Academic work at the UFS in terms of its intrinsic nature as a university

A foundation document of the UFS

The University of the Free State

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1. Introduction

International forces like globalisation as well as the national dynamics of political change, government spending priorities, new conceptions of accountability and relevance, transformation and restructuring imperatives, and the need to support economic growth and development, have produced an environment where the role of universities and of academics is being questioned.

Universities are confronting a higher education revolution that is likely to be swifter and potentially more intrusive than anything they have faced before. The very idea of a university seems under threat. New conceptualisations of academic work, of teaching, of research, abound. Managerialist conceptions and techniques are being introduced. New ‘creations’ like ‘comprehensive universities’ and ‘technological universities’ add to the complexity and perplexity. The range of expectations from stakeholders in society regarding the role of universities is as conflicting as it is overwhelming. In such circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that an insidious mixture of disappointment, bewilderment and betrayal shapes the emotional responses of many contemporary academics, both internationally and in South Africa. This tends to be reflected in behaviour and decisions that do not contribute to the existence of a sustainable and robust university sector that is secure about what it is and what its role should be.

Most academics have a highly developed sense, often largely intuitive, of what authentic universities should be like, and of the scholarly values, academic traditions, and intellectual assumptions that such institutions have inherited from more than 900 years of continuous institutional development. There is, however, a widespread feeling that this enduring legacy is under threat.

This document responds to the question whether there is a concept and idea of the university that can provide an ‘anchor’ for university management and academic staff whilst adjusting and responding to new challenges, expectations and threats, both on an institutional level and on the level of the individual academic. The document also provides a fairly detailed perspective on the implications of a higher educational landscape and ever-changing policies and practices that impact on the work of academic staff and the University of the Free State, and suggests how the UFS should respond to these, given that the UFS is committed to cherish, protect and sustain the core of being a true university.

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1 Based on a document originally prepared for the purposes of developing an appropriate performance management system for the University of the Free State, and approved in that context by the Senate of the UFS. It was originally developed by Channel Consulting with additional inputs by local consultants to the project, revised by members of the Recorate, and editorially finalised by professors Frederick Fourie and Magda Fourie. The English version is the original.
As such the document provides a contextual and principled backdrop against which the UFS can steer its commitment that, in its development and ‘unfolding’, it remains committed to manifesting the intrinsic nature of the university as institution – i.e. that whilst adapting its form and structures to realities, the UFS remains firmly anchored to a core concept or idea of the university.

The document is in four parts. Firstly, it provides a seminal discussion of the intrinsic nature of the university as institution, leading to a concept and idea of the university that can provide an ‘anchor’ for university management and academic staff whilst adjusting and responding to new challenges, expectations and threats. Second, it outlines the nature of the changes affecting higher education, particularly those changes that are impacting on the nature of academic work. Third, the relationship between teaching, research and community service is considered in more detail, against the backdrop of various concepts of ‘scholarship’. Fourth, the paper provides possible policy responses and offers some speculations on how academic work and staffing practices might evolve in the future, and finally addresses these issues in terms of challenges such as performance management.

2. The intrinsic nature and core functions of a university

2.1 A common lineage providing continuity: finding the underlying, intrinsic nature of the university amidst changing forms, shapes and sizes (i.e. continuity amidst change)

The world’s universities mostly follow institutional patterns that are basically derivative of Western models, with virtually no exceptions. It is fairly clear that universities have common historical roots, yet are clearly shaped by their societies and historical context. Established in the medieval period to transmit knowledge and provide training for a few key professions, in the nineteenth century universities became creators of new knowledge through basic research and scientific inquiry.

There are many variations - including open universities in Britain, Thailand, India, and elsewhere, two-year vocationally oriented institutions in the United States and many other countries, teacher-training colleges, polytechnics and many others. In South Africa we now have comprehensive institutions and institutes aspiring to be universities. While the functions of these institutions may differ from those of traditional universities, their basic organization, patterns of governance, and ethos remain remarkably close to the basic Western academic model.

The contemporary university still has a very prominent position in society. The most important institution in the complex process of scientific knowledge creation and distribution, it not only serves as home to most of the basic sciences but also to the complex system of journals, books, and databases
that communicate scientific knowledge worldwide. In addition, universities are key providers of training in an ever-growing number of specializations. (Universities have also taken on a political function in society: they often serve as centres of political and social thought, and sometimes of action, and they train those who become members of the political elite.)

The crux of the historical analysis centres around the question: amidst the changes and relative variability in appearance and organisational form, what is the common thread that makes them identifiable as universities? Is it possible to broadly identify a core of characteristics that capture the essence of universities all over the world and the centuries?

Despite and amidst these changes and variations, these institutions typically are still to a certain extent identifiable, from intuitive observation, as universities (despite some fuzziness created by the evolution of higher education institutions like polytechnics, ‘new universities’, technikons and ‘comprehensive institutions’). This implies that there must be a common, identifying element to all these universities. Identifying this underlying or intrinsic nature amidst considerable variation in form and organisational appearance, may be the key to explaining the robustness and continuity of these very durable institutions – and provide a strong guide to identifying and upholding the main idea of a university.

Certain key words and phrases stand out in literature, for example:

- Instruction of the young
- transmitting knowledge and providing training
- intellect and intellectual culture
- scholars and scholarship
- cultivation, training and exercise of the intellect
- enthusiastic study of subjects without ulterior motive
- conjectural (abstract) probing
- … of a ‘vast imaginative realm’
- the creation of new knowledge through basic research
- scientific inquiry
and so forth.

Taken together these terms give sufficient indication of a core of elements that characterise universities as such, amidst their variation in form.
2.2 The intrinsic nature of the university: adopting a viewpoint

If these have to be framed in a single statement or phrase, the following is a possible formulation, bearing in mind that these types of formulations are always provisional and open to discussion – but also, that some formulation must be adopted that captures the broad consensus of academic staff at the UFS. Against the background of the analysis above, the following is adopted:

*The essence of the university is the generation, transfer and application of analytical-scientific knowledge, methods and competencies.*

This formulation encompasses most of the elements of higher education and training, including generally formative education as well as career-oriented (or professionally-oriented) education, basic as well as applied research, and ‘mode 1’ as well as ‘mode 2’ knowledge. It most distinctive and essential crux lies in the term ‘science’ or scientific inquiry.

- This can be interpreted as a *leitmotiv* that decisively determines and shapes, or *should* determine and shape/govern, typical university functions, tasks and work, be it research, education (in whichever mode of delivery) or community service.
- It can also be understood as a decisive indication of the way things must be done – do it “the university way”, e.g. being founded in scholarship and scientific know-how, applying the benefits of analytical thinking, instilling critical-analytical thinking in other persons, and so forth.

There are also certain key issues on which authentic universities have never compromised.

- A university needs sufficient autonomy to discharge its long-term educational and scholarly responsibilities effectively; to determine its own curricula; to set its own standards of admission, assessment and progression; and to determine who should and should not receive its awards.
- It needs to nurture and uphold on behalf of all its staff and students the intellectual freedom to be able without fear or favour to advance unconventional critiques of established social, political or scientific paradigms.
- It needs to respect and preserve scholarship and learning for their own intrinsic value, and to provide scholars and researchers with an environment where free inquiry may thrive, independently of outcome or application.

Given the idea of the university outlined above, we can turn to the context of a changing higher education landscape and its implications for academic work at a university, and the UFS in particular.
3. The changing higher education landscape and pressures on academic work

Whilst one can identify and commit oneself to the above broad formulations of a certain unchanging or underlying nature, the approach taken does not imply an unchanging positive manifestation and visible appearance of this underlying nature (one “model”). This approach simultaneously requires the explicit recognition that various forces and dynamics continue to impact on the positive form of universities. In this view, universities – whilst remaining anchored in a core concept or idea of the university – can and should continue to adapt their form and structures to internal and external realities.

However, all these adaptations are not necessarily benign. Whilst the effect of the forces often is to enrich and develop universities (and their role in society) as the intrinsic complexity of the university unfolds, it sometimes serves to distort them – in some cases almost beyond recognition.

Amongst these forces one can distinguish between integrative forces (which serve to strengthen cohesion amidst increasing complexity, and need to be strengthened) and disintegrative forces (which tend to break apart and distort, and need to be resisted). Whilst this will not always be easy and open to debate, it is a task that cannot be escaped by university leadership, especially in these times of rapid change and transformation.

The challenge – and fundamental test – is how to distinguish the different forces and dynamics of a changing landscape and thus to react constructively to them and other realities without compromising and losing the adherence to the true nature of the university. Neither reality nor the nature of the university must be denied.

In determining its positive form, the South African university has to take careful account of both world and South African trends in higher education. The pace of change continues to accelerate, demanding an insightful balance between, inter alia, management imperatives (managerialism) on the one hand and academic values (collegiality) on the other, all within the context of the university as institution.

The following discussion (3.1 to 3.10) briefly reviews some of the main changes in the world of academic work that have to be taken into account in defining and evaluating academic work. Section 4 discusses the crucial relationship between teaching and research at a university.
3.1 Growth in higher education participation – towards massification?

Academic work was relatively sheltered during periods when higher education in SA involved a relatively stable external environment, small numbers of students, high levels of professional autonomy and relatively strong financial support from government (but not business and industry).

In South Africa this evolving process was clouded by exclusion due to apartheid for decades. From 1994 onward, access and equity were considered of critical importance in dealing with the legacy of exclusion. Although the potential ‘mass higher education system’ did not materialise, student numbers and concomitant staff workload have increased substantially especially in previously Afrikaans universities like the UFS.

Institutions are also faced with an increasing diversity in student population with regard to academic preparation as well as language, socioeconomic background and other factors.

The influx of students and the move to ‘student centered’ learning has placed in tension the values of those who see university education as being about critical thinking and disciplinary study, and the values of students, many of whom see university education as being about professional training and the acquisition of a credential which will assist their chances of career advancement.

At the UFS, this phenomenon has been exacerbated by the effect of a long period of ‘rationalisation’ which reduced staff numbers (prior to the success of the "turning strategy", which reversed the trend) and the strategic conversion to a dual language university.

- The issue of enormous workload resulting from these factors – including (ironically) the success of the turning strategy with regard to growth in student numbers – being an inhibiting factor to institutional (and personal) performance at this stage, was raised on more than one occasion.

3.2 Changes in higher education financing and accountability

The expansion of higher education student numbers has not been evenly matched by growth in government-provided resources for staffing. There is a significant reduction in the level of operating resources per student and an increasing separation of resources for research from those for general university operations. This trend is accentuated by the growing emphasis on securing income from non-governmental sources.
Government has repositioned itself from being a patron of universities to a purchaser of higher education, and expects accountability and returns on this investment.

A further change seems to be the shift of responsibility for funding higher education from the Government to the student. Students, employers and families have become, understandably, more demanding. Students are more concerned about flexibility and convenience, quality of teaching, ensuring the status and quality of their awards, obtaining more attention and feedback from staff, and having access to high quality facilities.

3.3 Exponentially increasing knowledge and the demand for synthesis

Burton Clark has drawn attention to the rapid growth of academic knowledge, not merely within particular disciplines but as new disciplines are created (Clark, 1996). New disciplines (or indeed the upgrading of areas such as tourism to the higher education sector) can fragment further the academic profession, both through increased competition and the development of separate organisational departments.

Yet the needs of students or corporate clients do not fall neatly into disciplinary compartments. Structuring curriculum around external needs and demands is a major challenge for universities, and one which directly confronts issues of academic territory and independence. Gibbons has argued that the growth of knowledge production outside universities is leading to the development of ‘globalised and distributed’ knowledge systems (Gibbons, 1998).

If universities are to engage productively with such ‘distributed’ systems and play a role as problem-solvers and deployers of knowledge, they will need to adapt their approaches to research and teaching. This implies combing what Gibbons describes as Mode 2 with Mode 1 knowledge, i.e. including both kinds of knowledge within the realms of the university. Some of the key characteristics of these two modes are set out in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode 1 characteristics</th>
<th>Mode 2 characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on the individual</td>
<td>Emphasis on teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic control and authority over research</td>
<td>Research direction shaped by interaction between researchers and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direction</td>
<td>users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline-focused problem and issue based</td>
<td>Transdisciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local organisational knowledge base</td>
<td>Organisational diversity, networks, connectivity—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>draws together knowledge from diverse sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality judged by peer review</td>
<td>Broadly-based quality control incorporating academic peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>review and judgments of users (e.g. economic and social impact)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Gibbons (1998)
3.4 Different Acts on labour relations, equity and skills linked to unionisation

The UFS is, like all other organisations (employers) required to conform to the prescriptions of local labour legislation. The institution is unionised for both academic and support services staff. The implementation of decisions regarding the employment relationship and changes to the nature of work must therefore flow from consultation, rather than decisions by leadership and management. This makes the introduction of, for example, a performance management system all the more difficult, as one must ensure that employees "buy into" the principle, before the system can be used to make human resources related or changes in work related decisions.

3.5 Information technology and the transformation of teaching and learning

Information technology has already had a significant impact on higher education and will continue to reshape the education landscape in coming years. For many institutions the principal impact has been in administrative and research uses and libraries. Increasingly, however, technology is underpinning innovation in teaching and learning.

Many universities, including the UFS, are actively looking at ways in which the use of technology can be 'mainstreamed'.

- Those who use technology (together with resource based teaching) to enhance their teaching find themselves faced with major changes in the ways they work and conflicts with established practices on workload allocation and professional recognition and reward (e.g. e-degree).
- Resource based teaching shifts the focus of academic time from face-to-face contact hours to more distributed patterns of activities. These can include responding to emails or hosting on-line discussions outside usual work hours.

The task of the academic teacher, traditionally encapsulated in the designation of 'lecturer', is shifting from the transmission of information towards the management and facilitation of student learning. Furthermore, these moves involve changes in the tasks normally undertaken by academic staff.

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2 Some skeptics recall inflated claims in the past for educational television, radio, satellite broadcast, videocassettes and personal computing, and conclude (or wistfully hope) that the impact of technology will be marginal or transitory. However, there are good reasons for believing that the new potential offered by technology will be markedly different to the past.
As the impact of technology is felt more widely throughout higher education, and as increasing numbers of part-time and mature-age students attend higher education institutions, the boundaries between distance education and on-campus delivery (and related staff tasks) is blurring.\(^3\)

The pertinent issue is how performance in this area will be measured and evaluated (whilst not confusing inputs and outputs). How will a workload agreement account for the more time-consuming practices associated with e-learning as opposed to traditional "talk and chalk" methods?

### 3.6 Pressures on time, workload and morale

In the main, academic work has stretched rather than adapted to meet the challenges. The preference of many is to allow accumulation and accretion rather than to undertake the more difficult (and threatening?) task of making strategic choices and reconceptualising what it means to be an effective and productive academic.

The effect of this accumulation have shown a consistent picture:

- Academics remain intrinsically motivated by their work, but many feel they are under growing pressure and disconnected from their universities.
- Many academic staff feel burdened by the increasing weight of expectations placed upon them, in contrast to their ideal of determining the parameters of their own working lives (which has become more sustained across the calendar year than formerly).
- A perception of an increase in ‘non-core’ work, notably administration.
  (The category of administrative work which apparently causes the greatest dissatisfaction, is that relating to external demands for accountability and quality assurance. This issue is not adequately addressed in the recognition of “service to the University”.)

### 3.7 Performance, professional standards and external accountability

Policy implementation and external demands for accountability and performance will only expect more and in this regard the quality assurance expectation of the HEQC, professional bodies and ET-QA’s are good examples.

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\(^3\) New educational providers emerging in the United States in particular illustrate the potential for further ‘vertical disintegration’. Western Governors University, for example, separates the assessment of students from the delivery of educational programmes, while the University of Phoenix has separate groups responsible for curriculum design and the delivery of teaching. These examples emphasize the correct "use" of staff (horses for courses), albeit within limits.
Those who provide funding for higher education, whether they be fee-paying students, business or government, are unlikely to accept less accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality. National quality assurance mechanisms are undergoing reappraisal and development in most developed and even developing countries and share a desire to hold universities more closely accountable for the outcomes of higher education (a reflection of an era of strong pragmatism). Performance management of the work of academic staff (and support staff) has therefore become essential.

3.8 The shift from individual autonomy to institutional goals

The focus of external accountability usually is the institution rather than the individual academic, e.g. in terms of institutions developing niches, using corporate strategies instead of allowing academic organisational units to evolve in their own direction.

Thus institutions are centrally adopting stances akin to that promoted by government management reforms from 1994, where an emphasis is placed centrally on broad policy 'steering', accountability and performance. This development is without doubt influencing the models of governance (management) at HE institutions. There is without doubt a move from a position dominated by features of the 'collegium' and 'bureaucracy' to one closer to the 'corporation' or 'enterprise'.

Within departments and schools there are also moves which shift authority and control away from the individual academic. Academics are increasingly working in teams for both research and teaching. The emphasis on programmes requires a more comprehensive view of curriculum structures than might emerge solely from reflecting the interests of departments or individual academic staff.

All of these developments seem to run counter to the traditional focus on the individual faculty member rather than on the institution. Linking and aligning the work of individuals with the goals of the organisation is a major management challenge for modern universities. Universities need to develop

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4 In the United States, post-tenure review is now implemented in 60 percent of those campuses where tenure is applicable (North 1999, p. 10). Student evaluation of teaching is widespread in the UK, Australia, and US and is mandated in many institutions.

5 A related impact on institutional culture flows from a trend towards more entrepreneurial styles of university operation. It places pressure on the ideal that all academics are equal members of a scholarly community, or at least that differentiation and status should be determined primarily by academic authority. As some members of that community are able to capitalise on various opportunities more successfully than others, rewards, status and resources will flow unequently throughout the institution. While control over the conditions and direction of working life may shift away from individual academics in some areas of the university, others will enjoy greater freedom and authority if their work is demonstrably valuable to the organisation.

6 Frequently it is attacked as 'managerialism' and opposed on the grounds that it represents an attempt by 'management' to control academics and remove their academic freedom. A balance is to be sought. Academic freedom remains an important cornerstone of higher education, but it has always been circumscribed (albeit by a fairly stable set of constraints, for many years).
mechanisms for negotiating the match between organisational goals and individual work, whilst allowing substantial freedom for academic staff to contribute to those goals.

3.9 Specialisation and complexity of university work

Academic work is usually described under the banner of teaching, research and service. Yet such headings do not do justice to the variety and complexity of tasks that occupy most academics in the 21st century. These patently reflect the changing positive form of the university, whilst clearly still being the broad manifestation of the intrinsic nature of the university discussed above.

Within the ‘core’ of teaching and research, academic work has become more specialised and demanding. Deeper understandings of the nature of student learning, and pressures to reposition the learning environment around learning outcomes, demand a more professional approach.

Academics are being asked to meet the needs of more diverse student groups, to teach at more flexible times and locations, to master the use of information technology in teaching, to design curricula around learning outcomes and across disciplines, to teach in teams, to subject their teaching to evaluation and develop and implement improvements, to monitor and respond to the evaluations made by students and graduates, to improve assessment and feedback, to meet employer needs, and to understand and use new theories of student learning.

Similarly, research demands are increasing: to improve postgraduate supervision, to publish or patent, to establish links with industry, and to prepare, submit or review grant applications.

In the face of an ever-increasing array of expectations and growing complexity of work, it is inevitable that staff will have greater strengths in some areas than others, and that their mix of interests and productivity will change over time.7

3.10 Diffusion and blurring of roles

Full-time, academic staff have usually been considered the essential core of the university. However, the career opportunities for non-academic staff in higher education are widening in areas such as li-
libraries, computer support, technical support and administration. To this can be added a growing range of ‘para-academic’ roles associated with equity units, staff development, learning support and instructional design.

In several policy discussion documents it is suggested the distinctions between staff groups [are] becoming increasingly irrelevant or fuzzy as staff move across functions. One study concluded that there were several areas of overlap for the two areas of work where:

- some staff other than academics undertook (limited) lecturing in e.g. business studies areas on a ‘guest lecturer’ basis in areas of special expertise;
- many persons classified as academic staff found that the majority of their time was increasingly involved with departmental/faculty administration; and
- in support areas professionally qualified general staff and academic staff were jointly involved in programmes which concentrated on the ‘teaching’ function of universities – e.g. specialised language preparation and curriculum design, development and delivery (esp. distance learning or electronic delivery).

The actual and potential blurring of roles may continue to grow in significance as universities move into more flexible modes of delivery of teaching and learning and as they seek to support and reward staff for their skills, performance and potential rather than on the basis of job classifications.

Part-time and adjunct academics form another group of university staff frequently overlooked in institutional strategy. Potentially, the use of such staff can add enormous practical value to university teaching. Yet in practice, many casual and part-time staff complain of being isolated from the university and being subject to arbitrary fluctuations in employment.⁸

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⁸ If universities are to prosper as professionally managed organisations, then they must recognise that there is a growing range of specialist tasks, which for too long were either undertaken in an amateur fashion by academics or considered unimportant to the ‘real’ work of the university. Such tasks include human resource management, management of information technology, marketing, strategic planning, and financial and investment planning.
4. Academic work: Teaching, research and service - deriving definitions, roles and weights

Amidst considerable diversity of opinion about the ideals that should characterise universities, or the specifics of their roles, there is general agreement that universities are institutions which deal with the production of new knowledge, the conservation, critical testing and refinement of existing knowledge and the development of knowledgeable understanding in students. The ultimate objectives of the various academic work practices are to support these broad types of scholarship and scientific endeavour.

The formulation of the essence of the university above – as the generation, transfer and application of analytical-scientific knowledge, methods and competencies – also reflects a principle and point of view regarding the central role of teaching and research in a university.

In practice, most academics are expected to be actively involved in both the generation of new knowledge (research) and the transmission of knowledge (teaching), albeit in varying degrees. The interplay between teaching and research is widely held by academics to be a necessary part of ensuring quality and scholarship at a university. Yet the issue is sufficiently complex to warrant further scrutiny, especially in the context of, for example, designing a performance management system for academic staff. (It also is important to note the difference and interplay between basic research and applied research in the generation of knowledge. The crucial role of basic research to contribute to the scientific body of knowledge must not be underestimated.)

There are two reasons for focusing on this issue more closely. The first is that there is a potentially wide range of academic work which can support the flow and quality of knowledge within the university. Yet in practice the teaching and research expectations of academic staff are often narrowly defined and considered as separate activities. Secondly, financial support for research is being increasingly separated from that intended for teaching. On practical grounds universities will therefore need to assess the implications of this trend for the ways in which academic work is defined and supported.

4.1 The relationship between teaching and research

The ideal that teaching and research should be intertwined in universities was well entrenched in the minds of academics, and was reflected in the dual funding system that operated in South Africa and many countries for many years. Under this system, some institutions were designated as universities
and some as technikons (of which some now are called ‘technological universities’). The universities were mostly funded to undertake research. Currently only universities are geared to produce researchers and provide mentorship for young and inexperienced researchers. This is what distinguishes universities from other higher education providers.

In the last decade technikons were encouraged through special grants to undertake more research. Until recently, universities were funded on a ‘block’ basis at a higher rate than technikons, inter alia on the understanding that university academics were expected to be both teachers and researchers. However, in the new funding formula there appears to be a decoupling of funding for research and teaching.

Such changes necessarily raise questions about the impact (or threat?) of a potential growing separation of teaching and research on the academic enterprise. This topic has been the subject of a considerable amount of debate and research over the years, with the dominant view remaining among academics that some sort of relationship, or ‘nexus’, does or should exist between teaching and research. However, theoretical models of the relationship range from those supporting a positive relationship between teaching and research to those proposing that the two are in fact in conflict, with a spectrum of possible relationships in between.

4.1.1 A supportive and positive nexus of teaching-learning and research

Proponents of a supportive nexus of teaching-learning and research might be said to take a ‘strong integrationist’ view (Ramsden & Moses, 1992) that teaching and research are mutually reinforcing or symbiotic. Good university teaching, the argument goes, can only be undertaken by active researchers, and research activity is strengthened through interactions between the researcher and students. This relationship is typified by activity at the postgraduate research level. Clark (1997) argues that the dichotomy should not be between research and teaching, rather ‘between research-based teaching and learning (where much space of blending of these three activities occurs) and teaching and learning centered on codified material and lacking an inquiring attitude’.

The integrationist view prevails as the preference of many academics. In 1988 Ruth Neumann surveyed senior academics from a range of disciplinary backgrounds in two Australian universities. The results showed without exception a belief in a mutually enriching nexus between teaching and research in universities, and furthermore a belief that this view was widely shared. She categorised the claims into three broad types of connection: a tangible connection, whereby the latest knowledge and
facts might be transferred to students; an intangible connection relating to the development of a critical inquiry approach in students and a stimulating and rejuvenating milieu for academics; and a global connection, where the connection was at departmental and not just individual level. The intangible connection relates to the notion that students should be inspired to be scholarly, reflective and take an inquiring approach to knowledge, and this is not possible unless the teacher is similarly committed.

The latter echoes the 'G model' of Hattie and Marsh (1996), where a productive relationship is placed on the premise that the abilities underlying good teaching and those underlying good research are similar. For example, both require high levels of commitment, a spirit of inquiry and ongoing learning. Weaker versions of the positive relationship might suggest that active research is necessary for good teaching, but not vice versa. Alternatively, the positive relationship might operate at a departmental or professional level, where there is a necessity for university teachers to be part of a research-rich environment, without necessarily being active researchers themselves.

Another argument is that the nexus should exist because students expect it. Recent research from Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom (Jenkins et al, 1998) found that students, not surprisingly, expected their teachers to be at the cutting edge of their areas, and to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to their subject. The necessity for research varied by discipline; in subjects such as anthropology, for example, students expected their lecturers to be involved in field research, whereas in professional disciplines the emphasis was on practical experience and relevance. The desire to be taught by researchers also varied by year of study, being stronger for later year students, and advanced level work.

Various intermediating models for the relationship between teaching and research have also been proposed. Some suggest that there are positive relationships between some components of teaching and research. Others have claimed that the relationship between the two is mediated or affected by various intervening variables, such as personality or organisational structure (Hattie and Marsh 1996). Hughes and Tight (1995) suggest that teaching and research are complex and multidimensional activities that should be linked through staff development and other developmental activities (including involving students in research). They note that this is easiest at postgraduate or later year undergraduate level and for mature age students and professional subject areas.

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9 In its strongest form this model is simply an assertion of definition: if teaching does not involve research, then it is not, ipso facto, university teaching.
4.1.2 A negative nexus – or no nexus at all?

Competing models have been put forward suggesting there might in fact be a negative or null relationship between research and teaching. One such model suggests that research and teaching compete for academic time, the so-called ‘scarcity model’ (Hattie & Marsh 1996). Another focuses on the view that research and teaching are inherently different activities, in contrast to the ‘G model’. Such a position was put in Cardinal Newman’s nineteenth century series of lectures on the idea of the university, but its most prominent contemporary exponent has been Barnett (1992). Barnett states that teaching and research deal in different ways with knowledge, the former integrative, private, personally constructed and process-oriented, while research is specialised, public and results oriented. The skills and personal traits needed to excel in teaching do not necessarily coincide with those needed for research, and indeed can be inimical.10

Hattie and Marsh (1996) also refer to the pragmatic ‘bureaucratic funding model’. For its adherents, the financial circumstances outlined earlier necessitate a split of research and teaching, and academic time can only be used productively if this separation is put into practice.11

4.1.3 Empirical evidence

With competing claims about the relationship between teaching and research, it is worth considering the available evidence – whilst recognising that statistical-empirical evidence can and usually does reflect both relatively ‘distorted’ and relatively ‘undistorted’ university staff behaviour, and thus is of limited value in analysing the underlying, intrinsic nature of social institutions.

Hattie and Marsh (1996) have undertaken a comprehensive review of 58 quantitative studies which attempted to find statistical correlations between measures of teaching and measures of research. They conclude that, at best, research and teaching are ‘very loosely coupled’ (p. 529). They acknowledge the limitations of correlation studies, and the increasing complexity of both teaching and research, which is likely to render such analyses difficult to interpret. Some dismiss these findings as

10 Barnett uses a long-standing analogy between scholarship and music. A composer does not need to be a performer, nor does a performer need to be a composer. The artistry of the performer comes from knowledge and interpretation of different musical scores.

11 Similar arguments underlie the self-interested claims of some universities that a binary system should be reintroduced to concentrate research funding in ‘research universities’, on the pragmatic grounds that otherwise there is not enough funding to achieve international excellence. Such pragmatic arguments do not explicitly address questions about the teaching and research relationship; rather they imply that even if a positive relationship existed (or should exist?), it would be unsustainable. (This model has seen practical realisation in the operations of some of the new commercial university providers which have emerged in the United States. The largest of these, the University of Phoenix, employs most of its academic staff on a contract
virtually meaningless (Clark 1997; Brew & Boud 1995), calling for different approaches to a ‘sterile debate’. The relationship may well be more subtle, escaping simple empirical observation.

Some studies have shed light on the actual work patterns of academics. A consistent finding has been that research output is highly skewed, with relatively few academics contributing to the bulk of research publications and a significant number of academics producing little or no output over prolonged periods. These findings are complemented by an international survey of the Carnegie Foundation between 1991 and 1993. It found two distinctive groupings of academics: those who were oriented towards teaching and those who were oriented towards research, with roughly equal numbers in each group (Gottlieb & Keith 1997). The two groups deployed their time between research and teaching in quite different ways, and research-oriented staff were more likely to see teaching as competing with research time.13

4.1.4 Implications of the intrinsic nature of the university: adopting a position

As noted above, the formulation of the essence of the university above – as the generation, transfer and application of analytical-scientific knowledge, methods and competencies – reflects a consensus surrounding the central role of teaching and research in a university (and, moreover, of a particular kind of teaching and research).

It was also noted that the most distinctive and essential crux of the university lies in the term ‘science’, or scientific inquiry. In recent years the term ‘scholarship’ has also been used to capture this idea.

- This can be interpreted as a leitmotiv that decisively determines and shapes, or should determine and shape/govern, typical university functions, tasks and work, be it research, education (in whichever mode of delivery) or community service.
- It can also be understood as a decisive indication of the way things must be done – do it “the university way”, e.g. being founded in scholarship and scientific know-how, applying the benefits of

basis, paying them for their time in teaching. It thus avoids what it considers to be the ‘overhead cost’ of research, which is not seen as central to its mission.)

12 Ramsden (1998b) found that 10 per cent of academic staff in pre-1987 universities produced 36 per cent of publications, and that 14 per cent accounted for half. For the newer universities the skew was greater, with 10 per cent accounting for half of all publications. These figures are consistent with other studies in Australia and around the world. For example, Berrell (1998) in a study of a newly restructured faculty of education at a post-1987 university found that 28 per cent of full-time academic staff showed no research activity, and noted this corresponded closely with data from the United States. Hattie and Marsh (1995) concluded that their best estimate for the percentage of staff who publish little or nothing is about 40 per cent (p. 532). It also should be acknowledged that measures of publication output reflect some level of research activity, not the quality or the impact of the research. In other words, such measures simply indicate how ‘busy’ academics may be in terms of their research profile.

13 McInnis’ 1993 survey of staff in Australian universities found that 26 per cent saw themselves as primarily oriented to teaching and 28 per cent primarily as researchers. The teaching group were older (77 per cent over 40), spent most of their time with undergraduates and were more likely to hold negative attitudes to their careers and working conditions. The research group were younger, more ambitious, and less interested in collegial work practices (p. 114).
analytical thinking, instilling analytical thinking in other persons, and so forth. (It will be seen below that some contributors use scholarship in the sense of a separate function or activity, rather than a characteristic way of doing at a university.)

In practice, most academics are expected to be actively involved in both the generation of new knowledge (research) and the transmission of knowledge (teaching), albeit in varying degrees. The interplay between the two is widely held by academics to be a necessary part of ensuring quality and scholarship at a university. That there may be variation in the mix and relationship amongst individuals, departments or faculties, or between different periods in a person’s career, does not change this fundamental coherence.

The approach adopted here is to accept the ‘positive nexus’ view. This is, inter alia, due to its close reflection of the essence of the university, as formulated. It also reflects the commitment of the UFS leadership that the UFS remains a high quality university in the long run. This implies and requires a normative approach and acceptance of a clear managerial direction and directive in this regard. (This would then, for example, give clear direction to the design and implementation of something like a performance management model for the UFS. This viewpoint implies, inter alia, that research be given a specified and significant minimum role and weight in the definition of academic work for performance management purposes.)

Our view of the ‘negative nexus model’ is that it basically reflects the inescapable scarcity dimension of time and resources and says little about any underlying nature of the university as institution. Such scarcity demands clear strategic and operational choices from managers and academics. However, such choices always occur within the context of the particular institution within which these persons function, and must thus be guided by some overarching perspective or mission or leitmotiv on what is to be served by the choices. We accept the intrinsic nature of the university as that leitmotiv. More specifically, the imperative is to manage these scarcities in ways that strengthen the university and does not subject it to distortive behaviour, and least of all accepts an ‘anything goes’ view.

Nevertheless, in practice the issue is quite complex and will warrant further scrutiny, for example in shaping and evaluating academic work and ‘performance’, or designing a formal performance management system for academic staff of diverse faculties (generally formative as well as profession-oriented) at a university such as the UFS. Specific answers will have to be found to the questions how and to what extent scholarship, the scholarly and scientific way of doing, teaching and research (and community service) should be incorporated. This goes to the question of specific minimum weights accorded to, specifically, research. Similarly, ways should be found to account for the variety and diversity amongst actual academic jobs, individuals and faculties in a way that respects such differ-
ences and the factual realities of this period in history (analysed above) – but which nevertheless clearly encourages non-distortive behaviour and discourages distortive behaviour. Ultimately it is a question of balance.

4.2 The role of service in academic work

The role of service can be categorised into two specific elements, that of service to the community and that of service to university (committee work, etc). During the consultation sessions, these two elements were specifically seen as separate roles for academic staff. Furthermore, in terms of current UFS policy, service to the community is further categorised into service which is embedded in the research and teaching-learning work of academics and service which is not.

4.2.1 Service to the community

The academe must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, economic and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to community service. This was again reinforced by the executive at a recent workshop to formulate the roles and activities of executive for PRS purposes. At this session, one of the defining activities under the role of "leadership" was "to be embedded and rooted in society and to serve society".

Service to the community means connecting the rich resources of the University to our pressing social, moral, and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities. Universities should be viewed by both students and professors not only as isolated islands, but staging grounds for actions, and ultimately service to the community. This also means creating a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures can communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other.

A significant and growing number of universities are accepting service to community as a challenge by pursuing an agenda of public and civic engagement and by considering the resultant faculty and student roles. Following the commitment of universities to undertake these ideas, new definitions of service to the community are taking hold.

Service to the community has raised significant fundamental questions. Some of these questions focus on what community service is, what the characteristics of community service orientated institutions are, how higher education deepens community convictions and collaboration in educational meaningful ways, and what the roles of students and staff in an engaged institution are. From its earliest definition, community service has presented challenges to higher education including its relation-
ship to the more common understanding of the “service” category of academic work, its relationship to core roles and functions of the University and whether it is a new integrated form of scholarship.

The most important recent development in service to the community has been that of community service learning. Service learning is still a relatively new and evolving practice. If service learning is to survive and thrive in the long run, service learning must be central rather than marginal, institutionalised rather than fragmented, and strong rather than weak. There are three major themes that are crucial to the future of service learning in higher education:

- We must work to renew a higher education commitment to community service
- We must demonstrate service learning effectiveness
- We must institutionalise service learning.

Service to the community, and in particular service learning, will survive and thrive because the powerful combination of service and learning will always inspire educators, students, community members and public and corporate leaders to come together in a spirit of collaboration and concern for common good. Democracy depends on the development of active citizens and their participation in the life of the community. Effective programmes that fully involve participants in service learning will develop individuals to go on to use the important lessons that they've learnt to create and sustain institutions and environments that, in time, will lead future generations of citizens to seek solutions to social problems and opportunities to engage in service and learning.

4.2.2 Service to the university

The participation of academic staff in institutional decision-making is accepted as having a positive effect on institutional functioning, but it is reflected in varying degrees in actual practice. The leadership model in higher education therefore requires a more frequent prescription of participative leadership style than in other organisational settings. Academic staff seek to protect mechanisms like academic Senate (and its subcommittees) and the well-established areas of curriculum and promotion. While some academic staff perceive such participation in committees, management and administrative affairs as a distraction or irritation, participation in institutional decision-making, through committee work, is associated with increased employees satisfaction and performance in a Univer-

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14 No universal willingness of employees to participate in making certain institutional decisions should be assumed to exist. Rather, employees are interested in and willing to participate in decisions that affect their own work units and their own jobs and are generally disinterested in broader matters of policy. The employees most interested in participation are those who are highly interested in the task at hand and also in personal growth (Bass, 1981: 315-16; Kanter 1983). Commercial organisations have generally found that employees soon lose enthusiasm toward participation in the absence of financial incentives or other formal rewards (Kanter 1983). This can be affected through rewards associated with performance review of the effectiveness of such participation in decision-making processes by academic staff.
sity. Academic staff tend to accord little legitimacy to institutional decisions that appear to be made without their involvement and therefore frequently resist the implementation of such policies.

It can be concluded that participation by academic staff (and support staff) in University decision-making processes is a necessary element of university work and most academics see this as an enhancement of their professional environment and their right to participate.

Perhaps the most fundamental other factor supporting participation in institutional decision-making is academic staff expertise on the subjects of decisions. This is particularly true in areas which effect the work of academics, such as curriculum development, etc.

The question is whether and how this participation should be incorporated in any performance management system of academic staff (excluding those in part-time or full-time management positions, such as departmental chairs, programme directors and deans, whose job description and remuneration already reflect such responsibilities). It may thus be useful to distinguish between:
(a) democratic participation in decision-making, whether on departmental, faculty or senate level;
(b) participation which derives from generic ‘skills of the academic trade’ such as that relating to curriculum design within a particular discipline or faculty and its courses/modules, in the course of the normal operation and updating of learning programmes and research;
(c) participation based on particular interest or expertise in a university-wide committee or body, and
(d) participation in university (committee) decision-making, based on a particular professional expertise, and involving a more explicit professional output such as a formal report or evaluation.

Types (a) and (b) are an integral part of academic staff membership and of teaching and research, and must not be recognised separately (except in exceptional circumstances indicated by clearly excessive and unfair time demands and probably requiring correction). Type (c) is traditionally also accepted as ‘normal’, but it may need further consideration, perhaps distinguishing between ‘normal’ and ‘above normal’ time commitments. The last form of service, i.e. (d), should be handled as a form of remunerated professional consulting, which places it outside ‘normal’ academic work, as discussed below.

4.2.3 Professional consulting by academic staff

The phenomena of professional consulting by academic staff is accepted as a long-standing practice at most academic institutions. Most institutions have policies relating to the amount of time that academic staff may spend on this activity. At the UFS, the policy provides for 20% of an academic’s time for ‘private work’, which often comprises professional outside consulting.
In international literature concern about the appropriateness of such consulting and similar activities which produce supplemental income for the academic staff member has increased.\textsuperscript{15} The central concern appears to be whether academic staff consulting and other supplemental income activities result in "shirking [other] university responsibilities" (Patton, 1980 in Boyer and Lewis, 1985). The basis for such concern is not the supplemental income per se, but earning of supplemental income on university time -- what some observers perceive as "double dipping" (Boyer and Lewis, 1985).

- On the one hand, some might argue that academic staff consulting might result in neglecting students, university and scholarly responsibilities, conflicts of interest and illegitimate use of university time and resources.
- On the other hand, others may argue that academic staff consulting enhances research and teaching-learning, academic stature and indirectly benefits the institution and society, as well as the individual.

During our consultation with pilot groups, different perceptions of professional academic staff consulting were apparent at the UFS:

- Some academic staff members perceive professional consulting to be a service to the University in that it enhances the academic status of the institution and also the professional/academic standing of the staff member engaged in such service.
- Others perceive academic consulting as a service to the community, in that provides the community with the benefit of professional academic expertise.
- Especially staff in professional or applied departments and faculties argue that their consulting work is essential to keep them professionally abreast of developments and to obtain practical experience in the relevant area of work.

\textsuperscript{15} The international debate around academic staff consulting basically involves six important issues:

- Who are the academics who consult?
- Is academic consulting on the increase?
- Do academics that consult shirk their other duties?
- Are academics that consult exploiting their consulting opportunities to substantially increase their total earnings?
- Are academics motivated to consult for economic reasons?
- Are institutional policies and procedures adequate for governing these activities?

In a report published by the US Association for the Study of Higher Education, these issues are reported on as follows. Academics who consult are more likely to be found in the professional fields or the Sciences, and to a lesser extent in the Humanities. The incidence of academic consulting does not seem to be on the increase. Approximately 35 to 50 percent of academics devote some portion of the time to professional consulting over the course of any two-year period, with only 15 to 20 percent consulting during any given academic year. These proportions have remained constant over the past decade. Evidence suggests that academics who consult are, on average, as active in fulfilling their university responsibilities of teaching-learning and research as those who do not consult. Less than 10 percent of academics who consult report that their supplemental income from consulting exceeds more than one-third of their academic income. For the Humanities, the figure is less than 4 percent. Despite the relative decline in academic salaries, academics do not substantially increase total earnings; economic reasons are not the primary motivator for such activity. At the UFS, these statistics are not available. It is therefore difficult to determine whether the same circumstances apply. During the consulting sessions, it was mentioned that in the absence of additional/supplementary income from outside professional consulting, some academics would find it difficult to remain in service of the university. This seemed to be the case, in particular, for the professional and science disciplines.
While institutional policies and procedures governing professional consulting do exist at the UFS, it would seem that the control and monitoring of outside professional consulting is, at best, informal. One might argue that in some cases the system is exploited (despite the indicative statistics outlined referred to above – see footnote 15).

The question is whether private consulting work done in an allowed for 20% of university-paid time, and for which remuneration is received from a client, should be factored into a formal evaluation of performance in academic work. Does or should the nature of the faculty or department concerned – generally formative versus career-oriented or professional – play a role in our evaluation? If it is an essential part of professional competencies, should it be rewarded – or, rather, seen as a condition of employment in a professional faculty position? Or is it a (legitimate) form of (paid) staff development?

Based on our point of departure, which is the intrinsic nature of the university as a place of scientific endeavour, teaching and research, it follows that private consulting must not be factored into any weighting relating to performance appraisal of an academic staff member – except in the sense of allowing, in a work load agreement and subsequent assessment of outputs and productivity, for a particular percentage of time (such as 20%) to be spent on non-university work. This would recognise that outside professional consulting is part and parcel of the life of some academics, at least in ‘professional’ faculties, and which must be factored in when considering the workload of the academic. However, it needs to be factored in a way which is reconcilable with the nature of the university and which does not unduly encourage behaviour which may easily amount to a distortion (or at least distraction) of the core activities of the university.

It is essential for proper governance measures to be clearly spelt out and for such work to become subject to regular management review within a performance management and workload system.

4.3 The broader picture: scholarship - or various scholarships?

Much of the discussion about research and teaching begs the question of what is meant by these terms, particularly research – notably in relation to the concept of scholarship. Is research and scholarship equivalent, separate activities, or what? How does it relate to the relationship between teaching and research, discussed above?16 Should there be a differentiation between teaching institutions and research institutions, or between research and teaching individuals?

16 Neumann's survey of senior Australian academics revealed considerable ambiguity in definitions of research and scholarship. There was a broad consensus that research involved creation of new knowledge, sustained inquiry and publication of results, while scholarship was a broader notion incorporating the interpretation and study of what is already known (Neumann 1993). In practice, however, there was considerable variation in use of these two terms among the various disciplines. Increas-
4.3.1 Single/separate functions and 'scholarships' for individuals?

One perspective comes from a view that the relationship of university teaching and research is not a simple dichotomy. Elton (1986) argues that “… the way forward for universities is not to be divided into teaching institutions and research institutions, but to make sure that scholarship flourishes in them all and supports both teaching and research … what is needed is a quite radical change in the value system of universities, giving equal value to excellence in teaching, scholarship and research, and a much greater differentiation of function between different academics” (Elton 1986, p. 304).

Pressures on research funding are making the traditional model harder to sustain. The SA Government's research discussion paper quite clearly articulates an expectation that institutions will implement policies of concentration and selectivity, implying models more akin to those where teaching and research become organisationally separated but not entirely divorced. Gibbons (1999) has suggested that a shift to more Mode 2 research practices will accentuate this trend: “to the extent that universities go down this road, they will be helping to establish two parallel structures within universities: one for teaching and another for research”.

A key question thus arises, how will education and research continue to be related to each other in such circumstances?

The late Ernest Boyer proposed one of the most influential reformulations of academic work in 1990. He argued that academic work should be structured around four types of scholarship.\(^{17}\)

- The **scholarship of discovery** encompassed the traditional view of research in uncovering new knowledge, although Boyer emphasized the process of discovery as much as the results.
- The **scholarship of teaching** was about transforming and extending knowledge through the interaction of the teacher’s understanding and student learning.
- The **scholarship of application** (engagement) covered ‘community service’ but also included broader application of knowledge between the academy and the ‘real world’.
- The **scholarship of integration**, the linking and synthesis of knowledge across the different disciplines, was viewed by Boyer as equally important but the most neglected of the four.

\(^{17}\) The Boyer scholarships have been incorporated into the policies of several universities (for example, the University of Ballarat and RMIT in Australia) in an effort to reflect more effectively the nature of academic work.
As Ramsden has pointed out, this reformulation represented “… a change from dichotomous models of university work (teaching versus research, practice versus theory) to continuous ones. The model integrates the different things academics do” (Ramsden 1998b, p. 357).

One perspective is that Boyer’s scholarships suggest greater differentiation between academic staff, with some being ‘pure’ researchers and others ‘pure’ teachers, with appropriate and equivalent recognition of their particular (and singular) relevant ‘scholarship’.

- Of course, redefinition will have to be reinforced by greater differentiation which explicitly accord priority and recognition to different endeavors. Most academics remain convinced that research is what really counts in promotion decisions, and despite some changes that have been made in recent years in the assessment and documentation of teaching performance and the promotion of some staff for their teaching excellence, this perception is likely to be largely valid.
- Part of the problem is that it is difficult to arrive at objective measures of good teaching (in contrast to research quality assessment through peer review). Despite admirable efforts, peer review of teaching remains patchy. Student ratings are useful; however are often self-selected by the teacher, and represent only a partial contribution to the assessment of teaching quality.

In this perspective, problems will also remain if the four scholarships become uniform expectations of all academics. McInnis (1996) states that “… to tackle the current tensions between individual and institutional goals, approaches to academic staffing should recognise the ongoing shift to greater academic specialisation … While most academics will continue to balance teaching and research, there is a need to give some academics more opportunities to contribute effectively to specialist tasks rather than, as has been the tradition, spreading themselves over a range of additional part-time roles” (McInnes 1996, p. 115).

The capacity of traditional universities to reflect increasing diversity of performance is, however, greatly limited by the current practices of academic employment. In any case, ‘specialised streaming’ of staff represents a narrow approach to academic specialisation. If greater diversity is to be permitted, then new paths of academic engagement will be required to enable individuals to develop their own strengths in ways which achieve both personal and institutional goals.

4.3.2 Scholarship as an overarching characteristic or requirement

Another possible perspective is provided by the following question. Does Boyer imply that simply renaming teaching as a ‘scholarship’ is sufficient to qualify it as belonging to, or being appropriate to, a university? If so, it begs the question.
Alternatively, does he (or should one) have in mind a scholarship-based, or scholarly, type of teaching appropriate for a university? In this regard it is instructive to note that Ramsden comments that “(t)he four scholarships are not distinct entities, but overlapping qualities of academic work” (1998b, p. 357; our italics). This seems to indicate his understanding that Boyer is trying to indicate scholarship as a certain quality or characteristic of academic work (of whichever kind, be it teaching, research or community service). For example, without this characteristic, it would be difficult to distinguish university teaching from other levels or types of teaching.

Understood in this way, scholarship serves as a term to justify neither a separation of university functions nor a singular focus on one function by academic staff/individuals, but as a term to indicate an essential quality or characteristic of all academic university functions. Understood this way, the term does not aid us in determining, for example, the weights to be accorded to research and teaching in workload agreements and performance assessment of academic staff, or to underpin a differentiation model. It does something completely different, which is to point out that the intrinsic nature of the university imposes a most fundamental requirement on all teaching and research and community service: to be scholarly and scholarship-based.

This is the view adopted by the UFS in this document: the intrinsic nature of the university imposes a most fundamental requirement on all teaching and research and community service: to be scholarly and scholarship-based.

5. Conclusion: Possible institutional responses

The task now is to consider changes in academic work and the implications of these changes for the ways in which academic work is defined, organised and rewarded, within the context of being and remaining a university (as defined).

One particular aspect which will be considered here is the relationship between academic work and institutional change. We must find ways to link the work of individual academics with the overall direction of the institution. The pressures being felt by academics – as their work becomes more complex and specialised and as fewer public resources are available to support a range of activities – reinforces this imperative. This will require not only management initiative, but also a renegotiation of

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18 In any case, even if one accepts the identification of four Boyerian scholarships as activities, the role (and requirement) of scholarship as a “way of doing” typical to universities and academic work remains vital.
the balance between institutional objectives and individual academic freedom, and a reconceptualisation of what comprises academic work, *given the context of a university*.

There are several strands which need to be drawn together to achieve this.

1. **Processes and systems** which provide the frameworks for linking individual work to organisational strategic goals. This expects a comprehensive performance management, as now being developed by the UFS. Such a system expects a systematic forward-looking assessment of organisational direction and workload, then a forecast of staffing requirements to ensure that those workloads are met, and finally a linking of staffing policy from recruitment to retirement which is designed to achieve the desired profile.

2. **Greater flexibility** in criteria used to assess the performance and prospective work of academic staff, always within parameters determined by the intrinsic nature of the university. These criteria are partly applied at the times of appointment and promotion, but should be part of a more seamless system of performance management which defines expectations for staff and provides feedback and development opportunities, perhaps averaged over three to five years.
   - There is a perception that uniform expectations of performance are the norm: “At present our university seems to require academics to be all-rounders, specialising in teaching, original research, professional activity and community service, or similar activities”, to quote one view.
   - Of course this is not necessarily the case in practice, as experience of, for example, promotion decision-making will attest. Nevertheless, reasonable allowance for variation has not been made explicit in policy and promotion guidelines. Some faculties and departments are beginning to allow various degrees of flexibility — for example, by allocating percentage weighting to various components and allowing these to change over time.
   - Variation might be achieved in two ways. First, the institution might develop further the range of specialised staff positions — for example, by expanding teaching-only or mostly-teaching positions or by formalising the separation of roles such as those outlined earlier in this document. Alternatively, specialisation and streaming could be allowed to emerge by freeing-up the expectations placed on staff, while still requiring certain standards of scholarship, and by allowing staff to develop their own strengths, which may change over time.
   - Of course, the key question is how to prevent such flexibility from allowing behaviour which amounts to a distortion of the university.
   - *Alternatively, if teaching-only positions are to be instituted formally, the question is whether such positions are to provide access to the same academic career stations (such as full professorships) than a balanced, broadly based position comprising all core functions, but notably research (even if in varying proportions within stated parameters).*
3. **Greater interaction and transfer of staff** between faculties and organisations and between academic and non-academic positions. Such interaction has the potential to boost the professional currency of many academic staff. Conversely, greater (appropriate) recognition will be needed in academic appointments of work done outside the traditional academic framework. In particular, divisions which claim to be ‘applied’ in orientation will need to ensure significant ongoing contact between academic staff and relevant external organisations, and should have well developed adjunct appointment systems.

4. **Improved capacity for collaboration** among HE institutions and between institutions and external organisations in the regional context. Such activities are already developing within specific contexts at present. For example, academic researchers frequently work with national and international academic collaborators within their area of study. Collaborative work needs to be widened, drawing in participants other than academic peers where appropriate, brought more into the mainstream of university activity, and made responsive to collective as well as individual goals.

5. **Capacity to recognise and reward performance** in a more flexible and diverse environment. This might involve, for example, linking remuneration less tightly to academic rank and moderating it by market factors and personal performance. Already, enterprise bargaining is introducing differential rates of pay among universities. Institutions which try to chase the highest rates and spread increases uniformly across all staff may expose themselves to high financial risk and find it difficult to attract high-performing staff in strategically significant fields.

6. **Staff management systems which recognise and coordinate the contribution to university objectives of the work undertaken by all groups of staff, not only full-time academics.** Thus part-timers and other staff need to be integrally involved in strategic developments and supported by the university.
   - At present full-time staff dominate in South African higher education, despite a decline over the past decade. Nevertheless the trends observed are likely to require universities to engage with an increasing range of academic and non-academic staff who are not full-time members of the university. Such engagements will require a shift in the idea of what constitutes ongoing and project work, with project work assuming greater importance to the mission of the university.
While the shift towards more nomadic and independent employment patterns for academics may be gradual, another possibility might be to more closely **align the employment of staff with periods of academic work.**

- Some universities are moving to academic calendars based on two publicly-funded semesters plus a third semester over summer, the latter being predominantly based on extra fee-paying arrangements.
- This suggests the possibility of South African universities adapting the semester-based appointment model from the United States, where many academic staff are engaged on a nine-month basis which holds them to undertake scholarly work for the university only during the two main semesters. Such staff are then free to pursue consultancies or be paid extra by the university to undertake teaching or research over the summer semester.

While the details of new approaches concerning academic work in the future can be debated, the question is not **whether** the nature and structure of academic work will change, but what the timing and extent of change might be. The inertia of the existing system should not be underestimated, however. Nevertheless, the number of examples of new models and pathways will grow.

*As long as such reconceptualisations are within the ambit of the university as institution, it is to be welcomed and evaluated with great open-mindedness. Obviously, no one prescription will suit all institutions but, to the extent that the signs point in a common direction, they suggest the following:*

- **We may need policies and planning which allow staff to develop their strengths and which do not constrain them to meet narrow expectations – whilst we remain within the parameters of a true university.**
- **Whilst adhering to, and being anchored in, the intrinsic nature of the university, we need to broaden our views of what constitutes scholarship and how university work relates to the external world.**
- **We need to enable staff to work in teams, to move across internal and external boundaries, to draw on the depth of knowledge from various disciplines and apply it to creating new knowledge and solving problems in the real world, and to receive recognition and reward for doing so.**
- **Above all, we need to be able to harness the full potential of the knowledge and expertise available to, as well as within, our universities.**
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