



**CHALLENGES FACING
THE NEW MINISTER
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RESPONSES FROM THE
SECTOR**

TRISH GIBBON

SEPTEMBER 2004

Overview and Analysis of Responses to CHET Change / Policy Dialogue Invitation

As part of preparation for the seminar, CHET invited all the subscribers to its Change/Policy Dialogue Newsletter, at present numbering around 1600, to send in short responses in which they outlined what they thought were the key issues in higher education that the Minister should address. The initial invitation was followed by a reminder, and personal reminders were then sent to a selected group. The level of response was disappointing – twenty three in all – two of which were from outside the HE sector (banking and publishing) and four from other parts of the world (three from Africa, and one from the US). It should be borne in mind, however, that many potentially key contributors chose not to send in written responses as they would be attending the seminar in person.

Nonetheless, this is a poor response and deserves some comment. The view has been expressed that had this sort of request been made in the years immediately preceding and after 1994, it would have been met with a flood of contributions. Does the current level of apathy reflect the fact that the sector is generally, as one respondent termed it, “punch-drunk with policy changes of one kind or another”? Are we suffering from the same kind of policy and change fatigue that has overcome Eastern Europe in the aftermath of liberation from Soviet control? At least one other possibility, that by no means excludes the first, is that academic life has itself changed so dramatically, that the profession makes so many more and varied demands on academics, that they lack enthusiasm for any additional impositions on their time. Whatever explanation is sought, there may be a danger here of limited ability and willingness to think systemically about higher education, and an increasing insularity as managers, administrators and academics focus on the immediate priorities of their local situation and institution.

In the following section, an attempt has been made to group, in appropriate categories, the issues raised by respondents. Inevitably, there is some overlap between the categories.

1. Pre-tertiary issues – the schooling system

◆ Schooling – quality and type

Higher education could do much more and be far more effective if the schools sent through better prepared learners. This is where young South Africans are most severely let down. There are also too many matriculants who do not meet the entrance requirements for HE and who are consequently simply lost to the system. One respondent suggests that consideration should be given to developing partnerships of the kind found in Santa Ana, California, a partnership that draws in universities, community colleges, high schools,

parent organisations and NGOs and engages in a variety of interventions designed to better prepare students for tertiary level studies. Partnering with FET colleges, in particular, could help provide places and training for students who are under-prepared or might not consider further studies after matriculating. Another contributor argues that more learners should be encouraged to take Technical College courses and there should be improved access to Learnerships.

◆ **Maths and Science**

Cabinet should declare Mathematics a national priority. Subject teachers in Maths and Science are ill-qualified, especially in the rural areas, and they contribute to the high failure rate of matriculants. Far too few girls are trained in these subjects and more learners should be encouraged to take them at the higher level.

◆ **Physical health**

The promotion of sport is not enough to enhance the general physical fitness and health of children and adults. The country suffers huge losses in productivity and medical expenses due to diseases linked to lack of physical exercise. HE should take the lead in developing physical education programmes that can be introduced at schools.

2. **Higher education sector and institutional concerns**

◆ **Autonomy**

How are autonomy and academic freedom to be understood in the context of a very prescriptive regulatory framework comprised of elements such as the Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM), Quality Assurance, enrolment planning and the new funding framework? To what extent does the Ministry have the power and right to intervene directly in the internal affairs of an institution and at what point does this contravene the autonomy of institutions as enshrined in the Constitution? A respondent from Kenya draws attention to the lack of autonomy of HE institutions in Kenya and other parts of Africa manifest in the level of direct control and interference from government, and the disastrous effect this has had on the development of higher education. While this kind of control is undesirable, another respondent argues that the Minister should intervene more timeously in institutional affairs to persuade managers to address issues before they erupted in destructive violence.

Restraints on public-private partnerships are seen as drastically limiting the capacity of the country to meet human resource development needs not only locally, but in the rest of Africa. Such needs could potentially be met by the

development of workforce programmes through partnerships with industries and international providers, and they will be critical to the success of the economic dimension of NEPAD. Restraints on mode of delivery, in the rigid distinction between contact and distance education, are also seen as limiting diversity and undermining access for poor and rural students.

◆ **Policy, steering and change**

Closely related to the above issues is a concern with establishing an appropriate relationship and balance between state driven policies and levers on the one hand, and conditions and capacities conducive to change at the institutional level on the other. At present the relationship between state and sector is one of mutual mistrust with the sector perceiving threats to institutional autonomy, and the government suspecting institutions of serving self-interest at the expense of national interests. The development of macro policy and the manner of deployment of the main levers for systemic steering (planning, quality assurance and funding) need to be shaped and informed by greater understanding of the dynamics and politics of institutional change and the various forms of resistance to change. Government policy discourse and practice tends to regard the system as a homogenous entity which can be coherently steered through strong control. In reality, the system is constituted of a much more diverse and varied cluster of competing, self-interested elements. An overly punitive and combative approach precludes opportunities not only for greater co-operation but also for more compliant sectoral self-regulation.

◆ **Funding and growth**

The critical question raised here is how the human resource needs of the country will be met, especially in the science and technology arena, if a cap is placed on the growth of the HE sector and it has to operate from a relatively fixed resource base. Another respondent asks how the ideals of the White paper in relation to increased participation are to be met in future planning given caps on enrolment growth. A third respondent approaches this issue by expressing concern at government's reluctance to increase public spending as a form of social investment. An expanded system is necessary not only to increase graduate outputs to meet national HRD requirements, but also to offset the impact of HIV/AIDS on higher education enrolments and continuing financial dropouts.

A number of other respondents refer to the inadequate funding of the HE sector as a whole, of the FET sector, and of NSFAS for students. A particular issue was raised in relation to how the new funding framework will impact on initial teacher training. The respondent argues that initial teacher training will not be financially viable under this formula and this will have the doubly negative effect of reducing the stock of teachers at a time when they are

desperately needed, and of leading to the collapse of HDIs that depend on teacher training as a primary income stream. The knock on effect is that there will be even fewer well educated students entering the tertiary system. With reduced funding, the HDIs will also find it increasingly difficult to meet the quality assurance benchmarks of the HEQC.

Improving conditions of service in HE is also seen as critical in order to continue to attract and retain new cohorts of (especially black and women) academics and HE leaders. This is especially important given the problems of the ageing professoriate and ongoing competition not only from the private sector but also from government and parastatals, especially the HSRC.

◆ **Impact of HIV/AIDS**

How is the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the system being addressed? What responsibilities can institutions reasonably be expected to shoulder? While the Department has an overarching policy on HIV/AIDS, implementation appears to be limited to donor-driven initiatives and there is no evidence of any modelling of the multiple and varied impacts on the system as a whole which should be informing debates about participation and expansion.

◆ **Mergers and quality**

One respondent asks whether the mergers presently tabled will proceed, or whether there will be any further changes. For another, the critical issue is that the mergers pose new challenges for quality assurance and improvement. Quality will have to be pursued under very different conditions, and implicit in this commentary is the view that the enormous expense and effort of mergers will not be justified if we end up with second rate institutions, programmes and campuses. The Minister will have to ensure the provision of adequate resources and personnel to avoid this outcome.

For institutions with fairly high levels of research productivity, merging with institutions with low productivity leads to a mean output that is drastically lower, and makes them far less competitive for research funding.

◆ **Knowledge and research**

A number of respondents urged the promotion of Maths and Science while one argued that greater efforts had to be made to make academic knowledge complementary to other forms of knowledge and to broaden conceptions of academic and scientific practice. Little was being done to promote indigenous languages in HE and in part this was due to the apathy of intellectuals who were speakers of indigenous languages.

A review of systems of publication and systems of approval for research reports, mini-theses and dissertations was suggested with the aim of encouraging promising young students to enter the academic profession. This respondent also suggested that European and American theories should give way to “new theories suited to local needs.”

A respondent from the publishing industry commented on profiteering in the higher education sector where an academic both writes and prescribes a book which, with some local examples, is really just a regurgitation of knowledge available elsewhere, but it is then imposed on a captive student market.

3. External linkages and demands

◆ Human resource needs and development

Higher education plays a critical role in meeting the human resource needs of the country but it does not meet those needs adequately. There are still great shortages of intermediate and high level skills. One respondent observes that while the policy framework for higher education encourages responsiveness to South Africa’s growth and development needs, higher education is not seen as a strategic partner in the country’s development policies. The Minister of Education needs to encourage ‘joined’ policy and practice at provincial and national levels. Further arguments are that the capacity of HE to meet the HR needs of the nation’s development agenda, and the extended development agenda of the SADC region and NEPAD may be severely compromised if a cap is placed on growth in the sector and if the policy environment is not changed to allow for more flexible forms of partnership and delivery.

If South Africa’s leadership role in the economic future of Africa, as envisioned by NEPAD, is to become a reality, the private sector firms that might exercise such leadership will need help in addressing the human resource gaps they will face in African countries to the north. That help will not be forthcoming from the ministries of education in these countries. But before they can look to South Africa’s further and higher education sectors for assistance, the new Minister of Education must take steps to change the policy environment in such a way that South African firms and education and training providers can pursue partnerships with international providers of high quality, cost effective workforce development programmes in order to jumpstart the design and delivery of such programmes.

In relation to NEPAD, a contributor from another part of Africa comments on the insularity of African universities and the unwillingness of both governments and institutions to cede authority to regional bodies or to actively

pursue collaboration. Others comment on the high cost of tuition and poor resources of universities in the rest of the continent.

◆ **Alliances, co-operation and co-ordination**

Other respondents take up the theme of alliances and partnerships by pointing to the things that have been achieved through these mechanisms within the higher education sector itself that would not have been possible for institutions operating on their own. Unlike mergers which are generally crude and inefficient mechanisms, co-operative and strategic alliances are almost infinitely variable and flexible and take their form from the needs and objectives of institutions and their partners, either within or outside the sector. Co-operative ventures have resulted in consortia of libraries, IT services, inter-institutional teaching and research platforms and a number of projects that address access, applications and articulation. The Minister should ensure that the means already provided for in policy and legislation are activated to strengthen the HE system through these alternative strategies.

One respondent focuses particularly on building partnerships between HE institutions, FET colleges and schools which offer the possibility of developing far more holistic and successful alternatives to stand-alone bridging courses which do not succeed in widening access because they cannot wipe away years of formal education deficit, social and family fragmentation, non-learning home environments and extreme economic deprivation. The Santa Ana partnership in California provides a model that could be adapted to South African needs and has proved to be enormously successful through a range of interventions aimed at communities, teachers and high school learners, as well as community college and university students. As a consequence, many students enter colleges and universities far better prepared and with much greater chances of success.

Analysis

Whereas ten years ago equity issues dominated higher education discourse, if these respondents are anything to go by, then making higher education more effective at producing quality graduates has become an overriding concern. Obstacles to the realisation of that objective are identified in a number of weak points in the system ranging from inadequate preparation of learners in the public schooling system, to inadequate funding of the HE sector and of students. Change overload and a sledgehammer approach to restructuring are also seen as deflecting attention away from the co-operative links and strategic alliances that might have brought greater educational and human resource development gains.

Another major concern is to improve Maths and Science teaching and learning in order to give more students opportunities to get into fields for which these are prerequisites. One respondent even goes so far as to suggest that Cabinet should make Mathematics a national priority.

In the light of highly interventionist strategies in recent policy implementation, and the imposition of a strongly regulative framework on the sector, a number of respondents also expressed concern about infringements of institutional autonomy. In particular, high levels of regulation could negatively affect the ability of institutions to meet human resource demands and position themselves adequately for local, regional and international markets either because of limitations placed on modes of delivery or bars on entering into partnerships with private providers. Uniformly applied controls not only provoke resistance, they ignore the diversity of the system and diminish the prospects for establishing more co-operative and compliant relations between state and sector that are the precondition for real change.

Reading between the lines, one might say that the sector responses reveal that higher education is no longer looking at social justice issues simply in terms of its own internal operations and composition but in the much broader sense that social equity will not be achieved unless higher education is given the means and the manoeuvrability to play its role in high level human resource development.

List of Respondents

Kiplimo David Bitok
Prof Chris Brink
Gina Buijs
Dr John Butler-Adam
Prof Marius Coetsee
Prof Cheryl de la Rey
Dr Richard Fehnel
Prof Magda Fourie
Dr Fred Hayward
Mathabo Hendricks
Pamela Johnson
Juma Eliud Khauka
Dr Jim Leatt
Susan Irene Meeme
Prof Piet Naude
Prof Daniel Okeyo
Prof Ben Parker
Prof Deon Pretorius
Cheryl Sayman
Dr Michael Smout
Prof Kallie Strydom
Dr Rolf Stumpf
Prof George Subotzky



**CHALLENGES FACING
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FRAMING THE DISCUSSION

**Seminar with Minister Pandor
27 September 2004**

Aims of the Seminar

This Seminar, which could be re-constituted on a biannual basis depending on interest by the Minister and participants, intends to put together a diverse group of established intellectuals who will identify and debate key issues confronting higher education at this moment. The main aim will be to focus on 'non-restructuring' issues such as the perception of, and self perception of higher education, skills (both the need for high level and intermediate skills and the link between higher and further education) and how enthusiasm and confidence in higher education can be built. While the seminar may point to key issues that require urgent attention, it should be a more sociological, pedagogical and philosophical form of reflection. The intention of the seminar is not to suggest policies, but to constitute a group of people with expert opinions who publicly discuss and debate their views, informed both by research (local and international) and experience.

Discussion Frame

A seminar such as this could be structured in different ways: one possibility would be to devise a menu of 'urgent' issues and invite people to talk about them; another approach is to construct some kind of overarching frame that links a number of issues. The latter necessarily excludes a 'super market' range of challenges, but the loose planning group for the seminar felt that it would be more useful to adopt this approach, and to articulate a range of opinions within a broad, integrative framework.

The frame is about two things. It highlights the particular form that the discourse of change in higher education has taken over the past ten years and suggests that it is time to develop a different way of talking about higher education. Secondly, it explores how a new discourse can be constructed around development as an integrating theme.

How Do We Talk About Higher Education?

Njabulo Ndebele, principal of the University of Cape Town, recently wrote: "The delivery regime resulted in higher education to be perceived as a diseased body that required massive political and administrative surgery There is a real threat of system low self-esteem The critical challenge facing higher education under new political leadership is to promote higher education with a greater sense of self-assurance about its role in democratic consolidation." (SAUVCA, July 2004)

Ndebele uses a medical metaphor (a diseased body ...surgery) that reflects a certain kind of 'Pretoria speak' to which we have become accustomed over the last five years, and he alerts us to the way in which such a discourse – of disease, of deficit, of lack – has itself produced a debilitating dynamic in higher education, an internalised inferiority complex parallel to that identified by some of Africa's other great thinkers, Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko and Ngugi wa Thiong'o in relation to colonial experience. Like them, Ndebele claims that such poor self-esteem cannot provide the basis for positive social action or the self-assurance necessary for higher education to play its role in democratic consolidation.

1. Diagnose the Disease

We have to acknowledge that the dominant discourse of the early and middle 1990s focussed on identifying the pathologies of apartheid, and this is apparent from NEPI, to the NCHE and the White Paper. But the negative view of higher education was given hyperbolic expression under Kader Asmal, when in the words of Njabulo Ndebele, higher education was declared a "diseased body that requires political and administrative surgery" – with some officials adopting the posture of surgeons. Asmal used what Habermas called the 'crisis strategy', meaning that when government contemplates radical, or oppressive action, it first has to declare a crisis. In this instance, the weakness of a minority of institutions was used to overemphasise a system weakness in order to justify radical reconstructive surgery.

2. Fixing the Patient with Policy

Apartheid was a state driven 'grand policy', so in the immediate post 1994 period it was widely assumed that fixing it would also require a state driven grand (comprehensive) policy with a 'one-size fits all' approach. The first five years were largely about symbolic policy, aimed at building agreement within the fragmented system, and society. The three key guiding principles (the *Holy Trinity* of higher education) were: *Equity, Co-operative Governance and Responsiveness*.

The importance of symbolic policy is the role it plays in developing consensus, and hence the emphasis placed on equity talk and consultation, which contributed in no small measure to the agreement and enthusiasm that characterised the 1994-1997 'new South Africa' euphoria. It could be argued that for the first time in the post 1948 period there was an apparent moment of trust and optimism between government and institutions. But by the time of the second election, considerable unease had developed about the health of the system.

3. An Implementation Vacuum with Unintended Consequences *(the patient had taken a turn for the worse)*

By 1999 the system, in institutional terms, was more unequal and fragmented than in 1994, and the National Plan (February 2001) attributed this unintended outcome to an 'implementation vacuum' caused by an 'incremental approach' based on three problems:

- lack of capacity in terms of person-power and technical skills;
- absence of an adequate information base, in particular, analyses and understanding of systemic and institutional trends;
- an ongoing consultative and interactive planning process. (National Plan, 2001; 1.2)

Outside the Ministry, it was not a lack of capacity, but bad intention that was identified as the cause of the malaise. Jonathan Jansen argued that politicians never intended to implement symbolic policy and Andre Kraak interpreted the adoption of GEAR by the new elite as 'policy slippage' (for which read 'selling out') to the new global hegemony. It should be mentioned that symbolic policy was a very necessary phase of nation building and of gaining consensus for a new way of talking about higher education in the post apartheid phase. A good example was the RDP, but GEAR, whatever the criticisms and imperfections, was a necessary next phase to establish priorities and make certain tradeoffs. To negotiate tradeoffs requires what Gelb calls 'infrastructural power', something the new state did not have, which is why GEAR was 'declared', and not negotiated. This produced a 'model' for implementation in other sectors, which has in part given rise to the current tension about academic autonomy.

4. Embargo Policy, Implement

(stop diagnosing, just administer the medicine)

The post 1999 period started with the credo that we had enough good policy, consultation had been overdone and now it was time to implement – and the Ministry immediately set about developing new policies, or, in its own terms, interpreting the White Paper. The Minister, in order to differentiate himself from his predecessor, bifurcated policy and implementation, instead of understanding that diagnosis, treatment, assessment, adjustment of treatment and rechecking the patient is an interlinked, ongoing process.

Being confronted with constant institutional crises in about 25% of the system, a symptomatic diagnosis concluded that the main cause of the epidemic was the institutional landscape, a product of the "geopolitical imagination of apartheid planners". The National Working Group was instructed to do some radical surgery - don't kill any patients (close any sites), just do some transplants. The NWG produced a report that is replete with internal contradictions, that misuses the methodology and purposes of performance indicators and in cavalier fashion mixes international policy examples with local political expediencies. Instead of consulting higher education, an extensive consultation occurred with every

regional ANC caucus, contributing to a deterioration in the doctor-patient relationship. The effects of this surgery will occupy a considerable amount of the attention of the new Minister during the next five years. It can only be hoped that once again the symptoms of 'recuperating' will not distract the Minister from the health of the whole body of the higher education system.

5. Doing a Check-up

Almost simultaneous with the NWG process, the Ford foundation funded CHET to round up about 50 of the NEPI and NCHE cadre to do an assessment of changes for the 1995 -2000 period in higher education. The review, called Transformation in Higher Education: Global Pressures and Local Realities (2002) is in the process of being republished by Kluwer for international distribution. The key observations it makes are:

1. Regarding individual redress, a 'skewed revolution' occurred (Subotsky, 2001) that dramatically changed the complexion of the elite, but like the Gini-coefficient, what we might call class-based or social inequality had not decreased because overall student participation had in fact dropped slightly. By 2003, however, participation had picked up from 15% to 18%.
2. In terms of institutional redress, the gap between the historically disadvantaged and historically advantaged universities widened, with the Afrikaans universities, ironically, being the biggest winners from the first five years of the new SA.
3. An alternative explanation to implementation vacuum is that a complex combination of factors such as geographical location, historical disadvantage, political disagreements, the creation of an internal competitive market (through the application of NSFAS and SAPSE) and an inadequate regulatory environment contributed to a number of historically black institutions spiralling into crisis while another group of institutions flourished. When you have inequality in a market that does not offer some protection for the weakest, inequality increases. The widening gap was partially the result of the implementation of certain policies, such as SAPSE and NSFAS, and not because of an 'implementation vacuum'.
4. Although inequality at the extreme ends of the institutional landscape had widened, a more differentiated and complex landscape with at least four discernable 'types' were emerging that were described as domain consolidation, domain enterprise, domain seeking and domain crisis. While this grouping of institutions still reflected certain vestiges of the apartheid legacy, these institutional types could no longer be described according to racially determined stereotypes. New terms had to be found to describe these new forms of differentiation.
5. The landscape differences, and many of the equity and efficiency gains, were determined much more by particular mixes of institutional academic and management capacities and cultures than by government policy – leading to

a realisation that government policy is more limited as a change instrument than was initially anticipated.

6. The overall cost efficiency of the system had not improved between 1994 and 2000, but at the individual institutional level, huge variations developed. The funding diversification of some of the institutions is the envy of many first world institutions – but part of it is due to student fee contributions that may already be exceeding sustainability levels.
7. Research output in terms of DoE accredited publications remained static, but some institutions increased their research/consultancy income by more than a 100% (some by even more than 400%) so that their income from this source became larger than the total budget of a number of the smaller institutions. The 2001 National Plan had not yet emerged, and the DoE Research Plan promised in the 1997 White Paper has still not been produced, but in line with global trends, other agencies and government departments are increasingly 'steering' research. On the one hand this brings much needed new money into the research system, but on the negative side, this uncoordinated research market means that government and the private sector both act as 'markets' for application driven research while basic research and strong disciplinary training come under increasing threat.
8. While research has become much more responsive in market terms, an issue of great concern is producing skills for socio-economic development. The concerns are about numbers, type and quality. The throughput rate of students has not increased, and the imbalance between white and African pass rates remain, resulting in a very slow change in graduation output. Labour market trends show that the current economy, **not a faster growing economy**, would require a growth in professional workers of more than 15% per annum, accompanied by a drastic reduction (over 30%) in unskilled workers. In addition to the need to increase the number of skilled people, there are particular areas of projected shortages. The phenomenon of skills shortages and unemployed graduates point to a problem of both type and quality of education. There is a growing tension between interdisciplinary, specific study programmes, targeted at the labour market, and discipline trained students who have solid academic skills that enable them to become 'self-programmable' - able to redefine their work and innovate.
9. The governance model that underpins higher education reform is now a 'mixed model' that combines a de facto market (deregulation) with attempted strong regulation, or an institutional state model (Olsen, 1988). The mixed signals also relate to abandoning the participatory consultative model, which is not suitable for negotiating policy tradeoffs. With a contradictory governance model and without specifying a different method for negotiating policy tradeoffs, numerous unintended consequences have emerged,

amongst others a widespread perceived government threat to autonomy and a loss of trust and confidence in, and within, the higher education sector.

The advantage of this sort of check-up is that it gives us the basis for talking about higher education in a new way. The higher education system in South Africa is by no means dysfunctional and perhaps the most interesting thing to emerge from this study is that the system has begun to differentiate itself according to dynamics and along lines other than those of historical racial division. The study also gives us ways of understanding the relationship between policy and implementation that are more complex and sophisticated, and critically point to the central role of institutions in any process of effective policy production and implementation. It also shows how institutions, not government, are taking the lead in responding to the needs of a globalising economy.

How Do We Talk About Higher Education And Development?

The ideological and political origins of most Third World universities cannot be ignored but should not be permitted to suffocate the necessary evolution of the university towards its central role in modernisation and development. If Third World countries are also to enter the information age, rejecting an increasingly marginal role in the world system, development policies must include the impulse and transformation of higher education systems as a key element of the new historical project. Manuel Castells, after an extensive overview of higher education in developing countries.

The global economy is knowledge-based. If you do not perform into this new system, you fall into low-value added production and you never, never develop, regardless of how much you trade. (Sub-Saharan Africa, minus SA, has a higher proportion of its GDP in international trade than the average for OECD countries; it just happens to be in devalued commodities.) The knowledge economy is based on the combination of technological infrastructure, connectivity, and human resources. Without human resources, nothing works. Manuel Castells.

A Set of Hypotheses:

1. Equity talk (Bengu) and Restructuring (Asmal) require a broader framework – equity and restructuring not only as moral ‘virtues’ (as part of deficit discourse) but as positively contributing to a differently articulated framework and set of objectives.
2. For higher education, development is a combination of promoting cutting edge knowledge production and training, of promoting different levels of intermediate skills training and of ‘good governance’ (citizenship) – productive skills and democracy.
3. A better understanding of the labour market, skills needs and the mobility of post-school and postgraduate students are necessary to provide signals to higher education and the Ministry – the current attempt at ‘blind steering’ has a history of failure world wide.
4. Meeting the increasing demand for high and intermediate level skills will require growth *and* greater efficiency (not one or the other), but cannot be delivered by public higher education alone – it also requires a stronger, and better articulated, private and FET college sector.

5. Improving cutting edge level research and teaching in ways that are more equitable and capable of replenishing the ageing academic cadre, will require targeted and expensive programmes.
6. While differentiation is still regarded as dirty apartheid talk, differentiated, rather than grand, one size fits all, policies and implementation programmes have become an imperative.
7. Differentiated policy and implementation is 'information rich', it requires more sophisticated information, performance indicators and methods to negotiate tradeoffs. This will require new ways of consulting in order to reduce the tension between accountability and autonomy.
8. At a government level, greater co-ordination, or inter-linked policies and actions are required amongst different departments and agencies. If linking higher education to the development project becomes a crude, and technicist manpower discourse it will undermine both higher education and the country.
9. Higher education requires confidence; from government, from the public and in itself to contribute to the "consolidation of the democratic project". Ten years after the first democratic election, neither a 'sick discourse', nor a 'confession of sins' will build a higher education sector with enough confidence and enthusiasm to contribute to the democratic project.

African universities must do more than bolster economic development. Strong African universities can play a role in protecting basic freedoms, enhancing intellectual life, and informing policy making.

Susan Beresford, President, Ford Foundation

Possible Programme to Fill Out the Above

Time	Topic	Speaker
11h30	Arrival and Settling Down	
12h00	Welcome and Aims of Seminar	Teboho Moja (CHET Board)
12h15 Lunch Served	Comments about Circulated Discussion Framework	Nico Cloete (Director, CHET)
12h45	Overview of the Skills Debate in SA Lead in Discussion:	Haroon Borat Pundy Pillay & Charles Simkins
13h45	Research and Innovation Lead in:	Ahmed Bawa Sibusiso Sibisi/ Debbie Posel
14h30	Intermediate Skills Lead in:	Penny Vinjevold Glenda Kruss & Leslie Powell
15h10	System Differentiation Lead in:	Jon File Rolf Stumpf
15h40	Co-ordinated and Differentiated Policy	Peter Maassen
16h00	How Could a New Minister Talk?	Larry Pokpas & Joe Muller
16h20	Closing	