Critical Reflections on post-2006 Institutional Planning at Rhodes

20 July 2010 (First Draft)

Introduction

In recent months it has occurred to me that there could be a lack of information and common understanding about institutional planning at Rhodes. This may be one reason for the difficulties that appear to be associated, for example, with formulating an Infrastructure Plan for Rhodes.

This document has been written in an attempt to clarify processes and issues, as I understand them, related to institutional planning at Rhodes.

The purpose of the document is to ground a conversation on institutional planning within, to begin with, the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) and the Senior Administration. This may be a discussion that we seek to also extend into Faculty Boards and other relevant structures within Rhodes.

The aims of such a discussion should be:

1. For the IPC and Senior Administration and other relevant committees to develop a shared understanding of processes and issues, as well as roles and responsibilities, related to institutional planning at Rhodes
2. To ensure that as a University we are able to, and begin to more proactively, efficiently and effectively, and democratically, make institutional choices and decisions, with a full grasp of the implications (short-, medium- and long-term) of these choices and decisions
3. To ensure that we make timeous and considered applications and submissions to the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET) and other national agencies with respect to the Rhodes' enrolment plans, new academic programmes and 'infrastructure and efficiency' funding.

Institutional Planning

The point of departure for institutional planning is the assumption that Rhodes University principally exists to serve three fundamental purposes.

The first is to *produce knowledge*, so that we can advance understanding of our natural and social worlds and enrich our accumulated scientific and cultural heritage. This means that we "test the inherited knowledge of earlier generations", we dismantle the mumbo jumbo that masquerades for knowledge, we "reinvigorate" knowledge and we share our findings with others. We undertake research into the most arcane and abstract issues and the "most theoretical and intractable uncertainties of knowledge". At the same time we also strive to apply our discoveries for the benefit of humankind. We "operate on both the short and the long horizon". On the one hand, we grapple with urgent and "contemporary problems" and seek solutions to these. On the other hand, we "forage" into issues and undertake enquiries

"that may not appear immediately relevant to others, but have the proven potential to yield great future benefit".

As a university our second purpose is to *disseminate knowledge* and to cultivate minds. Our goal is to ensure that our students can think imaginatively, "effectively and critically"; that they "achieve depth in some field of knowledge"; that they can critique and construct alternatives, that they can communicate cogently, orally and in writing, and that they have a "critical appreciation of the ways in which we gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society, and of ourselves". At the same time, we also seek that our students should have "a broad knowledge of other cultures and other times"; should be "able to make decisions based on reference to the wider world and to the historical forces that have shaped it", and that they should have "some understanding of and experience in thinking systematically about moral and ethical problems".

Our final purpose as a university is to undertake *community engagement*. On the one hand this involves our students' voluntary participation in community projects undertaken thorough our Community Engagement office. On the other hand, it involves service-learning, in which through academic courses our students and academics take part "in activities where both the community" and *we* benefit, "and where the goals are to provide a *service* to the community and, equally, to enhance our *learning* through rendering this service".

Myriad challenges face all universities, including Rhodes. In the face of this, planning is a necessary condition for addressing challenges, for maximising on strengths and exploiting the available opportunities, for overcoming weaknesses and minimising constraints, and for dynamic and sustainable institutional development. All areas of institutional life and activities including, fundamentally, academic provision, require deliberation and conscious policy- and decision-making.

Planning for greater efficiency and effectiveness in relation to institutional activities is not in competition with autonomy, academic freedom, democracy, equity and quality. There must be imaginative institutional innovation of structures, mechanisms and processes that balance in creative ways the core values that are fundamental to Rhodes.

While planning is necessary, it must accord to departments and academics and researchers substantial freedom with regard to teaching and research matters. Planning must also avoid generating an institutional culture of dull, plodding conformity that stifles imagination, creativity and innovation. There must be space for academic and research programmes with different purposes, methodologies, pedagogies and modes of delivery, and that respond in distinct ways to our varied and changing intellectual, social, and economic needs.

We need an effective institutional capability, including an effective institutional research capability, for rigorously analysing the social context and for monitoring, evaluating and interpreting dynamics, trajectories and trends that have implications for institutional development. The capability to read the nature of polices and policy signals, and to fathom the trajectories of policies is vital if Rhodes is not to be purely determined by context, but is to also pro-actively engage and modify its context.

The political terrain, economic conditions, macro-economic policy, the high-level knowledge and skills requirements of the labour market, budgets for higher education, including student financial aid, secondary school outputs, and the policy milieu all warrant close analysis for they impact on and have implications for institutional decision-making and planning.

An important goal of planning includes inspiring, conceptualising, managing, communicating and effectively implementing change. Institutional change is a demanding undertaking, whose complexity and enormity may not always be fully understood at the beginning. It requires sober, careful, detailed and realistic planning, that gives attention to strategies, structures and instruments, available financial resources, sources of expert staff, time frames, and so on.

At the same time that change is being undertaken in certain areas, various other areas of institutional activity have to continue to be steered, supported and maintained. In short, institutional change and institutional maintenance have to be managed simultaneously (not consecutively). If not managed effectively and efficiently, parts and areas of the institution that are functioning relatively well could also become dysfunctional and create new problems.

The *purposes* of planning are to ensure

1. That choices and decisions are made
- With respect to teaching-learning: the options of or balance between levels of provision (undergraduate and postgraduate), breadth of qualifications and programmes, the nature of programmes (the mix between general formative, vocational, professional, etc.), the mode of provision (correspondence, distance, e-leaning, contact. Etc.), and the scope of provision (local, regional, national, international)
- With respect to knowledge production, the options of or balance between different kinds of scholarship (of discovery, integration, etc.) and the nature of research (fundamental, applied, strategic, developmental)
- With respect to community engagement, relations with different kinds of communities (mining, manufacturing, agriculture, commerce, government, non-governmental organisations, social movements), which operate in different spaces (national, provincial, regional, local), and have different requirements (research, teaching).
2. That the University has carefully considered and formulated ideas of its academic and overall institutional trajectories and development
3. That the University is not entirely or even largely shaped by historical patterns and contemporary currents and pressures but proactively and consciously shapes its future

Certain values, principles, purposes and goals and strategies related to goals, may exist in a relationship of intractable tension in so far as we, for good political and social reasons, are obliged to pursue them *simultaneously*. Paradoxes must be creatively addressed and policies and strategies devised that can satisfy multiple imperatives, can *balance* competing goals, and can enable the pursuit of equally desirable goals. If trade-off's are necessary, they hey should be made deliberatively with respect to their implications for vision and goals, and consciously and transparently. The trade-offs and choices that are made should also be

communicated in ways that build understanding and secure support from important constituencies.

Allied to the need to make difficult choices, it is also vital to establish priorities with respect to institutional goals. This is more easily asserted than accomplished in practice. Yet a rational mode of prioritising, for the establishment of first order, second order and third order priorities, and for determining what changes are essential concurrently, what changes can be sequential and so forth, is crucial if the institutional agenda is not to be compromised and undermined.

C. Wright Mills (1959) writes that

> Freedom is not merely the chance to do as one pleases; neither is it merely the opportunity to choose between set alternatives. Freedom is, first of all, the chance to formulate the available choices, to argue over them - and then, the opportunity to choose. That is why freedom cannot exist without an enlarged role of human reason in human affairs. …(T)he social task of reason is to formulate choices, to enlarge the scope of human decisions in the making of history. The future of human affairs is not merely some set of variables to be predicted. The future is what is to be decided - within the limits, to be sure, of historical possibility. But this possibility is not fixed, in our time the limits seem very broad indeed.

> Beyond this, the problem of freedom is …how decisions about the future of human affairs are to be made and who is to make them. Organisationally, it is the problem of a just machinery of decision. Morally, it is the problem of political responsibility. Intellectually, it is the problem of what are now the possible futures of human affairs (1959:174).

This wonderfully captures significant challenges. In a nutshell, how are we to 'formulate the available choices', how are we 'to argue over them', and how are we to innovate the 'just machinery' that provides the 'opportunity to choose' and to make decisions. This also points to the necessity to build an institutional culture and configure internal governance in a way that holds fast to the values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, academic self-rule and democracy, that concomitantly addresses the requirements for public accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, and that avoids an ideology and culture of 'managerialism' (while acknowledging that effective management is indispensable).

The *goals* of planning are to ensure
1. That there exists an Institutional Development Plan (IDP), which is not a cast-in-stone, invariant, blueprint, as much as a compass that guides developments, prioritisation, decision-making and implementation at Rhodes while leaving room for pursuing new imperatives and exploiting possible new opportunities
2. That Rhodes remains financially sustainable with respect to its current and future envisaged enrolments, academic programmes and operations, staffing and infrastructure requirements
3. That Rhodes is able to effectively address and pursue new social and educational imperatives, identified goals and strategies

4. That there is an effective alignment between enrolment planning, academic planning, staffing, infrastructure planning and financial planning
5. That planning occurs on a longer-term horizon than has hitherto existed.

In the pursuit of these purposes and goals, the *objects* of planning are

1. Enrolments
   - The size of the overall student body of the University
   - The rate of annual growth
   - The mix between undergraduate and postgraduate students
   - The mix between students in Humanities, Science, Commerce, Pharmacy, Education and Law
   - The mix between local and international students (including short-term exchange students)
   - The equity (class, race and gender) profile of the University
   - The geographical origins of local students
   - Is there an envisaged maximum size?

2. Academic programmes
   - The current academic programmes (disciplines, fields, qualifications, extended studies) of the University
   - The mix between undergraduate and postgraduate programmes
   - The nature of academic programmes (formative, professional, disciplinary, inter- and multi-disciplinary)
   - The breadth of programme offerings and possible course combinations
   - The desirability and feasibility of new academic programmes
   - Academic pass, throughput, success and graduation rates
   - Research productivity

3. Staff
   - The size of the University's academic and support staff bodies
   - The rate of annual growth of the academic and support staff bodies
   - The academic: student ratio
   - The mix between local and international staff
   - The equity (race and gender) profile of the academic and support staff bodies
   - Developing a new generation of academics and transforming the social composition of the academic staff body

4. Infrastructure
   - The available infrastructure to support academic programmes
   - The available infrastructure for student accommodation and sports/cultural activities
   - The available infrastructure for housing for academics
   - The available infrastructure for administrative and other support services
   - The backlogs with respect to infrastructure for academic programmes, student accommodation, sports/cultural activities, housing for academics and administrative and other support services

- ▪ The implications of future enrolments and academic programmes for different kinds of infrastructure
- ▪ The capability and capacity of Makana Municipality to provide the necessary services to support larger enrolments and new infrastructure

5. <u>Finances</u>
   - ▪ The available finances to
   - √ Maintain current academic programmes
   - √ Initiate new academic (teaching and research) programmes
   - √ Remunerate staff appropriately
   - √ Ensure infrastructure backlogs are addressed and to support additional infrastructure related to growth and development
   - ▪ The current and possible future mix of sources of funding
   - √ State subsidy - including teaching input funds, teaching outputs funds, research (postgraduate outputs and publication) related funds, institutional size funds, student composition funds, teaching development grants, research development grants, academic development funds, infrastructure and efficiency funds
   - √ Student tuition fee income
   - √ Third stream income – including short courses, research contracts, endowments and gifts
   - ▪ The effective and efficient use of available finances to address the social purposes of the University, implement agreed upon strategies and realise defined goals

The 2006 imbizo

In July 2006 an imbizo was convened and attended by some 60 people drawn from all constituencies.

The *purposes* of the imbizo were
- ▪ To provide a forum for critically discussing the core values, purposes, goals and strategic directions of Rhodes University, and the efficacy of the policies, instruments and processes for their realisation
- ▪ To serve as a forum for agenda-setting – identifying of critical issues and challenges, and the initiatives that could be required to address these
- ▪ To provide an opportunity for the new Vice-Chancellor to hear the views of, and engage with, key constituencies on a range of key issues.

The *goals* of the imbizo were
- ▪ To critically discuss the stated *values* and *purposes* of Rhodes University, the extent to which they are institutionalised and practiced, and the challenges in these regards
- ▪ To critically discuss the *goals* and *strategic directions* of Rhodes University (both stated and what they should be), how they are being or should be pursued, and the challenges in these regards of Rhodes University
- ▪ To identify approaches, mechanisms and strategies for advancing the *progressive realization* of the university's vision, mission, goals and strategic directions in the short-, medium- and long-term

- To propose the ways in which there can be a substantive *institutional democratic consensus* around the values and purposes and goals and strategic directions of Rhodes University and their implementation
- To identify the implications of the above for policy- and decision-making and implementing structures and processes, and information sharing structures and processes

The *objects* of the imbizo were
- To discuss the University's vision and mission statement, and especially those aspects that are identified as requiring attention
- To discuss the University's current and evolving goals and strategic directions, and in particular those aspects that are identified as needing attention
- To locate the discussions within a consideration of the external environment in which Rhodes operates
- To conduct the discussions in the context of the University's strengths and weaknesses, and challenges and opportunities, including the commendations and recommendations of HEQC audit report
- To, where possible, relate discussions to the outcomes of and developments since the 2004 bosberaad.

Discussion centred around seven key themes:
- Values, purposes and identity: Rhodes' vision and mission
- Shape and size of Rhodes
- Sustaining and enhancing excellence! Where leaders learn?
- Recruitment and access and support and success
- Community engagement
- Institutional environment and culture: A people-centred institution/A home for all
- Institutional planning, policy and decision-making structures and processes

The imbizo was not a substantive policy- or decision-making event. It was understood that whatever changes that we identified were needed would have to occur through the established policy- and decision-making structures of the University.

Post-2006 imbizo developments

Size and shape

Much of the immediate post imbizo period was spent on issues of size and shape. The VC's Circular to Deans on 10 September 2006 indicated that we needed to give attention to

- What intellectual and academic values does the department/faculty wish to embody, and what is its vision?
- What does the department/faculty wish to hold constant – perhaps current pass, throughput and graduation rates; current teacher:student ratios; quality of graduates
- How may we innovate in teaching and learning in current academic programmes and through this produce more graduates and contribute to addressing social and economic development challenges?

- How may we innovate in knowledge dissemination and production through *new academic programmes* and through this also contribute to addressing social and economic development challenges?

In a further VC's Circular to Deans on 30 April 2007, it was noted

1. What new teaching courses/teaching programmes does each Faculty wish to introduce/support, and does Senate and Council wish to approve for further consideration with respect to academic and financial feasibility?
2. Are there any teaching courses/teaching programmes that any Department or Faculty wishes to terminate or any reason?
3. What new research programmes does each Faculty wish to introduce/support, and does Senate and Council wish to approve for further consideration with respect to academic and financial feasibility?
4. What new community engagement initiatives does each Faculty wish to introduce/support, and does Senate and Council wish to approve for further consideration with respect to academic, community and institutional merit and financial feasibility?
5. What current donor-funded activities need to become part of university-funded activities, over what time-frames, and in what proportions

In the case of all of the above, what are the implications

6. For teaching infrastructure, facilities and equipment?
7. For research infrastructure, facilities and equipment?
8. For overall academic infrastructure, facilities and equipment (including the library)?
9. For student residences?
10. For other infrastructure, facilities and equipment (including possibly accommodation for staff)?
11. For additional academic staff?
12. For additional technical and administrative staff?
13. For additional support staff?

Numerous meetings were held on these issues which resulted in the finalisation of our 2008-2010 Enrolment Plan. Following various growth scenarios being considered, it was agreed that Rhodes should pursue a modest rate of growth. In the light of this the 2008-2010 enrolment plan negotiated with the Department of Education (DoE) committed Rhodes to growing from just under 6 000 students in 2007 to 6 500 students. We indicated to the DoE the following:

1. The point of departure for the projections for growth should be based on the situation in 2007 (about 6 000 students, instead of that in 2005 (some 6 300 students).
2. We grow annually at between 2.5 and 3.0%, increasing to a maximum of about 6 500 students in 2010.
   The majority of these students would be full-time, and resident in Grahamstown. Additional growth may be possible in undergraduate diploma (Advanced Certificate in

Education - ACE) programmes, which do not impact as heavily on the requirements for providing residential, laboratory and lecture venue infrastructure.

3. The University will pursue a trajectory of a higher proportion of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) enrolments.
   However, in the absence of suitable Science, Engineering and Technology applicants, we should not be required to turn away good entering Humanities and Commerce students.

4. The University will pursue a trajectory of having a greater proportion of postgraduate students, especially in areas of proven excellence and potential new programme areas which build on current academic strengths.

5. We reduce the proportion (if not the numbers) of international undergraduate students, and diversify the sources of these students, in order to create more space for black South African students.

6. The University will seek to increase the number of undergraduate diploma (ACE students), but is not likely to be able to do so in the proportion requested by the Ministry. The enrolment of ACE students will, however, be conditioned by the availability of bursaries and resources
   This commitment should not, however, entail any a significant reduction in the proportion of undergraduate degree enrolments. It certainly makes little sense to curtain growth, for example, in Law which is projected to grow annually at 5%.
   Moreover, it should not be undertaken at the expense of cutting back the numbers of postgraduate enrolments in Education, which are projected to grow from 258 students in 2007 to 290 students in 2010.

7. The University will strive to maintain an average success rate for all undergraduate plus postgraduate courses of 87%.

8. Rhodes will also strive to maintain the ratio of graduates to head count enrolments at 33% in the period up to 2010.

Our enrolment in 2010 is 7 135 instead of the projected target of 6 500 students. Clearly, we need identify and interrogate the reasons for this if we are to plan our enrolments more effectively and if the 2011-2013 Enrolment Plan is to have any meaning.

As far as academic programmes are concerned we considered numerous proposals, which were interrogated as to:

▪ Whether they build on, enhance and consolidate areas of academic strength at Rhodes
▪ In the case of a proposal to introduce new academic disciplines/fields, whether we would be able to exercise leadership in the area or would be competing with another University, and with what likely success?
▪ The feasibility of the programme in terms of student numbers, possible staff requirements, and likely income and expenditure
▪ Whether they were congruent with the proposed enrolment trajectory of Rhodes.

We agreed to support either in-principle or fully a number of proposals - for example, a Centre for the Study of Democracy, a Social Policy research and postgraduate programme, an Integrated Development Masters programme, new Masters programmes in Fine Arts and Psychology, new Honours programmes in Science, and an African Child Forensics research and postgraduate programme in Law.

Subsequently, we have supported, either in-principle or fully proposals related to: CHERTL, BIOBRU, a PhD programme in Higher Education Studies, a Creative Writing Masters, the Confucius Centre and undergraduates Studies in Mandarin, the development of research and postgraduate focus areas in the Humanities, Rhodes residencies, various new initiatives in Journalism and Media Studies, partnerships with select Indian universities and initiating the Thutuka programme in Accountancy. In addition, we have applied for and successfully won South African Research Initiative chairs in Medicinal Chemistry, Marine Biology, Astrophysics and Mathematics Education (two chairs).

There have also been opportunities for new postgraduate and research initiatives in various other disciplines/fields in which we have strengths – for example, water education and fisheries. These, however, have not always been adequately or timeously pursued. The danger, of course, is that other universities could initiate programmes in areas in which we should be enhancing and consolidating our strengths.

Sustaining and enhancing excellence

We continue to be recognised as one of South Africa's outstanding universities, as confirmed by a recent Centre for Higher Education Transformation paper that assessed South African universities in accordance with a number of key input and output criteria. While we can be largely satisfied with respect to developments in research, learning and teaching and community engagement, we have made little progress on the idea of a curriculum initiative for all students that can give substantive effect to the Rhodes slogan 'Where Leaders Learn'. R250 000 of Mellon VC Discretionary funding that was set aside for this initiative had to be reallocated.

Recruitment and access

We remain an institution of first choice for many students and can be highly satisfied with our recruitment in recent years, especially the expansion of access to black South Africans.

Whereas black South Africans constituted 31% (1 854) of total enrolments in 2006 (5 914), in 2010 they constitute 40% (2 877) of enrolments (7 135). Black South Africans made up 31% of new entrants in 2006 and 41% of new entrants in 2010.

Women represent 59% of 2010 enrolments, an issue that we may wish to consider. The proportion of international student enrolments in 2010 at 19.6% (1 403) reflects a steady state as compared to 19.75% (1 384) in 2009, which is in accordance with our enrolment plan.

We have reviewed our Extended Studies Programme and have agreed the Programme expresses our commitment to further enhancing access for students from rural poor and working class social backgrounds.

Support and success

We have maintained our status of possessing the best pass rates and graduations rates among South African universities. However, our pass rates have declined marginally, an issue to which we have to give attention.

We also have to address whether we are providing effective support to all our students, and especially black South African students who are from schools other than private and ex-model C schools.

Even though, with a 30% drop-out rate, we were the lowest among South African universities in the study conducted a few years ago by the DoE, we have as yet not investigated the reasons for such a drop-out rate.

Furthermore, we may also need to look at time to completion of Masters and Doctoral students and interrogate whether we have the appropriate institutional arrangements in place to cater for and enhance the experiences of and effectively support Masters and Doctoral students.

Community engagement

The purposes, goals and role of CE (including service-learning) have been usefully clarified, additional staff, funds and space have been devoted to CE, and by and large CE has grown from strength to strength.

We were unfortunate to lose a very capable first CE Director (a new upgraded post) and the current director has indicated her wish to pursue more academic interests. This could provide the opportunity to consider again our needs and the kind of post/person we require.

Institutional environment and culture

We have held imbizo's related to equity, gender and institutional culture to address the challenges of Rhodes becoming a home for all, and becoming characterised by respect for Constitutional values and ideals, including respect for difference and diversity.

We have agreed to create the post of Director: Equity and Transformation and recently took a decision to remove the current portraits in the Council chamber and to establish a working group to advise us on visual representation at Rhodes.

It is clear that we have a long way to go in improving the equity profile of our academic and administrative staff bodies and that many of the strategies that have been attempted thus far have born little success.

There are also various challenges in so far as institutional culture is concerned. Little progress has been made on formulating initiatives following the imbizo on institutional culture.

Institutional planning, policy and decision-making structures and processes

Prior to mid-2006 a Senior Management Forum existed that met regularly and comprised of the VC, DVC, Registrar's and director-level senior administrators. Deans were not part of the Senior Management Forum. Alongside, a Dean's Committee existed, whose minutes served at Senate. Subsequently, the current bi-monthly Senior Administration Meeting (SAM) was begun, comprising of the current membership: VC, DVC's, Registrar's, all Deans and almost all director-level senior administrators. The SAM is meant to be a forum for discussing important academic and administrative matters, for feeding these into the appropriate governance processes and structures of the University and, where necessary, taking decisions that do not circumvent or undermine University governance structures. In creating SAM, consideration was given to, alongside, having more frequent meetings of the EXCO of Senate.

In late 2007, an Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) was established, replacing the old Academic Planning and Quality Assurance Committee. The IPC seeks to bring together enrolment, academic, staff, infrastructure and financial planning. An Institutional Planning Unit (IPU) was also created, with the post of Director Institutional Planning. The IPU services the IPC but has yet to begin to fully undertake all the functions for which it was established. While there have been indications of the kind of work that IPU needs to undertake as a resource for the IPC, a concrete agenda for the IPU needs to be tabled at and approved by the IPC.

During 2009, the Committee structure of governance was streamlined, and in some cases there has been a process of clarifying the mandates and functions of specific committees. While the concern has been raised whether Faculty Boards dedicate sufficient time to addressing core academic issues, there has been little movement regarding the proposal that Faculty Boards have research, learning and teaching and community engagement as standing agenda items, complemented by other issues such as equity and internationalisation.

None of the restructuring since 2006 has in any way affected the supremacy of the Faculty Boards and Senate or the Council of the University and its key committees, with respect to ultimate policy- and decision-making.

A process has been underway for some time to produce an Institutional Development Plan, which synthesises decisions that have thus far been taken, commitments that have been made to the Council on Higher Education in terms of Rhodes' Quality Improvement Plan, and agreements that have been reached on size and shape, equity, infrastructure and a host of other issues.

A process has also been underway to produce an overall Campus Development Plan that can provide a framework for and guide the effective and responsible use of available land and where we site new buildings and facilities.

The following policies have been developed (either newly introduced or updated) since 2006:

NEW POLICIES/FRAMEWORKS	DATE	REVISED POLICIES/FRAMEWORKS	DATE
Criteria for Evaluating Teaching Portfolios	Nov 09	Community Engagement Policy	2010…
Employment of Temporary Support Staff Policy	2010…	Equity Policy	2010…
Eradicating Unfair Discrimination & Harassment Policy	Mar 09	Honorary Titles Framework	Nov 09
Ill Health Incapacity & Occupational Health Policy	Mar 08	Institutional HIV & Aids Policy	Dec 08
Institutional Planning & Review Framework*	May 08	Institutional Planning & Review Framework	April 09
Job Evaluation Policy for Support Staff	June 07	Personal Promotions Policy & Procedures	Nov 09
Marketing & Advertising Policy for Student Societies & Clubs	June 09	Plagiarism Policy	June 08
Naming & Renaming of Buildings & Facilities Policy	Sept 09	Recruitment & Selection Policy for Academic Staff	
New Programme Application Framework	Aug 08	Recruitment & Selection Policy for Hall & House Wardens	2010
Parental Benefits & Leave Policy	Dec 08	Recruitment & Selection Policy for Sub-wardens	2010…
Patents Policy	09	Recruitment & Selection Policy for Support Staff	June 07
Personal Promotions Policy & Procedures*	April 07	Short Courses Policy	May 10
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy	Mar 07	Staff Development Policy	2010…
Recruitment & Selection Policy for Casual Staff	Jan 07		
Recruitment & Selection Policy for Hall & House Wardens*	June 08		
Recruitment & Selection Policy for Subwardens*	April 07		
Research & Scholarship Entities Framework	July 09		
Staff Disability Policy	2010…		
Student Admissions Policy	2010…		
Support Staff Leave Policy	2010…		

(* indicates the policy was introduced and revised during the period 2006-2010)

Rhodes' vision and mission

Little explicit and dedicated attention has been given to vision and mission and the identity of Rhodes, with a conscious preference post the 2006 imbizo to give attention to size and shape issues.

It should be recalled that at the imbizo some questioned the need for a vision and mission statement and posed whether a clear statement of Rhodes' commitments should not suffice. Such a statement would state the social purposes of Rhodes University and its specific goals.

As far as identity is concerned, Rhodes indicated in its submission to the CHE that it considered itself to be a 'liberal arts' institution. The precise meaning of this has been questioned, some at Rhodes considering it to be a 'research intensive' institution.

There is always a danger that phrases such as 'liberal arts', 'research intensive' and the like do not always easily capture identity. Hopefully, the discussion document produced recently by Prof. Boughey can help clarify matters.

Staff related developments

On the staff front we have

- Sought to address and improve the equity profile of academic and support staff through various initiatives, though with little success thus far
- Formulate a remuneration policy, including, moving to remunerate all staff, beginning with academic staff, on the 50th percentile, and addressing differentials between different categories of staff with a view to narrowing differentials
- Expressed our commitment, in the interests of our staff and the town, to not outsource (transfer to external providers) any current internally provided operations and services
- Created the posts of DVC's Academic and Student Affairs and Research and Development by using the existing DVC and Dean of Research posts
- Created the post of Registrar: Finance and Operations (using the existing Registrar: Finance post and shifting some of the responsibilities that fell under a DVC to this post)
- Created the post of Dean of Learning and Teaching (using the existing post of Director of Academic Development)
- Created the post of Director of Research to strengthen the Research Office in accordance with our goal of becoming more postgraduate- and research oriented
- Created the post of Director of Community Engagement (upgrading the previous post of Manager)
- Created the post of Director: Institutional planning (using the existing post of Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance)
- Created the post of Director of Internationalisation (converting the current part-time deanship)
- Created the post of Director of Communications and Marketing (converting the current manger post) as a consequence of splitting Communications and Development into Development and Communications and Marketing
- Agreed to create the post of Director of Equity and Transformation
- Further planned and implemented a programme for building the next generation of academics, and especially black and women academics
- Refined academic promotions criteria through a participatory and consultative process
- Sought to keep a watch on expenditure on administrative/support posts relative to academic posts

Infrastructure

With respect to infrastructure we have taken decisions and have mobilised funding with respect to:

- A new library and the renovation of the existing library
- Seven new residences (holding the decision about building a further 4 residences in abeyance)
- A new environmental education building
- A new or refurbished additional building for teacher education
- Renovating the old Loerie building as tutorial space and offices for Highway Africa
- Renovating the old Tick Research facilities for Entomology

- Renovating the previous Dean of Student's residence for CE/CSD
- Additional ICT bandwidth and speed with considerable future savings
- Acquiring new equipment in various fields of Science
- Replacement of the current telephony to institute considerable future savings
- Releasing academic space through the incorporation of some branch libraries into the main library
- Purchase of two properties on the corner of South and African streets
- An option to purchase the land surrounding and including the municipal quarry
- Creating an overall Campus Development Plan.

Some of the new infrastructure has been funded from Infrastructure and Efficiency Funding provided by DHET: R 80 million for the library and two residences in 2007/8-2009/2010 and R 62.5 million in 2010/11-2011/2012 for a teacher education building, two more residences and a dining hall, and equipment for life sciences. Fundraising for the library has thus far brought in about R20 million. Other infrastructure and equipment has been funded from funding received from the Department of Environmental Affairs, the NRF, other research and development agencies, internal funding and loans.

There will be an opportunity to apply for additional Infrastructure and Efficiency Funding for 2012/13-2013/14.

We investigated a possible public-private partnership with respect to student accommodation, but this was found to be financially unattractive, and remain open to public-private partnerships which are mutually beneficial and also of value to the town.

We established a task team on the accommodation needs of academics and support staff and further work on this issue was undertaken by the previous Registrar: Finance and Operations. However, there have been no easy solutions in sight.

Finances

As far as finances are concerned we have

- Committed ourselves to a zero-deficit budget
- Annually balanced income and expenditure
- Annually generated modest surpluses that have been allocated to an Infrastructure and Strategic Developments Fund
- Created a VC's Budget Committee to ensure more effective oversight of expenditure, to approve any expenditure beyond the amount budgeted, and to make recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee of Council and Council on deployment of available funds in the Infrastructure and Strategic Developments Fund
- Instituted a process to plan on a three-year basis and generate three-year budgets
- Been investigating the extent to which surpluses can be generated by the Residential Operations budget and can be used to subsidise the Central Operations budget, as a means of off-setting any reduced public subsidies that could be a consequence of limiting enrolments.

Challenges

Enrolment Planning

In our interim submission to the DHET we indicated the following with respect to our proposed 2011-2013 plan:

- A target of 7 071 students in 2010 (although we are already 7 135) with increases to totals of 7 147 (2011), 7 227 (2012) and 7 283 in 2013 – an average annual increase of 1%
- Undergraduate targets of 5 436 (2011), 5 480 (2012) and 5 502 in 2013 – steady at 76%
- Postgraduate targets of 1 679 (2011), 1 712 (2012) and 1 747in 2013 – an increase from 23% to 24%
- Consolidate undergraduate growth while undertaking investigations into longer-term growth capacity institutionally and within the Grahamstown context. This includes exploring new technologies and time-tabling options to enhance delivery, make more efficient use of existing space, and increase student access to teaching materials and programme choices. Discussions between the University and the Makana Municipality are ongoing regarding the infrastructural conditions necessary for further growth
- Continue the trajectory of slow but steady growth at the postgraduate level, increasing the proportion of postgraduate enrolments to 24% by 2013
- Maintain the current major field of study proportions at 24% SET, 15% business, 10% education and 51% other humanities
- Retain the increased proportion of African students above 50%
- Maintain the proportion of female students at 59%
- Reverse the trend of decreasing graduation and throughput rates in order to stabilise success rates at approximately 85%, recognising that enrolling increasing numbers of under-prepared students requires additional resources and time
- Maintain research output levels as far as possible.

In so far as the next Enrolment Plan for 2011-2013 is concerned, which must be negotiated with the DHET in October 2010 and has major implications for our subsidy, we need to have an honest and serious discussion about our ability to remain within our enrolment targets.

We have not done so during 2008-2010; indeed we are almost 700 students over our 2010 enrolment target. This had had consequences for infrastructure, and has also cost us teaching inputs subsidy income.

Whereas to date we have needed to grow annually in order to not lose our share of the teaching inputs subsidy and create financial problems for ourselves, the next two year period is different in that we are in a migration period (until 2012-2013) and our subsidy is already determined. The following three year period (2013/2014 – 2015/2016) could also be different in that our subsidy share could remain the same or even improve. This will depend on the approved enrolment targets of other institutions, the approved overall enrolment growth of the system and the outcomes of the Minister's impending funding review. It also remains to be seen whether the work being undertaken by the Director of Residential Operations regarding possible funds that could be provided by Residential Operations budget to the Central Operations budget holds out any real prospects of restricting growth.

Whatever our agreed enrolment targets over the next three years, we need to be certain that we can adhere to our targets. The Dean's, given their responsibility for decisions on admissions (guided by our new Admissions Policy), must recognise and appreciate that they are critical to us remaining within our targets. Either we adhere to targets – and there could give rise to difficult dilemmas and choices - or we set a higher (and more realistic?) target in order to not unnecessarily lose teaching inputs subsidy.

Academic Planning

A concern is whether there is full recognition and appreciation with respect to the manner in which, once decided and approved by DHET, our enrolment plan shapes our academic planning. For example, if we plan to grow by a tiny number of undergraduates between 2011 and 2013 it must be understood that there is no or little scope to introduce any new undergraduate programmes during this period unless there are cutbacks in existing programmes.

Our key challenges include:
- Maintaining our status of possessing the best undergraduate pass rates and graduations rates among South African universities
- Ensuring that we provide effective support to all our students, and especially black South African students who are from schools other than private and ex-model C schools
- Deciding on the appropriate balance between face-to-face teaching-learning and other forms of teaching-learning
- Finalising an appropriate model for providing extended studies
- Identifying and effectively supporting postgraduate and research niche areas
- Proactively identifying possible new postgraduate and research programmes, effectively and efficiently deciding on these and ensuring there is effective planning and implementation
- Ensuring that there begins to be a greater contribution by the Humanities Faculty to research and postgraduate outputs
- Developing the appropriate institutional arrangements to enhance the experiences of and effectively support Masters and Doctoral students.

Staffing

Key challenges here include:
- Improving the equity profile of academic and support staff
- Continuing to build the next generation of academics, and especially black and women academics
- Effectively supporting new academics
- Finalising a remuneration policy
- Systematically moving to remunerate all staff on the 50th percentile
- Improving teacher: student ratios overall and in specific areas.

Infrastructure Plan

Similarly, little progress has been made on finalising an Infrastructure Plan, which is necessary to inform Rhodes' next application in early 2011 for infrastructure and efficiency funding as well to inform the work of the fundraising efforts of the Development Office and the Campus Development Plan. (For example, any Development Office campaign such as 'Rhodes 2020' has to be informed by the Institutional Development Plan, including an Infrastructure Plan).

It seems to me that to identify our infrastructure priorities we could perhaps distinguish between

- What are *backlogs* in infrastructure – that is, what are priorities in relation to our current academic operations?
- What are priorities in relation to our 2011-2013 and 2014-2016 enrolment plans and new academic programmes?

In terms of our priorities, we could perhaps also usefully distinguish between

- Academic infrastructure
- Student accommodation and sports/cultural infrastructure
- Administrative and support operations infrastructure.

It is important that we are certain that we are utilising our current infrastructure optimally, as the building space audit/review that is being conducted by the DHET and HESA could have adverse consequences for Rhodes if it is determined that we possess more than sufficient space.

My impression is that we are not making effective and efficient use of some of our buildings, especially in the 'middle campus' area, and that having the courage to take a few *decisions* could set us on the path to freeing up space that could be more effectively employed, especially for academic purposes.

Finance Plan

Given government's multi-term expenditure framework, it should be possible to calculate public subsidies with a measure of certainty and to also project tuition fee income and other income with some certainty, and on this basis to develop three-year budgets.

Financial planning on a single year basis provides neither an adequate sense of future existing commitments and new financial commitments (Law Clinic, SANTED Multilingualism programme, possible need to absorb Mellon/Kresge posts, etc.), nor sufficient space to allocate resources on a sustained basis to new programmes and initiatives.

With respect to the former issue, are we able to rest assured that the financial commitments that stem from decisions taken at IPC and which mature in future years are diligently factored into financial planning and budgets for future years.

Institutional Development Plan

An IDP which collates, consolidates and expresses our choices, decisions and goals and strategies with respect to academic programmes, enrolments, staffing, infrastructure and finances over the next decade (two five-year terms) is long overdue. As has been indicated, the IDP should constitute a compass that guides developments, prioritisation, decision-making and implementation at Rhodes while leaving room for pursuing new imperatives and exploiting possible new opportunities.

For various reasons, developing and finalising an IDP has proved arduous. The IDP has to be informed by and also underpinned by Faculty- and Division-level plans. Despite requests, there have not always been the necessary inputs from senior administrators.

With respect to the IDP, the identification of goals on the part of Faculty's, Division's and Offices is a start but not enough. There has to be also a specification of the institutional arrangements, concrete strategies, funding and time frames for the realisation of the goals.

Campus Development Plan

Informed by the IDP, the CDP would need to be also finalised as a guide to the considered overall physical maintenance and development of the Rhodes University campus.

Planning and implementation

Overall, there have been many positive developments following the 2006 imbizo. Furthermore, there are many creative ideas within Rhodes that seek to exploit external and internal opportunities for new academic programmes (as a matter of choice primarily research and postgraduate), to expand or consolidate areas of academic strength at Rhodes, to enhance student learning through curriculum and pedagogic innovations, to innovate institutional arrangements that enhance the achievement of goals, and in general to better position Rhodes to realize its goals.

It is, however, clear that there are also shortcomings, which have adverse implications for effectiveness, efficiency and inclusive participation and for ensuring that Rhodes remains at the cutting-edge of knowledge production and the production of high quality graduates. These shortcomings, to varying degrees, include:

- The inordinately lengthy time period from ideas to concept documents to full proposals, resulting in possible missed opportunities
- A lack of clarity regarding the status of an outcome – whether this represents a decision, an in-principle decision, or simply an agreement to think more on an issue

- Lack of timeous responses by structures/offices to whom issues are delegated, which result in delays that compromise inclusive processes of policy- and decision-making and, ultimately, policy- and decision-making and implementation
- A seeming assumption that when a proposal has been approved, or approved in-principle, funding from the University will follow
- Ineffectual and/or tardy implementation, even when funding has been approved with, in the case of donor funding, possible reputational damage among donors
- Insufficient attention to the *planning of implementation* and *monitoring of implementation*
- An inadequate clear specification of roles, responsibilities and time frames with respect to new programmes, projects and initiatives.

The shortcomings