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Educational Change: The Case of the UWC Education Faculty

A Personal View

Owen van den Berg

A Potted History of the University of Western Cape

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) was set up in 1959 as one of the projects of Grand Apartheid, to be an institution which formed part of the government's intention of segregating tertiary education and of making the so-called 'Coloured people' racially conscious.

The University was staffed in its early years mainly by Afrikaner Nationalists, who operated largely in support of the Verwoerdian dreams of segregation and 'white' domination. More liberal or radical persons refused to consider applying for jobs at UWC, and a large section of the student body went to 'Bush' under protest - in fact, it is fair to say that there was a widespread rejection of the institution by the broad mass of the people for whom it was supposed to have been created. Students' attempts to bring about change at the University were largely unavailing in those early years.

According to Walters and van der Rheede, the year 1973 should be "seen as a watershed in the short history of UWC". They explain:

> *"The actions at UWC coincided with the reemergence of resistance in the country at large both amongst workers and students. Students and some staff were actively involved in the development of the Black Consciousness Movement, particularly through the South African Student Organisation (SASO) on campus. The students and a small number of staff ... challenged the system in no uncertain terms. The authorities responded in a predictable manner. The university was closed down for a short*

period, students had to re-register and a judicial commission of enquiry was set up". [1] *(p. 5)*

One consequence of the Commission's report was the appointment of the first 'black' Rector in 1975, when Dr Richard van der Ross took up appointment. During the latter years of the '70s and the early '80s, a power struggle waged at UWC, conservatives seeking to keep control over the direction in which the University was moving. With the patronage and support of the Rector, however, space began to be created for the University to move away from the ideological base upon which it had been created and which it had served faithfully during its early years. The creation of space for change was, however, mainly the consequence of increasingly powerful student activism. When the upheavals of 1980 had major repercussions in the Western Cape in that year and in 1981, the scene was set for a shift in the balance of academic power from Afrikaner Nationalism to a more enlightened view of the role of the University. That this battle had been largely won and lost by 1982 is evidenced by the *Statement of UWC Objectives* passed by Senate and Council in that year.

The UWC Objectives rejected the politico-ideological grounds on which UWC had been established, and committed the University to what was called the "development of Third World communities" and to the development of a staff committed to the same orientation. The means by which these objectives would be reached were to be forms of academic support, appropriate teaching and learning strategies, the encouragement of research and curricula orientated to Third World circumstances, community outreach and service, and an affirmative action appointments policy.

In the years since 1982 the University has changed in significant ways. Its acceptability as an anti-apartheid institution has grown to such an extent that academic posts are now keenly sought after by people who only a few years ago would have had nothing to do with UWC, and the ideological problems prospective students used to have about registering at UWC have disappeared. The gap between academics and students has also narrowed to a large extent, particularly in certain of the faculties.

The University has begun to explore and to seek to give effect to the Objectives approved in 1982. Moves towards the greater articulation of University and community have proceeded steadily, if somewhat laboriously. The University has developed an enviable reputation overseas and in South Africa as an anti-apartheid

champion, while at the same time the number of students registered and the composition of the student body have changed dramatically. For instance, student numbers increased from 3 591 in 1979 to 6 128 in 1984 to well over 10 000 in 1988, the percentage of African students grew from 1% in 1979 to 11% in 1987, the number of students who claim Afrikaans to be their home language declined from 85% in 1979 to 56% in 1987, and the number of female students increased steadily to reach 40% in 1988.

Today UWC has eight faculties. The Education Faculty was one of the first set up at the University, and during its early years closely resembled the rest of the University in terms of the composition of its staff and the attitudes that they brought to bear upon their work and demanded from their students. Until at least the late 1970s the Faculty was dominated by Afrikaner Nationalists - several of them Broederbonders - who brought their particular ideological stance to bear upon their work. The courses offered were presented almost entirely by means of the transmission of predigested 'knowledge', little or no small-group and hands-on activity being required. B Ed courses were more often than not a pale repetition of diploma work.

Central to the approach was a reliance on Fundamental Pedagogics, in terms of which the Afrikaner Nationalist leadership of the Faculty could couch its approach to education in terms of a supposedly 'scientific' approach that presents education as operating free of political context and as being amenable to 'value-free' considerations. The bias revealed was one that was not 'neutral' but, as Parker has said, one that is based on

> *"an authoritarian conception of education in which the child must be moulded and articulated into an attitude of obedience and submission towards the figures and instruments of authority ... This fits closely with the prevailing conception of government in which the State is seen as having virtually unlimited powers of coercion over the individual. What is frightening about Fundamental Pedagogics is that it provides a justification for an authoritarian conception of both education and government which makes the coercive action of both teachers and the State correct and right by definition".* [2] *(p. 27)*

At UWC, Fundamental Pedagogics provided the Afrikaner Nationalist leadership of the Faculty of Education with a supposedly scientific rationale for perpetuating their own racist and supremacist

ideologies and for mystifying the realities of education under apartheid. One interesting example will suffice: an M Ed student was able to complete a thesis on the development of 'Coloured' education in the Stellenbosch area without even having to refer to the Group Areas Act!

Transforming the UWC Education Faculty

By the late 1970s the Faculty of Education was ripe for change. For a variety of reasons the power clique within the Faculty of Education had begun to crumble. There was a widespread feeling - both on campus and in the broader community - that the Faculty was irrelevant, this at a time when education and schooling was probably the most burning issue in the country, and when obviously the Faculty could be expected at least to react in some or other way to the ongoing crisis in education. Many people saw the Faculty as little more than an embarrassment, and this perception obviously helped to discredit the leadership of the Faculty. Some of the Faculty's most powerful members had also been exposed or implicated as perpetrators of a plot to try to have Professor van der Ross removed as Rector; one at least decided to go into politics; some simply found the dynamics of the post-1976 campus more than they were prepared to try to handle.

Personnel changes were also beginning to make a difference. The first 'black' staff appointments had been made in the Faculty, and they were beginning to make their presence felt. They also received support from some sympathetic 'white' staff members - some of them probably a disappointment to the old guard, who had expected them to perpetuate the existing order.

The University itself was in transformation, and the new breed of academics that was being appointed to posts was beginning to exercise considerable muscle in attempts to transform the University and its various Faculties. The view grew that 'something had to be done about the Faculty of Education', especially as it was a major point of contact between community and campus.

A significant factor that was both to facilitate and complicate the transformation of the Faculty was the dramatic annual rise in student numbers, which generated additional staffing posts at the very time when the old guard was disappearing but at the same time significantly increased the work load of that staff every year. (An indication of this is that the number of final-year teachers-in-training increased from 340 in 1985 to 430 in 1986, 520 in 1987 and about 800

in 1988). Today the Faculty of Education can rightly claim to have made significant - some would say spectacular - progress towards becoming a transformed agency of the University. Only a few years ago the Faculty was regarded as irrelevant and dead; now it is probably fairly widely regarded as an important progressive force on campus.

It is always difficult to analyse the circumstances and factors giving rise to change, especially as one usually attempts to do so by separating out facets that are in fact occurring simultaneously and dialectically. For the purposes of our discussion here, however, an attempt will be made to give some structure to a discussion about the dynamics of change that occurred, but with the warning that the structure constitutes an oversimplification and at least a partial distortion of the complexity of the transformation that took place.

Internal Change: Academic

The change process, like charity, began 'at home', the Faculty setting out to attempt to get its own house in order. The first and most crucial aspect of this strategy involved the attempt to recruit and appoint committed, dynamic, talented and progressive staff, within the context of a concerted attempt to reduce the overwhelmingly "white" composition of the staff.

This process was aided by attempts by the University's Appointments Committee to appoint to the Faculty staff persons who would make a difference. Once that process had been started, the newcomers themselves attempted to ensure that the right sorts of appointments were made to future posts. As student enrolment was also growing rapidly, the process could be hastened because of the steady availability of new posts.

An important aspect of this strategy was the ditching of the normal 'merit' criteria for appointment, which would simply have meant the continuing appointment of 'whites' with doctorates in education, usually from the Afrikaans-language universities. The new criteria were not viewed within the Faculty as involving a simplistic policy of 'positive discrimination' or 'affirmative action', but of making appointments on the basis of people's demonstrated ability and potential. Often it was not the person with the best paper qualifications that got the job, but one who was considered to have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes, skills and community linkages, and the potential to develop them further.

This policy meant that the Faculty also needed to embark on a more concerted attempt at staff academic development, both internally - by way of seminar programmes and study - and by seeking opportunities for foreign study for the staff of the Faculty. The regular seminar is now a well-established aspect of the Faculty's programme.

Another dimension of staff recruitment and appointment was the attempt to break the stranglehold that Fundamental Pedagogics had exercised in the Faculty. On the argument that Fundamental Pedagogics was educationally suspect and politically supportive of the perpetuation of minority political domination and economic exploitation, a deliberate attempt was made to appoint persons who were not starry-eyed admirers of Fundamental Pedagogics. By the early '90s there were several people in the Faculty who could claim a sophisticated understanding of Fundamental Pedagogics, but none who were adherents of it.

In its place has come a more varied cohort of views about how the study of education should be approached. Some of these take essentially liberal positions, while several are supporters of a more structuralist or neo-Marxist position. There are also the almost inevitable differences between the 'theoreticians' and the 'practicists', the latter wanting a far greater emphasis on the skills aspect of teacher education, and whose lines of argumentation are essentially positivist and technicist. Debates around things supposedly as simple as a teaching practice evaluation form indicate these differences clearly. It is, however, true that a growing proportion of those appointed to the staff in recent years have been supporters of progressive political and pedagogical ideals.

The percentage of 'black' academic staff has increased steadily: there were three 'black' staff members in 1982, while the complement in 1989 was fifteen (almost exactly 50%). Of the eleven senior posts (professor or senior lecturer), five were 'black' appointments.

The imbalance between male and female appointments that existed in the days of the Fundamental Pedagogicians has also largely been eliminated, thirteen of the thirty-one staff in 1989 being women, although of the eleven senior appointments only two were women. (In addition, the professor and head of the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, which exists within the Faculty, is a woman.)

Part of the new staffing policy that has failed very largely thus far is the recruitment of Africans. If the Faculty is to achieve its stated goal of becoming staffed by a group of people broadly representative of

the South African population, then it is imperative that it recruit African staff in considerable numbers: the first African appointment to the Faculty has, however, only just been made, and the University as a whole has until recently struggled to attract African applications for its posts.

Internal Change: Administrative and Secretarial

The Faculty was seriously under-resourced in this area at the start of the decade. Up to the end of 1984 there was only one secretarial/administrative post; by mid-1988 this had grown to four. In terms of academic assistants - persons who give general academic assistance or who run the Faculty's laboratories - there were 2 posts in 1984, but 6 by 1989. Four of these are persons in charge of the Faculty's four teaching/learning laboratories, the other two responsible for 'general' academic support.

All the academic assistants are encouraged and expected to become involved in teaching in the Faculty's programmes, and all are similarly expected to further their studies. Several of these persons have already been promoted to other posts within and outside the Faculty. This mixture of administrative and academic responsibilities causes some strains, academic staff wishing to have additional administrative support, only to find that people are not available because of other duties (which include membership of the Faculty's major decision-making bodies and involvement in the seminar programme.)

Internal change: Organisational Structures and Procedures

The Faculty sought to get its own organisational structures and procedures improved. This involved a variety of steps, several of which went hand in hand with attempts to democratise decision-making procedures and structures. All the academic staff and all the academic assistants serve on the major Faculty decision-making bodies. The Faculty took a decision to support the notion of elective departmental headships or departmental chairpersons, and to ensure that a whole series of matters had to be discussed within departmental meetings rather than simply being left to departmental heads to decide.

Perhaps the most controversial and hotly disputed change of all was the decision to reduce the number of Departments to only four, instead of one for each of the sub-disciplines as required by Fundamental Pedagogics. The main rationale of those supporting the move was that it would produce larger and academically more viable departments, and reduce the repetition of administrative work in a

host of smaller departments. Opponents felt that reducing the number of departments would reduce the Faculty's power within the University, both because this would reduce the Faculty's Senate representation and because the department is the basic unit of the University when it comes to the award of resources, and that a reduction in the number of departments would reduce the flow of resources. These persons also felt that the reduction of departments would reduce promotion possibilities for staff.

Various committees were also set up with the responsibility to focus on each of the Faculty's major courses, to attempt to ensure a cross-departmental focus on these courses, There is also a cross-departmental committee for Higher Degrees, Study Leave and Research, which includes as consultants four members from other departments of the University.

A Faculty student committee has existed for many years, and is officially recognised by the SRC. Attempts by the academic staff of the Faculty to tie the Student Committee more closely into the decision-making structures of the Faculty have not met with success, mainly because the student body as a whole has not yet decided what position to take up regarding student representation on University decision-making structures. Close and positive links are, however, maintained between Faculty staff and students - for instance, in the most recent boycott the Education students decided to proceed with their teaching practice in spite of the boycott, and liaised closely with the staff on this matter. The students also set up, with assistance from the staff, an office to assist students to find teaching posts for 1989. The Faculty decided in principle to include student representation on the Faculty's major committees, and intends to implement this decision as soon as the UWC student community has clarified its position on such involvement.

The combination of democratisation attempts, growth in staff and student numbers and the proliferation of activities with which the Faculty is involved, has placed severe strains on the Faculty's organisational arrangements, and this is a matter where an optimal situation is still far from being achieved.

Internal Change: Physical Teaching and Resources

The Faculty has gradually obtained larger premises, although the dream of an own, custom-built building is still a remote one. The major problem to be tackled was to change the pattern whereby

virtually all the teaching took place in large lecture situations. The breakthrough in this regard came with the institution of the practical for Subject Didactics courses, which normally now take place in groups of not more than twenty students (which, of course, creates staffing strains).

By the late '80s four teaching/learning laboratories had also been set up. The pioneer in this regard was the Language Education Laboratory, followed in 1987 by a Didactics Laboratory (now called the Teaching Resources Laboratory). A Computers in Education Laboratory and a Science Education Laboratory became operative at the beginning of 1989. A Materials Development Project to work extensively with practising teachers, funded by the Kellogg Foundation, also started in January 1989. This project will help to tie together the work of the four laboratories in an innovative and exciting way.

The growth of secretarial support and of the number of academic staff positions resulted in the splitting of the Faculty office into three separate entities, one for the central administration of the Faculty and two others each handling the work of two departments. This has created problems of intra-Faculty communication that have yet to be adequately worked through.

Internal Changes: Course Revision

The courses offered by the Faculty have been almost completely revamped and new courses introduced. The influence of Fundamental Pedagogics has been completely eliminated, the current approaches ranging from positivistic and technicist paradigms to what might broadly be termed 'progressive' approaches to the study of education. The major changes are the following:

Higher Degrees: A programme to introduce 'structured' Masters courses was introduced in 1987. The first such programme, which requires a year of part-time lectures and seminar work and a year for the completion of a mini-thesis, was in the area of School Improvement and Action Research. The second, introduced in 1988, was in Education and Democracy, the third in 1989 was in Language Education, and others followed.

The motivation for this innovation was essentially twofold - to reduce the attrition rate amongst students who battled on in isolation with their theses and eventually gave up, and the desire to introduce greater relevance to Higher Degree study and to do so in an

interactive and mutually supportive environment.

An attempt was made to improve the survival rate of students registering for Masters work by thesis only, largely by introducing a procedure through which students have to go - with staff assistance - in order to register for the degree. This involves staff assistance to students in the writing of an adequate proposal, so that they have a reasonable grasp of the issues involved before the work is commenced. It is difficult to say yet whether this strategy has been very successful.

Another innovation was the introduction of the M Phil degree, which allowed students to register for Masters-level study in education without the HDE or B Ed, the requirement being an Honours degree or equivalent. Of the sixteen students who initially registered for the Education and Democracy course, for instance, half were M Phil candidates who would not otherwise have been allowed to enroll for such a course, though many of them were experienced educators and community workers who brought a rich experience to bear on the work of the group.

B Ed: The programme for this degree was changed to a modular system offering students a wide range of optional semester courses from which to construct their curriculum. Fifty modules are offered, of which students have to complete ten for the award of the degree. Only one, in Metatheory, is compulsory. This has probably been the most popular and successful of the curriculum changes introduced thus far, and it also offers an opportunity for all the academic staff to get involved in the work of the Faculty beyond the diploma level. The hierarchical arrangement whereby junior staff taught diploma courses and senior staff taught B Ed and supervised theses has largely disappeared. The rules of admission to B Ed were also changed to make it possible, in certain circumstances, for students without a teaching diploma to enroll for the degree. The Faculty's HDE (non-graduate) diplomates will also be allowed to register for this degree. Again this means that people with experience, a particular interest in education and with considerable ability are not kept out of a course because of the absence of a particular piece of paper.

HDE (Post-Graduate): This diploma course has been changed in basically three ways:

- By introducing a system of small group work in Subject Didactics, usually coupled with a system of continuous assessment often not requiring a final written examination.

Although resources do not exist to introduce microteaching opportunities for all students, some of the small group Subject Didactics work is supported by microteaching sessions.

- By the introduction of an orientation fortnight at the start of the year, in terms of which students are given a series of introductory lectures to prepare them for a two-week school observation phase. They are immediately placed in school groups, which meet as tutorials to discuss the lectures and to draw up a plan of action for the school observation phase, during which they are required to write a report on aspects of school life that they have identified during the tutorials in the orientation phase. The teaching that they do in this phase is unsupervised, giving them a chance to find their feet before being subjected to the trauma of assessment. Staff visit schools not to evaluate lessons but to continue tutorial discussions with their students. Part of the intention of the programme is that the tutorial system build networks of peer support amongst students before they visit the schools, and that the students then focus on what actually occurs in schools rather than worrying only about the lessons they are going to teach and have evaluated. Hopefully this also builds a cooperative relationship amongst the students rather than a competitive one. Students do teach during this phase, but hopefully the absence of a supervisor allows them to orientate themselves to the task of teaching without the problem of coping with a university lecturer at the back of the room. And finally,
- By reducing the number of lectures for the 'theoretical' subjects by half and to require the students to do more self- study and reading. A serious attempt was made to stop over- lecturing the students and to stop cluttering up their days with heavy lecture-room commitments. The nature of the work required of them in Subject Didactics courses also required that they had more time to prepare teaching materials and to work in the laboratories.

The 'concurrent' 4-year course: This course was introduced in 1984. It allowed students to enroll for a four year HDE (non-graduate) with Arts or Science subjects, or a four-year B Sc (Ed) or B Econ (Ed) degree. Because of staff shortages, the Post-Graduate Diploma students and the Education IIIs were taught together, but the classes will be separated from 1989. One spectacular outcome has been the

increase in the number of education students who have studied Science subjects at university level - the Subject Didactics course in Physical Science in 1989 had some 70 fourth-year students.

Internal Changes: 'Climate'

A concerted attempt was made to change the general institutional climate within the Faculty. Some aspects of this can be highlighted.

First, The 'distance' between senior and less senior academics, and also between academic and non-academic staff, has deliberately been whittled away. All staff are on first name terms and share the same tea room. The annual get-together is an occasion for everybody, as are the occasional lunches and teas that occur with birthdays and other such events. Second, an attempt has been made to involve more and more people in decision-making and in the general activities of the Faculty. The executive of the Faculty consists of all academic staff plus the academic assistants, the latter also all being full members of the Faculty Board. Information about current developments - often very dramatic at UWC - is sent to everybody on the staff.

Third, an attempt has been made to encourage people to contribute to the efficient functioning of the Faculty, so that the necessary work gets parcelled out fairly (always a problem) and so that work gets done well and (almost) on time. This remains a major problem, given the huge expansion of the Faculty in recent years - the percentage of people who have been around for some years and so can claim to know the ropes is not that high. (For instance, of the 43 persons who working in the Faculty in 1989, 27 arrived in 1986 or more recently.)

Fourth, an attempt has been made to encourage everybody to engage seriously in the study and practice of education. A regular seminar programme is followed, and staff members are encouraged to present their work to their colleagues. Staff, including the academic assistants, are encouraged to further their studies, to write and to do research. Attempts are made to give as many people as possible the chance to attend conferences. Given the huge work-load, however, this area is still far from satisfactory, particularly in the areas of research and publication. In this regard staff also have tensions between community involvement and classic, high-status research, and between publishing for SAPSE 'recognised' journals and for audiences whose publications do not draw subsidy.

Changing the Faculty's Status on Campus

Given the extremely bad name the Faculty had on campus at the end of the 1970s, a concerted attempt was made to improve its reputation. This was done in a variety of ways - by improving the programmes of the Faculty and by being seen to be attempting to innovate; by improving the administration of the Faculty so that complaints about bad records or faulty information and about missing deadlines began to diminish; quite simply, by the appointment of energetic staff who then became involved in campus activities and began to be elected to committees; by demanding that the Faculty also had representation wherever the other faculties were represented; perhaps the most difficult, by insisting that the Faculty and its requests be taken seriously and not be regarded less sympathetically than those emanating from other faculties; finally, by a strategy of public relations, to make the campus more aware of what was happening in the Faculty.

Improving levels of academic expertise and identification with the broad goals of the University also resulted in the Faculty being far more fully involved in the decision-making structures on campus, and in requests for the Faculty to assist the broader University with current activities and with the preparation of reports and programmes for the future.

An improved reputation on campus was obviously a crucial factor if the Faculty were to improve its resources, both human and physical. For several years, including the early 1980s, the University failed to give the Faculty its fair share of the new posts that were being created, but by 1989 the situation had improved significantly.

The major event that brought about the final breakthrough in the Faculty's attempt to win the necessary resources was the generation of a 'Policy Memorandum' in 1987. Although the first version of this document was not well received in certain quarters and was referred back to the Faculty, its acceptance by the Senate of the University carried with it the understanding that the University would have to assist the Faculty in obtaining the resources necessary for the achievement of its mission. The Faculty is now finding that the climate within which it competes for resources is fundamentally supportive.

The essential clauses in the Policy Memorandum were to commit the Faculty to the following:

- The reconceptualisation of the Faculty's initial training function as one that requires students to become confident and competent classroom practitioners with a critical understanding of education and of the political economy of schooling.
- The development of its role as an institution committed to the academic study of education, in line with and in support of the Mission Statement adopted by the University regarding its role in South Africa at this time.
- A policy of staff recruitment, employment and development in order to bring together a staff cohort freed from the shackles of conservative political and educational ideologies, sophisticated in critical academic analysis, and representative of the broad spectrum of the South African academic community, to the extent that it might view itself - and be viewed by others - as a truly South African institution.
- A policy of community involvement and relevance, with particular reference to
  * the community of teachers and educators in the Western Cape and to the children in their care, and
  * the promotion of adult and continuing education which serves the needs of the poor and oppressed both individually and organizationally.

Changing the Faculty's Status in the Broader Community

Another area for action was involvement and identification with the broader community, its aspirations and problems, especially as the Faculty is one of the major points of contact between the University and its feeder community. Given the low opinion of the Faculty that existed in the broader community, it was relatively easy to show that the Faculty was becoming a different place.

One initiative which helped involved improving the quality of the Faculty's courses, notably the B Ed, and a more concerted effort to provide quality supervision of Higher Degree students. Another contribution was made by the Faculty's taking a clearer line on the politics of education, andon events concerning education and schooling in the broader society. Attempts were made to respond to requests for help, staff members becoming involved in teacher organizations and in conferences and workshops. Obviously, the rapidly improving reputation of the University had a positive impact on the Faculty, but

several initiatives showed the Faculty to be ahead of much of the rest of the campus in terms of building community links. Two instances were the joint organisation by the Faculty and the NECC of a People's Education Conference at UWC in 1987 - the publication of the Proceedings has already sold about a thousand copies - and the signing of an agreement of cooperation between the Faculty and the progressive Cape Educational Computer Society.

Building links between Faculty and community is essentially a matter of public identification, of responding to approaches, of accepting invitations and of exploring links and possible projects and activities. The decision to request permission to send a delegation to the SAPS Conference in 1987 was another aspect of the Faculty's attempt to understand its context better and to become involved in the broader South African community in the most appropriate ways.

A related aspect was the introduction of fund-raising for Faculty programmes. The Faculty raised R80 000 towards the equipping of the Teaching Resources Laboratory and R160 000 towards the establishment of a Computer Laboratory. American Foundation funding has also been obtained for an in-service Materials Development Project - the amount is over $100 000 - and smaller amounts of funding have been raised for other projects, such as sending staff members overseas and for research projects. The Faculty has also become jointly responsible for the launching of the Base Ten Primary School Mathematics project in the Western Cape, and the funding for the project is routed through the Faculty.

Educational Change: In Search of Effective Strategies

Is there anything to be learnt from the case of the UWC Faculty of Education about effective strategies for educational change? To bring about real change, several features have to come together in the right context: as Michael Fullan has put it, educational change is the result of "a fortunate combination of the right factors - a critical mass".[3]

Examples of these are:

Patronage: The University as a whole was disturbed by what the Faculty had become by the late 1970s. As soon as some pioneering work had been done to show that there was hope for improvement, patronage became available from the leadership of the University and from a whole range of concerned people on campus. More than that, enough concern existed - and amongst senior personnel in the University - even before there were any signs of significant change

within the Faculty for attempts to be made to help it to begin to move. The Policy Memorandum, which appeared much later, helped to consolidate and focus the patronage needed, so that the Faculty could be given the tools to do the job.

Personnel: Change depends to a crucial extent on people. A team of innovative, hard-working people with some vision of what might be has to be brought together, which requires both good (or lucky!) recruitment and the willingness of those appointed before them to move with the times and join in the enthusiasm. Growth in student numbers also meant that momentum could be maintained, as new troops could be brought in to assist - and, with the growing reputation of the University and the Faculty, more people well suited to helping with the task applied for posts. In the recent round of appointments there were two persons who were offered two jobs within the University but who chose to join the Education Faculty.

Planning: There must be some plan about where change is to take one, however vague that plan might be at the start. In its simplest terms, it must be a plan to refuse to be satisfied with what is, to be prepared to review every aspect of one's functioning and the assumptions upon which it rests, and a plan to make all things better to some or other extent. The Faculty had sufficient people prepared to engage in the hard slog of planning, rather than simply talking about the problems. More than this,

Policy: must be clear and comprehensive - this does not mean that policy has to cover every aspect, but that at least it needs to make reference to as many as possible of the facets that will eventually have to be brought into place. Policy helps avoid the dangers of ad hoc innovations which fail to build a comprehensive new direction. And a sound policy requires sound

Philosophy, or theory. The Faculty's policy was unnervingly simple - to eliminate conservative political and educational ideologies from its work, to promote those things which would promote the transformation of schooling and society, to move from transmission teaching to more interpersonal and interactive styles, and to make the Faculty more relevant - to its students, to the University and to the broader community. All these things - planning, policy and philosophy - are of little or no use, however, if they do not result in changed circumstances.

Programmes And Practices: The Faculty worked its way into and through changes very largely by changing its courses and the way they were presented. To move from planning/policy/philosophy to practice requires the ability and courage to implement - and often change means doing new things badly at first instead of continuing to do old things well, which can be demoralising. Nor is it a matter of formulating policy and then applying it, for that such an approach would be to reflect a view of a divide between theory and practice that is not theoretically defensible. Often, for instance, one only discovers one's policy or is forced into theoretical reflection by re-evaluating or designing programmes and practices: the dialectic is important. The growing availability of new posts meant also that the Faculty could recruit people who would be good at doing the new things rather than the old.

Priorities are crucial if change is to be effective. The Faculty's essential problem was that it first had to innovate and then hope for additional resources; this meant overextending every single member of staff, and for years. The Faculty did not, however, try to do everything well or properly at the same time - we tackled some areas, and 'muddled through' with others. Change has to be focused, and for this prioritisation is important: while one is often embarrassed about some of the other things that one is continuing to do without changing them, they have to wait their turn.

Public Relations initiatives are terribly important - staff has to be convinced that things are worth doing and that the sacrifices currently being made will be rewarded with the award of additional staffing and other resources later; others both within and outside the University have to be convinced that things can be changed even when the evidence is pretty thin, and that the personnel working on change is capable of bringing about that change; worse than that, one needs to convince oneself that the thing can work. Ultimately, attempts at bringing about effective change depend on a great deal of:

Pluck and Perseverance - of courage, of commitment to very hard work in impossible circumstances, when simply to muddle along as before and blame the whole thing on someone or something else is so much easier. That pluck is made even more crucial given the context within which educationalists have to operate in South Africa. And so it is necessary to say that all the above are of little use in the face of the

most crucial and critical dimension for bringing about effective educational change, namely:

Political Context: It was stated earlier that, for change to occur, several features have to come together in the right context. The South African political climate is one that is fundamentally hostile to the democratization of society and to the creation of an educational system supportive of the democratization of such a society.

The crisis facing the government in recent years has been one of seeking to perpetuate and consolidate an authoritarian, minority regime and the politics of economic exploitation in the face of growing opposition to its policies and practices. In the face of the increasing illegitimacy of the regime, the state clamped down extensively on public and community attempts at opposition, and so effectively reduced the arenas where political action can occur. One consequence of this was that agencies such as educational, trade union and church institutions had to bear a heavy political burden as arenas for people to express their political aspirations and to engage in political activities, this in an environment of shrinking space for democratic activity.

UWC is generally regarded as the tertiary institution in South Africa that has taken the most strongly anti-State line in its public pronouncements and actions, and that is the most strongly committed to working for a transformed society and to providing an example of a post-apartheid institution in a society still being forced ever deeper into apartheid.

In a political climate in which state support for universities is steadily decreasing, and in which state respect for freedom of expression and the right to organise peacefully reached a low point, it would be surprising if the state were not to target UWC as a major protagonist in the struggles surrounding the forging of a South African future.

The University is also faced with the daunting task of seeking to become a post-apartheid institution in a society which is still profoundly and increasingly warped and devastated by apartheid. Many people and institutions have been innocent victims of apartheid and the struggle for liberation from apartheid, and a front-line University should not expect to be exempt from the consequences of this struggle.

The University thus faces opposition from the State and its surrogates - such as much of the mainline press - at the same time as

it seeks to bring into being an example of a post-apartheid institution. UWC is fraught with problems and challenges - racial, ideological and political tensions on campus; social problems that make the headlines as if they are the fault of the University alone and not products of a grossly distorted society; problems of rapid growth, overwork and inadequate resources, exacerbated by a subsidy formula that on the one hand has never been fully implemented by the state and which on the other favours institutions which grow slowly and refuse the more marginal student the opportunity to come to university.

The University, in striving to be the intellectual home of the left, has to engage in the struggle both within itself and on a broader front. Many contradictions and tensions remain and may become exacerbated - moves to introduce rigorous progressive curricula to a student body from often drastically deprived educational backgrounds; the dynamics of student politics seeking to evolve policy and principles for student involvement in and response to events on and off campus; an open admissions policy that undertakes to provide a solid tertiary education to students turned away by other universities on the basis of selection criteria supposedly based on merit; the recurrence of boycotts at a time when the boycott strategy is increasingly disputed even in progressive circles, and so on.

The destiny of the Faculty is obviously closely tied to that of the University, and what the future holds for UWC it is hard to anticipate. In discussing effective strategies for educational change, we should not expect that the identification of a set of recipes will help us to solve our problems; while they may help, a great deal will depand on the broad political, economic and social context within which we have to operate. The educational struggle - the desire to bring about educational change to the benefit of the country and all its people - is inextricably linked to the political struggle, for both concern the questions regarding what sort of society we should have and how we should arrive at creating it. It is the fundamental position of the Faculty of Education that it should strive to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

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Matatu

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