

HELM SUMMIT REPORT 2022

LEADING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE
FOR
SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Starting points

Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) is one of Universities South Africa's (USAf) flagship programmes and a Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) initiative, which features in its Annual Performance Plan. The discussions at the HELM Summit take place against the backdrop of two recent Higher Education Leadership Conferences hosted by HELM and USAf in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

In 2020, the first Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) Virtual Conference took place entitled "Leading and Managing the University in Africa for Disruption, Complexity and Change". In 2021, the Universities South Africa Forum (USAf) conference focused on "The Engaged University".

This 2022 HELM Summit aims to build on these conversations with a special focus on leadership development for the sector. The Summit focuses on drawing from the challenges as discussed within the context of disruption, complexity and change and the Engaged University by reviewing what this means for developing leadership for sustainability and change.

In this way the Summit considers the practical implications for what is required from leadership within the

current context. The following constitute the sub-themes of the Summit:

1. What has changed in the global and regional context that requires a rethinking of leadership in higher education?
2. What is required in relation to leadership development that will allow for complexity thinking, agile and nimble capacity for change, innovation and fresh "out of the box" thinking?
3. What is the Organisational Setting/s in relation to, for example, collaboration, partnership and innovation required for organisations to strive towards sustainable change and development?

1. Global and regional context of universities

The focus of this theme is to understand the global, regional and the national challenges that are impacting and requiring changes in higher education institutions and leadership. Part of mapping the contextual setting is to critically engage with multiple frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Africa's Agenda 2063 and the South African National Development Plan (NDP) in relation to their relevance locally and globally. Of further significance is how leadership has brought about sustainable change, accountability, and stability.

While the context and challenges will be engaged with, the intention of the sessions will be to consider

sustainable development opportunities to pursue in collaborative and fresh ways with government, civil society, and industry. Consideration will also be given to the regulatory environment, its policies as well as ministerial reports and how this enables change within the system.

The guiding question is: What does the global and regional context of universities mean for higher education leadership?

2. Leadership development

The leadership development sub-theme is focused on understanding the diverse ways and models in which leadership development is framed globally to pursue ways in which higher education leaders can contribute to global change. Consideration is given to the following:

- How is leadership development framed that enables a rethinking of the impact of the global and regional context on higher education institutions?
- What leadership development models and approaches are proven good practice and remain relevant within current experiences of higher education change?
- What are the enablers that allow women to assume and retain leadership positions?
- In which ways can leadership development for sustainability and development be taken forward

within the current context of change, uncertainty, and complexity?

3. Organisational settings for sustainable change and development

For change to happen, leadership development needs to be sustained within a multiplicity of organisational settings of the university. While courses are available for leadership reflection and development, the organisational settings need to be coordinated with the kind of change needed. Understanding what this setting, enables and hinders, is the focus of this theme.

Questions to be considered in this sub-theme are:

- What are the features of higher education organisational settings that enable sustainable change and development?
- How, through collaborations and partnerships, can these diverse settings be enhanced for inspiring leadership change and development?
- What might be the blockages and barriers experienced within creating leadership development in organisational settings in universities?

The complexity of organisational settings is interrelated with institutional cultures, socially just, transformed, diverse and inclusive universities.

The HELM Summit is held in collaboration with the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), a representative association of Deans of Arts and Sciences in the United States of America. It is hoped that this collaboration will deepen and grow in the future.

The nature of this Summit is such that it will be a series of dialogues, invigorating conversations between subject experts rather than focusing on inputs alone. It is hoped that this format enables engaging new perspectives on the subject of leadership in its myriad forms. The Summit will also begin with a high level overview of the current state of

global higher education and its future prospects. From here it will dig down into higher education leadership and its relationship to gender, mental health, coaching, transformation and a host of other nuts and bolts that hold the university project together and keep it in motion.

By way of conclusion, I want to express my appreciation to the HELM Summit organising committee, including Dr Oliver Seale, Dr Carolyn Stefanco, Dr Bernadette Johnson, Ms

Nolusindiso Kayi and Mr Patrick Fish. I would also like to acknowledge and

thank the leadership of the Department of Higher Education and Training, for their unwavering support of USAf, and in this case particularly, the work of HELM.

Dr Phethiwe Matutu: CEO USAf



Dr Phethiwe Matutu

Day 1 - Themes

1. Keynote opening address.
2. Trends in global and regional contexts of universities. Question to Speakers: What is the current state of higher education?
3. What does the future hold? Global and national university leaders on the implications for universities. Leadership Conversation Circle.
4. Closing session: Leadership stories.

Day 2 - Themes

1. Showcasing issues in leadership development. Academic leadership and management.
2. Student success.
3. Reimagining leadership post-covid. Transitioning into leadership.
4. The Hot Spots of Leadership: Conversations with university leaders.
5. Mental health in the academy.
6. Enabling institutional cultures.
7. Leading from the middle: Global perspectives on the role of the Dean.

Day 3 - Themes

1. Leading and managing change in universities. Ecosystem of leadership of organisational development for change and sustainability.
2. Building communities of leaders. Reflexive conversations and sharing experiences.
3. Moving the needle: Diversity and women in leadership.
4. International models of leadership development. Reflexive and practical sessions.
5. Coaching for leadership development.
6. Leadership development partnerships.
7. Transforming university leadership for social and economic impact.

DAY 1

The leadership context¹

Keynote address:

Dr Marsia Socikwa, Deputy Director General for University Education, DHET

Stepping out of a workshop with the minister, Dr Socikwa welcomed participants from across the globe. She noted the relevance of the Summit theme and its emphasis on sustainability and development in the face of global uncertainty, climate change and the continued impact of Covid-19. "As continuous uncertainty characterises our world globally, socio-economic inequalities as well as poverty and health, gender, mental health and matters around clean water and sanitation, universities, globally, need to be at the forefront of finding solutions to these manifold challenges."

In addition, she pointed out that the wars and technological disruptions resulted in people feeling very vulnerable. In particular, Dr Socikwa was keen to point to a wider set of crises: of social inequality, of climate change, of technological disruption, and linked to all of the above, a crisis of the global capitalist system.

For her it also reveals how highly interconnected we are as societies economically, socially, and politically. The ways in which the global geo-political context is framed and who is focused on shapes development and change. Higher education is impacted by these changes whether financially or in relation to mobility and internationalisation of its campuses.

There is no doubt, she continued, that during the past two decades the world of higher education has changed dramatically, and this environment has had significant implications for university governance, leadership, and management.



Dr Marsia Socikwa, centre

¹ All recordings for Day 1 are chronological and can be accessed via this [hyperlink](#).

The South African university in transition

South African higher education is in transition and grappling with major challenges arising from global and local development imperatives. Traditional methods of governance, leadership, and management as applied in universities have been surpassed by corporate-like approaches, characterised by performativity requirements and measures. So too the increasingly vociferous demands from students and other stakeholders like organised labour, for more democratised forms of governance, leadership, and decision-making, in local universities, placing increasing pressure on university leadership and management. Even more so here, where balancing global and unique local environmental drivers are key for survival and success.

Some writers suggest that the higher education sector has a leadership crisis and requires a new kind of leadership and management that is attuned to transformation, pluralism on the one hand and performativity and efficiency on the other.

University leadership has recently expanded to a broader understanding of institutional leaders, including Deans, HoDs and the like.

She noted that our understanding of leadership in South Africa has also shifted. “The notion of university leadership has only recently expanded to a broader understanding that includes Head of Academic Departments, Head of Academic School, Deans, and Deputies as well as Administrative Leadership, such as

Registrars’ functions and Faculty Managers”. For Dr

Socikwa, this is a refreshing change. These tiers of leadership need “structural and systematic training development programmes” in both the academe and administration of universities. It is for these reasons of advancing management that the Department of Higher Education and Training partnered with Universities South Africa to develop and implement its Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) programme.

HELM

The HELM programme is a Department of Higher Education and Training initiative undertaken through a strategic partnership with Universities South Africa (USAf). Although HELM has been in existence since 2002, it achieved a focused strategic direction in 2017 with financial support through the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP). Reconfigured in 2018, HELM offers valuable perspectives on the contemporary leadership and management context, complexities and challenges facing universities.

The need has never been greater for HELM to provide all levels of university leadership and management with skills, strategies, and insight into this ever-shifting terrain. “HELM’s mission is to explore and create relevant and cutting-edge solutions that build organisational and individual capacity needs in universities. The overarching objective is to ensure that the higher education system is endowed with leaders and managers able to drive their institutions towards a transformed future in this challenging environment”.

Refining relationships via programmes

For the DHET, this partnership has already borne rich fruits, such as the Women in Leadership programme, which was launched in September 2020 and is now in its third cohort of 35 participants from 21 universities. New developments on the horizon is the University Lecturer Development Programme (ULDP) and Student Affairs and Student Success (SASS) that HELM is designing and will implement with financial support from the ETD SETA in 2023.

According to Dr Socikwa “there is no doubt in my mind that HELM will grow from strength to strength with these dynamic partnerships and collaborative ventures”.

Turning her attention to the HELM Summit, she noted the ways in which the global geo-political context is framed and who is focused on, shapes development and change. Higher education is impacted by these changes whether financially or in relation to mobility and internationalisation of its campuses. This context of unrelenting instability and uncertainty raises several questions for higher education leaders:

- How do we locate Higher Education and its leadership to advance sustainability and development?
- How can Higher Education Leadership enhance its collaborative efforts for national, global change and stability?
- What frameworks can guide our thinking?
- How can we as Higher Education leaders monitor and evaluate our contributions

This HELM Summit aims to build on these conversations by drawing from the challenges as discussed within the context of disruption, complexity and change and the Engaged University and by reviewing what this means for developing leadership for sustainability and change. The Summit will consider the practical implications for what is required from leadership within the current context.

This Summit will not only stimulate our thinking around these questions, but equally important will provide a compass and guide to engaging with perspectives like

- What might I be assuming that is not correct, how do I consider my own thinking on these issues and what might I need to reconsider?
- How can I, as a leader, collaborate with government and civil society to build a better higher education system for my country? What will a better system look like?

She hoped the Summit will shape a workable and exciting set of priorities that HELM, together with the DHET, can use to forge a stronger future than anything we could have imagined before the arrival of the pandemic.

“In closing, I believe that our leadership journeys in our universities have their genesis in life, are inspired by intellectual quests, interweaving experience and application of theory and praxis. It is most aptly described by Lewis (1929, p.134) who says that ‘knowing begins and ends in experience; but it does not end in the experience in which it began’. I hope that this is your experience at this HELM Summit”.

Trends in global and regional contexts of universities

Discussants:

Prof Sibongile Muthwa, Vice-Chancellor, Nelson Mandela University

Prof Ahmed Bawa, former USAf CEO and Prof of Higher Education, University of Johannesburg

Prof Catherine Odora Hoppers, Scholar and Specialist on International Development

Dr Minu Ipe, Vice-Chairperson, University Design Institute, Arizona State University

Prof Hans de Wit, Emeritus Prof of the Practice; Distinguished Fellow, Center for International Higher Education, Boston College

The big question

A pressing question was posed to initiate the conversation:
What is the current state of higher education?

In the discussion that resulted, there was general consensus on the big issues: funding for higher education is drying up in both the North and the South; global collaboration has been damaged by changing geo-political allegiances; knowledge production is being undermined by social media and misinformation; and the imbalance between the wealthy North and the relatively poor South (particularly Africa) continues to expand.

For Prof Sibongile Muthwa, Chair of the USAf Board and Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Nelson Mandela University, the role of higher education is pivotal to the democracy project in South Africa. Higher education has to ensure that different levels of society and people from all walks of life have enabled to access and are able to transition to better



Prof Sibongile Muthwa



Prof Ahmed Bawa



Prof Catherine Odora Hoppers



Dr Minu Ipe



Prof Hans de Wit

lives for themselves and their families while contributing to the economy.

She argued that “the biggest challenge is the underfunding of the higher education system. Government has done a great deal in the past few years to help students access higher education following the #FeesMustFall campaign. However, we remain challenged — compared to other countries of our size — when it comes to the funding of research and innovation”. The fact that we have been

“South African higher education is crucial in strengthening democracy.”

aiming for (and failing to achieve) the magical 1% of GDP spent on research and development (R&D), together with the general decline of private R&D does not bode well for the future competitiveness of the country.

Populism and geo-politics

Prof Ahmed Bawa (Former USAf CEO and now Prof of Higher Education in Japan) had a global take by pointing out that the slide towards anti-intellectualism and populism meant that the knowledge project — and the future prospects of higher education — was under pressure. This pressure is exacerbated by geo-political shifts where some universities are closing their doors to students who are “deemed to be agents of enemy states”.

In the global South there is also the difficult process of decolonising the curricula, rediscovering indigenous knowledge systems that have been suppressed and moving towards a socially just future role in society for our

universities. This implies an examination of the impact of the social movements that are occurring both locally and globally — from climate reform to those for racial and gender justice.

Prof Catherine Odora Hoppers is Prof Extraordinarius at the University of South Africa (Unisa) and founder and director of the Global Institute for Applied Governance in Science, Knowledge Systems and Innovations (Uganda). She agreed that we need a different understanding of knowledge and the very tools of cognition that we’ve used to define our reality. She went on to critique the monopoly of western knowledge. “The post Galilean development of human thought remains largely a product of the West, especially of Europe. The knowledge production enterprise, which emanates from this epistemological position, leaves us with many areas of inquiry. They have to be considered relevant to development in non-Western societies including the monopoly control over concepts, practices and images. Most disciplines are stuck with a coded discourse and practices, which fail to explain the social changes that are taking place in African society.”

South African higher education needs to find ways that it can interrogate silo disciplines to find new and African conceptualisations of the world, to uncover and test the multiple layers of sedimented assumptions about Africa.

Dreaming up the future

Dr Minu Ipe, Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director of the University Design Institute, Arizona State University

(USA), opened her input by pointing out higher education's lack of capacity. She estimates that by 2040, we will see a 68% growth in demand for higher education and we don't have the capacity in the system to meet that demand right now. If we don't have the capacity, we also don't have a clear idea of what future jobs will look like. All we do know with clarity is that new areas are emerging — health, climate, environment and social issues — that will require urgent research and solutions.

For her, the entire higher education ecosystem needs overhauling and reimagining:

- Why should the university be seen as a brick-and-mortar place where people go to study?
- Why do we look predominantly at high school graduates who want to go to university? What about anyone at any age accessing higher education ?
- Why can't universities offer more than just degree programmes?
- Why are we not more entrepreneurial and able to generate additional revenue for institutions of higher education?

The answers to many of these questions require a global collaboration among all universities to actively work towards delivering a better world.

Globally we are united by a lack of funding. So argued Prof Hans de Wit, Distinguished Fellow at the Center for

The entire higher education ecosystem needs overhauling and reimagining.

International Higher Education, Boston College (US) and the recipient of the Noam Chomsky Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021. He continued the theme initiated by Dr Ipe. "It is important that we continue to work together in a global context.

We need to keep communication channels open. Isolation is not a solution but a major concern for higher education institutions. Only when we work together, can we address the problems that our planet faces. It's very important that the Global South is considered as an equal partner and that there's not the dominance of the Western higher education community or the increasing power of countries like China. Africa is important enough to take a leading role together with the rest of the world."

These session themes provided for a high-level overview that would recur — in different formulations — throughout the deliberations over the next two days. These challenges are inter-twined, complex and, in some cases, unanswerable (the specific nature of future jobs, for example). But, that does not mean that they can go on being unanswered in perpetuity. Change is accelerating and this is as true for technology as it is for higher education. In the face of growing political isolation and polarity across the globe, a crucial part of the solution is that universities need, at least, to come together on a global scale to work together, collaborate and to puzzle out these urgent, massive problems.

What does the future hold? Global and National University Leaders on the Implications for universities.

Discussants:

Chair: Dr Carolyn J Stefanco, Former University President; HELM Senior Associate, International; and CEO, Baret Leadership Consulting, United States

Prof Amany Lubis, Rector, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

Prof Ihron Rensburg, Former Vice-Chancellor and HELM Senior Associate, South Africa

Dr Larry Robinson, President, Florida A&M University (FAMU), United States

As was true of many of the deliberations, the session hosted leaders based in the USA, London and Indonesia. It was the sense of 'communality over distance' that helped to create a group of experts throughout the globe talking to each other and the participants on issues specific to their contexts. In the process it became apparent how common were the challenges for all three speakers.

Speaker Context

Dr Larry Robinson joined Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) 27 years ago. FAMU is a public, historically Black university located in Tallahassee with 10 000 students enrolled from 35 US states as well as

having students from more than 70 countries. It is ranked No 103 in the 2023 US News & World Report Rankings, and has been the country's highest ranked, public historically black college and university for four consecutive years. The university's focus is on global, sustainable solutions especially at the School of Environment and whose strategic commitment is to sustainable strategies concerning energy, water and food.



Dr Larry Robinson

In 2019, Prof Amany Lubis made history when she was appointed Rector of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, becoming the first woman to serve as Chancellor at the Indonesian university. The university itself, now has 12 faculties and one graduate school with 783 study programmes.

To local higher education leaders, Prof Rensburg was well known. He was the founding Vice-Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg (UJ) has spent all of his life in

public service as an activist helping to build the liberation movement in South Africa. UJ was the result of a merger between three universities, one former white university with two historically disadvantaged institutions. Prof Rensburg oversaw that merger based on the principle the institution would pursue inclusion and diversity as well as excellence.

“Today, 90% of the student body is black in the South African definition, and 57% women. As many as two thirds of our first year students are first-generation university entrants.”



Challenges facing the system

Prof Lubis highlighted the issue of gender, specifically in Indonesia. She hopes to leave a legacy “of gender equality when it comes to positions throughout the university

hierarchy, as females have a pivotal role to play. Eighteen heads of departments are now women. “We need to defend and protect women and give them better chances to study”.

Dr Robinson’s focus was on the challenges of access versus funding models and outputs and outcomes. Echoing the situation in South Africa he spoke of how “one third of our students are first-generation and we have the highest percentage of federal aid assistance students in the state university system in Florida by far, with 60% receiving aid”.

Because Florida is such a popular destination for students, there is never enough access. Each year over 12,000 students apply and only between 2000 to 3000 finally enter the university. Not only is he worried about what happens to those students who cannot manage to enter into the system, he also worries about the extra pressure the new students place on the staff and university resources.

Prof Rensburg agreed that the way universities deal with access is critical. During his tenure at UJ he pursued the vision of ‘accessible excellence’. This applies not only to student demographics and success but staff diversity as well. “To widen access to urban and rural poor is not to bring the university down but rather to take the university up. When we diversified our academic staff, it was to broaden perspectives, to bring new insights and affirm our emergent national identity. It was not to destroy it. And so, a university that only had 15% Black academics on its staff soon became a university with 50% Black academics. At the

same time, the institution excelled in many facets including its research outputs.”

Reiterating what Prof Bawa had said earlier in the day, he spoke of the dangers of polarising communities and even populations. Joint research with our Chinese counterparts can have grave consequences to work done with our USA research collaborations. Globally, higher education needs to be the originating site of academic freedom and collaboration if it is to handle the big crises that are amassing.

Why lead?

Dr Carolyn J Stefanco, who was the facilitator, asked each of them why was leadership even an option, what inspired and prepared them for leadership? Prof Lubis admitted that it wasn't the plan originally but she came to realise that she had many of the right skills — consultation, discussion and then the ability to make good decisions in a timely manner. She continued, “I am patient and take time to understand the details. I think they are lessons I have taken from my religion. My style of management is also results-based.”

Prof Robinson spoke of his approach to meetings with his team which always start with ‘great things moment’ which is positive and sets the tone of the forthcoming discussion. He was particularly proud of creating a new position with FAMU of a Chief Operating Officer. This avoided any possibility of stagnancy and allowed the management team to “develop a blueprint for the future;

“We’ve been given two ears and one mouth so the ratio of listening and hearing should be in that proportion.”



Prof Ihron Rensburg

a teaching plan with five or six strategic priorities. The first one is students and staff because that’s why we are here and we can never forget about that.”

Prof Rensburg: “You have to engage with your senior team and colleagues in what we probably refer to, now, as transformational leadership. Self-awareness is a critical part of being a leader. With that goes self-regulation and to be able to adjust and change course if how you are leading is not achieving the necessary results. I always say we’ve been given two ears and one mouth so the ratio of listening and hearing should be in that proportion, more or less.”

The university as a change agent

Prof Lubis viewed the role of the university as a mechanism to educate society, especially the young generation, to have the awareness, for example, about climate change.

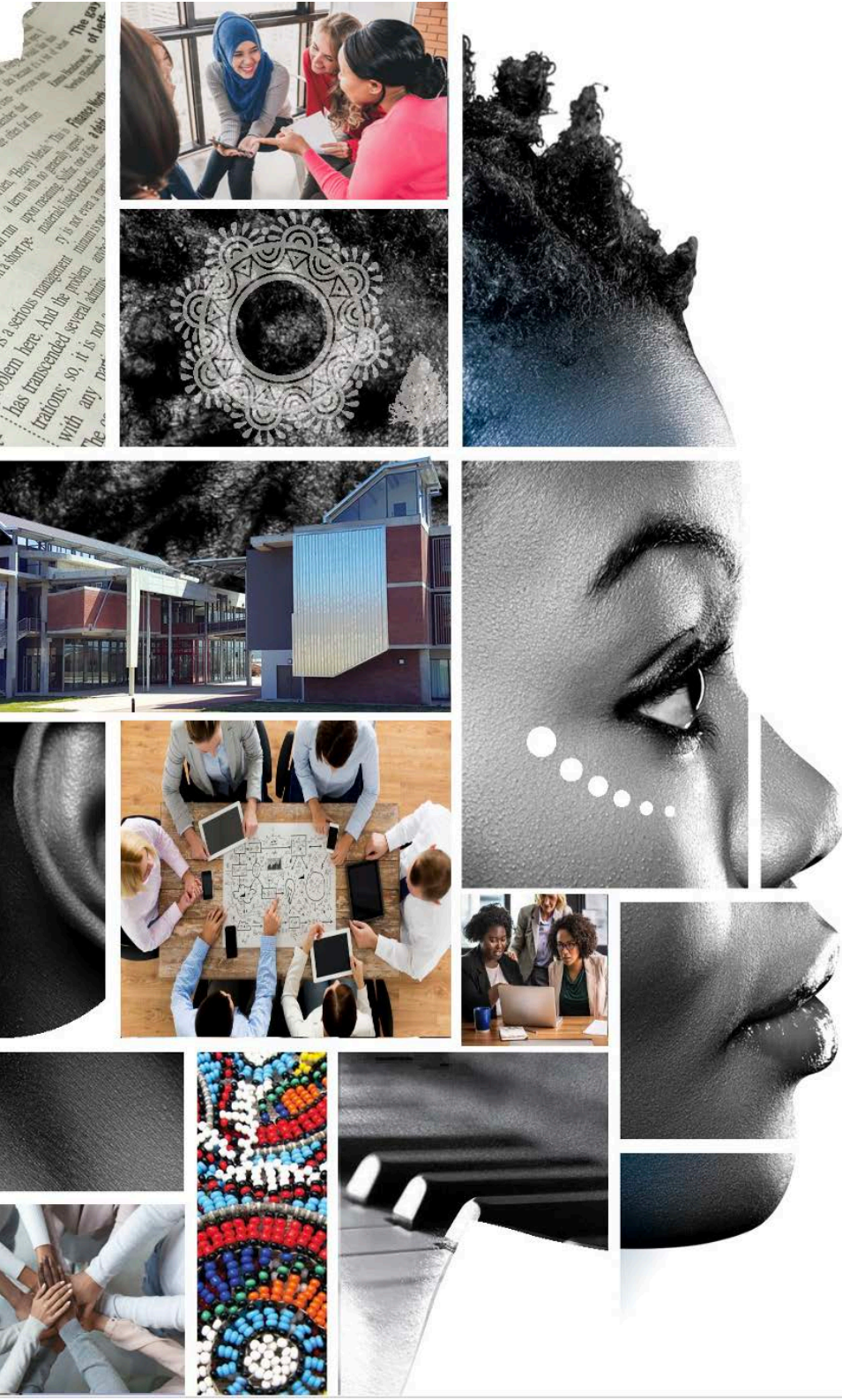
Indonesia is prone to natural disasters and stands to be one of the worst affected by tidal flooding. It also has the third-largest rain forest in the world and is a contributor of oxygen to the lungs of the world. These challenges and opportunities are the core mandate of her university.

Prof Robinson spoke of his personal journey as a role model for students to follow. To achieve this, he took a leave of absence from the university to serve as Assistant Secretary of Oceans and Atmosphere at The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and helped guide policy and programme direction for NOAA's conservation, protection and resource management priorities.

“Climate health and the impact it is having on communities of colour is vitally important to us as an institution. We need to change our carbon footprint to look more holistically at sustainability and the role universities can play.”

Prof Rensburg has a substantial history in the public sector and was the chairperson of the predecessor to USAf, which helped shape governmental policy. He went on to chair the Southern African Regional Universities Association which provides a strong network of colleagues who can collaborate and work together on these grand challenges throughout the Southern Africa region. He was also privileged to serve as a commissioner of South Africa's National Planning Commission that developed our national

plan for 2030 and beyond. As he notes by way of conclusion “in as much as university leaders must successfully run their institutions, we also carry the responsibility to lead with our peers in nurturing national, regional and global solutions to the grand challenges of our day.”



LEADERSHIP STORIES

Leadership stories

Host: Dr Phethiwe Matutu – CEO, USAf

Panel Discussion

Prof Jonathan Jansen, Distinguished Prof of Education at Stellenbosch University and President of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

Dr Muki Moeng, Executive Dean, Nelson Mandela University

Prof Vivienne Lawack, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning, University of the Western Cape

These three academics shared lessons from their own experience, often learned the hard way. From the powerlessness of the leader through to negotiating the Covid-19 space, these were narratives unique as they were fascinating.

Learning to dance

Dr Moeng began by addressing the impact of Covid-19 on staff. She said a lot of people were feeling isolated. In 2021, she held virtual one-on-one meetings with every staff member, just to ask: “How are you? What are you doing? How can we improve your working conditions at home?”

She said it was not just to ensure people were being productive. “It was a way of saying ‘we are here as a university, and, as the Dean, I am here as a person’,” she said.

Once the harsh lockdown restrictions had lifted, she had arranged a picnic on the beach for staff members “to be able to breathe some fresh air, just to hang out and let our hair down. And a lot of staff members really appreciated that,” she said. They had felt trapped during lockdown.

Dr Moeng said she had learnt during #FeesMustFall in 2015-2016 how “to dance with, around, and against the prevailing conditions, because at times you have to go with the flow, at times around things, and, at times, you have to push back a little”. As Dean, she was sandwiched between the needs/demands of the students and the best interests of the institution. That makes leadership a messy and sometimes contradictory way of being. The crucial lesson was to accept this and to function while being accepting of the space. As she put it, we must be “able to forgive yourself, which is very difficult to do, for decisions that did not work out. We become so hard on ourselves”.

One positive outcome of the pandemic, especially in her faculty, was that it led to more reflective research as people sat back and reflected on their own practice in ways that had not been done before.

Real vs perceived power

Prof Jonathan Jansen has been through all levels of university leadership and is fully aware of how little power a leader has within the larger context of an institution and its culture. Jansen, a National Research Foundation A-rated scholar who is a Distinguished Prof of Education at Stellenbosch University and President of the Academy of

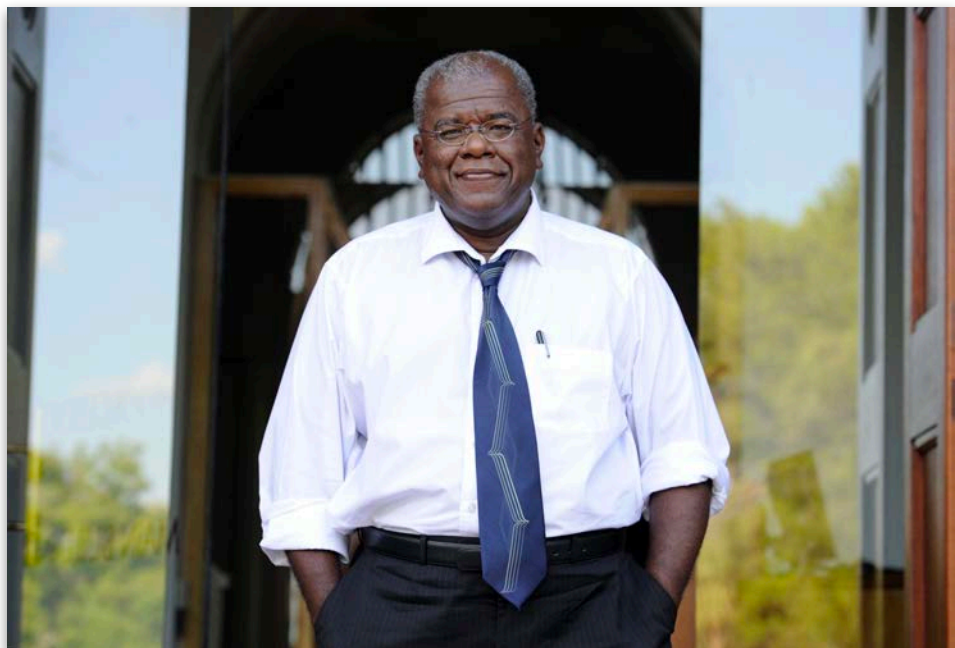
Science of South Africa offered four insights into higher education leadership:

- It is a mistake to think, even as a Vice-Chancellor, that you are the university. Leaders, at all levels — from heads of department through to Vice-Chancellors, come and go. Leaders are only as good as the quality of their second tier, which is why they must respect, nurture and love their team leaders;
- Becoming a personal example of living the institution’s vision matters. Setting a personal example as a scholar leader is the most powerful influence over the academic community. It doesn’t help to announce in Senate that you would like to see research quality improve. You have to do it first.
- University leaders should use any number of available platforms to also communicate human values and to speak about issues in their troubled society and campuses. He said he had told his colleagues he had heard them talk about everything from climate change to big data and the oceans, but he had never seen them use the platforms of orientation, graduation, or alumni gatherings to talk about racism or xenophobia; and
- Leaders without control over their emotions is a danger to themselves and others. Being criticised by academics is part and parcel of university life. If leaders don’t understand that they shouldn’t work in a university because they could destroy their academic

unit or even their whole university. “Your temperament as a leader is the single most important asset in your leadership backpack,” he said.

Leadership is very human activity that all too often proves you wrong but gives you wonderful opportunities to grow.

Prof Jonathan Jansen



Scholarship and hope in a time of fear

Prof Jansen spends a lot of time visiting schools and universities and he has noticed something about people’s emotions which have direct implications for leaders. Whether they are in corporates or shack schools, people have a heightened sense of stress and dismay because of

Covid-19, crime, corruption, and the collapse of the electricity grid. “And how do you convince followers of the value of their work, the power of the local, and the importance of hope, when you are leading in such contexts, whether on campus or in the community?” he said.

Again he reiterates that in these times, scholarship is the place to which he constantly returns. Scholarship as well as being a site for reflection, provides a crucial example for young academics.

Leadership is very human activity that all too often proves you wrong but gives you wonderful opportunities to grow.

One example of that role is a recently published book he co-edited and contributed to. Published early in November by the open access, not-for-profit publisher, *African Minds*, *On Becoming a Scholar: What Every New Academic Needs to Know*, features 20 chapters by leading academics from different disciplines around South Africa, providing advice on career stepping-stones such as how to leverage the research office, to when and how to apply for promotion.

“This is about speaking through your scholarship to people that you serve, in order to give them a sense of hope in a very dismal situation,” Jansen said.

Look after the staff

Prof Lawack began by acknowledging her underestimation of the systemic inequality that existed at her historically disadvantaged institution, UWC. This was made painfully clear during Covid-19. “At UWC, we had to be very creative”.

It always assumed that if a student has data and access to a laptop it would fully prepare students for the shift to online. Instead she found that having data did not necessarily mean they had connectivity, and their remote students did not necessarily have a formal address. That impacted on the logistics of delivering study materials to them.

Coming from a background in law, she is wary of making assumptions without hard evidence. “One of the first learnings was to not assume that you know the institution in terms of where students and staff are from. And we were making assumptions about our staff as well,” she said. To find out, they conducted a readiness survey and surveyed 12 000 people within 48 hours, which gave them a very clear idea about who had smartphones, who had laptops, what people’s needs were. They had already adopted blended learning in 2016 with #FeesMustFall and that helped them transition to an online format rapidly.

They followed up with a huge survey on staff and student experiences after the first semester, which informed and shaped their second semester. Prof Lawack took the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor in 2015, at the exact time of the student unrest. What she learned during that baptism of fire stood her in good stead during the pandemic. Her advice to other higher education leaders,



Prof Lawack

drawn from the insights she had gained from performing two key leadership roles simultaneously during the pandemic, included:

- Be agile. The situation can be so fluid that you might need to change tack while in the process of implementing plans;
 - Constantly evaluate what you do and if something is not working, change it;
 - Be attuned to people’s needs and health. Plans can look beautiful on paper but can be implemented only if people are mentally prepared to deliver on them, and have the mental strength to do so;
- Above all, listen to stakeholders, because it’s not about you and your personality but about what’s in the best interest of your institution, the staff, the students, and the broader community.

What united all three speakers, was the need to dispense with ego, to strive for an unmooring of personal self-importance in favour of close, human encounters with staff, understanding where students come from and the core function of the university — scholarship in the service of future academic generations.

DAY 2

Prof Ihron Rensburg, HELM Senior Associate and host for the duration of the Summit, welcomed participants to Day 2. He urged participants to keep the themes of development and sustainability in mind during the day's deliberations. Referencing the conflicts across the globe, he noted our shared vulnerability as well as our inter-connectedness. Higher education is profoundly affected by this vulnerability and its impact on its core areas of financial sustainability and its moral and intellectual relevance.

He asked “how can higher education enhance national, regional and global stability and collaboration? And how can higher education mediate populism, racism, climate change scepticism and gender inequality?” And replace it with collaboration, scholarship and building a critical and active future citizenry. The university is the pre-eminent institution for advancing constitutional democracy and advancing social justice. Higher education may lack capacity but it has a crucial role to play in up-skilling and re-tooling people of all ages for very different future careers.

He concluded his remarks by introducing participants to the day's proceedings. “Today we focus on leadership and management; the transitioning into leadership roles; student success; leadership hot spots; mental health and enabling institutional cultures.”

Academic Leadership and Management

Main discussants:

Dr Oliver Seale, Director HELM

Prof Anne McLennan, Senior HELM Associate

For both of these speakers, the main issue under consideration was to find a balance for higher education leaders between academic experience and leadership responsibilities and how to set about improving managerial skills? Dr Seale is particularly interested in the Dean's role within the leadership matrix and has recently published *Deanship in the Global South: Bridging Troubled Waters*. The role that the Dean plays has not been deeply explored in South Africa but needs to be strategic and tactical — what Prof Jansen called “the second tier” that enables university leadership.

“Universities can stand or fall on academic leadership and never more so than in the last decade or so. In some quarters the question is sometimes still asked: Are leaders born or made — is it nature or nurture? For me, it's both. Today, everyone has the potential for leadership. The sooner one can discover that, and develop it, the better”.



Dr Oliver Seale, front row, third from right

Leadership styles in a time of crises

Focussing on leadership styles, he noted how these had changed over the years, including during Covid-19. Servant and transformational leadership and more recently humanistic (which is more about EQ), transpersonal, collective or distributed leadership have all been used and still are. Covid-19 brought a shift towards collective leadership, not just within the institutions but across institutions through greater collaboration especially around the issues of technology-mediated learning and digital transformation.

Dr Seale went on to list the changing tensions bearing down on the academy which were covered by Prof

Rensburg earlier. Those in leadership roles in the Global South focus much of their attention and energy on scholarship and research in crisis management and not enough on key functional roles, like Deanship or HoDs, which are critical for the university sector, Dr Seale explained.

For the last decade, he argued, higher education seems to lurch from one sectoral challenge to the next. We have not reached a point of environmental stability in our higher education system. #FeesMustFall and the calls for decolonisation of the curriculum has had a huge impact on South African universities and their leadership.

Are you prepared for leadership?

Another critical issue is the fact that most leaders and managers at universities are former academics who are then catapulted into a largely executive or management role. “It’s a major problem that you suddenly shift from where you were in academia and where you were measured by your own success in your field of study, into a management space with its focus on others and their collective achievements.”

This lack of preparation and inadequate support, argued Dr Seale, points to the need for a more strategic, integrated approach to leadership development within their critical bridging roles between the academe and administration.

“There’s also inadequate succession planning and mentorship and coaching given in the leadership pipeline, especially at middle management level. Another problem is that women are not represented enough in Vice-Chancellor and President roles in universities. Institutions are still a man’s world when it comes to opportunities — with less than 30 percent of women in executive management roles in universities.”

The HELM model

HELM’s approach has understood leadership as an activity that is located at every level of the university. From student leaders, to early phase lecturers, to Heads of Departments, Deans and Deputy Vice-Chancellors; each grouping has

“To put it bluntly, academic leadership is one of the few professions one can enter today with absolutely no training in, credentials for, or knowledge about the central duties of the position” Gmelch & Buller (2015).

different needs and require different skillsets. Leadership development should be events based rather than systemic interventions driven by strategy and performance. There needs to be strategic and integrated leadership development with a focus on leadership context, leadership capacity and leadership capital.

He briefly touched on the “HELM ‘soccer ball’” to point to the interventions that begin with induction, move through middle management to executive programmes, coaching and thematic engagements which are hosted monthly and cover emerging topics in higher education.



Managerialism and Collegiality

Prof Anne McLennan's input focussed on a crucial tension that exists with the university. Academia is hierarchical, but at the same time it claims to be collegial. The introduction of managerialism comes with its own style and processes which relate to issues of performance.

She pointed to the danger of a simple managerial approach because professionalism often gets eroded as those in charge have to constantly prove where they are in terms of outcomes. This can undermine the freedom to be an academic.

"Just how do we maintain the image of the academe in the face of managerialism and complexity? The idea is that academic leaders and managers have to be innovative and look at entrepreneurial sustainability. So, there are a whole range of new roles that get taken on. What gets lost in the process, particularly if you are very senior in academic management or leadership, is the sense of what it actually means to be an academic leader and not just a manager. How do you balance these roles?"

Dr Seale agreed, and pointed out that in his research many leaders feel like they "are losing their religion", that they have lost their intellectual or scholarly identity. "Given its size and capacity in the university systems in the Global North, there are the resources where you can be a top scholar in your field and there's no need to divert from the management/administration track to advance your carrier. The South African system is not big enough to allow senior

academics to do that. The one avenue here for promotion is by taking a managerial role but that can come at a cost of your academic pursuits and scholarship". For him it's a constant trade-off that finally is debilitating on both scholarship and the ability to lead.

Time off

On the question of bringing in external managers to manage and leaving academics free to pursue their own work, Prof McLennan felt that it separates the academic project from the process, which, for her, is highly problematic. She does argue that leaders need safe spaces where they can confer with colleagues without being judged. Once leaders understand that they have many of the tools for leading, they are able to deploy them in a thoughtful and considerate way

Dr Seale concluded by noting that universities must advance the academic project, nothing more, nothing less. Often, when a Dean comes to the end of their term, unless they are moving up, they go back into academia but they have such a rich knowledge and skills set that they have developed, which can be lost to the system. We need to continue supporting them in making meaningful contributions to the academic project whether as mentor or even coach. Finally, "academic leaders also need to invest in themselves and try and set aside a few days each year for their own time of pausing, reflection and learning."

Transitioning into Leadership

WiL

WOMEN in LEADERSHIP

Discussants:

WiL – Prof Denise Zinn, HELM Programme Leader (Host)

Associate Prof Samantha Govender, Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning at the University of Zululand's Faculty of Education

Prof Dini Mawela, Deputy Dean: School of Medicine at the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University

Prof Zannie Bock: Linguistics and Deputy Dean of Teaching and Learning at the University of the Western Cape

Building the ark

Prof Denise Zinn introduced the rest of the panel which consisted of participants from each of the three Women in Leadership (WiL) programmes that have been held. She borrowed Prof Harkavy's 'Noah principle': "There will be no more credit given for predicting rain, it's time to build the

ark". That statement gave voice to the development of the WiL programme. There is no point in talking about gender bias in higher education, rather do something about it.

WiL was conceived, neither as a training nor a capacity-building programme because people appointed to leadership positions already can do what is needed. However, it was created as a platform where women leaders, in particular, can speak to their vulnerabilities safely and ask questions about complex matters in the sector. In addition the focus is on leading from the inside out; leading in times of crisis and challenge; focusing on higher education missions; leading and working with people; working with finances; career planning and advancement; and building networks globally, regionally and nationally.

Prof Zinn then briefly elucidated the various components of the WiL programme, focussing specifically on the coaching, peer learning groups and content of the programme.



Leadership over the years

Associate Prof Samantha Govender was part of the first cohort and admired the relevancy of the programme. “We know that institutions of higher learning are very complex — difficult to understand and challenging to lead and manage.” She says WiL equipped her perfectly because its content proved applicable to her real work-life experiences. “I have been able to put into practice the knowledge and insights I have gained from the programme in my current post,” she says. “Obviously, we are never going to be perfect when we lead — we are constantly learning and growing”

Of particular importance was the coaching it required a lot of self-reflection that taught the participants to analyse scenarios and their reactions to them as leaders. Overall, she said the programme had taught her to lead with

“The development of people is key. The development of women is non-negotiable.”

humility. It had cemented a belief in her, that her success as a leader lay in the success of those she led.

Peer learning

When Prof Mawela was nominated for WiL, it felt like both a reward and an expression of support from her institution. Once she had started the programme she realised it was going to be hard work; therefore, she needed to commit herself wholly to the process. She soon discovered within WiL that she was in the company of women leaders who had confronted many common issues. The peer learning opportunities became

the most important and constant reminders that her circumstances were not unique.

Peer learning also helped the participants to learn from each other, especially those things we can bring into our own workspaces and grow from them. “But it was also important for me to know that it is all within us... we lead from the inside. I became a bolder leader when I realised that I do not have to be looking at other people, but that it starts from within me.”

Prof Mawela says she learned the importance of context as a determinant of the kind of leadership to deploy. For her, how she sees and applies change in her environment became clearer. She says she learned to be a patient leader and understood that change takes time. More importantly, she also discovered through the coaching sessions that it was okay to take care of self; intentionally block time out and rest because incessant busyness can eventually render people ineffective.

Thanks to WiL, Prof Mawela says she has been able to define a clear career path for herself; has become more self-aware and has learned to raise a hand when she needs support. Moreover, now that she sits around decision-making tables, she feels adequately equipped.

Self care

Prof Bock liked the course because it talked about creating a space for women leaders to safely explore their own power in shaping the higher education sector. Having admired women leaders in her career trajectory, Prof Bock

felt that WiL would also help her become a better woman leader.

She reiterated Prof Mawela's sentiments on self-care and said that was a revelation to learn that self-care mattered as much in the workplace, as it did at home. "I suppose the focus on self-care somehow legitimised it as a very valid need for the workplace. That enabled me to embrace it".

It was during the coaching sessions, her coach tasked her to introspect on why she always felt exhausted and burned out. The answer was that she could not say "no" and tended to stretch herself beyond capacity, helping her 14 postgraduate students and seeing to her responsibilities as Deputy Dean. She called this her "lightbulb" moment. She did not have to agree to everything — including projects she found interesting. It was crucial to scan her capabilities to cope with the load.

"That was probably the most important learning. It is one that I am still trying to integrate," she says, through "structuring my day and having a definite end to it, instead of just allowing myself to work until I can barely move, glued to the laptop as we all are."

She feels that she has brought self-care to her passionate, hardworking and committed staff and felt that if she could model self-care, it would also give them space to take care of themselves. Prof Bock says this is often overlooked, especially in the sector, yet it is one of the elements that help employees to perform optimally. "I felt affirmed by that. I now see things as always in a balance," she says.

She says as an individual in the workplace, her goal has always been to take care of people and create a growth-enabling, listening, and inclusive environment. But that had never struck her as a leadership strength. She says it somehow felt like a mothering instinct. Thanks to WiL, "I felt affirmed in my leadership style," she says.

After having completed the programme in October, many of the lessons that she learned still need to be implemented. However she is clear that all leadership styles differ and that is a good thing. As an example, her peers must understand that leadership styles are unique, for which reason they should not feel pressured to follow any style but their own.

Student Success



Discussants:

Dr Birgit Schreiber, HELM Senior Associate (Host)

Prof Jonathan Jansen Distinguished Prof of Education at Stellenbosch University and President of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

Prof Elizabeth Balbachevsky Prof at the Department of Political Science at the University of São Paulo (USP)

Prof Hans De Wit, Emeritus Prof of the Practice; Distinguished Fellow, Center for International Higher Education, Boston College

As host of the session, Dr Schreiber heads up the Student Affairs and Student Success (SASS) programme based at HELM. The session was guided and shaped by four basic questions posed by Dr Schreiber. Each of the subject experts were then given an opportunity to respond and extemporise. She began the questions by acknowledging that “while this is a high-ranking focus for higher education across the world, there is less consensus on the definition of student success: how we may want to support it or even measure it”.

What is student success?

Prof Balbachevsky pointed out that in Brazil public universities are tuition-free but also highly research-focused and top of the higher education hierarchy. Like South Africa segregation is forbidden by law, but structural racism remains: because of Brazil’s slavery heritage, the elite is white, and, in the past, white children went to well-regarded universities. She said current affirmative action policies ensure half of all university places are reserved for low-income families or other minorities.

Within this racist legacy, one of the most important indicators of student success is the way he or she changes the way they see the world and contribute to it.

Prof Jansen spoke of the low number of students who can access higher education and the fewer number that

complete their degrees on time, “For me, student success has to be academic success; you have to be able to pass well enough in the courses that constitute the subject and the degree. If we miss that simple, obvious point, then the system collapses.”

Turning to the example of Stellenbosch University, which is in the throes of a row over institutional racism. “I think that the personal transformation of 30 000 students has to be part of the way in which we measure success.

Graduates have to be leaders, especially in this broken country. Universities should not simply churn out thousands of graduates every year. They should be able to know that those graduates would lead whether it’s in the NGO sector, in government, business, or internationally.

Prof De Wit believes academic institutions have largely ignored their social responsibility role, which is to prepare students better for a society that is much more inclusive and diverse. If we don’t, people won’t understand the complexity of the context; we cannot exclude people from a different culture or country. We have to be inclusive — it is needed more than ever for sustainable development.

He continues, “if you only prepare students to be professionals in a career for self-enrichment, that will be a wrong approach to student success. We have to emphasise the social role of students.”

Graduates have to be leaders, especially in this broken country.

Who defines student success?

It’s all about context. Prof Jansen told how, during his days at the helm of the University of the Free State (UFS) had the second lowest throughput rates of all of South Africa’s institutions. UFS also became notorious for the Reitz incident, the “most egregious racist act when four white students racially abused five black workers.”

His management team agreed that these two issues needed to be addressed simultaneously and out of this emerged an Academic Project and a Human Project. The first required that they dramatically raise the academic standard of this former white university, which became an important measuring tool in determining academic success more broadly. They also closed down the Reitz residence and reconfigured the university to ensure that black and white students could learn to live together.

“Each institution has to define what success means in relation to its history, geography, its particular political world. Stellenbosch does not have a problem with student success rates but it is no good having 98% graduation rates but producing students who become a danger to society without having addressed the way in which they see the world.”

Academic success is absolutely non-negotiable “in a country like ours, where the social and individual rates of return to investment in education is the highest in the world. There are huge costs: to individuals and to families.”

Very low pass rates meant there was huge “wastage” in the system “because we don’t take our talent seriously. Making sure that a working-class kid is able to become a first-generation graduate — that surely has to be non-negotiable.”

Prof de Wit agreed that context was everything. In Amsterdam, for example, there is a huge difference between a research university like the University of Amsterdam and the University of Applied Sciences in Amsterdam — the students have different career paths and different backgrounds. So, defining student success is always context bound.

There is a tendency to talk about students and not to students about what they need.

He added that aspirations of the labour market had to be factored in. How institutions respond to those outside — society and industry — and inside, where students and academics, define student success. “We should give students more of a voice in this process. There is a tendency to talk *about* students and not *to* students about what they need.

“I witness a change in students who arrive with a narrow definition of success (a job and money) and who begin to shift focus as they interact and have their minds opened”, said Prof Balbachevsky. The issue of belonging is something, we in Brazil, have taken for granted because of our homogeneous profile. The country is experiencing an influx of students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds including indigenous people who do not speak Portuguese.

Support, especially for students who are first generation at university is paramount to them achieving success. “Society evaluates the degree of success of our students, as does the labour market regarding the skills we teach them.” She said a university has many roles, especially in developing countries, to provide learning opportunities for those unable to go to university. Her university has 87,000 students, alongside 100,000 people who enrol for short programmes and classes. “We evaluate their success differently,” she said.

How will we know, perhaps retrospectively, that we were successful or unsuccessful?

Prof Balbachevsky said there was a problem in Latin America, where credentials are more important than the content of the education the student receives. One-third of Brazil’s students are enrolled in teacher education “but half of our students reach high school without learning how to read.

Prof Balbachevsky



We produce teachers who are dismal at their jobs which has consequences for those being taught by them.

Success, for her, is less about the student and more about breaking down the elitist Brazilian university system that still keeps first generation students relatively excluded. Until we can have institutions that are equal we will continue to perpetuate inequality. That is true of much of the Global South.

Prof de Wit noted, with concern, that global success is measured in an extremely artificial and incorrect way. Success is proclaimed via external measures like global rankings which does not offer a true understanding of success. We have to convince students, institutions and society that not just getting the degree is important, but rather the quality of the education; to prepare them as professionals and as citizens for the world.

Prof Jansen came at success from an institutional perspective, where the success of degrees is based on students:

- What they say when they leave.
- Where they go when they graduate.
- How they lead where they are.
- How often they come back to contribute.

All of the speakers also noted the importance of listening to the market at both national and local levels. “We should constantly be asking,” said Prof Jansen “ what part of the curriculum are we missing, that industry or the future

market needs and how can I incorporate that into my teaching”.

If you had a magic wand and can do one thing for higher education (or remove one thing) — what would it be?

Prof Balbachevsky would re-engineer the hierarchical design of universities in Brazil. For her, the two tier system is failing the higher education system.

In part agreement, Prof De Wit argued that while getting rid of the hierarchy creates a much more competitive environment, it is not in the interest of quality, student success and of society. “We need to cherish the diversity of the higher education system. Not all institutions can be and should be world-class institutions. We need different kinds that relate to the labour market and to society in different ways.

He spoke of community colleges in the United States which are playing an important role in bringing in first-generation, low-income and rural students into the higher education system. The promotion of diversity is key.

Prof Jansen wants to see more of a sense of compassion, of brotherhood and sisterhood, of a broader sense of responsibility. “Then the university doesn't simply replicate what other institutions do — the home, the school, the church, the mosque, and the football club — but it adds value to a changing society and a changing world”. The university becomes the epicentre of change.

Mental Health in the Academy

Discussants:

Dr Birgit Schreiber, HELM Senior Associate (Host)

Prof Jason Bantjes, Stellenbosch University

Prof Teboho Moja, Clinical Professor of Higher Education, New York University

Charl Davids, Director, Centre for Student Counselling and Development, Stellenbosch University

Moving from the specifics of a single institution (Stellenbosch) to the global stage, all of the speakers warned that mental health was a pressing issue that was growing across all universities.

According to Prof Moja, about 25% of students globally are showing signs of mental health issues and this number has grown during Covid-19 as already vulnerable students were further alienated from their fellow students. This was echoed by Prof Bantjes who described a “series of surveys of first-year students in 19 universities across 8 countries (Australia, Belgium, Germany, Mexico, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Spain, United States). They reported that 31.4% (95% CI 30.2-32.6%) of students screened positive for at least one common mental disorder in the preceding 12-months, which is higher than the prevalence typically observed in the general population”.



Crisis, what crisis?

However he was more cautious about the way that mental illness was understood and emphasised that mental illness was context bound. To call it a crisis or epidemic of depression and suicide among university students is not particularly helpful. For him, it creates an impression that all

The 'crisis' lies in the treatment gap. students are in a perpetual crisis and all have mental issues. While this is palpably not the case, this narrative of crisis does focus attention and prompts action to make resources available.

Prof Bantjes referred to some of the findings of one of the largest student mental health surveys ever undertaken in the world — which was launched in April 2020, initiated by Universities South Africa (USAf) and funded by the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) — which focused on mental health at South Africa's universities with 29 000 students completing the survey.

Because of the large numbers, reporting, traditional treatment models (e.g., one-on-one psychotherapy) are not a sustainable or feasible solution. Aside from depression and anxiety, there are the additional concerns of attention difficulties and hazardous substance use. Given common mental disorders' age of onset, it may be possible to implement early screening and targeted interventions for 1st year students.

Turning to suicide over the last 12 months, 40,9% had suicidal ideation, 20,6% had drawn up a suicide plan and 5,3% had followed through with a suicide attempt.

Although this may look like a large number it needs to be understood in the context of late adolescents engaging with the big questions on life and his or her purpose in life.

30-day prevalence for students likely to meet diagnostic criteria	
PTSD	21%
ADHD	21%
Generalised anxiety disorder	10,9%
Hazardous substance use	6,6%
Bipolar mood disorders	16,3%

- 22.7% screened positive for an eating disorder
- 24.5% screened positive for social anxiety

The survey did not screen for hazardous alcohol use or binge drinking. In addition, the liberalisation of cannabis in South Africa is going to have as yet unknown and potentially harmful consequences for the wellbeing of South African university students.

The 30 day prevalence also showed an increase with 22.5% of historically white institutions showing signs of mental illness compared to 16.5% at historically disadvantaged institutions.

The university as microcosm

For Charl Davids, his work is in the heart of the university he has definitely seen a rise in the numbers of students reaching out for support and accessing available mental health services, particularly after the CoViD-19 pandemic.

However, what is particularly disturbing is the increasing severity of the presenting problems. This year, Stellenbosch University (SU) has had to hospitalise more students than it has done in the past three years due to severe anxiety and depression as well as substance (such as cannabis) induced psychosis. Tragically, two suicides have also been recorded.

“However, when I speak to psychologists in private practice, it’s not different to what we also see in the general population. So, universities are a microcosm of general society”.

Picking up on the question of context, Davids raised the sociological, economic and political problems facing South African students: “Look at what has happened at SU recently around racism and the link between race and class. It is the reason why we also see more black students in historically white universities seeking mental health services because of issues they face.”

Whose responsibility is mental health?

While universities have some responsibility to respond to students’ needs, at the very least by creating an environment which is conducive to their psychological well-being, to what extent universities can and should provide services remains an unanswered question. As Prof Batjes puts it, “the absence of adolescent mental health services in this country as well as a health care system that is overburdened and under-resourced leads to an implicit assumption that universities should be the ones to solve the ‘problem’ and provide care — responsibilities that, in other countries, might be assumed by the healthcare

system. However, it all too clear that the public health system is hopelessly under-resourced and it can take months to see a state psychologist.”

However, this leads to problems of its own, especially concerning confidentiality, privacy and autonomy.

“For example, a student may not want their parents to know about the mental health issues they are facing and won’t allow us to speak to them but what happens if they are psychotic or have attempted suicide? If we take them to hospital, the hospital stops talking to us and contacts their parents who then hold the university responsible because we did not keep them informed,” says Davids.

Student confidentiality and autonomy

And the staff?

Taking a broader perspective, Prof Moja argued that in the focus on students, we tend to overlook the staff, especially those working in the mental support services. She noted that the high workload and demand, staff are also under stress, with mental health workers leaving their jobs en masse. While other industries are also experiencing turnover, mental health workers are particularly vulnerable to leaving their jobs in today’s environment. And we cannot forget university staff and lecturers who are burnt out and also struggling.

“I also need to underscore the point that mental health issues are not just an institutional responsibility but should

be regarded as a national responsibility, similar to other societal issues such as gender based violence.”

Mr Davids argued that there needs to be a shifting of the discussion away from psychological interventions and towards mental health literacy programmes. In this way we know that students are fully aware of what, when and where the resources are in the case that they need assistance. At the same time, universities need to focus on reducing stigma surrounding mental health through peer education and peer counselling.

For Prof Bantjes, he is concerned about making sure that students in need can access the help that they require. And seeing that the public health care system cannot fulfil that role, universities have to offer some reprieve. What universities can realistically achieve requires a sustained sectoral discussion about ethics and the nature of the role that universities can realistically play in dealing with mental health issues.

Enabling Institutional Cultures

Discussants:

Dr Bernadette Johnson, HELM Associate (Host)

Professor André Keet, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation, NMU

Zetu Makamandela-Mguqulwa, Managing Director, Mindshift

Institutional culture is, at once, immediately apparent to the outsider and yet almost invisible to those immersed in its hold. It is this apparent double-faced nature that makes it so difficult to change and makes it so hard for leadership to change. When change does occur it is most often to the internal qualities of the leader.

Good people

Prof Keet was forthright when he addressed the question of leadership on culture. He felt that, all too often, when good people entered into the higher echelons of leadership within a university, their goodness is eroded as is their self

awareness. “I don’t know what it is about the positions — whether they come with certain characteristics. But when I cast my eye over the system, it seems to me that good people in university executives are not in abundance,” said Professor Keet.

University leadership and the need for good people

Rather than dynamic leaders who get the work done, he all too often sees self-obsessed leaders who lead by adherence to rules and regulations. There are, of course, outliers and

exceptions. A good example was his mentor, Professor Sibongile Muthwa, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Nelson Mandela University. “I could not have asked for better,” he said.



Prof Andre Keet

He elaborated on the notion of goodness as a quality that includes respect and advancement of human rights, the capability to be highly self-aware and self-reflexive, and to have integrity. Good people are committed to social justice and have high levels of empathy. The idea of their own



Zetu Makamandela-Mguqulwa, right

humanity would, of course, be an invaluable contribution to a more productive institutional culture. Keet is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and said his views came from 10 years of experience in advisory roles to Vice-Chancellors and in his own executive posts, which included a tenure as Director and Deputy CEO of the South African Human Rights Commission. He was of the opinion that requisite skills could be learned and should not be the entire focus of developing leaders.

Professor Keet said he was personally drawn to leadership development initiatives that focused on “whether the

people have the capability to cultivate their own humanity and human goodness” rather than those focusing on leaders’ skills. Skills can be learned, human goodness is more difficult to acquire. He said that the ability to cultivate personal integrity in the context of just relationships and solidarity “is not something that happens automatically within the university space”. He reiterated that the advancement of a good, inclusive institutional culture is not dependent on skilful or experienced leaders, but on good human beings in leadership positions.

Prof Keet is also of the opinion that good leaders should also not be embedded in the university for 30 years. “I support the notion that it should be a requirement for university leadership to have leadership experience outside of the sector itself. The more diverse experiences you bring into the executive space, the better”.

The connection between leadership and culture is profound, he said, adding that a university ombud could be a formal expression of this connection — of what should not happen in good leadership.

The role of the ombud

As vital as the registrar’s role is in ensuring compliance and adherence to institutional rules, as is the ombud to oversee the leadership integrity and ethical behaviour throughout the university. Makamandela-Mguqulwa said that the function of the ombud is not well understood and under-utilised even in organisations and sectors who have had them for extended periods of time. In South Africa, people

are familiar with the office of the Public Protector, which is a legislative type of ombud that uses a classical approach.

An ombud is “an authorised person who receives complaints, concerns about omissions, alleged acts, improprieties and broader systemic problems within their remit”. The ombud then listens to understand, to help address the problem, and gives feedback. That is the ultimate value, what she referred to as the “upward feedback”. For example, an organisation promises “XYZ” to employees. The ombud reports back: “X is not part of the mix. People are complaining X is non-existent. And Y is not as fully implemented as you promised. Please fix.”

The office of the ombud must be a “safe haven for most people who would otherwise be afraid to come out and talk about how displeased they are with decisions, or with how processes are being delivered”, she said. The decision to have an ombud is crucial because it shows that the institution — like a university — values all of its people and wants to ensure a productive and healthy culture within the organisation. As she aptly described it, “ombuds are the conscience of their appointing institution”.

Because leaders cannot be expected to be specialists in all areas, the ombud can assist, especially in areas like conflict and crisis communication. “In my experience, the issue of confidentiality and independence from the university were the reasons that my visitors came to talk to me about their problems. So, if people come because I promise confidentiality, and because I’m not part of the formal

system, then it means there are trust issues,” said Makamandela-Mguqulwa.

The university as a safe space

In addition, the ombud constantly reminds the leadership of an institution that they don’t need to lead alone. When you win together with people, you win better. Universities can operate in silos but have leaders that are planted everywhere. If you leverage that and use that to your advantage when you are the overall

leader, it’s to your benefit. Shared leadership and the capacity to listen, to engage in conversations and reflect.

That is where the ombud can play a

role in lightening the whole culture of

the organisation and enhancing trust between members.

She was asked about the tension between having an ombud or using that salary to fund an additional academic post. So what is the cost-benefit of an ombud?

Makamandela-Mguqulwa was forceful in her response by pointing out the high cost of resolvable cases being constantly dragged to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration. “Would you rather have people take ill because there was no outlet and they walked away, afraid? Or would you rather your institution acquired a reputation of not welcoming, not listening, and not valuing people? Remember, people quit people; it’s rarely about the institution. If you look at that in terms of cost, it is costly and risky not to have an ombud”.

A transparent and safe university can be achieved by an effective ombud

Universities are incredible complex institutions and leaders of these institutions must have the courage to open yourself up to scrutiny. And you must “agree that I may not have capacity to see everywhere. I may not be perfect as an institution or even a leader. Therefore, I’m open to advice, to counsel, to hearing more”. For her, it can’t be a nice to have but must be seen as a core component of opening up the institution and its existing culture to allow it to become a safer place for all those who work and study there. That allows the university to move forward.

For Prof Keet all universities should have institutional ombuds, as per the recommendations of the transformation oversight committee, to assist the university to function and to assist leadership.

He then went on to touch on the complexity of the institution. Its social dynamics, the intellectual cabals and networks it generates, the administrative and financial net it creates, the cultural and social networks it enables and the interplay between governance structures, one would not expect executive leadership to be able to process the entirety of its challenges. It is at these intersections that the ombud plays a crucial role.

Leading from the Middle: Global Perspectives on the Role of the Dean

Discussants:

Chair: Prof Dolores Guerrero, President: Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, United States

Prof Nalini Moodley-Diar, Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Design, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

Prof Kumar Ramakrishna - Provost's Chair in National Security Studies, Associate Dean in charge of Policy Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Prof Andrea Rizzi, Associate Dean Research in the Faculty of Arts, Melbourne and Convener of Associate and Deputy Deans (NOADD) of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, Australia

The focus of the session was on Deanship, as much it was about examining the impact of research on communities and broader society.

Professor Ramakrishna put it succinctly: "there's a real need to ensure that we don't create a culture where academics just write for other academics." He is the Associate Dean in charge of Policy Studies, Political Violence and Terrorism Research, in the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. RSIS is somewhat of an anomaly as far as universities go. It is a graduate school with no undergraduates but about 250

Commonalities of purpose across the globe

postgraduate students, 70 senior researchers and 30 staff. The institution also functions as a think tank.

Professor Nalini Moodley-Diar, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Design at the Tshwane University of Technology concurred. For her, research is all too often wasted on library shelves. Even blue sky research needs to have an eye out for possible applications. It needs "to translate into projects that improve and impact societies and communities, affect industry and government". Her faculty has five departments, 11 programmes, about 2 000 students, 110 full-time staff as well as many part-time staff.

Professor Andrea Rizzi is Associate Professor of Italian Studies and Associate Dean Research in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne, Australia, and Convener of Associate and Deputy Deans of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. His faculty at Melbourne has five schools, about 5 000 students, 600 academic staff, and four other associate Deans responsible for Education, Partnerships, Indigenous, and Diversity and Inclusion.

Nanyang Technological University

Research impact was a theme that dominated USAf's conference in 2021 and again drove the conversation. Prof Ramakrishna said while RSIS had to ensure the academic credibility of its researchers' output, it also had to ensure its research was accessible to a wider community of both policy practitioners as well as the public.



Melbourne University



Nanyang Technological University



Tshwane University of Technology

The question becomes how do you create a culture where academics are always looking for ways to transform their credible research into communications that non-specialist members of the public can also consume without dumbing it down. The other challenge is the willingness on the part of academics, where some researchers will say, "I'm comfortable just producing for an academic audience. Others feel they won't go far in the university context if they write for a mass audience. So, it's a real challenge trying to ensure that the good research that many of our colleagues produce is not just consumed within a small group but is more widely disseminated to educate the broader community," he said.

University of Melbourne

Professor Andrea Rizzi said there were different kinds of impact. Everyone would agree that research is needed to benefit society, both locally and globally, but there was less certainty about how to achieve that, primarily because funding bodies were focusing more on applied scholarly research with an almost immediate application. That was perhaps inevitable, he said, but it was also important to recognise that good quality research enables impact. "We can't do anything until we produce very high-quality research and very high-quality teaching. The two things should go together," he said.

But it's crucial to have the support of academics and not simply to impose external criteria on them. Otherwise, he said, they would feel "that their research or their careers are

being threatened by directions or agendas that they don't believe in. That's a real problem and risk."

He said the University of Melbourne had done a lot of work to understand impact, and had identified five facets of it:

- scholarly and creative impact, about knowledge and ways of knowing;
- policy — impact on politics, policy and governance;
- media and culture — how its impact was reflected in public debate and perceptions;
- practice — its impact on processes; and
- enterprise and operationalising — its economic impact.

Each faculty has asked each school to think about impact and quality in terms of their disciplines and programmes and was given a year to articulate pathways towards that from their perspectives. This has given them the freedom to carve their own pathway and it is hoped, when it is operationalised in 2023 that there will be ownership of the schools goal and purpose. It is also hoped that the faculty will be much clearer when we go out and work with our partners, with industries and others, about who we are, what we believe in, and what we are supporting," said Rizzi.

Tshwane University of Technology

Prof Moodley-Diar referred to it as the "quadruple helix where universities, government, industry and communities

need to work together in order to have an output that's actually going to have long-term impact".

The faculty of arts and design meant that many of the staff were also performers or artists and one of the challenges in the performing and visual arts was to grow research in a way that did not affect their creative output. This wasn't so easy because their creative outputs required time away from teaching, which had to be funded from a pool that was constantly diminishing.

She said there was a lot of opportunity to integrate the arts with the sciences, such as combining engineering and robotics, and software design with fashion design. They had already graduated a student who had combined

Information and Communications Technology and the arts, and the faculty was now looking at a project that integrated puppetry and robotics. But it needed significant funding which was not forthcoming.

Challenges facing each university and faculty

Prof Moodley-Diar said impactful research projects required a focussed and purposeful leadership agenda. "What real change can we make? We really need to figure out how we drive higher education, purposefully," she said.

Leaders in the hard sciences were traditionally seen as the ones who can drive real change. But there was space for the arts and humanities and social sciences too, for creating awareness about different types of thinking. "But how do we shift that even at very micro levels? And how do we build that into a curriculum that's impactful? We are

Define impact according to your discipline and work backwards

talking here about impactful research, but it's also about impactful teaching and learning that leads to a sense of global citizenship. "We have been entrusted with the young people of the future, and we should find critical, strategic ways to lead them into the future that, to all intents and purposes, is precarious and unknown right now," said Moodley-Diar.

Prof Ramakrishna echoed Prof Rizzi's notion of defining impact and working backwards from there. His colleagues would also be interested but he had some reservations about its potential application at RSIS. If they had five outcomes of impact as a strategic frame for the entire university to follow, that kind of task would become the Dean's responsibility, yet he would find it difficult to put it into practice once they got into the nitty-gritty, he said, of approaching each department.

At RSIS, there are the homeland security people who have their views, the counterterrorism thinkers who have their views, and sometimes these views may not gel, understandably, because they come from different perspectives and disciplines. So, operationalising a strategic framework akin to the one advocated by Prof Rizzi may take a fair bit of time according to Ramakrishna.

"Universities don't listen very well" said Prof Rizzi. They needed to listen and understand the problems from the community's perspective and how they could help, rather than deciding what the problem is.

Universities also needed to listen to students and understand their perspectives and then build curricula around a sense of ownership of the problems the students and community face. "It's about bringing the teaching into the world outside academia," he said.

The strategic challenges that each of these Deans face are slightly different (based on the specifics of the departments reporting to them) but are also united in the core of what Deanship requires — to inspire academics and students to move towards a goal of maximising research impact.

DAY 3

Leading and Managing Change in Universities

Discussants:

Host: Patrick FitzGerald, HELM Programme Leader

Dr Randhir Auluck, Head of School of Organisation, Economy and Society, Westminster University

Dr Gary Paul, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Resources and Operations, Central University of Technology

Dr Randhir Auluck, Head of the School of Organisations, Economy and Society (SOES) at the Westminster Business School of the University of Westminster in London was joined by Dr Gary Paul, CUT's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Resources and Operations.

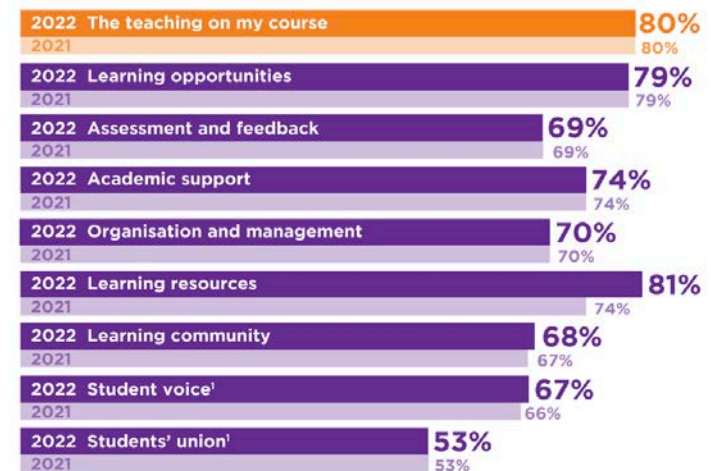
The UK approaches to organisational development in higher education

Dr Auluck presentation made for some interesting numbers. She said the UK has 170 higher education institutes with about 2.6 million students, full-time and part-time. A lot of institutions' decisions are informed by findings of the annual National Student Survey, completed by about half a million final-year students who give feedback on their courses and institutions by answering 27 core questions.

Student numbers, student fees, financial viability, and how the UK higher education sector faring in terms of league tables are at the forefront of leadership's concerns.

2022 National Student Survey

Percentage of respondents who gave the two most positive answers ('definitely' or 'mostly' agree) on:



¹ The data for the 'student voice' scale does not include responses to Q26 on the students' union, which is reported separately in this table.

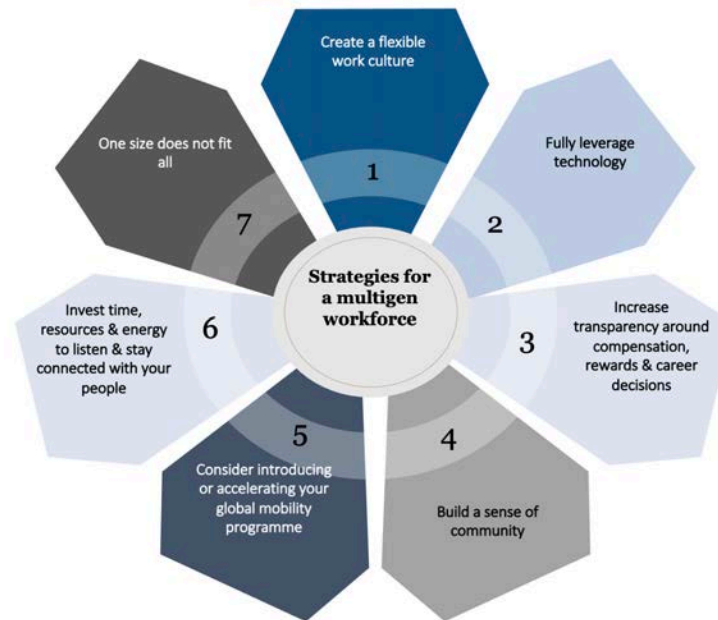
Her focus was on organisational development (OD) as a model of change in organisations, based on science, that puts people at its core. It is completed by aligning organisational structure, corporate culture, and the realities of work to respond to the needs of any business. There is no single way OD is structured in the UK. Her university, the University of Westminster, for example, has a small separate OD function linked to Human Resources, and reporting to the Vice-Chancellor. At one point it was shut down but has

since been reconstructed. “So, it’s ebbed and flowed,” she said. It has a role in ensuring alignment between the institution’s strategic direction and practice. Therefore it has a broader purpose than the typical understanding of OD’s contribution in terms of learning and leadership development.

Referencing the 2022 Advance HE Leadership Survey in the UK, that looks at how they might enhance OD in English universities, what tools and approaches they use, how they see their role, and the initiatives they are planning. That study revealed that improving student experience is rated highest, followed by improvements in leadership and management, and then teaching and learning provision, with changing culture ranked fourth.

The survey’s conclusion was that each institution needs to find and adapt approaches specifically rooted in its context and its unique features. OD is absolutely context-bound. She wondered if developing leaders as facilitators of change was teachable. Or could it perhaps be better achieved by the kind of process we’re engaged in today, which is hearing about how others have done it and try it for ourselves?

“Re-imagine this campus into what it could be, so that it can become what it should be.”



IdeaPaint. (2013). Millennial Workplace Trends

She acknowledged that her journey into leadership was a trial and error approach and the greatest lessons came from her peers and other colleagues.

The Central University of Technology (CUT) case study

Dr Paul presented a case study of the Welkom Campus repositioning process. As was so often the case with the South African higher education mergers, strategically and spatially remote institutions were flung together. This was the case in Welkom. For CUT it was part of organic and inorganic growth strategy that strategically re-positioned the campus (in the North-Eastern Free State).

It was guided by a desire to

- Enhance and transform the academic profile of the Welkom Campus (WC).
- Identify unique niche areas germane to its geographical and strategic position.
- Undo perceptions of “step-child” treatment.
- Create/enhance management and leadership capability based at WC.
- Enhance infrastructure and HR structure.

The university is now “re-imagining this campus into what it could be, so that it can become what it should be”. The university is now transforming the Welkom campus to optimise its capacity

and capabilities for increased academic impact. This was part of the CUT's broader transformation to identify Welkom's niche areas and so help blur the lines, at least operationally, between the two campuses.

The process that they undertook began with a benchmarking exercise to explore other multi-campus institutions. The planning methodology followed the "Carpenter's Rule" — 'measure twice and cut once,' as opposed to fiddling around.

The implementation of the methodology gave rise to the following process which is nearly complete:

- Established Task Team (WC Repositioning TaskTeam).
- Initially chaired by Deputy Vice-Chancellor: ResOps but eventually chaired by an external expert.
- There were initial problems with the external expert and a new external expert was appointed which gave the process much-needed traction.
- The Task Team eventually transitioned into the WC Implementation Team.
- There was extensive engagement (horizontal and vertical) and various concerns were raised and effectively addressed.
- The final proposal is serving at Council in November 2022.

He noted that authentic stakeholder engagement was critical to the success of the project. This entailed engaging organised labour at both the Welkom and Bloemfontein campuses. They also engaged with the university's executive

as well as the next layer of management. The deans played a vital role in looking at the Programme and Qualification Mix and how they could deal with those courses presently offered at the Bloemfontein campus yet not supported in the way they should be at Welkom. The SRC was also a very important stakeholder in the mix, he said.

Engagement also entailed managing stakeholder expectations including those of the current incumbents in positions that might be repurposed and possibly seniorised. Although all stakeholders wanted the process to happen quickly, there were issues that required some time. Getting new academic programmes to be offered uniquely from the Welkom campus meant they first had to be developed and then put through the accreditation processes. Only thereafter could they appoint additional positions. Dr Paul was frank in his assessment of the process. "Of course, the inevitable companion of change is resistance. It is referred to as a continuum of change that does not happen in a linear fashion but vacillates between active, passive, indifference, and back to active." The additional costs were not limited to simply acquiring new things but there was a cost of ownership, known as lifecycle costing.

"You must create the planning platform, inspire your people, share the vision, share the why, explain the benefits, be strategic, tactical, and operational and invite and encourage your people to co-lead the change. If you do that, you will empower people and that, to me, is the ultimate embodiment of leadership," said Dr Paul.

Building Networks and Communities of Leaders

Discussants:

Dr Oliver Seale, HELM Director and Prof Dolores Guerrero, President: Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, United States, in conversation

The HELM Summit was held in collaboration with the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), a representative association of Deans of Arts and Sciences in the United States of America. It is hoped that this collaboration will deepen and grow in the future. By way of deepening that relationship, the President of CCAS and the Director at HELM engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about leadership networks and their role in contemporary higher education.

Background HELM

Dr Seale began by providing a background to USAf, and HELM, while Prof Guerrero elaborated on the history and structure of CCAS.

Dr Seale examined what leadership development at a macro level looked like. He pointed out that the focus was on:

- Research, policy and practice.
- Programme curriculum design, architecture and pedagogy.
- Design and delivery of partnerships/collaborations, using existing content/expertise e.g. institutional higher education management/skills programmes.

- Higher education organisational support — which will be provided by HELM's tHE Lab.
- Partnerships locally (with higher education organisations and institutions) and internationally with organisations like the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, ACE and similar.

He admitted that some South African universities run very good in-house programmes for their heads of departments and senior professors. However, many universities don't have these programmes. HELM attempts to fill this gap.

One of its flagship programmes, Women in Leadership, was launched in 2020 and was introduced after a series of HELM's research projects revealed that significant stereotyping and gender bias persisted within the sector. At least 35% of women leaders spoke of gender bias, isolation and lack of support for women in middle management positions. He also spoke of the Universities Learning Futures (ULeFu) project which prioritises digital skills development at eight Historically Disadvantaged Institutions.

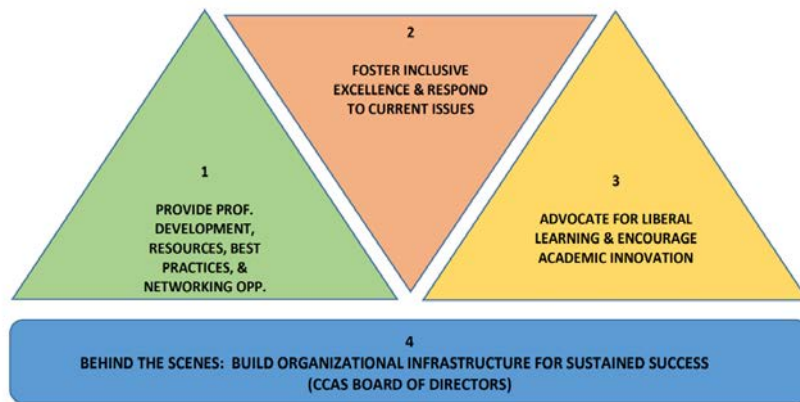
Background CCAS

Professor Dolores Guerrero, President of CCAS, gave a background to her association, which, founded in 1965, is a facility for deans of arts & sciences and represents more than 500 universities and 1 900 deans and assistant deans. It is hosted at the Texas A&M University, Kingsville, in the US.

The body is governed by a board of 12 directors, drawn from the membership and are elected on a three-year tenure.

She listed the four goals of the CCAS 2023-to-2028 plan:

- ▶ Provide professional development, resources, best practices and networking opportunities.
- ▶ Foster inclusive excellence and respond to current issues.
- ▶ Advocate for liberal learning and encourage academic innovation.
- ▶ Build organisational infrastructure for sustained success.



The approach was to work with the Dean to develop individual and professional skills that would achieve personal success but also that will filter into their institution. “We have seminars for Deans, we also provide training for department Chairs. We want to deliver the tools for Deans and Chairs to be successful as academics, as administrators and as leaders”.

CCAS moved to Zoom during CoViD, which allowed for weekly discussions with Deans from across the country. These virtual meetings have been added to in-person

seminars. The hybrid mix of in-person and online has allowed CCAS to reach a broader audience as some of the institutions couldn’t afford to travel to the in-person events. “What was a challenge has become an excellent opportunity for us.”

Moving away from deficit assumptions

Moving away from a deficit model of fixing people, to developing people

For HELM it is important to move away from a deficit assumption that holds that we have to ‘fix people’ or their ‘weaknesses’. Rather the organising ethos is towards a developmental orientation in HELM which advances the idea that everyone has the potential for leadership and HELM should identify and develop this. One major problem in South Africa, relates to the leadership pipeline, when we get to our highest level of leadership, the pool becomes smaller and smaller. We need to grow the leadership pool substantially.

For that reason “we decided to start with Heads of Departments (HoDs) because we just don’t have resources and capacity for all levels of leadership. By creating a good pool of HoDs, we are growing the number of people who can advance in leadership at the institution”. The Foundations of Leadership programme offers HoDs an ideal introduction to the big issues in higher education.

There is a very strong focus on the individual because that’s where the starting point is, but “we are shifting our focus at HELM to working with executive leaderships teams in our higher education institutions.”

Prof Guerrero concurred with the idea of a personal and team approach to leadership development by pointing that the seminars for new Deans and new department Chairs, they are introduced to the conversation of creating a new pipeline and succession planning. She continues, “at our university, within the last three years, we have created leadership and emerging leadership academies on campus, which involve both staff and faculty. It’s a holistic team of multiple parts.”

Q&A from the floor

There were a number of questions addressed at the two presenters.

How can organisations of your nature seek for collaboration when institutions are effectively competing with each other?

Prof Guerrero argued that CCAS emphasised diversity of perspectives and these enabled all participants to learn from the other about how we provide and support the leadership network. Dr Seale noted that the work being done at HELM is a national project in the national interest. “So, when we have universities that would normally be competitors for students, staff, research projects and funding, we come together in a safe space where we can support each other and share our experiences while building mutually beneficial leadership networks and collaborations. There is a peer-to-peer connection.”

How lonely is the Dean’s position?

The question didn’t resonate for Prof Guerrero who pointed out that her work is always done within the context of her team. For her, leadership, it is much more collaborative and not a top-down structured hierarchy. Deans have to make the final decisions, but they can still and must allow input.

Based on Dr Seale’s research, the Dean’s experience is very different at the well-established and well-endowed universities, compared to those at the lower end where the role of the Dean is more of an administrator. “Loneliness may come in if you lose your disciplinary or scholarship identity and peer networks while in management.”

How important is coaching in education leadership in the US, and in South Africa?

“Coaching is imperative as is mentorship and sponsorship. We need to create a clear structure of how we make it available to our members,” says Prof Guerrero. At different points in one’s leadership journey, different coaches and mentors can support the individuals progress. Dr Seale acknowledged that coaching was an integral part of the HELM offering: “We introduced coaches for the first time in our Women in Leadership programme. Coaching is a process and methodology, and you have to ensure that both parties have similar expectations.”

Partnerships

By way of conclusion, they both spoke of the potential of global partnerships between similar organisations like HELM and CCAS. As Prof Guerrero pointed out that it was about fostering global connections not only to open up to

diverse and refreshing perspectives but as a way of evolving and adapting to the rapid speed of change in higher education across the globe. Dr Seale spoke of strategic alliances that would allow leaders to adopt a global perspective and hoped that this partnership could bloom into a world-wide network.

Moving the Needle: Diversity and Women in Leadership

Discussants:

Dr Carolyn J Stefanco, Former University President; HELM Senior Associate, International; and CEO, Baret Leadership Consulting (Host)

Dr Mario Gallo, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, and Chair, ACE Women's Network Executive Council

Prof Denise Zinn, HELM Associate and Programme Leader: Women in Leadership (WiL)

Both speakers have a long history of working on women's equality within higher education. Prof Zinn heads up the Women in Leadership (WiL) programme, is involved in HERS-South Africa and has been working on gender for many years.

Dr Mario Gallo is the chair of the American Council on Education's Women's Network Executive Council which has a long history. It was established in 1977 from a Carnegie Foundation Grant to ACE and it has evolved over time. The work centres on equity issues within the USA relative to higher education leadership.

Challenges for women leadership

Dr Stefanco opened the conversation by looking at the challenges that women have faced and continue to face in the context of your own higher education systems in terms of equity and diversity issues.

Prof Zinn, noted "as you all know it goes back more than decades, it goes back centuries". She noted the work being conducted by Drs Adele Moodley and Nolando Tony who have, since 2015, been doing some of the most up-to-date research that will give the statistics but currently in South African universities, women students outnumber men by a clear margin of 60 to 40 percent female to male students. The same is true of those who graduate but they're still disproportionately represented across faculties and discipline with more men in the STEM related fields in science, engineering and agriculture more women in the humanities related fields such as education the social sciences.

Squeezing the pool

As far as staff are concerned, the numbers have improved on the surface with an equitable distribution of 51% female to 49% male. But if you look deeper, women are disproportionately much more represented in the lower ranks of Junior Associates and Lecturer levels than in the Senior Lecturer, Professor and Associate Professor levels. When you look at the leadership and management levels the proportions just switch around at middle level (HoDs) and at Dean level the disproportion emerges clearly. So, at Vice-Chancellor level only 6 out of 26 are women by 2022.



Prof Zinn



Dr Gallois



Dr Stefanco

This situation is similar in the US. Dr Gallois referred to a recent report and statistics that say that women hold about one out of five or 22% of leadership positions. “Once you examine top research universities and there was 130 of those and women of colour are only 5% and that’s despite women earning more bachelor's degrees in the US for the last 40 years; more master's degrees than men for the last 35 years; and more doctoral degrees for the last 15 years. So there is not parity yet”.

“When we look at the level of Deans and Provosts, women are nearly 40 percent of those positions and that’s from which 75% of all presidents are drawn, so even when you do the math it should then be closer to more 30%. So, there's a power gap not a pipeline issue — it's not that women are not in the pipeline but they're not reaching those heights”. The other interesting points are that women are more likely

“I was in various oppositional organisations and they said the black struggle comes first, the struggle for women is to come after.”

to be hired in the US for top positions in a time of crisis and that also makes success harder for them to achieve.

Moreover, as shown in the Stanford Graduate School of Education report, there is implicit bias against feminine academic work and an obstacle to progress is something like being in student affairs or in areas that are deemed or feminine type of positions in higher education.

How I got here

Prof Zinn feels that disproportional representation both in terms of academic staff (as well as students) are norms that got developed out of this inequity. The base assumption was that universities were for men and the people who taught in universities were men. Even if one looks at universities like Harvard and Oxford, the first

women allowed to join was in 1920, a short 100 years ago, and black men 50 years previous to that.

In South Africa, in particular, Prof Zinn pointed to the struggles against colonialism and apartheid which have always superseded the struggles of women in these spaces. “I was in various oppositional organisations and they said the black struggle comes first, the struggle for women is to come after. It got subsumed within that and so women have raised their voices but they've not had the power to change things significantly. This is why women's voices and agency within leadership positions is so important and also explains how I got here.”

As a scientist, Dr Gallois entered her first faculty she was the only woman in the department and it was noticeable. From the perspective of male faculty, they did not exactly know how to treat a women scientist. I was lucky to get mentorship from both men and women, but is important to have men as allies to support one. “Title 9 in the US said if anybody is awarded Federal funding there has to be equality and gender equality. “However, still it doesn't translate into positions of leadership so seeing all of that, I want to give back and I want to be able to mentor and support women to reach their full potential because I think that's what we do as educators”.

The programmes

The Tertiary Education Linkages Project (TELP) was Prof Zinn's first participation at the nexus of higher education and gender equity. It had a series of milestones, the fifth one

was (not the first) gender equality. A lot of data was collected, we held workshops and we scrutinised and tried to change policies — the women at these institutions did this work. We spoke with the Vice-Chancellors to become more gender fair I think in those years there were (three to four out of the 23 Vice-Chancellors were women) and so we had to rely on male allies but some male colleagues were definitely not cooperative. By 2000 there was no allocated budget and TELP died out.

A primary focus of our work is how we shift the culture in organisations and how we shift how we think about what's needed in higher education and that a case be made for a different way of being. The benchmarks for changing the needle mean that those need to shift as well.

Dr Gallois referred to the recent conference where they talked about the obstacles and they're systemic things and policies but finally a combination of the systemic and personal issues (being a mother and a caregiver). There's also a sense that higher education leadership is deeply competitive and many women are resistant to that culture. Part of the solution is to ensure that women need to be on governing boards and if they were on governing boards then they could address these more systemic issues.

Also the breadth of the ACE network means that US women have members in every state and they can have programming and advocacy and support in each state. The Women's Network Executive Council has monthly calls and then quarterly calls with the state Chairs.

Vrot not fraught

Taking a harder line, Prof Zinn said that the entire higher education system was, in her opinion, not so much fraught but, as they say in Afrikaans, “vrot, rotten”. For her, “we have to strengthen the core which informs our work, to get rid of this rot. Those norms, established centuries ago, can’t possibly still shape and control the praxis of higher education”. Covid-19 was a profound indicator of how unprepared humanity was for an event like this and as tragic as it was, it allowed the world to innovate (a vaccine in under 12 months) in ways never thought possible. In the same way higher education has to look at itself in new and innovative ways.

In the Women in Leadership programme we’re trying to incorporate focus areas like nurturing, collaborative leadership, a humanised pedagogy and creativity into the curriculum so that it, in turn, can start impacting our curricula at universities.

Dr Gallois concurred with much that had been said. She believes that there has to be a willingness to change, a passion for it and a drive otherwise it is superficial. It cannot just be how do we work the system and check the box and move onward. It requires we move the leadership and the desire of the institution to really change. Organisations like ACE, HERS, HELM and others around the world need to have a global Summit where we could share similarities and best practices. As she put it “there's power in those numbers.”

Dr Stephanco concluded the session by noting the purpose of this Summit was to bring people together within South Africa, across national boundaries and between the global North and the global South and to figure out what can we learn from what's happening in South Africa from a US perspective and vice versa. She also wanted to know what the two women hoped would be their legacy. Dr Gallois did not care about a legacy but rather what can be achieved while in the position to make a difference, to leave the position better than before. “As a connector facilitator, to build a flexible, creative, collaborative and strong network.”

A leader is a convener, according to Prof Zinn and her aspiration is that women create a platform that can host different ways of being and doing — to face the challenges of the future, without clear answers but eager to find those solutions.

Coaching for Leadership Development

Discussants:

Dr Bernadette Johnson, HELM Associate (Host)

Dr Antonia Wadley, Project Manager: Carnegie Diversifying the Academy Programme, School of Physiology, Wits

Prof Hajierah Davids, Head of the Department of Human Physiology, NMU

Brightness Mangolothi, Director HERS-South African

Dr Elizabeth Smit, Deputy Director Mahikeng Campus, NWU

Prof Davids kicked off the session by noting that she nominated herself for the Women in Leadership (WiL) programme because she likes to step out of “my comfort zone just to agitate myself a little bit and when I saw the briefing of the WiL programme I saw that it did contain coaching as one of its components”. For her, she had her doubts about the coaching component because she had been through the process before and found that the coach had no real grasp of her environment and that the approach was very generic. So, when Dr Johnson introduced the coaching in WiL she thought that would not be able to survive six sessions. However, once the sessions started she sensed that there was a different space and an openness that allowed her explore issues in more depth.

More importantly for Prof Davids, there was genuinely no judgment in any session whatsoever and that really made me feel valued and energised. The coach can assist with

unlocking one’s potential and every session started off with the beginning of the journey, what the problem was and how far the individual had come in this journey. “I was really pushed to explore my own thoughts but nothing was imposed on me. As I began to align my goals I grew in confidence. I mean look where I’m sitting right now I would never have done this without the coaching sessions, that I can tell you.”

For her, she argued for each institution to have a coaching office because it would help as a transformative tool to empower new leaders in the daily activities and this can really help to advance the equity portfolio of the institution. “It’s an investment not only in the individual’s personal and professional growth but would equally benefit the institution in its transformative agenda.

“Each institution to have a coaching office because it would help as a transformative tool to empower new leaders.”

Happy accident

Dr Wadley admitted that she

came into coaching by accident but a happy accident. She described herself as a burnt out lecturer, completely swamped with work and small children at home. She was invited to a coaching course that was being run by the faculty via the head of HR. While on the course, she re-discovered

Prof Davids





Dr Wadley

herself. Similar to the process described by Prof Davids it was the safe space that most impressed her, full of questions and possibilities. After that course she ended up doing her full professional training through UCT in integral coaching. Then she split her time between coaching and her work in physiology.

Ms Mangolothi was tasked to coordinate the WiL coaching component so her participation was to matching the coaches with the coachees and managing the whole process. According to her, why

certain people have a negative connotation about coaching is because only when things go wrong a coach is appointed to assist the leader — it's a reactive approach rather than a proactive approach. At each level of leadership, new ways and new coaches need to be found to enhance the institution. But, she argues, this should not be an internal matter and requires the impartiality of someone outside of the institution.

Another WiL participant who nominated herself, Dr Smit felt it was crucial to break out of the rut of doing the same things over and over. She too was taken aback by the coaching component. As a Social Worker she understood coaching as there for people who have problems. Dr Smit found that the experience was very different. Here was a place where she could talk about herself (something she

rarely did). She agreed that the coach must not do all the work and this really changed her mind as time went on with coaching. “I thought to myself I wonder why universities don't introduce coaching because it's a very good thing and now I'm like a spokesperson for coaching.” For her, her personal and professional life have been changed as a result of coaching.

What coaching is not

Dr Johnson was adamant about what coaching wasn't. Mentoring is more of a process where about the mentor shares relevant knowledge, experience and wisdom which they have accumulated over a period of time. Neither is it training which is an activity about the transfer of knowledge/skills in a learning context. Nor consulting. The consultant is often an expert who makes use of that specialist expertise, for very specific results so the consultant is expected to provide answers and solutions to a problem.

Therapists are trained to make professional diagnoses, identify and understand underlying cases or causes and treat psychological pathologies. Coaching is a process of posing questions, a methodology around posing questions in order to understand the coachee better but also to deepen that understanding and hopefully to enable a transformation of the self.

Personal and professional development

Dr Wadley addressed this question by saying “how it was so powerful to have someone really see you, to see your value and to really see the potential in you and having had

somebody see that I could start to see it for myself too.” This allowed her the space to build on the courage to actually be more of herself and less of some carbon copy of a successful academic.

“Ironically, that makes my academic work more meaningful and able to bring value to others”. By way of an example she showed a picture of a diver in the sea, lost in the stillness. For her, it is this space where she goes to reflect and to make decisions about her work and life. Moreover, it is from this space that she leads, rather than from the turbulence of the surface.



Dr Smit

Reading books and writing poetry was the solution that triggered Dr Smit through the coaching process. She admitted that she had fallen into a lull where leadership was carried out with minimum disruption (even though the person who she was leading may be wrong) “to keep the peace”. Coaching triggered self-awareness and brought her back to her self in an invigorated fashion. And, as a result, she could understand her role as a leader in a new light which meant that she was more open, more present in her dealings with her staff and, most importantly, a professional change agent. First and foremost as an academic you have to have a voice or you will be drowned out and ignored. She has just started the coaching course through UCT.

Prof Davids also pointed out that she felt that either by choice or environment, she had also lost her voice. Because her opinions on subjects often did not align with her colleagues, she would find herself keeping quiet. During the coaching process she began to explore the various ways that she could ‘find her voice’ rather than simply reacting to her environment in negative ways. “Although everybody talks about the importance of self-care, no-one actually does it”, she continues. Self-care has become her mantra and the foundation from which she leads.

Coaching permeates every aspect of one’s life, both professional and private, she argues. Her transformation from an exhausted, un-motivated individual to a committed confident leader is entirely down to her experience of coaching.

Matchmaking

Ms Mangolothi has the benefit of having an overview of the coaching component of the WiL programme. She is the one who goes through the pre-coaching questionnaire and is able to analyse what it is that coachees most need. Also interesting for her, is the difference between what they say they want to achieve and what actually changes by the end of the process. She is busy working on her third report and she has identified common themes:

“In academia you have to have to have a voice, otherwise you will be drowned out”

- Personal mastery or self leadership. If you don't master yourself, if you don't lead yourself, then it becomes a challenge to lead others.
- Growth in emotional intelligence. As they grow more emotionally aware, the more they know themselves and the more they can now start managing how they are interacting with themselves and how they are interacting with others, more from a social relationship management.
- Growth in resilience. That implies using different lenses to look at any one situation.
- Finding a different way to communicate. Finding a way to own my own voice as a leader is crucial.
- Achieving a work/life balance.

“Open those cavities within us which are so rich in wisdom.”

Dr Johnson conducted a thought experiment — a four minute coaching session — with all the participants. As Dr Smit put it, the experiment must “open those cavities within us which are so rich in wisdom”.

Coaching and the university

Noting the interesting work being done in the Health Sciences at Wits, Dr Johnson opened the discussion to the university’s role in the coaching process. Dr Wadley noted that in the last three years, they had trained 20 coaches who had, in turn, coached 120 staff members. The implications on this for the university was to promote wellness among academics, to give them the time and

space to slow down and reflect upon their way of being. She then went on to the ripple effect where the act of coaching one person can elicit change throughout the individual’s immediate environs.

Dr Smit elaborated on this detail. Where there is organisational and behavioural change (through coaching) then transformation is enabled. Transparency, empathy, personal insight, confidence are features that will slowly but surely transform the university into a caring organisation. In addition, coaching is one of the most effective means of ridding leaders of micro-managing their people, because it doesn’t only build self-confidence, it builds confidence in one’s staff. Prof Davids picked up on the confidence theme and how it is the major quality that a newly appointed leader requires to make sense of the position.

The resources required to making coaching viable and sustainable are far less than the mental health costs, legal costs and it alters the culture of the institution, according to Ms Mangolothi. What looks like an organisational cost actually becomes a saving because of its multiple benefits.



Ms Mangolothi

Leadership Development Partnerships

Discussants:

Patrick FitzGerald, HELM Programme Leader (Host)

Prof Morris Mthombeni (Dean GIBS)

Dr Marcia Socikwa, Deputy Director General Department of Higher Education and Training

Prof Fitzgerald set the scene for the discussion on developing partnerships and capacity interventions. The complexity and resultant disturbance of the 21st century has meant that universities will find it increasingly difficult to do everything. For that reason, universities need to forge partnerships — operational, research, resource sharing — to share the load. This has consequences for leadership. Noting the importance of relationships with the DHET and GIBS, he turned to a matrix (below) of leadership interventions that he had assembled to show the different forms of embedded

Embedded Aspects	Management Skills	Management skills and competencies allows individuals to act as more confident and consummate leaders.	Enhancing management competency and improving management skills.
	Managing Differently	Fostering significantly different and more progressive management styles.	State-of-the-art and enlightened management styles would advance available leadership paradigms.
	Formal knowledge	Assembling formal knowledge and theoretical understanding about the world.	Formal knowledge exposure would build leadership stature and ability.
Ethothetic Aspects	Self-discovery	Learning about the self opens the pathway to leadership wisdom.	Enriching self-discovery and personal growth.
	Ethical fortitude	A deeply rooted ethics and appropriate ethos establishes leadership fortitude to resist dishonesty and corruption.	Building ethical foundations and considerations.
	Environmental socialization	The prevailing institutional ethos is a crucial determinant of leadership quality.	Developing the institutional environment and the ability to build conducive organizational milieu.
Innovative Aspects	Broadened horizons	Wide-ranging quality experiences broaden the intellectual horizons of leaders.	Facilitating exposure to greater diversity of world and life experiences.
	Tacit knowledge	Surfacing and sharing implicit knowledge can facilitate leadership growth and augment approaches to key challenges .	Rendering explicit, learning from and sharing of implicit knowledge.
	Chaos acculturation	Heightened and constant strategic alertness and adaptive ability are vital leadership characteristics.	Creating capacity to function in a context of and surprising change.



leadership: development of management skills; learning to manage differently; and obtaining formal education to gain a more detailed understanding of the theories of management.

Turning to the private qualities needed for leadership, he noted the importance of self-discovery; growing awareness of ethical practices; and developing an institutional ethos that allows for a healthy institutional culture.

Finally, Prof Fitzgerald remarked on the necessity for innovation within complexity — the broadening of horizons through travel or the exposure to different kinds of thinking, tacit knowledge gained by unearthing new perspectives through discussion and chaos acculturation, of getting used to adroitly responding to an ever-changing 4IR world. The partnership between HELM and the DHET is a crucial partnership for developing capacity within our universities while HELM's relationship with GIBS is about finding programmatic common ground that can add leverage to leadership in the higher education sector.

GIBS

Prof Mthombeni emphasised that GIBS is a public institution and, more importantly, a well functioning one. It is often forgotten that not all public institutions are failing — many are thriving within the country. He picked up on the notion of complexity and argued that the concept may be somewhat of a novelty in the developed world whereas, for us, in emerging markets dealing with complexity is a way of life.

He spoke of the three Cs:

- **Courage.** Those of you who are in leadership and management in the education sector especially in the higher education sector we all have to have courage to survive and thrive in the sector.
- **Care.** Emerging from the #FeesMustFall and Covid-19, care needs to be top of the agenda.
- **Compassion.** Within leadership and management in higher education, compassion is essential in an environment with a wide distribution of inequality.



These concepts can form the basis of the partnership with HELM as GIBS engages with the entire ecosystem. Prof Mthombeni described the adaptive university which embraces entrepreneurial activity at the same time as it displays compassion for all those within the university. The dynamic university is one that understands the resources available with the institution and whether that brings about change or stagnation. Does it embrace learning not as a product but as a process, learning as a way of life? Do these universities embrace appropriate levels of failure and learn from those failings given that many universities only measure

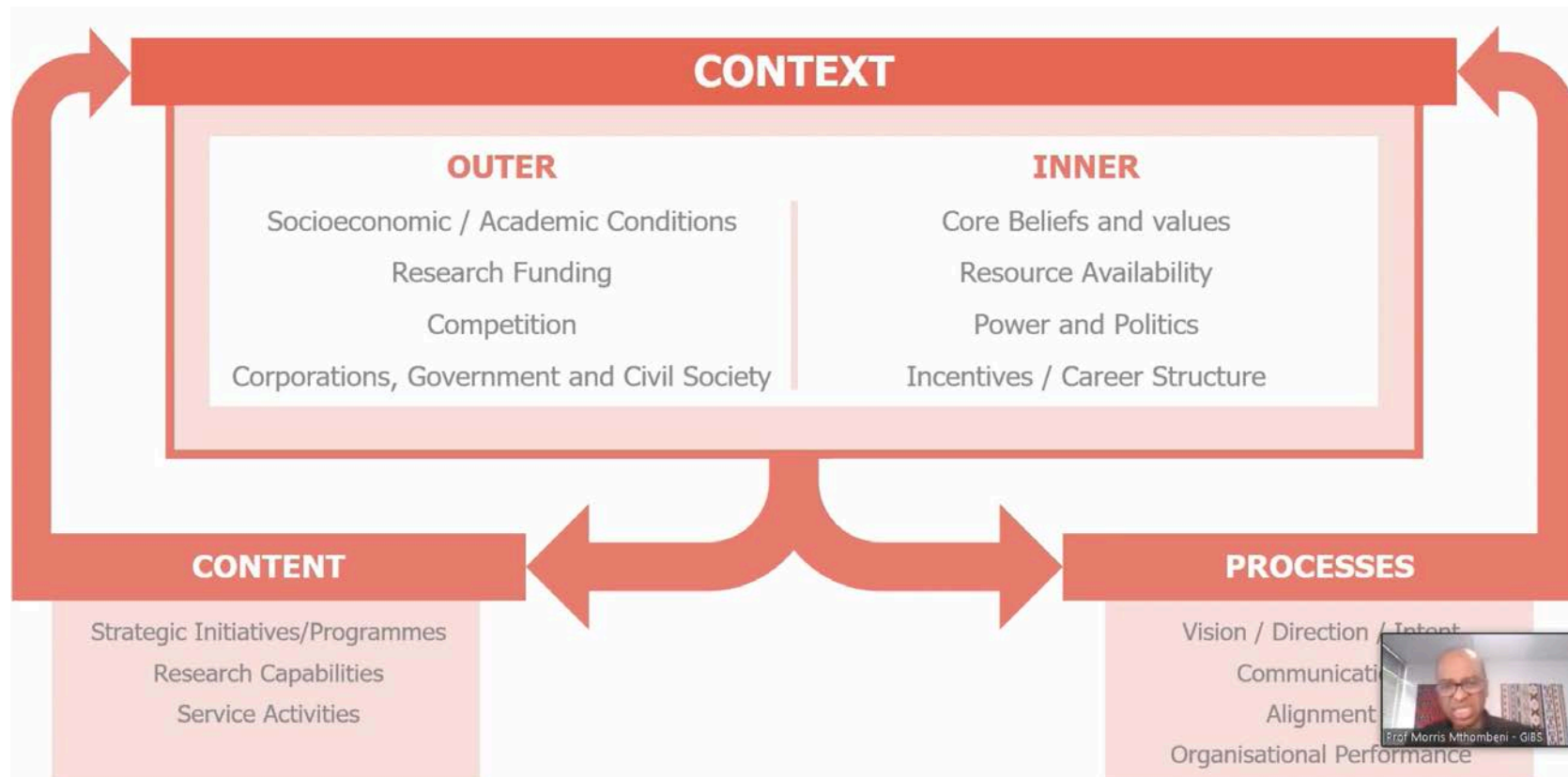
success?

The question of pass and throughput rates should never blind leadership to the importance of learning (and unlearning) as we lean into the future. The dynamism of higher education needs to focus on how we move between these states of the university. He continued, “for GIBS the

hope is that the partnership with HELM will invite higher education leaders to embrace this future university that is in the process of being thought through”.

“The partnership with HELM will invite higher education leaders to embrace this future.”

To achieve this, three processes of context, of



content and the process itself must contribute to the arriving of solutions. We need to understand the socio-economic and academic conditions in which you operate; you need to understand issues of funding; and competition regulation. In addition, how these operate within inner beliefs, resources, power and politics and how to be awake to the challenges of the outer dimensions. Finally, we are looking to achieve *attuned* leadership. This requires emotional intelligence and self awareness; to be attuned to the needs and aspirations of their followers; to be ethically attuned and morally centred; and to be attuned to history, the present and destiny.

Prof Fitzgerald echoed many of Prof Mthombeni's observations and noted that the university is, in fact, three organisations in one — the academe, a government agency and a business looking for ways to achieve financial sustainability.

DHET

While noting that she had enjoyed the discussion so far, Dr Socikwa revelled in a profession that paid someone to think. Rather than looking at leadership immediately she tried to clear up perceptions of the DHET. It is not all about compliance and report writing, about obtaining data. Increasingly it is about mining that data to arrive at the best possible future for our students. This includes ensuring a healthy higher education ecosystem where students are nurtured throughout their time in the ecosystem.

That is not to imply a static model of institutions. Are we preparing them for the future that is both distant and already upon us? Referring to Clem Sunter's *Thinking the future*, she pointed to his preoccupation with the future and the concomitant lack of present tools for dealing with that future. If universities can focus on the question of the future, they will assist the department enormously in its work. This may be assisted with tracer studies — initiated by the DHET — that will trace students from entrance into university all the way to the world of work.

The role of the DHET will focus more precisely on M&E work and ensuring that the funds used via the UCDP programmes (including HELM) are delivering on the imperatives outlined by the department. For her, leaders are not sufficiently committed to managing inefficiencies within their organisation.

Moving beyond compliance was picked up by Prof Fitzgerald who noted that many institutions in South Africa still laboured under the perception that government was there to be critiqued and thus ignored the tremendous opportunities for deeper partnerships with the department on mutually beneficial initiatives. Prof Mthombeni also picked up on the notion of the future and argued strongly that before we even look at the future we need to “grasp the many histories in the room”. Without understanding and empathising with these histories, we will never be able to build solidly into our future(s) that await us.

Referencing the amazing work being done in Thailand as the lead producer of chips for the digital economy, he

reiterated the need for our students to “fall in love with 1 and 0s” not as consumers of them but as creators of them.

The university as an entrepreneurial space

This question was raised from the floor and centred on the notion that against the backdrop of huge unemployment. Should our universities not actually have entrepreneurial degrees, not simply a course here or there. Dr Socikwa argued that the department had placed entrepreneurial efforts front and centre of many of their activities. For example, one student had developed an app that allowed other students to figure out how to access funding their studies. So, while entrepreneurialism is fundamental to the future of higher education, so should be networking, connecting students with needed resources and other parts of the solution.

Emerging from the discussion are possible future parts of a curriculum — how do you teach networking, entrepreneurialism, management, leadership, communication skills?

Prof Mthombeni focussed on a question about how to drive down the numbers of the unemployed in a space that is so uncertain. For him, a possibility is that students should be encouraged to take longer at university garnering knowledge from a range of cross-cutting disciplines that will not give them the actual content of a future curriculum but the cognitive mechanisms to cope with the future. “We have trapped IP both in staff and students and we need to figure out a way of releasing this trapped IP”, he continued.

Falling in love with 1s and 0s, not as consumers but as creators.

In summation, Prof Mthombeni pointed out that “there are two types of pain — the pain of regret or the pain of discipline. If we carry on the same trajectory, we will suffer the pain of regret. The only way to succeed is to ensure that the rate at which we learn exceeds the speed at which the future is coming into focus”.

Transforming university leadership for social and economic impact

Discussants:

Dr Birgit Schreiber, HELM Senior Associate (Host)

Bongi Kunene MD of The Banking Association South Africa in conversation with

Dr Minu Ipe, Vice-Chairperson University Design Institute, Arizona State University

Dr Schreiber began by looking at the need for the reconfiguration of time and space and how we make use of it to maximise the effectiveness of university leadership.

“The transformation of higher education is part of the changing world: time and space are collapsing and we are re-negotiating how we use and occupy space and how we maximise time.

We need to re-design structures and systems so that these fit the new space and time dimensions.

The challenges are local and global — these two are intricately intertwined,

It was said that the 4IR influences are galloping ahead and we need to understand the social, political, discursive and relational implications of that.

The university is increasingly becoming a tool, it is instrumentalised: a political tool, an instrument to attain the

“Time and space are collapsing and we are re-negotiating how we use and occupy space and how we maximise time.”

SDGs, and in this session we are asking questions about its role in advancing social and economic justice”.

After introducing the speakers she invited Ms Kunene to offer her thoughts.

What kind of leaders do we need to create the workers of the future

Her insights were not derived from collected information but from lived experiences, so when she was asked to talk about transforming universities for economic and social impact, her immediate thought was what kind of leaders are needed in the education space to deliver the kind of throughput that will have an impact economically and also on the society at large.

When graduates arrive within the banking world, Ms Kunene expects them not only to be able to learn but to be adaptable to expectations of the job. In particular, a graduate who can ensure profit from the balance sheet, but a banker who can find solutions for each and every client. A chartered accountant, for example, cannot only be a subject matter expert, but needs to be someone adaptable enough to apply knowledge transversally. Moreover, the skill set will also require versatility, especially in their grasp of digital mechanisms — data analytics, data mining etc.

Pre Covid-19, young bankers were exposed to a range of people who would guide and mentor them. Now, it is a matter of being alone and busy and this forces the re-imagining of the workspace for the future. She proposes a

slightly different graduate, not one who has undergone a four year degree programme but one who has achieved micro-credentialing in a range of banking-related subjects including digital skills. This may mean a degree that spans 10 years but creates useable skills for business within a year. That also means building quality assurance across disciplines and the ability to build in a scaffold towards the expectations of the versatile worker.

The growth of AI means that more and more of the CA's work could be accommodated by sophisticated algorithms. Instead it is the ability to communicate, a moral compass, empathy and kindness — qualities which cannot be replicated by machines. She asks of the university “do you teach your students that all jobs are transient, that there isn't a permanent job anymore”. What we now need are graduates who are self-managed, reliable and capable of picking up on bits of knowledge and weaving these bits into workable solutions.

The world now is in a space where there is zero difference between money and data in the banking sector and what kind of leadership do we need from academic institutions that realise this.

Seize the moment

Dr Minu Ipe began by arguing that the University Design Institute looks at higher education design more broadly. “We are at a moment where we really need to reimagine and rethink what higher education is and should be and as

we think about the kind of leaders who are going to move us into the future.

“I would like to offer six points on what leaders should be thinking about in higher education because we are at a particular moment in history, with just coming out of the pandemic and as horrible as the pandemic has been globally it has been a huge wake-up call for the higher education sector because it's revealed that we were completely unprepared to take on this particular social problem: we didn't have the capacity to serve our students”. But it did force the sector to become innovative. The question now is can we seize this moment to drive new ideas.

1. *We need to question the missions of higher education.* There are, for example, huge access gaps and we can no longer have the luxury of capping who we admit into our institutions. What if institutions embraced the needs of their community, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and dealt with the real community needs of the people in which the university is located.
2. *Teaching and learning.* Returning to Ms Kunene's points about a different looking degree, she noted that our universities are still faculty-centric. For her, that is completely inadequate and what we should be creating are learner-centric universities where students have choices. She points out the neglected fact that: “we made all of this up. We can make up new models”. Globally about 50% of the workforce is going to require

up-skilling and re-tooling and who is going to provide that if not the university?

Dr Ipe also took issue with the assumption, especially in emerging countries, that institutions should emulate the western model which, as she points out, was made for a different time and different conditions.

3. *Digital solutions.* Covid-19 presented higher education with a crisis that was largely mitigated by technology. Any attempts to return to the old forms is to “waste the crisis”. Blended and fully online degrees should be opening up numerous more opportunities for those that want to learn but have never had the opportunity without having to give up their existing jobs.
4. *Research for social impact.* Without undermining the importance of basic research, now there is a perfect opportunity to look at the knowledge that we are creating and see how it might actually solve problems in our local communities. Social problems in the real world hardly ever present themselves in silos but are messy and overlapping. To achieve this we need to re-organise our universities to become inter-disciplinary.
5. *Resource diversification.* Across the globe, public institutions are facing cuts to their resources and revenue streams. The question then becomes how we become more entrepreneurial in freeing up additional resources. Again alluding to the banking sector, Dr Ipe wanted universities to partner with business early on in the process to refine curricula, to attune students to the

world of work. In addition, how might universities make better use of their real estate to create multi-use facilities, especially at the level of local government

There is also a case to be made for partnering with Ed Tech companies who may have solutions but have no way of testing out their ideas. “We have the students that can allow for real-life testing of these ideas,” she argued.

6. *The need for different kinds of leaders.* There is no need for more administrative leaders, what is now required are leaders who can think like designers, who can motivate and organise faculty to start implementing some of these ideas, who can influence policy and establish business partnerships. And leaders do not only refer to the Vice-Chancellor at the top of the university but across those domains where leaders operate at the various levels of seniority.

Research, soft skills and basic literacy

Research in banking, especially in ensuring the speed of payment, does not require traditional research expertise, but has come to rely on coding and algorithms. This is indicative of a shift away from traditional notions of research for Ms Kunene. And, as is the case in South Africa, how do you achieve digital inclusion, how do you solve for all? What are the current and future digital relationships? How can we start impacting the family, the work situation, local and regional government while making use of different digital experiences.

Locating South Africa within a human rights culture, she asks is a bank account a human right? This impacts on the poorest of the poor, on refugees and asylum seekers and it starts a conversation that is much broader than simply banking. Universities need to contribute to these kinds of debates, to bring their wisdom to debates that are not considered to be the domain of the universities.

In response to Dr Schrieber's question of the importance of soft skills, Dr Ipe pointed out that they were learnt in the process of doing and were not taught as such. Soft skills were picked up in the context of project-based community interventions, in working with real people trying to solve a particular problem. Or in the rise of gaming which was giving students a fun way to learn outside of traditional teacher/student mechanisms. At the heart of the conversation is what is basic literacy for those exiting the university system. An ability to manipulate and mine data, a predictive knowledge of human behaviour and an awareness that learning will never stop.