HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP FOR DEMOCRACY, SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Council of Europe
Higher Education
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HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP FOR DEMOCRACY, SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Sjur Bergan, Ira Harkavy
and Ronaldo Munck (eds)

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Contents

Preface

The Council of Europe Higher Education Series and the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education are both well established, and it is only natural that the two are brought together in this book. Over the years, both the Global Cooperation – albeit under different names – and the Higher Education Series have explored a broad range of issues that concern the role of higher education in furthering the Council of Europe's *raisons d'être*: democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

This book is the 26th in the series and the seventh which is a result of a Global Forum for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. The Global Forum held at Dublin City University on 16-17 June 2022 established a particularly strong link with the Council of Europe because it was part of the programme of the Irish Presidency of our Committee of Ministers. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Irish authorities, in particular the two ministers who spoke at the forum, and the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the Council of Europe for making education and this Global Forum such an important part of their presidency. I should also like to thank Dublin City University for hosting the Global Forum, and in particular its President, Daire Keough, and Professor Ronaldo Munck – a co-editor of this book – without whom neither the forum nor the book would have come about.

Our long-standing co-operation partners in the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, and in particular its Chair, Dr Ira Harkavy – another co-editor of this book – and its Executive Secretary Rita A. Hodges, were equally essential in making the forum and the book a reality. My gratitude also goes to the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities, both of which joined the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education more recently and laid the foundation for turning it into a global undertaking. I, for my part, wish to underline the Council of Europe's continuing strong commitment to this co-operation. I underline this not because our commitment has been in doubt but because the Global Forum coincided with a period of transition in our Education Department. Sjur Bergan – the third co-editor of the book – retired from his position as Head of the Education Department in February 2022 and was succeeded by Villano Qiriazi. Persons change but our commitment remains.

The topic of this book and of the Global Forum on which it builds is wide-reaching: democracy, sustainability and social justice. All are important to build and maintain the society that we wish for our children and grandchildren. But, as the Global Forum emphasises, democracy, sustainability and social justice will not come about by themselves. Our overall concern about the state of democracy is increasing, as shown through the Secretary General's annual reports,[1] against a background of rising populism, questioning of the need to base political and societal decisions on facts, and the very concept of democracy being challenged by distortions such

1. See www.coe.int/en/web/secretary-general/reports, accessed 5 June 2023.

as "illiberal democracy". We need leadership, and as the Global Forum underlined, higher education needs to be an important part of this leadership.

By supporting and developing the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education as well as its local democratic mission, the Council of Europe will continue to be a strong voice for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We will continue to support the role of higher education in this respect through our Steering Committee for Education and through our Education Department.

As the relatively newly appointed Director General for Democracy and Human Dignity, it gives me special pleasure to highlight the role of education in general and of higher education in particular in imbuing European citizens with the culture of democracy, without which our institutions, laws and elections will not easily be democratic in practice. We were reminded of this basic fact, four months before the Dublin Global Forum, by the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Council of Europe took prompt action to exclude Russia from the Organisation and to mark its full support for Ukraine. I hope that it will one day be possible for Ukraine to benefit from a just peace and strong European assistance in the reconstruction that will both precede and follow this peace. I also hope that it will one day be possible to welcome a democratic Russia back to European co-operation, even if that day seems remote as I write these lines.

Marja Ruotanen
Director General for Democracy and Human Dignity
Council of Europe

A word from the editors

Sjur Bergan, Ira Harkavy and Ronaldo Munck

Context

As editors, it is our pleasure to introduce this publication, *Higher education leadership for democracy, sustainability and social justice*. It has a double background. Most immediately, it arises from the Global Forum that the Council of Europe, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities organised at Dublin City University on 16 and 17 June 2022. Beyond that, it arises from the challenges that both society at large and higher education in particular face as both try to recover from Covid-19.

Dublin City University was much more than a technical organiser of the Global Forum. It has been an important contributor to our exploration of the democratic mission of higher education over several years, represented by one of us, Ronaldo Munck.

This was the seventh Global Forum organised by the Council of Europe and the International Consortium, with the first dating back to 2006. At the same time, it was the first organised jointly by all four organisations after the Organization of American States (OAS) joined the co-operation in 2018 and the International Association of Universities (IAU) in 2019. What started as a transatlantic co-operation has now gone global and, to mark this significant shift, we renamed it the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. Even more than with previous editions, this book, and the Global Forum from which it arose, seek to look beyond Europe and North America.

The problems exacerbated by Covid-19

The second part of the background for this book is also global: the Covid-19 pandemic that struck almost all parts of the world in 2020. Covid-19 changed our societies and the way they operate. It changed education, as we explored for higher education in the preceding book in the Council of Europe Higher Education Series (Bergan et al. 2021), and as the Council of Europe outlined for education overall (Council of Europe 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic also impacted the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. The Global Forum which had been planned for 2021 had to be postponed until 2022, and we used webinars and podcasts to a much greater extent than previously, pioneered by Dublin City University and the IAU.

The Covid-19 pandemic affected most particularly the more vulnerable members of society. It exposed issues that were also present pre-Covid but that were, regrettably, given new salience through the pandemic. It not only exposed but also deepened extreme inequities both within and between countries. The pandemic highlighted and contributed to the fragility of democratic systems, with the increasing erosion

of participatory democracy, the strengthening of identity and nationalistic politics, and the promotion of populist anti-intellectualism, involving attacks on science and knowledge itself. Covid-19 highlighted, more broadly, the backsliding of democracy (Council of Europe 2021).

At the same time, demands for basic human rights, social and racial justice and economic equity are increasing in many parts of the world. Opposition to police violence against Black people in the United States, for example, has dramatically expanded multiracial activism through the Black Lives Matter movement. This is part of a broader international reckoning regarding ethnic bigotry, the status and rights of refugees and the obligation of Western countries to acknowledge and learn from their histories of racial, colonial and ethnic exploitation. Racism is, incidentally, an area in which Europe and the United States use quite different terms to describe much of the same reality. Racism exists on both sides of the Atlantic, but it has been much more present in American history and public debate. In Europe, "race" is a heavily loaded term because of the continent's experience of Nazism and its false categorisation of races to justify extermination of groups. Perhaps because of this experience, Europeans tend to consider "race" as an invented rather than a biological category, and the issue is more often cast in terms of ethnic groups, migration and linguistic and religious minorities. These dividing lines can sometimes coincide.

The Covid-19 pandemic may momentarily have slowed the speed of climate change, but it did not change the fact that we have reached and daily exceed a climate tipping point, further destabilising human societies, precipitating massive waves of migration and threatening to move millions more into poverty.

Democracy, sustainability and social justice: three connected issues

The book brings together our ongoing concerns for democracy, sustainability and social justice that were with us in what we have increasingly come to call "the pre-Covid world", but that have been exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In this book, we take the view that the three issues are inextricably linked, and that we can impact none of them unless higher education plays an important role in identifying the issues and helping society devise a viable and robust response. In part, that role is what higher education has always done: developing new knowledge and understanding through research and disseminating them to students through learning and teaching and to society at large through outreach activities. This remains important, and the backlash of democracy makes it even more important, since part of the backlash is the rise of populism with its belief – or rather gut feeling – that simplistic solutions are adequate, that facts do not necessarily matter and that everyone is entitled not only to their own opinions but to their own facts. Encouraged by demagogic leaders, many citizens believe that there can be such things as "alternative truths" and "illiberal democracy" and treat unwelcome facts as "fake news".

But higher education must do more than develop and disseminate knowledge and understanding. Higher education must influence the way individuals and societies behave. Higher education must lead.

One indication of the importance of leadership is the inclusion of the Dublin Global Forum in the programme of the Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (Irish Presidency 2022). Two Irish Government ministers, one for higher education and the other for European affairs, addressed the Global Forum. Along with the strong commitment to the democratic mission of higher education on the part of the President of Dublin City University, Daire Keogh, the Irish hosts demonstrated how important it is for higher education to lead rather than just follow, to show the way rather than merely follow the paths trodden by others.

This book therefore appropriately opens in Part I with a presentation of the context in which higher education leadership must be exercised. Matjaž Gruden, the Council of Europe's Director of Democratic Participation and also a key person in writing the Secretary General's annual reports on the state of democracy in Europe (Secretary General 2023), demonstrates why we cannot have democracy without education and underlines the fact that knowledge and critical thinking are the driving force of progressive change. The Chair of the International Consortium, Ira Harkavy, shows where this road can lead us if higher education shows leadership and creates a global movement to fulfil higher education's democratic mission, and develops and sustains participatory democracy on campus, in the community and in the wider society.

Higher education needs to work with the broader society

Higher education needs to show leadership and work with partners locally, nationally and globally to respond to attacks on democracy itself. In Part II, Simon Harris, the Irish Minister for Higher and Further Education, shows how higher education matters within a national context and how this contact has international relevance. Then four chapters from four continents explore how this can be achieved. Writing from a South African perspective, Ahmed Bawa outlines the role of engaged universities and points to significant disruptions – the student activism of 2015-17 in South Africa and the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020 – which are giving rise to a new societal interest in the role of higher education. Based on their experience at Rutgers University-Newark – an archetypical democratic anchor institution in the United States – Nancy Cantor and Peter Englot explore how universities can be trusted neighbours in their local communities. They emphasise that local commitment does not stand in the way of global ambitions and resonance.

From a European perspective, Liviu Matei asks whether universities have an obligation to further democracy. He points to the very different circumstances between institutions that function in a culture of democracy and can express themselves freely, compared with those for which any attempt at democratic engagement can have literally fatal consequences and those that operate under difficult circumstances but nevertheless have some leeway for engagement. In his contribution, Jim Nyland suggests engagement with democracy will be "the next big idea" in Australian higher

education and argues that it is essential that higher education retain its "pandemic activism" to address attacks on democracy and its local and global consequences together with the existential threat of climate change.

Furthering sustainable development

Part III of the book addresses sustainable development more directly and asks how a commitment to the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can contribute to the university's democratic mission in the community and wider society. Drawing on their experience from Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and its co-operation with Latin America, Luz Claudio and Rocío Rodríguez-Báez show how higher education can further both diversity and education on sustainable development by improving the representation of minorities in science and medicine by providing members of underrepresented groups with intense research training coupled with effective mentoring. Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito, the founder of the Millennials Movement and a Peruvian activist now living in the United States, offers a comprehensive overview of the work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the role of civil society stakeholders in achieving them. Rui Branco from Universidade Nova Lisbon takes the perspective of a political scientist and explores current challenges to democracy – in particular the predicament of new democracies. He argues that higher education institutions must be responsive to societal needs to become agents of change in solving the complex challenges in moving towards a sustainable future, which includes political, economic and social components in addition to ecology.

Promoting social and racial justice

Part IV asks how academia can redesign, and engage in, social and racial justice work in democratic co-operation with others within and beyond its campus. Sibongile Muthwa presents the case of Nelson Mandela University in South Africa to argue that universities need to foreground the scholarship of engagement, revitalise the humanities, advance transdisciplinarity and put the student at the centre of their work. From her double background as the long-serving Rector of the University of Rijeka and as a philosopher, Snježana Prijić Samaržija pleads that universities need to develop innovative modes of action, mutual connection, community and co-ordination. She also maintains that universities' local mission is crucial because their engagement must always be contextualised and tied to specific community challenges. Renée White from the New School in New York argues that education has always been political, which is proved by movements to ban books from classrooms. She emphasises the importance of antiracist practice in higher education as part of its value as a public good, because it prepares people for full participation in public life through being economically self-sufficient and civically engaged.

Educating ethical and democratic citizens

Part V discusses how institutional practices can help sustain and engage the most at-risk students, while also ensuring that all students are educated to be ethical and

democratic citizens. Annick Allaigre presents the experience of Paris 8 University, a relatively new university on the northern outskirts of Paris with a high proportion of foreign students and a policy of openness to the world. Marcelo Knobel and David John Lock draw on the experience of Latin America – in particular, Argentina and Brazil – to argue that practising, and educating for, values is more important now than ever for universities and the authors point to the 1988 Magna Charta Universitatum, its follow-up document from 2020 and the programme of the Magna Charta Observatory as significant supports in the democratic, values-based mission. Galina Rusu describes how legislation, government action and international projects combine to further education's engagement in fostering democracy in Moldova.

Universities working with local communities

Part VI asks how higher education institutions can build relationships with local communities, especially those most devastated by the pandemic and its aftermath, in light of persistent inequalities. David Maurrasse describes how the Anchor Institutions Task Force helps its almost 1 000 members develop deeper commitments to their local communities and partners, and he argues that these anchor partnerships are crucial to the future not only of higher education institutions but of their local communities. Ryan Feeney provides a brief outline of the long-time engagement of Queen's University Belfast in the highly fraught context of Northern Ireland, while Andrew Montague – a former Lord Mayor of Dublin – points to the importance of Dublin City University in providing opportunities for the residents of an area of the city that have few offers of education or culture in their immediate neighbourhood. Writing from her vantage point as the (then) Chair of the European Students' Union, Martina Darmanin demonstrates the potential of student community engagement and suggests how it could be put to better use on a global scale if it were accredited and supported by universities. Katherine Conway-Turner draws on the experience of Buffalo State University to look at ways in which higher education institutions can help communities face tragic events, such as the mass shooting that Buffalo, New York, lived through in May 2022.

Making the democratic mission a priority

In Part VII – Conclusions, Enida Bezhani, who was the General Rapporteur for the Global Forum, asks how we can and need to rethink education in times of crisis to ensure that democracy, sustainability and social justice are strengthened rather than weakened. She quotes Dublin City University President Daire Keogh in his opening address at the Global Forum to suggest that "we should look into building a world not as it was, but as we want it to be and as it should be" and maintains that higher education needs to be both ambitious and humble at the same time. Yadira Pinilla, of the OAS Department for Human Development, Education and Employment, outlines how the democratic mission of higher education resonates with the overall task of furthering democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, while Maija Innola – the Chair of the Council of Europe's Education Committee – examines how the democratic mission of higher education can and should inform the new Education Strategy that the Council of Europe expects to adopt in September 2023. Within this

strategy and the overall democratic mission, the local democratic mission must find its place through the European platform that the committee approved a few months before the Global Forum was held.

In Part VIII, in a series of afterwords, three long-time contributors to the Global Cooperation who recently retired, or are about to do so, draw on their years of work in arguing for the continued importance of democracy and the indispensable role of higher education in developing and maintaining it. Ronaldo Munck argues that in rethinking the whole "knowledge project" that encompasses teaching, research and service as well as the broader question of public knowledge, we need to identify a new sense of purpose. Sjur Bergan argues that, as academics and higher education policy makers, we cannot remain indifferent to the threat that Russia's war of aggression represents not only to Ukraine but to all of Europe. He argues that the measure of a society's greatness is not the size of its army but the strength of its civil society as well as its contribution to the greater good of humankind, through education, research, culture, democracy and social inclusion. Tony Gallagher takes a longer-term view and provides an overview of how he has experienced the development of what is now the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education, an experience which leaves him optimistic about its future.

Towards a better future

We hope that Tony Gallagher's optimism will be transmitted to our readers, and that they will find inspiration in the diversity of views and practices presented in this book. We would like to express our thanks to all the authors as well as to those who work within each of the four partners in the Global Cooperation to promote social justice and sustainability and to develop and maintain the culture of democracy, without which our institutions, law and elections – and our societies as a whole – would not be democratic in practice.

We would in particular like to express our thanks to our strong supporter Snežana Samardžić-Marković, who stepped down as the Council of Europe's Director General for Democracy shortly before the Global Forum, and Joann Weeks, the retired Associate Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Netter Center, who for many years helped hold the Global Cooperation together as the day-to-day co-ordinator of the International Consortium. Our heartfelt thanks also go to Joann's successor Rita A. Hodges, who played a key role in organising the Dublin Global Forum, and to our editorial assistant Irina Geantă, who did an outstanding job of keeping track of successive drafts of all contributions to this text and helped make this book what it is.

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Part I

Prologue

Chapter 1

Why we cannot have democracy without education

Matjaž Gruden

I would like to start this chapter with an inspirational quote – and here is my take:

> In a dark place we find ourselves, and a little more knowledge lights our way.

This is Yoda, the Jedi Master, speaking. The choice of quote tells you where I spent most of my time during my university years.

Back then, in the late 1980s in what was still Yugoslavia, apart from watching *Star Wars*, we were also changing the world. At least we were doing our best to do so, and the university was the place to do that. This was not because professors and students had been secretly plotting to overthrow the regime – we did that only occasionally – but because the university was doing what universities always do: nurturing knowledge and stimulating critical thinking.

The university did so on campus, but also beyond the campus.

Knowledge and critical thinking are the driving forces of progressive change. They always have been and always will be.

This is why higher education is an essential part of democratic infrastructure. Higher education is one of the cornerstones of a society based on the values of humanity, knowledge, openness, curiosity, innovation, respect for individual rights and freedoms, respect for human dignity, a sense of responsibility for community and a sense of solidarity with other people. And this is why authoritarians fear and loathe its independence and autonomy and will do everything within their power to subjugate it. In March 2022, we were all shocked by the letter of support for the Russian aggression of Ukraine, signed by many rectors and prominent personalities from Russian universities (O'Malley 2022). It is difficult to know how much of that pledge of loyalty was genuine and how much was coerced, but it showed that the Kremlin clearly understood one thing. To wage a war built on lies, manipulations and falsifications, the Russian academic community had first to be silenced, neutralised and discredited. We should add that few (if any) Russian rectors got their position through active opposition to the regime and that, even if some may have signed under coercion, others hardly needed to be "convinced".

This is not a situation that we could have predicted more than 20 years ago, when we started working on the Democratic Mission of Higher Education with our US colleagues in the International Consortium. But what is happening is making our work even more important. It sounds like a platitude, but it could not be further from one.

What started as part of the effort to consolidate democratic achievements almost a quarter of a century ago has today turned into a race against time to stop and reverse the democratic decline. Some governments in the Council of Europe still struggle to fully understand and acknowledge the vital role of education in this respect. This project demonstrates that relevance in a very clear and convincing manner. This is why it should be an integral part of the Council of Europe's future strategy on education. That strategy was discussed by the Council of Europe Education Committee in March and September 2022, and again in April 2023, with hopes that the strategy will be adopted by ministers of education at a ministerial conference at the Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg in September 2023.

We are delighted that this co-operation is now "going global" with the full participation of the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities. Together, our two newer partners represent the two broad groups we need to make democracy a reality through higher education: the higher education community of institutions, staff and students alongside public authorities.

The Council of Europe commitment to the democratic mission of higher education is institutional, but we all know that it would not have happened and become as successful as it is if it were not for Sjur Bergan, the outgoing Head of our Education Department. Without people like Sjur, people with commitment, knowledge, ethics and sheer stubbornness, institutions are mere empty shells. Sjur's colleagues in the Council of Europe are immensely proud of the great honour bestowed on him by our host on 16 June 2022 when he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy *honoris causa* by Dublin City University at a ceremony held during the Global Forum. It could not go to a more deserving person.

The Global Forum which is the basis for this book was held in Dublin in June 2022 under very special circumstances. One European country had invaded another, and the war is still ongoing as this chapter is being written. Russia was excluded from the Council of Europe in March 2022 because of its war on Ukraine. It misuses education to try to justify its aggression. More precisely, Russia falsifies history.

At the same time, the war on Ukraine has led to a surge in solidarity quite unlike any other that Europe has seen recently. We need to help Ukraine – including its higher education – both now and in the long term.

This is also a reason for concern. Over the past decade or so, democracy in Europe – and not just in Europe – has been backsliding (Council of Europe 2021). At a time of very serious global challenges, from environmental change to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are witnessing increasing attacks on knowledge, on science and on reason. Illiberal populism thrives on ignorance and "alternative facts". This phenomenon is often attributed to the rise of fake news caused by the internet and social networks. That is true, but only to a certain extent. Conspiracy theories drove and fertilised a whole range of reactionary ideas and ideologies long before the advent of the internet, but it is true that the internet has established an ideal ecosystem for their creation and distribution.

However, the conditions in the market of lies are dictated not only by supply but also by demand. Denial of knowledge is not just a consequence of ignorance or

inaccessibility of facts. People often deliberately believe in alternative facts because they provide emotional comfort and an antidote to frustration and anger accumulated over a long period of real and perceived injustice. Rebellion against reason, against knowledge, against facts, though to one's own detriment, is often experienced as a rebellion against elites.

Regaining trust is always a two-way process, but we cannot change these perceptions unless higher education engages strongly with the broader society of which it is a part. Our project should strive to rebuild respect for and confidence in knowledge in our societies. And the imperative of social justice featuring prominently in the title of this event is a key part of the equation necessary to achieve that.

This includes something in which our host institution, Dublin City University (DCU), is a pioneer: engaging and working with its local community. In 2017, DCU hosted a Council of Europe conference on the local mission of higher education. The Council of Europe is building on that conference and on other work to launch a platform bringing organisations and institutions together to work further on this topic, with an emphasis on the local democratic mission. This platform, which will be launched in 2023, is a logical extension of what we do here today and tomorrow, and DCU plays a key role in both.

I am also very pleased that this conference is part of the programme of the Irish Presidency of our Committee of Ministers and that the presidency in general emphasises education. Having this kind of political support is essential.

The thinkers of the Age of Enlightenment – and I will admit I am paraphrasing Wikipedia here – emphasised the importance of individual freedom, reason and science and the value of human life. More than two centuries later, we seem to be getting tired of the light. The Darth Vaders are winning against the Yodas. We are not yet at the Age of the Eclipse, but we should never forget that, once it gets dark, it tends to be dark for a long time.

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Chapter 2

Higher education, creative altruism and democracy: where do we go from here?

Ira Harkavy

The Global Forum on Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability and Social Justice in Dublin was the seventh involving co-operation between the Council of Europe and the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy since their partnership began in 1999. The Dublin Forum, however, was different in its composition and sponsorship thanks to the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities joining the co-operation in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Their involvement, which led to the formation of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education in 2021, ensured a more global composition and focus.

This forum was also the first since the onset of Covid. In 2021, the partners produced a volume on higher education's response to the Covid-19 pandemic (Bergan et al. 2021), which included contributions from many of the colleagues who participated in the Dublin meeting. Although the pandemic was not the focus of our conversations in Dublin, its devastating and ongoing impacts could not but affect the proceedings. Among other things, the participants were well aware that the "pandemic-impacted university" needed to be decidedly different from the "pre-pandemic university", which had failed to adequately address and effectively combat the frightening problems facing the world. Among the most urgent problems discussed at the forum were the serious and growing threats to democracy.

A system in crisis

In the United States, the chasm-like inequities laid bare by Covid-19, the ongoing killing of Black Americans and other minorities, the gun violence epidemic and the armed insurrection at the Capitol on 6 January 2021, inspired and instigated by the outgoing president, Trump, and his refusal to accept his defeat in a democratic election, as well as the continuing attempt by a major political party – the Republicans – to subvert the electoral process, are powerful indicators of a system in crisis. These developments reflect global trends that are also signs of deep and deeply troubling problems, which include:

- increasing economic, political, social, educational and health inequalities;
- increasing racism, antisemitism and xenophobia;

- increasing attacks on science, knowledge and democracy itself;
- declining trust in nearly all major institutions and the concomitant rise of autocracy and an anti-democratic form of populism.

Many things, obviously, contribute to the present situation. Among them is the failure of universities to sufficiently do two of the primary things they are supposed to do: educate students to be ethical, empathetic, engaged, democratic citizens and advance knowledge for the continuous betterment of the human condition (Benson et al. 2017).

In an 1899 speech at the University of California, William Rainey Harper, the first President of the University of Chicago, observed that:

> The school system, the character of which, in spite of itself, the university determines and in a large measure controls. … through the school system every family in this entire broad land of ours is brought into touch with the university; for from it proceed the teachers or the teachers' teachers. (Harper 1905: 25)

Agreeing with Harper, I contend that higher education institutions powerfully shape the learning, values and aspirations of students from kindergarten through to graduate school.

To put it simply: no democratic higher education, no democratic schooling, no democratic societies.

As Professor Henry Taylor has written, higher education in the United States has not done what it could and should do to "produce knowledge for racial and social change" (Taylor 2021: 42). This also appears true on a global level. The current situation demands an increased dedication and commitment to realising the democratic mission of higher education, so that advancing democracy *democratically* becomes higher education's primary mission.

Where do we go from here?

The question is how do we get there from where we are now?

I certainly do not have a full answer to that question, but Martin Luther King's last and most radical and prophetic book, *Where do we go from here: chaos or community?* provides a useful beginning for the conversation (King 1967). *Where do we go from here* was written in a period that saw the rise of Black power and the concomitant criticism of multiracial coalitions, a visible white backlash against Black progress, and an expanding Vietnam War. Dr King felt that these developments and others required him and the movement he helped lead to take stock and make fundamental choices. The alternative for King was stark – *chaos or community*. Our current choice might well borrow from and build upon the one Dr King presented: *chaos and autocracy or community and democracy* – specifically participatory democracy.

Creative altruism

The psychologist Howard Gruber's concept of "creative altruism" might also be useful as we try to develop answers to the question of what approaches to consider as we chart our course.

According to Gruber,

> We can envisage and identify cases of "creative altruism," in which a person [an institution in this case] displays extraordinary moral responsibility. … Creative altruism, when it goes the limit, strives to eliminate the cause of suffering, to change the world, to change the fate of the earth. (Gruber 1989: 285)

Given the state of the earth, universities need to be creative altruistic institutions that are dedicated to community and democracy and that work *with* their neighbours to change the world for the better. In so doing, they will create a "community of experts" and make increased contributions to research, teaching and learning (Cantor and Englot 2013: 121).

I would be remiss if I did not turn to Benjamin Franklin, the founder of the University of Pennsylvania, my home institution, to help answer the question of how to move forward. According to Franklin there are three kinds of people: those who are immovable, those who are movable and those who move. It seems to me that university academic staff and administrators, community leaders and public authorities must be among those who move, working together to develop mutually (university and community) transformative local partnerships. While the local democratic work is a necessary condition for change, it is not enough. A global movement has to be built and advanced to help universities function as creative altruistic institutions dedicated to the values and practice of democracy, sustainability and social justice.

This is where the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education comes in, providing opportunities for colleagues from around the world to learn from one another, as it did at the 2022 Global Forum. Developing ideas and actionable knowledge as a result of global forums and other convenings, as well as sharing that knowledge through publications, such as this book, are the core work of the Global Cooperation. That work is crucial, in my judgment, for creating a global movement to fulfil higher education's democratic mission and to develop and sustain participatory democracy on campus, in the community and in the wider society.

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Part II

Universities and colleges working together locally, nationally and globally

Chapter 3

Higher education leadership for democracy, global sustainability and social justice

Simon Harris

Higher education

The exact role and scope of higher education has long been debated by academics, policy makers and others. There is no doubt that the collective goal of education must not be confined to skills development, as crucial to our well-being as it might be. Certainly, without the right skills in our economy, we will not reduce our emissions to avert climate breakdown. We will not build the homes our people need. However, a strictly instrumentalist or utilitarian view of education's purpose is clearly a limited one.

Nelson Mandela famously said, in a speech given on 16 July 2003, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Given the ongoing attacks on democracy all over the world and on our own continent, education – and specifically higher education – can and must play a vital role in protecting our democratic institutions and values. Education has an essential role in not only defending but advancing genuine democracy for all. Indeed, it is the most powerful weapon we have to maintain peace and advance democracy. It can deliver what Mandela cherished, as he said at the end of the Rivonia trial, "the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities" (Mandela 1964).

Council of Europe

In 1949, Ireland was one of the 10 founding members of the Council of Europe. Today, the Council comprises 46 states, spanning our continent and, crucially, including Ukraine. On 20 May 2022, Ireland took the helm of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers for the seventh time. All of the Council's members have committed to protecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These are values which Ireland will work to advance during its term. During the Irish Government's Presidency, one of our priorities is to engage fully with higher education and with the academic community throughout Europe.

The overarching goal of Ireland's Presidency is to renew "the conscience of Europe". In the wake of Russia's expulsion following its invasion of Ukraine, Ireland wishes

to refocus on the Council's core work, so we can deliver the most effective support for Ukraine and its people. We will pursue three clear and complementary priorities during our presidency.

First, as a founding state, we will work to reaffirm "Our Founding Freedoms", reinforcing human rights protection for civilians across Europe. Second, we will draw from our national experience, including with citizens' assemblies, to promote participatory democracy and engage young people in the democratic process. Finally, we will work to foster a Europe of welcome, inclusion and diversity. We have framed this around the concept of *Fáilte*, the Irish word for "welcome". To support our priorities, we will make an additional voluntary contribution of almost one million euros to the Council this year, channelled in particular to the Action Plan for Ukraine, the new Human Rights Trust Fund and the effective functioning of the European Court of Human Rights.

Ukraine

At the turn of the year, there were few here who would have predicted the outbreak of war in Europe and, with it, the biggest displacement of people on the continent since the dark days of the Second World War. The European Union has shown its true democratic colours and, from the get-go, our nations worked together to support and protect Ukrainian people fleeing conflict. Early this year at the European Council on Education (where EU ministers of education meet), we heard from our ministerial counterpart in Ukraine that the continued access of Ukrainian young people to education will be an essential element in rebuilding their future.

Ultimately, we must and will do everything we can to empower Ukrainians to shape a positive collective future for themselves and their country. As a government and as a country, Ireland is unequivocal in its welcome for people fleeing Ukraine. We are determined to deliver access to education, social income and shelter. I am proud to see that this approach is widely reflected throughout our society. In particular, we have seen a typically open and generous response from Ireland's third-level (tertiary) sector.

Pronouncements of the importance of education are only as useful as the programmes that are in place to support them. Ireland has established the National Student and Researcher Helpdesk (Irish Government 2022a) as a single point of contact for all displaced students who are seeking to access higher education. It will guide applicants through the documentation required to support their continued access to higher education. We will also facilitate the Ukrainian higher education entrance examinations, which will be taken online in a dedicated testing centre, and we are planning a range of financial supports for Ukrainian students planning to attend Irish universities and colleges.

The Ukrainian people that I meet are united in their determination to return to and rebuild their homeland as soon as they are able to. Our support is unwavering so that, when they return, the forces of democracy in Ukraine and across Europe will be stronger than ever.

Social justice

One of the outcomes I would like to see emerge from the Global Forum would be increased leadership by our higher education institutions in democracy, social justice and sustainability. If we want to widen the net to shape a higher education space that is truly representative, the choice to attend must be a real one; it must be an available one, an accessible one for every single student and family, here in Ireland and across the world.

To make access a lived reality, not only must we fund our higher education as part of the public space delivering a common good, but we must also remove cost barriers for all students. That is why I recently published "Funding the future", a landmark government policy which has settled the question regarding the funding of higher education in Ireland (Irish Government 2022b). Our higher education system will be a multifunded model of additional Exchequer investment and employer contributions through the National Training Fund. The student contribution will be retained but I am committed to reducing it over time.

Not only will we properly fund our institutions with the core funding necessary to provide this public good, but we are also committed to reducing the cost of education. Particularly, I would like to provide more supports for flexible and blended learning, which will really benefit women, carers, people with disabilities and people from other groups which have been traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

Citizen-centred education

If we want an education system that is citizen-centred, that is democratised, that is empowering future generations to deliver social justice, we must have a unified system without silos. I am very proud of Ireland's education and research systems and the tremendous track record they enjoy internationally. I saw this especially through the challenges of the pandemic, when the response of staff to the needs of their students was very impressive.

Our policy pathway is to enhance the ways in which the system as a whole responds to the changing needs of students and learners, of industry and of wider society. It is my view that a more unified approach across tertiary education and research can build a sea change of broader yet more cohesive opportunities for learners, researchers and innovators. At its heart, this new design is about opening doors for people, rather than closing them. Unfortunately, a lack of clear signposts or pathways for the learner can serve to exclude many people.

Education should never close doors. Education should always mean opportunity and hope, regardless of who you are, where you come from or where you are in life, young or old. Central to this new policy approach is increasing movement for learners and researchers across and within all aspects of the third-level system.

There is no doubt in my mind that these reforms will advance equality, diversity and inclusion across the educational landscape. This will be good for regional development and industry too. But we do not have all the answers to this and it will only work if

driven by the innovators and trailblazers in higher education. My department has now commenced an open consultation process on how we shape this collectively. We are looking for all and any ideas and suggestions for change.

Increasing access

As we break down barriers of cost and illuminate more effective pathways across parts of the third level (the tertiary system), a truly democratic education system ensures that access and inclusion are core values and practices. We have come a long way here in Ireland. We have increased access for people with disabilities, and we have more members of the Traveller community than ever before in higher education.

Very shortly, I will bring to the government our new National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education. This plan is to ensure that the student body entering into, participating in and completing higher education at all levels reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. It identifies the target groups that are currently underrepresented in higher education. These include entrants from socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education, such as Irish Travellers, students with disabilities, including for the first time a dedicated pathway for students with intellectual disabilities, first-time mature student entrants, part-time/flexible learners and further education award holders.

Education advances equality – Literacy

We are reforming third-level education beyond higher education too. My generation must not forget those who went before us and were locked out of the education system. We talk of our knowledge-based economy and talent as our greatest strategic asset. In this rapidly changing world, knowledge and talent will drive forward democratic transformation. But everyone must have an equal opportunity to contribute to and participate in these advances.

Crucial to democracy, equality and sustainability is literacy. Beyond its conventional concept as a set of reading, writing and counting skills, literacy is now understood as a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world. On the other hand, unmet literacy needs adversely affect the enjoyment of other democratic rights.

Unfortunately, the stark reality in Ireland 2022 is not so rosy on the issue of adult literacy. One in six Irish adults cannot read or struggle with reading. I have met people around the country from all walks of life who have hidden for years in forgotten worlds where literacy and numeracy needs are often experienced in shame. Well, I think the shame is ours as a society.

I was proud to publish the first ever 10-year Adult Literacy Strategy in 2021 (Irish Government 2022c). We will shortly be recruiting and appointing new literacy co-ordinators in each region of the country and a new National Programme Office to deliver a cross-government, cross-economy and cross-society response.

Gender equality

I cannot address the theme of social justice without speaking about gender equality. In Ireland, our own experience with the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality demonstrates how engaging citizen dialogue can make change happen within society and across government systems (Citizens' Assembly 2021). This was a significant moment in the long history of advocacy and public discourse around how we treat and value women and girls in this country. The Assembly recommended that all levels of the education system should monitor policies and practices through the lens of gender equality and report regularly on trends and outcomes by gender.

I recently addressed the Oireachtas (National Parliament) Joint Committee on Gender Equality established on foot of the Assembly's recommendations. I shared with my parliamentary colleagues some of the changes we are progressing, such as the National Review of Gender Equality and the Gender Action Plan.

Another significant disrupter is the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (HEA 2019). This programme has created rapid and sustainable change in the representation of women in the senior professor grade, with funding for 45 prestigious senior leadership posts over three years. There are other positive developments such as the Gender Equality Enhancement Fund, as well as the 98 Athena Swan awards earned by Irish higher education institutions (HEA 2023).

However, gender inequality is a deeply ingrained cultural problem. Until we achieve gender justice, our universities and in fact all parts of society are prevented from realising their full potential. I know that the Council of Europe is side by side with us on this journey.

Sustainability

Another journey the whole world is taking together is that of climate change and sustainability. With this, we have to recognise that the human condition fears change. On climate, the public are way ahead of us. They know things need to change, but not everyone knows how we are going to get there.

This is where higher education comes in, educating and informing us all. It is our higher education researchers who will find the zero-carbon replacements and new ways of living and working that we need. In Ireland, we have to ensure that we maintain momentum around the Climate Action Plan and our goal to achieve a 51% reduction in overall carbon emissions by 2030.

My own department is of course uniquely placed to play its part. Those we work with and represent are integral to every part of the solution to this issue, from the academics and researchers who will create the evidence base to tackle this global crisis to the builders and retrofitters who will undertake the work needed to reduce our carbon footprint.

Research, innovation and climate change

Addressing climate change is a fundamental, complex and multifaceted issue for society. I recently launched Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy

(Irish Government 2022d). This is our shared ambition for research and innovation for this decade. This will see us through these years of accelerated change and rapid transformation. The strategy aims to support the development of new ideas, technologies, skills, knowledge and solutions which can transform our prosperity and the way we work and live.

The impact we are determined to deliver is an effective response to the twin transition challenges of climate change and digitisation. The strategy commits to maximising the impact of the Irish research and innovation system on critical sectoral agendas of government.

We know that high-quality research is vital for a robust evidence base. However, a decarbonising economy will also bring opportunities, including in research and innovation. These are clearly emerging in energy efficiency, in renewable energy, in resource recovery, in the circular economy and in the bio-economy, and they need to be systematically developed through research and innovation.

For the first time ever, under Impact 2030, I will chair a group of the six government departments with the largest research budgets. Through this and other measures, we will ensure research and innovation are critical enablers to support delivery of our climate action targets and to address wider environmental and sustainability challenges as part of the strategy's first work programme to 2024.

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has also undertaken a significant new project, in collaboration with Science Foundation Ireland, called Creating Our Future (Irish Government 2021). This is what you might call "a national conversation" with the people of Ireland on science and what types of issue matter to them. We asked about the issues that researchers and innovators should be looking at into the future. We will use the data captured to set up a series of grand challenges. Climate of course featured heavily, so watch this space over the next few years to see the innovations and new solutions flowing from this work.

Conclusion

James Joyce wrote in *Ulysses*, "To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher". Life is teaching us a lot at the moment. More than ever though, we need an education system that is properly resourced and protected as a public good. But we need our educators to be humble also and help us to find the solutions to the challenges of the future. We have to keep in mind the need to include the broadest cross-section of people in all our endeavours and to continually ask how we can put our commitment to inclusivity, equality and diversity into practice.

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Chapter 4

Defence of democracy in South Africa: the role of engaged universities

Ahmed Bawa

Conditions in South Africa

At the end of 2021, Universities South Africa held its Second National Higher Education Conference, entitled "The Engaged University" (USAf 2022). The theme was chosen as an opportunity to think about higher education's engagement with its multiple publics and within society at large. Underpinning this choice was a deeper interest in wanting to engage in reimagining the university as a social institution and wanting to understand how universities could best address what appear to be so many intransigent socio-economic challenges of this adolescent democracy. Two very significant disruptions, the student activism of 2015-17 and the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020, gave impetus to this surge of interest, and there have been many lessons learned about the state of higher education and in particular its relationship with broader society. The erosion of democracy, deepening poverty and inequality, rampant public and private sector corruption, rising xenophobia, a stagnant economy and severe energy crisis and volatility – all form a backdrop of prodigious proportions.

As one witnessed at UNESCO's World Higher Education Conference 2022, entitled "Reinventing Higher Education for a Sustainable Future", in the rapidly changing environment in which higher education finds itself there is a global surge of interest in thinking about its future as a public good and its role in the path to addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO 2022). During the deliberations in Barcelona, where the conference was held, a lot of time was spent on the need to (re)imagine engagement, but in a context where many of the challenges that universities worked with were simultaneously local and global. Among them we find the recent assaults on democracy and the shifting boundary conditions of truth, with the concomitant impact of rising populism and anti-intellectualism. Many old and new democracies face challenges that have the potential to weaken their effectiveness and their trustworthiness if they are not addressed suitably.

While these challenges have implications for the role of universities as social institutions, they also have implications for the future sustainability of universities. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is a rise in interest to revisit/reimagine/reshape the nature of universities and their complex relationships with the societies they serve. More practically, while it appears that higher education has recovered from

the pressures brought to bear on it by Covid-19, much has yet to be understood about the impact of the pandemic on critical aspects of the operations of universities such as the future profile of supply and demand, unbundling and the creep of the gig economy on the higher education labour market (Nelson et al. 2020).

The student uprising of 2015-17 very nearly brought the South African higher education system to a staggering halt. The major motifs of the student demonstrations were two campaigns: #FeesMustFall and *#RhodesMustFall*. While these were initially separated along ideological lines, they flowed together to generate powerful interventions. As one vice chancellor put it, in getting former President Jacob Zuma to meet at short notice with the leadership of the many student movements and vice chancellors, the students had achieved in a few days what the vice chancellors had never been able to do. Yet, the legacy of the student uprising was that it shook the system to the core, giving impetus to transformative, longer-term impact on this project of reimagination. First, it broadened the base of interlocutors with multiple threads of student, staff, faculty and public involvement. Second, it shaped (perhaps for the first time since the early 1990s) the discursive nature of the project of engaging the future of higher education in relation to what was perceived to be the prevailing objective national conditions (Bawa 2021).

There are multiple dimensions to the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is estimated that in South Africa alone more than 300 000 people lost their lives to it (Madhi 2022). Its impact on the socio-economic well-being of the most marginalised layers of society has yet to be properly assessed. The unequal access to education – both basic and higher – will likely have serious long-term effects in the deepening of inequality and poverty. This devastation did not spare the universities and higher education more generally. Its impact on teaching and learning received much media attention, but research, innovation and service activities were all affected. The individual institutions dealt with severe short-term financial crises, but they were also understandably consumed with modelling the impact of the pandemic on their long-term sustainability. In the quest to complete academic programmes, much technological innovation was generated, and it is inevitable that many of these innovations will be brought to bear on the future of higher education. There is still much to be learned about the impact of Covid-19 on society and more specifically on universities. One example of this is reports of what appears to be some reluctance on the part of students to return to the traditional learning and teaching arrangements (Krupnick 2022).

It is now a cliché that the peaceful, democratic transition in 1994 was a magical moment, generating euphoria and hopes for a better quality of life for all South Africans. In 1995 the national government led by Nelson Mandela instituted a multisectoral National Commission on Higher Education to produce a post-apartheid mandate for its universities (NCHE 1996). The outcomes of the commission formed the basis of the Higher Education Act of 1997, which defined the transformation agenda of the higher education sector. As these disruptive periods in higher education unfolded, there appeared to be a clearly defined theme emerging: the social compact between higher education and society (through the National Commission) was in tatters.

Notwithstanding the success of the transition in preventing South Africa from marching towards a seemingly inevitable civil war, and the fact that it has produced a relatively stable democracy for the past 28 years, that success is being questioned. It simply has not sufficiently improved the socio-economic conditions of the vast majority of South Africans. Using the Gini coefficient as a measure of wealth inequality where 1 represents maximal inequality (all wealth concentrated in one person) and 0 represents total wealth equality, South Africa – with a Gini coefficient of 0.65 – has the highest level of inequality in the world coupled with high levels of poverty and an official unemployment rate of about 35%. It is not surprising that there is growing disillusionment with democracy, especially among youth. The questions that emerged in the student uprising were: are the universities, and the higher education sector more generally, complicit in the construction of a socially unjust society and, if that is the case, how did this happen?

The two arms of the student movement raised different, but convergent, streams of deep disquiet with universities and with South Africa's political dispensation more generally. #FeesMustFall raised a simple question: how is it possible, in a democracy such as South Africa, for a university education to be unaffordable to the vast majority of young people who qualify to take up a place of study at an academic institution? Rhodes Must Fall raised much deeper philosophical questions of the extent to which South African higher education is embedded in a colonial mentality, a colonial imagination. Both spoke to the basis of possible alienation of the sector from the lives of the majority of South Africans.

Lessons from South Africa

In 2013, the unemployment rate of university graduates was slightly higher than 6%, considerably lower than that national figure (Broekhuizen and Berg 2013). The number of students from working-class and poor backgrounds has since grown considerably, with some 60% of the total national enrolment falling into this socio-economic category and receiving full cost-of-study government bursaries. Higher education opens doors to significant social mobility and so, unsurprisingly, it is a highly contested terrain. The interrogation of the role of universities in South Africa has always been a tortuous process.

Universities are knowledge-intensive social institutions, created and sustained by societies because they are recognised to be essential to the healthy functioning of multilayered democracies. Among other knowledge-intensive institutions, they have a special role in that they have students, and their core purpose is to provide learning environments and opportunities for the social, intellectual and emotional development of the graduates who emerge from them. They have a major role in developing critically engaged citizens. It is not surprising, then, that the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education recognises the imperative for universities and university leaders to be redoubling efforts in ensuring that their role in invigorating and deepening democracy is optimised. Thus, at a time when there is an accelerating disillusionment with democracy in South Africa, especially at a time when we observe falling participation rates of youth in elections, the rise of

political discord (and even violence), the rise of xenophobia and so on, universities are revisiting this purpose (Runciman and Bekker 2021).

The impact of globalisation on higher education has produced an increasingly tenuous relationship between universities and the nation state, thereby undermining their role in shaping the future of democracies (Readings 1996). In young democracies that have arisen from deeply fractured histories, like South Africa, the project of nation-building and the design and constructive evolution of social coherence are essential projects of universities as well (NCHE 1996). At a time when many of the grand challenges facing humanity, global warming for instance, are simultaneously local, national and global, it seems important that the connection of universities with their local contexts needs to be reinvigorated, though this comes with the risk of rising parochialism, which is challenging at a time of rising ethnic tensions and nationalisms. Notwithstanding this danger, engagement has to be seen as important to addressing the pressures on democracy.

In South Africa, the history of higher education's engagement with its local contexts is replete with examples of unsustainable experiments, notwithstanding their intentions and outstanding short-term outcomes. To take them beyond rhetoric towards sufficient levels of sustainability, there are lessons to be learned: for example, from the medical and health sciences where learning in practice is formally incorporated into the teaching and research programmes. To reiterate, the lesson is to ensure that the engagements of universities with their local contexts, however these are defined, must be seen to transform their knowledge projects. Due in part to the paraphernalia of the globalisation of higher education, such as the ranking systems and their embedded measurement protocols, the connection of universities to international aspects of higher education seems to come more easily. This has ramifications for the ways in which universities organise themselves because of the impact of these measurement systems on the work of individual academics and their departments or schools. If there is to be systemic change in this regard, it will depend on reimagining the knowledge projects of institutions.

The Rhodes Must Fall student movement accelerated rethinking of the nature of teaching and research. More generally, in higher education systems in former colonial societies, the project and process of "decolonisation" has focused attention on the nature and content of teaching and research. University systems, the mantra suggests, must enter the global knowledge system on their own terms rather than on the coat-tails of the more dominant higher education systems they partner with. This depends, in part, on knowledge projects being locally contextualised. In South Africa, where 55% of the peer-reviewed publication output of the national system is done in collaboration with scholars in other parts of the world, this is at least a pertinent question. It should not be surprising that the most cited South African research domain is clinical medicine, one reason for this being the fact that clinical medicine depends fundamentally on research based on the local context.

Threats to the social ownership of universities

While it is broadly understood that universities are created and sustained by societies, there are, at least in South Africa, questions about the extent of their social

ownership. On multiple occasions when universities (and indeed the university system) were under threat of closure because of student and/or staff actions, there has been very limited (if any) defence of the institutions. For universities to be effective in addressing the defence and the deepening of democracy there will have to be significantly higher levels of social ownership. What are these threats and how are they to be addressed?

As in other parts of the world, South Africa's democracy faces threats from several directions. First, as mentioned previously, the shifting boundary of truth is an important threat. This generates havoc in the knowledge enterprise of universities in the sense that universities are in the business of producing experts, critical thinkers and engaged citizens. One representation of this is the rise of anti-intellectual approaches, as was seen during the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of anti-intellectualism on policy makers and policy-making ranges from levels of absurdity to sophisticated ideological manipulation; from Donald Trump's musings on the injection of disinfectants as treatment for Covid-19 to the ideological position adopted by the South African Government on the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the late 1990s and early 2000s, notwithstanding serious pushback from the scientific community, on the rejection of the use of antiretroviral treatments for the disease. It has been estimated that the latter resulted in more than 300 000 extra deaths (Nattrass 2008 on the HIV/AIDS pandemic; Madhi 2022 on Covid-19). Allied to this is the rise of populism in many parts of the world, with the selective use of science-based advice and information for political expediency. The extent to which populism and anti-intellectualism more generally erode the public's trust in experts has to be of serious concern to universities and their communities.

As was mentioned earlier, the question about the complicity of universities in the production and maintenance of inequality and poverty is perhaps simplistic since these are institutions that are embedded in the political economies in which they find themselves. Having said this, as was explored in the edited volume *Universities and the production of elites: discourses, policies and strategies of excellence and stratification in higher education* (Block et al. 2018), universities are in the business of producing and reproducing elites. It is not sufficient for universities to depend on some form of trickle-down effect – through arguments of social mobility, for instance. The question is: should and can universities adopt a social justice rubric that shapes their teaching and research activities so that they are more clearly defined as impacting directly the socio-economic challenges mentioned above? Purely as an example, the significant uptake of technology for teaching and learning by institutions of higher learning during the pandemic produced some of the crassest forms of inequality of access. It may be imagined that any future innovations ought to emphasise the need for solutions that eradicate this kind of outcome. They must, through their multiple knowledge projects, demonstrate ways in which they sharpen their focus on being more socially just. It is not enough for universities to simply co-exist without tension in the places carved out for them in the political economy.

At a more practical level, South Africa adopted a post-school education and training system that bifurcates learning pathways into "theoretical" learning and skills development. An unintended consequence of this philosophical approach has been the decreasing emphasis on providing students with the opportunity of developing skill

sets and integrative learning abilities at the interface of theory and practice. While there are programmes at universities that successfully bring these interfaces into conversation in their formal curricula, such as in the medical and health sciences, the extent of such integration in most general degrees is sadly lacking. More recently, even in engineering and engineering technology, there has been a decline in requiring such learning.

While South Africa has a rich history of experimentation in engagement as a basis for this form of integrated learning, the majority of these continue to be very much at the edge of universities rather than being seen as central to their academic enterprise. The original conceptual framework for engagement was to bring students from upper- and middle-class backgrounds (and white in South Africa) to "communities" to help their own development. The student demographics at South African universities have changed considerably, with hundreds of thousands of students who come from those communities and have deep insights into life there. In a conversation with Professor Melissa Steyn at the University of the Free State about her paper on the imperatives of diversity, she spoke about how students identified precisely these understandings and connections with their communities as a basis for much more engagement in the formal curriculum (Steyn 2007). Moving towards a humanistic higher education and the development of critically engaged citizens, it would be important to bring learning opportunities to students where such integrative approaches may be nurtured. Moving the learning agenda of students away from thinking of the purpose of education and qualifications as having transactional value to having use value seems to be important in the quest to develop critically engaged citizens.

Finally, colonialism's project was predicated on constructing hierarchies among knowledge systems that co-exist and are cohabited in colonised contexts. For universities to consider the place for knowledge systems that have been systematically excluded in the past addresses four issues. First, such projects would be essential to enhance the social ownership of universities by ensuring that people see themselves and their lives represented within the knowledge enterprises they encounter at the institutions. Second, the role of universities in shaping political and socio-economic policy must consider the cohabitation by the majority of South Africans of more than one knowledge system to ensure that the policies speak to the complexity of the social environments that those policies operate in. Adam Ashforth wrote extensively about this in his work based in Soweto, Johannesburg (see, for example, Ashforth 2002). Third, this is indeed an issue of social justice; it is about ensuring that decolonising discourses recognise the multiplicity of ways of knowing, and the interactions and intersections between them. Fourth, opening up the university to multiple ways of knowing has important consequences for the social ownership of universities as individuals and communities see their complex lives represented in them.

Concluding thoughts

Humanity faces a number of grand challenges, and among them is the need to strengthen and deepen democracies around the world. This need comes at a time when there are serious attacks on democracy which, by definition, are also direct

attacks on the long-term sustainability of universities. Universities as social institutions must rise to the challenge of building and sustaining democracies through their core activities of research and teaching. Essential ingredients for universities to be involved in such projects are high levels of social ownership and trust in the work that they do. This is a two-way street in the sense that universities must demonstrate their effective engagement with the challenges facing humanity and their commitment and adherence to rigorous academic endeavours. Academic freedom and institutional autonomy come at a cost. The modulation of social ownership is not simply a question of universities selling their wares more effectively. It is about how society, and especially the poor, experience the university in terms of their core functions. Who gains access to higher education? What do the knowledge projects of universities address? How porous are the borders of universities to other ways of knowing?

In the case of South Africa, a significant contributor to the increasing fragility of democracy is its failure to have produced sufficient socio-economic transformations to ensure that an improved quality of life of most of the population would be secured. Amartya Sen and others have argued for the positive link between successful development trajectories and a healthy democracy (Sen 1999). While we may conjecture that a sustainable future of humanity is tied to the strengthening of democracy, it is also the case that socio-economic alienation can rapidly unweave the democratic fabrics of societies.

A constant thread through the process described here of reimagining the university as a social institution is tied to the idea that universities are located in place and time. Engagement with that context is essential to this project of understanding the place of universities in actively and meaningfully addressing the threats to democracy and in strengthening democracy. The impact of globalisation and its machinery has been a major factor in dislocating them from those contexts. And yet, at a time when so many of the grand challenges facing humanity are intensely local and global, there cannot be a more important time for universities to be global in scope, to be the bridges between societies, to allow for the free flow of scholars and scholarship. This is especially important at a time when geopolitical shifts are rapidly closing down the spaces for the development of a global commons of scholars and scholarship. The one way for institutions to address this conundrum is for universities in South Africa to enter the global knowledge system based on an assumed responsibility for generating new knowledge about the contexts in which they are based. This formulation helps to address the decolonisation challenge faced by South African universities, seeing decolonisation as a process rather than destination.

That universities are essential to the struggle for defending and deepening democracy is without question. What must be probed, at least in South Africa, is what universities have to do to be able to play that role. It is argued here that the current debates on the reorientation of universities towards being more connected with their local contexts with the subsequent (re)orientation of their knowledge projects (teaching and research) are essential to ensure sustainable action and impact. Strengthening the social ownership of universities depends on the creation of meaningful intersections between local contexts and the work of institutions.

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Chapter 5

Colleges and universities as trusted neighbours: digging deep locally and resonating globally

Nancy Cantor and Peter Englot

A central and pressing question for higher education today revolves around gaining or regaining public trust in a time of growing distrust of institutions and civil society generally, expressed as threats to democratic freedoms, including academic freedom to set curricula and voice expert opinions (Svrluga and Rozsa 2022; Young and Friedman 2022). This landscape of distrust comes on top of the harsh realities of the ever-rising inequality that leaves too many people feeling left out in the cold, promotes extremes of zero-sum thinking and inter-group discord and unleashes hibernating bigotry of all kinds – racial, ethnic, xenophobic, faith-based and more – what psychologist Rupert Nacoste describes as anti-group feelings of prejudice that people hold but do not express in behaviour until a stimulus comes along and wakes it up (Nacoste 2015). Higher education, a critical lever for social mobility in a knowledge economy, all too frequently reproduces precisely the inequality of access to opportunity that repeatedly dooms too many to the sidelines of equitable growth (Carnevale et al. 2020). To add insult to injury, too often the knowledge produced within our institutions does not address the everyday issues confronting the growing populations of the marginalised in our home communities, or may even be itself a source of discriminatory inequality (as for example when technological innovation leaves workers behind or the science of healthcare is far too inaccessible for far too many). Moreover, higher education institutions are too often seen as cut off from the voices and lived experiences of residents in our home communities, producing knowledge in what Harry Boyte wisely called a "cult of the experts" rather than collaborating in ways that create what we have called a "community of experts, with and without pedigree" (Cantor and Englot 2016).

Building trust by digging in locally

Starting, then, from the premise that higher education has to focus more on building trust and demonstrating genuine care for the community and the public good at a moment of widespread disillusionment, we harken back to the words spoken over half a century ago at the 1963 March on Washington led by Martin Luther King, Jr., where Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a revered voice in Newark NJ, where

our university is anchored, said: "Neighbor is not a geographic term. It is a moral concept. It means our collective responsibility for the preservation of man's dignity and integrity."

Translating those prophetic words into the pragmatics of our current reality, we suggest that higher education institutions and leaders need to ask a deceptively simple question when developing our institutional strategic plans, namely: what does the public need from us? (Rutgers University-Newark 2014). Or, as Chris Brink framed it in his 2018 treatise on *The soul of a university*, we need to ask not only "what we are good at" but also "what we are good for" (Brink 2018). And taking that duality one step further, we want to argue that very frequently the scholarship we produce (that is, "what we are good at") can be substantively enhanced by publicly engaged efforts to collaborate with our neighbours in mutually beneficial partnerships addressing the pressing issues of our community (demonstrating "what we are good for"). Or, to paraphrase the wisdom again from long ago of the renowned scholar Kurt Lewin, "the best way to understand something is to try to change it", wisdom that resonates in the participatory action research that has come to increasingly inform work in the sciences of late (Harkavy et al. 2014). Fulfilling our roles as Prinz's neighbour in its fullest sense – being what we now call anchor institutions committed to mutually beneficial, democratic partnerships in our home communities that resonate globally – constitutes, we believe, a significant step towards building or rebuilding trust even in this strained world, and perhaps not surprisingly but often ignored, it makes us better at what we are good at too (Harkavy 2016).

Taking as but one example of both the university–community trust that can be built and the progress that can be made in tackling the thorniest challenges of our world, we point to the work of the Humanities Action Lab (HAL), a global network of university–community partnerships, whose home base is in Newark NJ at Express Newark, our university–community centre for socially engaged art and design. The participants in HAL's Climates of Inequality project used a participatory action research and collaboration framework to create local teams in locations across the globe of sustainability citizen-activists, university students, scholars in the arts, public humanities and environmental sciences, to tell the stories of frontline communities disparately impacted by toxic environments (HAL 2019). They produced a digital platform exhibition connecting the stories of environmental impact on the health and well-being of residents heard from the voices of lived experience to the mapping of air, water and soil toxicity by scientists and climate activist organisers. In so doing, they not only raised the consciousness of policy makers and politicians dealing with a range of local pressures from new potential industrial polluters to lead (Pb) toxicity in water systems, but also encouraged a new generation of student activists, many of whom came from precisely these kinds of frontline communities, provided critical data to greatly enhance the public scholarship of the faculty and produced curricula for both college and local public schools. In other words, by digging deep locally, they built both local ecosystems of trusted anchor institution–community partnerships, informed scholars and democratically engaged students and also a resilient, sustainable global network across geographic boundaries.

The lessons of digging deep locally

There are, we believe, four fundamental lessons about the process of trust building to be learned from endeavours like the Climates of Inequality. First, and perhaps most central, is the recognition of the assets in and of our communities full of the wisdom of lived experience, beyond the gates of our institutions and often hidden behind the wall of a pedigree that we erect to define excellence and knowledge. As was often quoted in our conference in Dublin, the great James Joyce wrote in 1918 in *Ulysses*, "To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher" (Joyce 1992: 35).

Second, and related to that pool of lived wisdom, is the opportunity to create two-way streets of publicly engaged and community-informed scholarship if we are only willing to breach those walls and listen to those voices.

Third, and perhaps hardest to sustain, but critical to it all, are the practices of dialogue and collaboration and co-creation in what we call "third spaces" (those not of either the university alone or the community alone, but both together), and then connecting those local anchor partnerships in networks, national and global, in which the sharing of local stories from those third spaces of collaboration can magnify impact across many boundaries, geographic, generational, disciplinary and more (Cantor et al. 2013).

Finally, and in some ways the approach most likely to sustain its impact, is the possibility that by engaging deeply with that next generation in this process, we have a chance to produce democratic practitioners who might just trust universities as places where they and their kin belong, allowing us to reverse what many of us at the Dublin Global Forum called out as our complicity in the production of inequality and allowing us instead to become a more active environment for producing social mobility, prioritising racial equity and equitable growth, and connecting it to democracy, sustainability and social justice.

Setting our institutional agendas

Working from these lessons in trust building, and prioritising our duty to be engines of equitable growth, not producers of inequality, we see at least three critical ways in which our institutions of higher education can set a progressive agenda as an alternative to reproducing inequality: focus on social mobility, starting in our local communities and regions; reward and incentivise the publicly engaged scholarship of our faculty, staff and students; and make institutional commitments as anchor institutions in and of our home communities by collaborating across sectors in an ecosystem directed at local equitable growth, with special attention to systemic barriers often, in our country, written in colour (Lewis and Cantor 2022). As we unpack examples of each of these aspects of a democratic progressive institutional agenda here, we acknowledge our bias to dig deep locally, opening the gates of our universities and informing our perspective by looking from the outside in, as a good neighbour at home, even though we firmly believe that such localism can resonate broadly and that we also have a responsibility to learn from and inform each other's

global journeys. Moreover, as we will try to illustrate here, our institutional home communities are so often made up of students and families from all over the globe that localism quickly turns into globalism.

Pathways to social mobility

One of the surest ways to gain public trust is to open our institutions by creating accessible and affordable pathways to and through them for local students, which in the United States often means dismantling what civil rights scholar Gary Orfield calls *The walls around opportunity*, the title of his recent book on the effects of four decades of so-called colour-blind policies that resulted in barriers to higher education for students growing up in largely segregated neighbourhoods and therefore attending public schools segregated by race and socio-economic class (Orfield 2022). We see this up close in our local community of Newark NJ, a majority Black and Brown city, built by decades of migration from the South to the North of the US, and immigration from global diasporas.

Newark is the largest city in the state of New Jersey, surrounded by very wealthy suburban communities, and characteristic of what Martin Luther King, Jr., in a speech at Stanford University on 14 April 1967, called the "two Americas". In one America, the people enjoy access to all the tangible and intangible benefits promised by a free, democratic society; in "The other America" (now used as the title of the speech) the people do not have access to all those benefits because of segregation by race and class. King went on to give variations of this speech in other locations in the ensuing months (King 1967).

Newark is a city with multiple Fortune 500 companies, many cultural institutions, and research universities and hospitals. Yet it is a transportation hub for the Metro New York/New Jersey region, and yet one where the poverty rate is nearly triple that of the state as a whole, and only 21% of the residents hold post-secondary degrees (Cantor et al. 2019). Accordingly, as an anchor institution committed to this community, our university – a highly diverse urban research university – is a perfect place to demonstrate that those walls around educational opportunity can be dismantled if we just recognise, recruit and financially support the vast talent that sits right at our doorstep. For example, we have mounted a residential Honours Living Learning Community in which at least 50% of the students are from Newark and where they pursue a curriculum (in addition to their major fields that span all of our disciplines) dedicated to local citizenship in a global world, building on their lived experiences as assets and preparing them to be the next generation of democratic practitioners, as they engage in community collaborations that range from a substantial project on community solutions to racial reparations in Newark and the Climates of Inequality project already mentioned here (Eatman 2019). Additionally, in recognition of the financial barriers to pursuing higher education in our community, we support an expansive financial aid programme that reduces the need for our Newark students to take on debt (likewise for a majority of our undergraduate students), thus enhancing the likelihood that their university education is genuinely a pathway to social mobility.

With a focus on how the lived experiences of our students are assets to the university, our faculty and staff have created curricula and experiential learning programmes

and research opportunities that directly engage their stories and their wisdom, while demonstrating that a focus on accruing skills and a focus on democratic engagement are not at odds but are in fact complementary parts of their education. To name a few of these publicly engaged programmes:

- Lives in Translation builds on the more than 48 home languages spoken by our diverse student body to train them as interpreters for our law faculty, working in our Immigrant Rights Clinic, and as contact tracers for the City Public Health Department, speaking to non-English speaking residents during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Arts, Culture and Media faculty train our students in video and other storytelling technologies to spread the word on their life stories as new Americans, as so many come from families that have immigrated to this country. Meanwhile the Mediterranean Displacement Project travels with our students to connect their stories to the current experiences of global refugees and other displaced families;
- students who have spent time incarcerated come to our university through our prison education and re-entry programme (NJSTEP) and become highly effective leaders in our community, facilitating Racial Healing Circles with youth in the community who have become disconnected from standard educational pathways, as part of the work of our Center on Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation.

Again, a key to the impact and success of all of these programmes is that the students bring their communities to the educational and scholarly table, even as they accrue the skills that will translate into a path for social mobility after they graduate.

Incentivising publicly engaged scholarship

Just as our students bring their community knowledge to the educational table, when we genuinely create a two-way street between higher education and our localities it also means that we must commit ourselves to walking in the other direction, especially by focusing at least some of our scholarship on the challenges at our doorstep, and rewarding that work as a central part of our institutional excellence. Of course, just as our admissions traditions have tended too often to exclude an expansive definition of excellence (Carnevale et al. 2020; Guinier 2015), so too have our scholarly habits, rewarding what is so often referred to as "basic research" over and above publicly engaged scholarship, even as common sense would tell us that there is nothing more basic than insights garnered in, about and with the real-world challenges of our communities and the people who live them on a daily basis (Eatman et al. 2017). As systems theorist Scott Page has shown in a variety of disciplinary contexts, there is a true "diversity bonus" to be garnered when the collective intelligence of a group of people with a variety of insights and experiences come together to work on challenges in our knowledge economy (Page 2017).

Moreover, to say it again, if we are to be trusted as caring about the public good, we need to demonstrate that it is an integral part of what we do as scholars and educators and citizens. And in the tradition of Lewin's action research model, when we do open our minds and eyes and ears to move beyond the cloister of a library or

a laboratory or a studio on our campuses, it can be surprising sometimes how much our own thinking changes (Brydon-Miller et al. 2003), even as we must continue to also value the insights, practices and traditions of some disciplines that grow and succeed at more of a distance from the engaged world outside.

Whereas this kind of publicly engaged scholarship may not fit the norms of all our disciplines, it is sometimes surprising to see how far-ranging the benefits can be, which we see across all our disciplines at our university. Two-way streets of dialogue open when our criminal justice scholars, who produce risk-terrain maps focusing attention away from people to places where crime occurs, share it with citizen–community street teams and law enforcement, and social service professionals working on reducing crime and increasing neighbourhood safety in our city. They open when our geochemists team with community gardeners and health experts testing soils to promote safe and thriving local food opportunities. And they open when our faculty in law and the social sciences, who also create maps of city spaces, feed information on the risks of displacement and the needs for affordable housing measures to the Mayor's Equitable Growth Advisory Commission working to ensure that the people of Newark can live here, even in the face of outside capital investments and gentrification. Perhaps more familiar, owing to the proliferation of murals in cities globally, but equally powerful, are the alliances between our socially engaged artists and community artists and residents, as the narrative of Newark's resilience, history and future gets painted on murals all over this city that has seen so much and knows so well how non-linear progress is, as the long arm of history bends ever so slowly towards justice, to paraphrase the wisdom of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Collaborating in anchor institution partnerships

Moving from our students and scholars to our institutions as a whole, a key part of a progressive agenda for democracy, sustainability and social justice must entail a full-throated commitment to partnering for equitable growth in our communities. This means recognising that equitable growth needs to be viewed through a broad lens of durable inequality, as Charles Tilly labelled the many intersecting manifestations of systemic inequity in our societies (Tilly 1998). These are seen today in disparities in health, toxic environments, food and housing insecurity, a digital divide, mass incarceration, under-resourced and highly segregated public schools, rising wealth gaps and employment barriers, among other dimensions. It also means acknowledging that we do have institutional resources, even in tight times, that can help make a difference in addressing such issues in our communities, especially if we team up and work with our community partners, our political leaders and our fellow citizens in mutually beneficial, democratic ways. Hence, we need to be prepared to use all of our resources – our intellectual, social, financial and human capital – in collaboration with an ecosystem of other anchor institutions in our localities – public and private community-based organisations, political and civil society groups, cultural and educational and corporate entities alike, if we are to make progress and in so doing (re)gain public trust.

In many respects, fulfilling the mission of an anchor institution runs counter to the norms and practices of most of higher education. It requires a focus on partnerships

and collaboration rather than inter-institutional competition, including between and among other local educational entities that might normally be seen as competitors for talent, projects and external support (Reuben 2022). For example, as we in Newark collectively tackled the challenge of building more accessible and successful educational pathways for our local talent pool, we formed the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, including 10 higher education institutions in the area – public and private, community colleges and four-year institutions. We share best practices, smooth articulations all along the educational pathway with dual enrolment for pre-college students, codify transfer agreements from two- to four-year institutions and forge partnerships with local community-based organisations, with the local public libraries, with local philanthropy and with the Mayor and his colleagues to promote a college-going reality for residents of our city by spreading the word and helping with financial aid applications for up-and-coming students and re-engagement for city residents who have earned some college credits but no degrees. While this work is slow and often disrupted, as it certainly was by the challenges of remote learning in a pandemic environment, putting in place the collective commitment and the sustained community of practice among us all creates a certain accountability for each institution to play its part.

And speaking of the informal accountability to hold to a mission that comes from participation in these anchor partnerships, another key feature of living an anchor institution public mission is the willingness of leadership to look internally at our practices and the ways in which we use all of our resources (financial, human capital and intellectual) and examine whether we are doing all we can to promote equitable growth in our communities. In our case, this means playing a very active role in the cross-sector Newark Anchor Collaborative, which includes 17 of the major anchor institutions in our city, from corporate giants to cultural institutions to universities and hospitals, all committed to increasing our sourcing from local businesses, our hiring of local residents as employees and our capital investments in the city infrastructure, such as encouraging employees to live locally. As leaders of these anchor institutions, we meet regularly and share our goals and progress on the "Hire.Buy. Live" local campaign, and even more importantly, we all commit to viewing our institutions through a lens of racial equity on our own institutions, using a formative assessment tool developed to monitor progress in terms of our own diversity, equity and inclusion practices, and their impact on our investments in and with the City of Newark and its residents, businesses, students, and so forth (Marga Inc. 2022).

In turn, as each anchor institution examines itself through this racial equity lens, we also reflect on "what we are especially good at" and how that can in turn translate to "what we can be good for", for our city, returning, thus, to Chris Brink's arguments about the intersection of excellence and the public mission (Brink 2018). For our university, in addition to enrolling more local students and hiring more local employees, that entails capitalising on the excellence of our business school faculty in supply-chain management and entrepreneurship. This in turn means supporting the publicly engaged scholarship of Professor Kevin Lyons in our Local Supply Chain Research Center, as he extensively maps the capacities of local women and minority-owned businesses and connects them to the sourcing needs of the 17 anchors in our collaborative, and then looks for gaps such that new local businesses

can be supported through the capacity-building programmes of our Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, led by Professor Lyneir Richardson and our Provost and Prudential Chair scholar Jeffrey Robinson. Moreover, as these publicly engaged scholars intersect with the corporate and cultural leaders in the Anchor Collaborative around local sourcing and entrepreneurship, they also create new pipeline programmes and social capital networks for our Newark students in these institutions and corporations, thus returning us to the other critical element of a progressive anchor educational agenda – increasing social mobility.

Building bridges, common ground and shared purpose

As we consider, thus, what it takes for higher education institutions to answer the question of what the public wants from us by opening our doors to both bring in the lived wisdom of our local communities and to step outside our competitive and somewhat disconnected norms to learn and work and research with (and in) those communities, we return to the invocation of Rabbi Prinz – "neighbour" is more than a geographic concept. Indeed, to promote the progressive agenda of social mobility, publicly engaged scholarship and anchor institution collaboration, we need most of all to be flexible in our definitions of excellence, empathetic in our willingness to listen to and respect those with pedigrees different from ours, and caring enough to accept the institutional moral responsibility that goes with being a neighbour. And while it might seem easier to just wait out the storm of public distrust of our institutions and watch the divisive zero-sum pitting of groups and the opportunity hoarding that routinely goes with wealth inequality from an "academic" distance, this we believe would be such an opportunity lost. For it is our experience, as we pursue this engaged agenda, that higher education actually has a special role to play in building bridges, finding common ground and executing on shared, mutually beneficial purposes, when we do step in to the fray, hard as that may seem.

Whereas some will say that this agenda distracts from our core "academic purposes", our experience is exactly the opposite. It enriches our scholarly insights, gives us tools to educate for democracy by practising democracy *in vivo* and brings together a surprising set of partners around a common table. We have seen this in action, for example, as we work as part of a national network organised by the Center for Social Solutions at the University of Michigan on university–community reparations solutions. Questions of reparations for the historical and ever-persisting injustices of transatlantic slavery and Indigenous relocations are both definitional for a local, national and global equity commitment and yet ever so feared by many. Even in a progressive state like New Jersey, it is difficult to get public officials and private citizens to even say the word "reparations", as our partners in this project at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice remind us regarding the state's refusal to name a task force to study "reparations" – opting instead for one studying "wealth disparity" (Haygood 2021).

We cannot help recalling that New Jersey was the last northern state to give up slavery, amending its constitution only in 1866, three years after the Emancipation Proclamation. The rhetorical wrangling we see today exemplifies the ambivalence that characterises the racial reckoning not just in our state but across the US, as

Americans struggle to face and grapple with the dark truths of slavery, its role in the founding of the nation and its persistent, pervasive effects in every aspect of social relations today. So, if ever there was a landscape of distrust and zero-sum discord to wade into, this is surely it.

Nonetheless, when we get on the ground and touch this subject with a combination of honesty and humility and with the common purpose of listening and thinking forward to collective responses, not meant to resolve or absolve the past, then people come together and we all learn. This is true in every space of this multiprong project: in every city-wide dialogue on what reparations could look like in Newark that we hold with our community partners from the Newark Community Development Network, in every analysis by our public historians, urban education scholars and legal activists from the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice of the long arm of slavery in our city and state, and in every class that we teach with our students, many of whose family stories of migration and immigration resonate back to historical injustices of one time or place. Importantly, this engagement gives us and our community and corporate partners in Newark a way to place a foot in what otherwise is such fraught territory, as so many institutions reckon with both their past and their role in building a democratic, trusted landscape for the future – one that is informed by digging deep locally and at the same time connects us all globally.

Conclusion: building trust as neighbours

We underestimate at our peril the magnitude of the effort it will take to restore trust. It starts with recognising just how broken higher education's relationship with the public is. As we have noted, distrust in higher education has been growing for years, but a 2022 poll showed that the percentage of Americans who believe that higher education has a positive effect on society dropped alarmingly from 69% in 2020 to 55% in 2022 (Fishman et al. 2022). If we truly take that seriously, we must commit to transformational change in our institutions. As we outline briefly above, that means taking seriously the challenges faced by the communities where we are situated and then working across traditional boundaries, navigating contested politics and heated dialogue, expanding our notions of who is positioned to contribute to scholarship and how it is produced, and gauging the success of our collaborations with others to make a real difference in addressing those challenges. As we have noted elsewhere, this is hard work, in part because it grounds noble intentions long embraced by higher education – equity, fairness, inclusiveness and shared responsibility – in the realities of specific places, our communities and specific strategies to tap the untapped talent within them (Cantor and Englot 2014). It is in doing this kind of collective public problem solving side by side that bonds of trust are forged, person to person.

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Chapter 6

The Iron Veil: universities and democracy at the beginning of the 21st century

Liviu Matei

Do universities have an obligation to further democracy?

Should universities endeavour to support any democratic developments, and possibly even weighty democratic transformations, in their societies? Or should they rather focus exclusively on education and research understood as the production and transmission of knowledge in a narrow ("technical") sense, confined at best to training the workforce, supporting the economy and also, on occasion, abetting a dominant political line, whatever that is, democratic or not, in a given country at a given time?

The answers to these questions are most often taken for granted, even if they differ in different political contexts. In democratic societies, the public authorities, political actors of various orientations, university leaders, higher education professionals and scholars quite often proclaim that yes, universities should engage in activities that contribute to democracy, always and everywhere, because this is or should be a core component of their mission. For example, Ronald J. Daniels, President of Johns Hopkins University (considered to be the oldest research university in the United States), stated exactly that in a talk at the 2022 anniversary conference of Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU) Observatory: "Universities have an obligation to restore democracy education as a core element of their institutional mission and should make rigorous study of democracy a requirement" (MCU 2022; O'Malley 2022a). It is the point about "everywhere" made earlier in the text just referred to, that is problematic in statements like this.

In other situations, in democratic and undemocratic regimes alike, the answer put forward, chiefly by representatives of state authorities, is that universities have only a vocational mission confined to preparing their students for professions or employment and producing knowledge immediately useful to the economy. According to this view, endeavouring to contribute to democracy would entail an illegitimate transgression, well outside the area of responsibility of science and education (the genuine "academe") and into the sphere of politics, from which universities should stay away at all costs. Civic engagement and education for democracy are often branded as unacceptable political positioning and mission creep, often equated with undesirable partisan politics by those who voice this opinion. To illustrate with another example from the United States, Governor Ron

DeSantis of Florida accused universities engaged in antiracist, civic education in his state of being "socialism factories" and promoting "zombie studies" (Atterbury 2022). He went further than that, pushing though the state legislature a bill meant to restrict university civic education and democratic involvement, and to punish those institutions that perform such work.

Yet in other contexts, in dictatorial regimes, questions about universities and democracy are not even asked because it is not allowed to ask them, and universities are forbidden to even talk about organising their work in ways that involve any interest in or obligation vis-à-vis democracy.

The "yes, everywhere" answer, it can be argued, is dominant mainly among higher education scholars and policy entrepreneurs in the West.

Beyond how scholars, public authorities and other stakeholders think about universities and democracy, is it the case that the contribution (or lack of contribution) of universities to democracy depends on the nature of the political regimes under which they work? How do we know this? Has the subject been studied? Should it be?

In this chapter I attempt a heuristic exercise in the form of a brisk mapping of this policy and professional territory, based partly on prior research and partly on practical experience in a few parts of the world. This is a simple taxonomy combining two criteria: the nature of the political regime, on the one side, and the freedom or capacity of the universities to engage with democratic causes, on the other. Obviously, this is a taxonomy that requires testing and refining through further research.

For the first category, we can easily observe a group of countries in which universities as institutions, members of their internal (students and staff) and immediately external constituencies (non-university higher education professionals, such as those working in accreditation and funding agencies or in professional associations) stand no chance of working for democracy. In Myanmar, for example – where the author participated in extensive work with universities from 2011 to 2021, a time of democratic opening in the country, between two military juntas – following the brutal military takeover of February 2021 what is at stake for universities is not democracy, not even education and science in the narrowest technical sense, but sheer survival. Whatever work can be still carried out in higher education in Myanmar, and there is almost nothing left, is done at gunpoint – and this is not a metaphor. Similarly, in Afghanistan after the Taliban took power for the second time in August 2021, there has not been much space for universities to try making any contribution to society on the technical/vocational plan, and even less so in terms of education for active citizenship or other forms of contribution to democracy.

It would be unfair in the extreme to take universities to task for not trying to further democracy in such circumstances. In countries like these, it is in fact impossible to even try. And yet, our theories and intellectual policy frameworks regarding higher education and democracy make no provisions for such situations. They assume there is one world and one model only – the "Western" one. The normative models, conceptual and policy frameworks of reference and more practical guides for higher education and democracy, where they exist, ignore this heterogeneity of situations.

In a second category, we can place countries or political regimes where it is not completely impossible for universities to try and engage with democratic causes and themes, but where they cannot realistically succeed in having much practical impact because the space for such contributions is severely restricted. These are countries with repressive legislation, policies and control mechanisms in place that result, or would result, in individuals and institutions paying a huge price if they try. Even the intention is discouraged. Iran has been such a country for decades. It can be argued that Russia should be put in the same category after its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, if it was not already there before the invasion. There is a question of where to place Turkey, in particular in the period immediately following the failed (or alleged, depending who is talking) coup of 2016, when many higher institutions were closed down by the government and scores of individual academics and students as well as non-university higher education professionals lost their jobs or enrolment, and many were put in prison (Kaya 2018). Turkey might belong to this category as well, although a more refined analysis and categorisation might be needed here, given that some narrow spaces and scattered zones of university agency remained, in spite of the restrictive nature of the overall system.

What is possibly more surprising is to be able to identify a country from the European Union that must be put in this category, beginning around 2010: Hungary. This is surprising because, unlike Russia or even Turkey, Hungary was reputed democratic and is still a member of the EU, which is a "club" of democratic countries, despite a European Parliament resolution in September 2002 stating that Hungary is not a "full democracy", but rather an "electoral autocracy" (European Parliament 2002). Beginning around 2010, the regime of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán designed, adopted and implemented a series of measures that affected severely all work in higher education (Kenesei 2017; Matei and Orosz 2017). Those measures included several universities and research centres being closed down. These unexpected developments did not concern only the better-known case of the Central European University, which was forced to leave the country in 2017-18 to avoid closure. At the time of writing this chapter, the remaining higher education institutions in Hungary are working under a heavy shroud of political, legal and administrative pressure that has crushed their basic freedoms and forced them to work as if they were "conveyor belts" obliged to advance the ideology, social and economic objectives of a "mafia-style regime" (Magyar 2016), self-branded as an "illiberal democracy" (Rupnik 2017). As provided by the country's constitution, modified a few times after 2010, professing the (Christian) identity of the nation in ways defined by the Hungarian party-state is an official, party-state imposed, higher-level obligation for Hungarian universities than the pursuit of knowledge and truth wherever it may lead (Kenesei 2017; Tausz 2017).

Can universities from Iran, Turkey, Russia or Hungary be asked to try putting themselves at the service of democratic developments in their countries, and openly so? The answer is not as straightforward here. Because, unlike their peers in Myanmar or Afghanistan, these universities can still try, at least to some extent. However, the price that is expected to be paid, even for trying, is very high. It can mean losing one's individual freedom and job, which would affect the well-being of one's family; in extreme cases, the price for even trying can be life itself.

In a discussion about the agency of the university, more precisely about its capacity to contribute to democracy or democratic developments, we also need to consider the cases where higher education institutions, or perhaps their leaders, appear to voluntarily engage in promoting non-democratic values, norms, models and behaviours. Such may appear to be the case with the recent public statement by the Russian Rectors' Union in support for Vladimir Putin and his regime, in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine (O'Malley 2022b). Even more clearly, there were countless instances of universities zealously promoting undemocratic, even extremely and tragically undemocratic, directions and objectives under the Nazi and communist regimes. We can also find instances where universities in democratic countries contribute extensively and not under constraint to the reproduction or perpetuation of undemocratic political and social realities. All these examples are a reminder that universities are not all and not always a force for good, including from the perspective of their democratic, or undemocratic, voluntary engagement. The present analysis does not intend to cover the issue of university agency comprehensively. Rather, it is concerned only with the narrower topic of the capacity of the university to contribute to democracy, depending on the nature of the political regime.

A third category in this taxonomy is that of democratic countries. Here, universities have genuine space and means to contribute to democratic developments, whether they are encouraged to do so by their governments or not. Ignoring this obligation, which can reasonably be considered part of the mission of the university, is therefore a matter of choice and can unquestionably be subject to moral judgments in a more direct way, as opposed to the other two categories. If universities in democratic societies refrain or withdraw from engaging on behalf of democracy in the name of whatever principles ("universities are not political organisations", for example), they can and should be held responsible.

It is also important to note that public authorities and political forces in democratic regimes are often favourable to such engagement by the universities, but not always. This is another subject that deserves more research: where and how national policies, in higher education and beyond, support or do not support universities' work for democracy. But the fact remains that universities in these countries have broad freedom to engage in education and research for democracy and, for this reason, they also have a responsibility to do so. Many of them do not rise to this responsibility.

The Iron Veil and the need for new frameworks of reference in education for democracy at university level

It was noted above that the current scholarly debate regarding the contribution of universities to democracy most often assumes that this is indeed a key function of higher education. It was also noted that this type of scholarship tends to assume that there is only one model according to which all universities can and must contribute to democracy, possibly in the same ways. This is already problematic. But there is yet another difficulty with this approach resulting from a misconception, which in turn is based on a delay in grasping the meaning of important aspects of current global geopolitical trends that affect higher education and also general education

as we advance into the third decade of the 21st century. It is important to identify, analyse and address in practice this second misconception as well.

Several frameworks of reference already exist regarding education for democracy in higher education or university work for democratic causes more generally. By "framework of reference" here we mean formal normative models and guides for action in this area, not necessarily specific projects or initiatives. While they are normative models and guides for action, these frameworks also theorise why and how universities should dedicate part of their work to democracy or democratic developments. Such frameworks of reference are developed at the national level by governments, governmental agencies, non-governmental and professional associations and so on. International and intergovernmental organisations and entities such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe and the European Union have also developed and endeavour to put in place such frameworks internationally. This is a list, for illustration, with only a few examples of various frameworks of this type (there is, to this author's knowledge, no systematic database or study of them):

- Council of Europe: Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, with a separate section dedicated to higher education (Council of Europe 2018);
- United Nations: Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, 1995 (UN 1995);
- European Union: Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond, 2021-30 (Council of the EU 2021);
- USAID: Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (USAID 2003);
- Commission of the European Union – Deepening Democracy in Armenia (European Commission 2018).

A feature shared by all of them is that they tend to ignore the taxonomy proposed in the first section of this chapter, just as the scholarship of higher education ignores it. It is true that sometimes these frameworks have a precise geographic area of application (a country or region) and are not explicitly concerned with implementation beyond the relevant geographic boundaries of interest, in countries or regions that might otherwise be significantly different.

A second important defining characteristic of the frameworks of reference for higher education and democracy is related, although possibly even less salient. It has important conceptual and practical implications: these frameworks share the assumption that everybody supports democracy and all that universities have to do is pursue their regular activities unchallenged, in general and "for democracy" in particular, given this pervasively supportive environment. The origins of this assumption can be traced back to the period immediately following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. At that time, it appeared to many that liberal democracy had won, maybe once and for all, and that all that would happen from then on was an uninterrupted march towards more and more (liberal) democracy. This assumption informed the initial overall approach and the details of the formal frameworks of reference regarding university and democracy and still influences it today. The projections regarding how universities and schools should behave in this

respect are still informed by the belief that everybody in education, nationally or internationally, supports democracy: politicians, the general public and universities as well. This view also assumes that there is no remaining dividing wall or Iron Curtain in the world that requires policy makers, scholars and higher education institutions, or their internal constituencies and external stakeholders, to think carefully about how they envisage that universities can and must contribute to democracy, how to design frameworks of reference for such activities and eventually implement them, and how they differentiate their approach as outlined above.

In the first two decades of the 21st century, the politics and geopolitics of higher education are different from how they were thought and expected to be after the fall of the Berlin Wall in the last decade of the previous century. In reality, it is quite clear that political processes underpinning the current shape and nature of given political regimes, East and West, South and North, are not all supportive of democracy (Matei 2015). At the same time, prevailing attitudes towards higher education within a given country and in the realm of international relations are often not supportive of democracy either. And while the old Iron Curtain had indeed broken into pieces after 1989-90, new major lines of fracture and separation have emerged more recently in the world. This new reality must inform the frameworks of reference for higher education and democracy. At present, they do not – or at least not yet.

Over the past two decades we have witnessed certain political forces and entire countries putting forward political projects as alternatives to liberal democracy, alternatives which, maybe as a consequence, see the place of higher education in society with a lot of scepticism, including with regard to the potential and obligation of the university to contribute to more and better democracy – or just democracy. We mentioned above the case of Hungary. That is an extreme, almost clinical, case and for that reason easier to notice and study. But there are other cases in the world as well, including in Europe and North America. It is not true that all political forces and the general public see the engagement of universities on the front of democratic development with positive eyes. Russia and Belarus are obvious examples, but there are reasons for concern also in the United Kingdom, Poland and the United States, among others. This is one strong reason to consider the need for new, better adapted frameworks of reference to orient such work.

In international relations, quite a lot has changed in ways that do not fit the post-Cold War enthusiastic, even euphoric, expectations. In higher education, the trend towards increased internationalisation and liberalisation of international co-operation is severely challenged. Once again, it is true that the brutal line of separation symbolised by the Iron Curtain has disappeared. For a while, it looked as if any major divide would disappear. However, new lines of fracture started to appear that are highly relevant for our discussion here. There is no NATO-against-the-Warsaw-Pact now, but the EU, the United Kingdom and the United States are acutely concerned about competition with China in the global arena and have adopted or are considering measures to restrict co-operation severely, including in higher education. As mentioned in a recent report from the US: "In Washington, … great power rivalry, defined more by competition and confrontation than cooperation, has become the central framework for bilateral ties" (Haenle and Bresnick 2022). To evoke another example, the entire Western world has been relatively united in opposing Russia's

invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and in supporting Ukraine in all ways possible, militarily as well as in other areas, including education. The geopolitical ripples of the war on Ukraine alone are of a large magnitude and must not be ignored in higher education.

With all these examples of regressive changes, however, it is still difficult to argue that a new Iron Curtain has risen anywhere in the world. Co-operation in higher education has been affected (Russia and Belarus have been suspended from participation in the work programme of the European Higher Education Area, for example) but co-operation has not been completely stopped or even reduced to old Cold War levels. Rather, what is happening is that an Iron Veil has fallen over and between certain parts of the world. This is a new reality in geopolitics and in higher education that has not been studied. It is also relatively recent. What is urgent for higher education scholarship and higher education policy is to begin moving away from the post-Cold War euphoric (and by now obsolescent) belief that everybody everywhere, at home and abroad, supports democracy and that the world is one and homogeneous in this regard. Accordingly, we need more generally to rethink our frameworks of reference regarding education for democracy and higher education's engagement with democracy in view of this reality. That should be done at national level as well as internationally.

Whose task is it to undertake the necessary research and policy elaboration? The present chapter does not attempt to answer this question. Clearly, however, more research is needed. It is unlikely or at least unclear whether policy makers will act first, or act at all. Provided that the analysis proposed in this chapter is reasonably pertinent and accurate, it appears that the higher education scholarly community interested in matters of university and democracy may need to step up first, and bring along policy makers, the public and universities themselves. For this, the higher education community should also engage in a reflection on, and design of, new frameworks of reference for education and democracy to guide the action of the universities themselves and that of other relevant actors in a way that is effective and adapted to the prevailing, actual, differentiated realities in different parts of the world.

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Chapter 7

Engagement with democracy – The next big idea in Australian higher education

Jim Nyland

A university's engagement is a kaleidoscope. It extends far and wide and reaches into schools, colleges, industries, commerce, research and development and employment of almost every kind. Universities are ubiquitous throughout communities in every country. The sheer and simple presence of universities in public life is a fact of astounding proportions on a world scale: whereas once universities were a refuge from "normal" life, where young people in particular delayed their entry into work and "real life", universities are now engaging with the question of what their social purpose and function are in a fast-changing and uncertain world. Universities are everyone's business.

There are many issues to be considered to meet the challenge of reconstructing a university mission for the 21st century, such as the problematic nature of community engagement; developing local, regional and metropolitan-wide provision simultaneously; achieving social justice through educational interventions; and the role that might be played by cultural knowledge for individuals. While all these issues are currently under consideration, there is no obvious consensus emerging. The "anchor" function (see Maurrasse, Chapter 17 in this volume) of the engaged university, with its emphasis on multitasking and operating in many "markets" can be contrasted with the primary role of the university as a public educator. The fact that we are living in the digital world cannot be ignored, and neither can the cognitive concerns of learning skills in an age of information and surveillance capitalism which offers great challenges to the core values of liberal Western democracy.

There is in this century a crisis of knowledge which in some ways repeats that of the dawn of mass higher education in the last decades of the 20th century – but with a new and entirely distinctive emphasis on the digital revolution in information and data generation, the presence of actual and potential threats to our planet and the existence of natural and human-made catastrophes. The value position which is emerging is transparent: in the developing 21st century we need universities that exist for a social purpose, where learning can transform lives in a world of uncertainty and instability. Our current education system requires a university curriculum where programmes of study, methods of learning and teaching, critical thinking and analysis, methods of assessment and frameworks of dialogue and critique are designed for specific sets of social purposes to meet the challenge of change which modernity inevitably brings. This challenge is ever more urgent and contested as we consider how we might push back against the gathering tides of global turbulence – not just

the pandemic, but globalisation, climate change and accelerations in technology that are reshaping and replacing the workplace, geopolitics, democracies around the world and our communities everywhere.

Chris Brinks in his recent book *The soul of a university: why excellence is not enough* has posed the question "What is a university good for?" (Brink 2018: 45). It is quite different from the question "What is a university good *at*?" For example, a university might be excellent at research. However, that is quite different from being good for communities, good for social solidarity, good for democracy and good for social justice and fairness.

The framework in Table 7.1 represents an attempt to focus on the question of what the university is "good for", exploring how education could contribute to social and economic welfare. Such a framework could address such services as healthcare, carbon clearance, food production and distribution, urban farming, social housing projects and places where there is a mosaic of incomes which vary according to location, housing type and community orientation. This approach assumes that a university and its communities could support projects at volume which could benefit the engaged stakeholders.

A possible framework for being good for something might look something like Table 7.1.

Table 7.1. – A framework for being good for something

▶ Knowledge must have a social purpose. It must also focus on critical social teaching and those who are yet to speak.
▶ The community of learners and the places they inhabit are major strengths for the curriculum. Universities are foundational to local and regional economies. They can invest and directly support a zone of the economy focused on productive enterprises and social capital.
▶ A critical literacy is surely needed for those facing a precarious economic future. A truly democratic participation would be 95% of the total number of young adults having direct experience of higher education; the current 50% rate among Australians aged 15-24 is pathetic (ABS 2022).
▶ There is no dispensing with the disciplines, but creativity is a key to progressive education. Where is the critical curriculum which investigates our social lives? When does creative art, music and literature interact with science to define and expand our future possibilities?
▶ The borders we have erected around faith, ethnicity, race, social class and culture must be recognised and crossed. How can we be vigilant for tolerance while expressing a distinctive vision through education?
▶ The ecological precariousness of our planet must now be the object of our critical awareness. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals could/should be central to all higher education curriculum planning.

- The ecological crisis is accompanied by a crisis of digital life which is accelerating at exponential speeds. Our lives in the public spaces of the internet are commodities. Information explodes into availability, and all emotional and social life can be commercially exploited through an addictive technology.
- A curriculum has always to be chosen; it cannot evolve spontaneously: whose curriculum is chosen and in whose interests is it selected?

In choosing to be good for something, Australian universities have opted to engage with democracy in three key areas. First, many of them are "adopting a position" in response to attacks on democracy. In recent times, a number of university leaders have released position statements denouncing the unlawful Russian aggression in Ukraine, committing their institutions to opposing supply-chain companies with links to the Russian economy. Second, Australian universities have sought to provide a platform for ideas, debate and discussion around current challenges to democracy from cybersecurity to unwarranted coercion or influence within multiple levels of Australian Government from authoritarian regimes. Given the reported disenchantment with entrenched political positions, progressive universities in Australia are embracing their role as one of the last bastions of democracy. Third, Australian universities are responding to attacks on democracy by listening more attentively to the "student voice". We have a new generation of students with new motivations who are concerned with the big issues of our time – war, poverty, terrorism, refugees, environmental degradation, climate change. A number of universities are partnering with their student body, making sure they have a curriculum that is relevant to tackling the big issues of our time.

In addressing such issues through the vehicle of learning it is essential that we retain and nurture what Professor Sharon Bell has called our "pandemic activism" to address collectively attacks on democracy and their local and global consequences, together with the existential threat of climate change. The pandemic has shown us that we are more than capable of rising to this challenge through the impact of our graduates on a curriculum that is relevant, through the quality, dissemination and translation of our research and education that has been tested in local, national and global forums, and through the nature of our organisational cultures that are addressing the legacy question of what our universities will be good for in this new era of engagement.

The work of Professor Bell illuminates the possibilities of universities situating themselves within communities and regions as anchor institutions (Bell 2019; Brink 2018). While acknowledging that universities may be in the vanguard of the advancing knowledge economy and have in many places replaced the manufacturing economy of an earlier era, there can be little doubt that many key issues and wicked problems have not been addressed by this process, and that the broad university curriculum has not yet successfully addressed the deep and abiding pockets of deprivation and intergenerational disadvantage which continue to bedevil our societies.

We are now living with threats to our existence that require a critical ecology of learning. These threats – such as mass poverty and starvation, rising global temperatures and

levels of pollution, dispossession and displacement through war and aggression against minorities – are in fact places of pain and often of suffering, and yet must surely be places where we learn to be different. The destruction of the environment and earth's resources shows us a world that burns and is in need of urgent reform and change. Our cultural and social identity is in need of a viable ecological identity and we surely must end the war with the natural world that has fuelled our economies for generations.

The series of global health pandemics and environmental catastrophes in the 21st century, impacting people across the world, signals a social deficit. People can no longer control their own futures. For some it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the ending of the social and economic system which is destroying their world. For educationists this means the ecological crisis is at the same time a crisis of the curriculum, but also a crisis of what and for whom knowledge is produced and in whose interests it is consumed. We currently have no "universal literacy", meaning knowledge and skills that are adequate to the task facing us as the ecological crisis deepens.

There are definitive trends in modern mass higher education which deny the subjectivity and agency of individuals and which by inference deny the reality of the communal and social experience. Gigantic university campuses seeking economies of scale find difficulties in responding to the needs of individuals; the corporate giants of the digital world construct lifestyles and alternative realities for billions of consumers who are made passive consumers of things produced elsewhere; and internet addiction sucks the capacity for agency and activism out of the lives of many who can more easily imagine the end of the world than the ending of their dependency on a service provider. Meanwhile, human activities are heating the world's atmosphere, creating an energy imbalance and a host of climate crises which are a perfect storm of threats to human existence in large parts of the planet. Health pandemics since the turn of the century have killed millions and threatened billions more, and poverty and deprivation stalk the earth. Many millions of refugees are in search of a safe and secure home and a decent future while local and regional wars threaten to create even more anxiety and distress.

The question is: how can the engaged university respond to the need for learning and education which addresses these issues? How can we affirm the rooted settlements where people live, work and have place-based identities as a living part of a multi-faceted yet anchored university? How can university knowledge become infused with other forms of knowing, including Indigenous knowledge? The cultural and social role of the university will need to change if the social determinants of university life are to be translated into the lived contingencies of people's experience. University life offers the prospect of greater opportunity to those who have been granted access. Yet there is a need for universities to expand access to be more inclusive of those social groups that have previously been denied adequate representation among the student body. The lived contingencies of people's experience calls for a greater voice for Australia's First Nations people, and some universities are responding to this reality by including Indigenous knowledge alongside Western knowledge throughout their curriculum. Universities are in the knowledge business but they are also in the identity business and, though no easy resolution of who belongs to what is possible, they must surely engage with the problem of living with and acknowledging difference.

The discovery and recognition in practice of the laws of nature and of the ecological precariousness of our planet must be the object of our critical awareness and thus of our education. This awareness of the ecology of learning is not restricted to the geographical and physical environment, though it is connected to it. Ecological life includes also the ways in which we live our lives in a mass culture of consumption and the acceleration of everything including our "attentionality" (Crawford 2015).

Life is lived at speed – fast cars, fast food, fast music, instant gratification and delivery of what we want if we can pay for it now. Everything is speeded up and our perception of the environment is changed as we are bombarded with advertisements in every possible shape and form and size, and every public and private space becomes a venue for the sale of something. The mass data harvested in its millions and trillions of clicks per minute across the whole world and harvested by the monopoly digital conglomerates multiplies exponentially. Information explodes into availability across the internet. High levels of stimulation are of course intrinsic to high levels of consumption in our mass culture. The lessons to be learned, often in settings that are beyond the classroom, are that it is possible to decelerate so that complex social and emotional processes can be identified in the places we live and work.

More participation and a negotiated curriculum which focuses on the key issues of the time plus a decelerated learning and teaching (a pedagogy for dialogue) would provide us with better tools to fashion our future. It would perhaps help learners to develop a critical commentary on public life and reality because the systems of mass communication we have currently leave many of them immobilised, unable to understand the causes of their confusion and alienation and unable to act on them. For young people in particular this is important since they are the future and they have the most to gain or lose. Engaged universities must be open in their connections to communities and be open to the versions of identity they encounter and sponsor. This is above all a curriculum matter. It is a vital part of what is shaping the goals of the engaged university, in this third decade of the 21st century.

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Part III

UN Agenda 2030 and the related Sustainable Development Goals

Chapter 8

Generational environmental justice in climate change and sustainability education

Luz Claudio and Rocío Rodríguez-Báez

One of the main purposes of education is preparing students for the future. It is clear that climate change will be an important part of their future, yet there is a lack of concerted effort to educate them about global warming, environmental justice, sustainability, remediation or adaptation. There is also insufficient effort to encourage behavioural changes in students or in the public to reduce some of the impacts of climate change (UNESCO 2019a, 2019b). This is not to say that the responsibility of reducing emissions and other causes of climate change should fall solely upon youth. It is well known that corporate regulation and policy implementation should be the focus of climate change mitigation efforts (Ben-David et al. 2021).

But, as is plainly evident, the catastrophic effects of climate change require a massive mobilisation from all of society. These catastrophic events and the misery that they cause around the world are no longer the dystopian nightmares of a distant future. Many people around the world, especially in the global south, are already suffering the devastating consequences of climate change leading to mass migration and strife. Should students not learn about this? This is beyond politics or beliefs. We are living in a new, but predicted, reality. This emergency requires an all-hands-on-deck approach.

Addressing climate change requires education on a massive scale that matches the severity, enormity and urgency of the problem (UNESCO 2019a, 2019b). Climate change education and environmental and resilience education have been on the worldwide education agenda since the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment. Since the 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, the UN has promoted disaster risk reduction and resilience education. Yet, climate change is one of the most contentious global issues of the past 50 years, and climate change education, like other forms of environmental education, has been difficult to implement. Despite the high-level recognition of the need to combat climate change, climate change has generated more sceptics than almost any other environmental issue, and unfortunately this scepticism and distrust seem to have spread to many sectors of society, including industry, government and also academia (Haltinner and Sarathchandra 2021). Universities and schools need to be deeply involved in the struggles for generational climate justice, and young people are demanding this. Greta Thunberg proclaimed "Our house is on fire" (Workman 2019), and thousands of

youth worldwide protested at government inaction on climate change. We, higher education academics, need to respond as if our house were on fire and our children were trapped inside the house.

In this chapter, an experienced environmental health educator and a higher education student present a brief overview of the state of climate change education and describe a programme in environmental health research training at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City as an example. The Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health at Mount Sinai was the first hospital division dedicated to environmental and occupational medicine. It was founded by Dr Irving J. Selikoff, considered by many as one of the originators of occupational medicine as a discipline, having been a pioneer in the discovery, treatment and prevention of asbestosis in the labour force. Mount Sinai is now well known for having incorporated environmental medicine and public health into its medical school and for its work internationally to address environmental injustices in many populations. One of us, Dr Luz Claudio, has been the director of International Health for over 15 years. Through this work, she has focused on strengthening research and research training collaborations with colleagues in Latin American countries. In this chapter, she and one of her trainees from Puerto Rico examine the importance of including climate change and sustainability in higher education and describe one of the Mount Sinai programmes that aims to provide training for future generations of medical scientists.

Climate education beyond the cute polar bears

In April 2023, the Pew Research Center conducted a survey of Americans' views about climate change. They found that 54% of Americans view climate change as a major threat, but the divide between Democrats and Republicans has grown, making partisan ideology a strong predictor of views on climate change. Regardless of political ideology, more respondents placed the economy and other economic issues such as the cost of healthcare as the top priorities they wanted politicians to address. However, the number emphasising climate change was higher among the 18- to 29-year-olds, again another indicator that youth will drive the academic and political agenda on climate change education (Pew Research Center 2023).

There is, however, still the popular notion, even among young people, that environmental education and activism is about saving the earth and the polar bears that live on it. This is in part because many early schools teach about sustainability on one day in the year. Earth Day is a day in April when children learn about the melting icecaps that endanger polar bears and parade on the streets with papier-mâché blue and green globes. Much of the misconception that learning about sustainability is only about saving nature and animals carries forward into higher education.

A connection needs to be made in early education that humans, like bears, suffer climate change-related challenges to their habitat and survival, including worsening wildfire seasons, more powerful and frequent storms, spreading droughts and

floods, rising sea levels and higher temperatures. Unlike polar bears, humans can seek higher education that can enable us to innovate remediation strategies and find ways to adopt more sustainable practices (IPCC 2018: 53).

Why education on climate change and sustainability is important

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, recommends awareness raising and climate change education in school curricula, alongside gender equity in education and various forms of adult and non-formal education. These include extension services; sharing Indigenous, traditional and local knowledge; participatory action research and social learning; knowledge-sharing and learning platforms; and disseminating hazards information. By the IPCC definition, sustainability education is teaching how to decrease people's impact on climate change and its repercussions. These practices can be individual – like eating a diet with a lower carbon footprint, using renewable energies, or consuming less – or collective, like participating in the democratic process at various levels of government or influencing corporate behaviour. We need citizens who comprehend the scientific consensus on climate change and influence government policies like emission limitations that can reduce global warming.

However, climate change higher education must go much beyond that. The urge to innovate more sustainable ways of life requires more than an awareness of climate change science or the ability to design technology advances or an ethical framework that helps us aspire to live in more inclusive and sustainable communities. It requires an understanding of social systems and the development of ethical reasoning that can help us integrate critical thinking about the current impact of climate change. One way of engaging students in projects centred on climate change is to integrate complex social systems with ethical reasoning. For this, one could focus on the notion that women who live in developing countries are particularly vulnerable to climate change. Women who are tasked with providing water, food, cooking and heating fuel, and who rely on agriculture, confront additional obstacles. With this example, students can understand some of the intersectionalities that put poor, lower-caste women at greater danger from climate-related changes (Arora-Jonsson 2011). Understanding intersectionality is vital to understanding climate change's unfair implications. Human rights education or environmental justice education helps students identify how climate change impacts diverse groups (women, minorities, the poor) and stimulates them to investigate the topic more fully and imaginatively. Students can (and should) learn about extremely complicated social interactions and how "equity, sustainable development, and poverty eradication are best seen as mutually supporting and co-achievable within the context of climate action" (IPCC 2018: 54; see also UN Women 2016).

Successful global solutions to gender inequity and climate change involve addressing the structures that enable such complex processes. Acknowledgement of this fact has led to the awareness that climate action is best integrated with poverty reduction and sustainability efforts, such as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted at the UN 2015 General Assembly (UN 2015). To promote such systemic multidimensional endeavours, we must teach students to grasp complexity and to collaborate to impact social systems and think through complex intersectionalities.

Why is climate change education so urgent?

Several phenomena are coinciding to produce an acceleration of the climate emergency.

- Industrialisation of the global south

  Much of the industrialisation and economic development of the countries in the global south has relied on the existence of hazardous and toxic industries (Miller 2015). Industries for the manufacturing of chemicals and the exploitation of natural resources like coal, gold, zinc and lead represent a risk to workers' and communities' well-being in these locations. This continuous pollution also exacerbates health disparities, environmental degradation and climate change (Cardoso 2015; Miller et al. 2016; Landrigan et al. 2018).

- Fast increasing human population

  One can look at population growth in total astonishment and as an example of what it means for something to rise exponentially. World population climbed from 2 billion in 1927 to nearly 3 billion in 1960. Four billion was reached in 1974, after only 14 years. The world's population has now doubled to exceed 8 billion in 2022 (Worldometers 2022).

- Resource consumption

  Increased consumption in developed and developing countries is happening at the same time as exponential population growth. These two factors together accelerate the depletion of resources such as clean and safe freshwater, productive land, ocean production (Barnes et al. 2019; Ganivet 2020).

Given these three forces that are combining to accelerate climate change, education must teach people how to minimise, adapt and reverse climate change through knowledge, critical thinking, science and ethics. This involves education to understand how to act effectively, not just in altering personal patterns of consumption, but also in developing the agency and skills to collaborate with others to impact the complex systems which underlie climate change.

It has been shown, however, that awareness and knowledge about climate change appear to be insufficient to spark meaningful action (Eichhorn et al. 2020). Even though individuals acknowledge the need for environmental sustainability, there is limited evidence that they can transform this awareness into behaviours that promote sustainable living (ibid.). This is because how we balance the trade-offs of different methods of responding to the climate crisis influences our behaviour. For instance, people may be aware that walking or riding a bike has a lower carbon footprint than other kinds of transport, but they still prefer the convenience of private transport. The way most people respond to those trade-offs has the greatest impact on how we interact with the environment, not merely ignorance of the implications of our actions or our options.

Evidence reveals that most individuals are not yet prepared to put environmental sustainability over other priorities like high consumption or jobs. The World Values Survey asks respondents to pick between "Protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes some loss of jobs" and "Economic growth and creating jobs

should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent", and 47% of respondents chose the environment over jobs across all countries (Running 2012).

As the US shows, economic opportunities determine how much people favour environmental conservation above jobs and growth. Since 1985, Gallup has polled Americans regarding conserving the environment when it conflicts with economic growth. Surprisingly, the percentage of the population who feel the environment should be protected was quite similar in 2019 (65%) to 1985 (61%), even though public understanding of climate change has increased (Saad 2019). These views may be changing, especially among youth.

Values, not knowledge, may explain the public's appreciation of environmental sustainability. Support for environmental causes changes by age and political party, demonstrating that these are value-based decisions. Among the younger generations, 78% of 18- to 24-year-olds would choose environmental conservation over economic growth, compared to 58% of 25- to 54-year-olds and 60% of 55-year-olds. In the US, fewer Republicans (35%) than independents (71%) or Democrats (82%) prioritise environmental protection over economic growth. These findings suggest that climate change and environmental health education must ignite ethical and critical thinking, not only supply more data, to alter how people connect to the environment (Reimers 2021).

Addressing climate change needs more than influencing private choices because information and awareness have limited predictive value over individual behaviour. Systems of production and consumption are the main drivers of climate change. Thus, to make significant impact requires the ability to engage with others to alter the systems of production and consumption that are the main drivers of climate change, not just changes in individual behaviour (Cuadrado et al. 2022).

What is the state of higher education on climate change?

There have been efforts over the years to develop higher education on climate change. One of the first examples was the Talloires Declaration (ULSF 1990). The Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future convened in Talloires, France, in 1990 to forge a 10-step strategy to integrate sustainability and environmental literacy into university teaching, research, operations and community involvement. Five hundred university representatives from 50 nations signed. But, as their own statement emphasised: "Once signed, the challenge of the Talloires Declaration is implementation."

The COPERNICUS Alliance and Global Higher Education for Sustainability Partnership is another worldwide network that intends to apply sustainable development initiatives in higher education institutions (IAU 2022). Yet, not all universities support environmental sustainability or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA 2015). In spite of these commitments, a consensus for climate education is not unified.

The problem is complex. Climate change education encompasses several strategies. Students learn about a scientifically confirmed phenomenon induced by humans' interactions with the environment. Many field techniques teach such things didactically (NEEF 2022). For instance, a full Climate Change Curriculum designed by Stanford

University climate scientists is an excellent illustration of that didactic method. Climate science, implications for society and global resources, and mitigation and adaptation measures are all included in the curriculum (Holthuis et al. 2014).

Some agencies had previously pioneered environmental topics within the context of scientific literacy. For instance, the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm was a turning moment in the worldwide environmental movement. The UN's environmental activities promoted environmental education research, according to an assessment (Gough 2013). The same evaluation stated that UN agencies should switch from environmental education to education for sustainable development, emphasising the human capacity to handle environmental and development concerns. A more recent analysis of 220 studies of climate change education conducted between 1993 and 2014 indicated that most of them treated climate change as STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) or environmental and sustainability education. This focus dominates the field to date (Rousell and Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles 2020: 198).

In 2010, UNESCO started the Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development programme to foster "climate literacy" among students (UNESCO 2010). Integrated programmes were proposed that included: climate science and knowledge; climate change education; climate change, cultural and biological variety; and cultural heritage, ethics, social and human sciences components. As climate science education and sustainability education expanded, so did interest in outcomes beyond knowledge and student-centred, interactive, cross-disciplinary and multi-dimensional approaches.

Another approach to climate change education has been the "green school" movement, which originated at the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development and established "whole-school" concepts as applied to environmental sustainability education. These green or eco-schools are part of networks that promote sustainability in their communities (Goldman et al. 2018). In a whole-school approach, students and other school community members live and learn based on sustainability principles. A whole-school approach to climate change involves addressing climate change in every aspect of school life. This covers school governance, teaching content and methods, campus and facilities management and collaboration with partners and communities (UNESCO n.d).

UNESCO's plan for whole-school climate change education includes the following steps:

- create a school climate action team;
- incorporate sustainable development into all classes;
- encourage innovative future thinking;
- empower students to take action to address facilities and operations;
- build community partnerships.

The guide proposes hands-on activities such as developing and managing a school garden and compost, making climate change risk maps and researching how societies have resolved conflicts and addressed environmental challenges (Gibb 2016). This kind of holistic approach to climate change is still emerging in higher education. Part

of the barriers to this kind of approach in higher education is that climate change education is so vulnerable to partisan controversy.

Illustrating this point is a recent review of environmental education research that found that most empirical studies focus on individual responsibility for energy conservation behaviour among children and youth, with little attention to collective action or the sociotechnical transformation needed to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy systems (Jorgenson et al. 2019). Many environmental education methods are based on 1970s and 1980s approaches that assumed "environmental problems could be adequately addressed through resource conservation and incremental changes to technology and human behavior" (Jorgenson et al. 2019: 160). The reviewers argued that focusing solely on individual behaviour is insufficient to address climate change. Environmental or climate change education focused on collective action in only a few of the 70 studies published between 2012 and 2018 that were included in the review (ibid.).

This is a problem because environmental educators and researchers may be reinforcing a simplistic and narrow view of the relationship between climate change, human action and energy system change by downplaying the role of collective action. However, many of the most impactful climate actions are decisions about energy supply systems made by state and market sector actors under direct pressure from advocacy coalitions and other social collectives (Burke and Stephens 2017). Another climate change education review suggests current climate change education helps students understand climate change and its science, but not how to change it (Leal Filho et al. 2021).

Another review of climate change education studies published between 1993 and 2014 found that many of these studies demonstrated little impact on students' attitudes and behaviour (Rousell and Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles 2020). Participatory, interdisciplinary, affect-focused and creative climate change education approaches are scarce in the literature, according to the review. This literature review found a conflict between knowledge-based science education and interdisciplinary, affect-driven and experiential education. Some studies on climate science found no correlation between scientific knowledge and pro-environmental behaviour. Several of the studies reviewed found that co-operative, interdisciplinary, place-based, experiential programmes are more effective (Rousell and Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles 2020). Half of the studies reviewed by the authors promoted scientific knowledge-based climate change education, followed by curriculum and pedagogy. After these two approaches, others emphasised behaviour change approaches, adaptation and mitigation.

Knowledge-based climate change education is based on limited models of climate action engagement. The work by Maria Ojala and colleagues proposes that engagement in climate change education must be linked to emotions. According to her work, the emotions of hope and worry about climate change were positively related to pro-environmental behaviour in a study of Swedish youth and young adults, but hope without worry was not (Ojala et al. 2021). Ojala suggested cultivating emotions like hope and worry to sustain pro-environmental action that challenges climate change-causing norms and institutions. Transformative climate change education

that recognises the worry and anxiety that young people face can create hope through critical emotional awareness and activities that create visions of better futures (Ojala 2016).

Considering this emotional framework that goes beyond teaching within the scientific context, the Alberta Council for Environmental Education (2017) in Canada identified six key principles of excellent climate change education in a literature review:

- frame climate change education around solutions, not problems, and establish a positive narrative around shared identity;
- consider the audience. Support teachers to design age-appropriate curricula.
- action-oriented programme design. Empower students;
- expand beyond climate science to include imagining a bright future, local content, teaching students how to think, not what to think;
- link curriculum and skills. Promote cross-curricular learning, systems thinking and the interdependencies of climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience;
- assess programme improvement and evolve through evaluation.

Despite this growing body of practice and the more limited body of research, documented student knowledge and skills on climate change are not sufficient to meet the urgency of the challenge and, as mentioned in the reviews of this research, evidence of climate change's impact on attitudes or behaviour is scarce.

What are we doing at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai?

Some authors argue that sustainability is inherently cross-disciplinary and requires understanding climate change systems. This kind of cross-disciplinary approach requires integrating economics, science and social science, so traditional curricular silos hinder system understanding (Jain 2020: 30). Students and scientists need multidisciplinarity to understand climate change systems. Biomedical health scientists, engineers, planners, biologists, zoologists, ecologists, agronomists, environmental scientists, and social and behavioural scientists must collaborate to address human environmental harm (Stewart 2020). Arts, sciences and humanities are also needed to imagine sustainable living environments. To educate for environmental sustainability, students must learn about the various humanistic traditions and engage in environmental ethics (Mantatov et al. 2020).

Taking all this evidence into account, the authors of this chapter at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai have created several environmental health science research training programmes that focus on recruiting minority students (Misra et al. 2009; Rice et al. 2009; Deas et al. 2012; Tull et al. 2012; Duffus et al. 2014; Krawczyk and Claudio 2017). These programmes have three key features: 1. multidisciplinary, hands-on research training in environmental health; 2. a concerted effort by faculty to create an atmosphere of community among students to reduce isolation and promote integration into academic life; and 3. a strong focus on research mentoring.

It is important to note that increased diversity in the higher education of climate change scientists can have many benefits for the academic research community at

large and can help address environmental injustice (Bollinger 2003; Tabak and Collins 2011; Campell et al. 2013). For one, minority students tend to do much-needed research on issues that disproportionately affect underprivileged populations, of which climate change is a good example (Bailey and Willies-Jacobo 2012; Thoman et al. 2015). In turn, exposure of the whole academic body to cultural diversity can improve the quality of research aimed at solving climate change (Oscós-Sánchez et al. 2008; Betancourt et al. 2016).

The global lack of representation of minorities in science and medicine careers necessitates that intense research training experiences be coupled with effective mentoring (Valantine and Collins 2015; Valantine 2017). This is the strategy we use in our current research training programmes (Krawczyk and Claudio 2017). The research training experiences at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (Landrigan et al. 2011; Peres and Claudio 2013; Krawczyk and Claudio 2017) and elsewhere (Drain et al. 2017) have shown that there has been a surge in students' interest and demand for global environmental health experiences as part of their need for a well-rounded higher education. It has been argued that transnational competence is more appropriate in today's biomedical research training programmes because it provides trainees with opportunities for growth in analytical, emotional, creative and communication skills that they do not exercise sufficiently when not confronted with international experiences (Koehn and Swick 2006).

Our own programmes illustrate this point, particularly among graduate students from minority backgrounds. To address their needs, we have created several strategies to increase students' interactions with a wide variety of minority and non-minority mentors (Claudio 2001). We also involve students in community-based research in minority neighbourhoods that are particularly affected by climate threats, where they are co-mentored by community-based researchers (Claudio and Stingone 2008; Northridge et al. 2010; Claudio et al. 2018). However, not enough of these opportunities are available to trainees to sustain them through their careers, partly because there is not enough mentor time to fill those roles. It has been shown quite clearly that research experiences, authorship in research papers, academic achievement and faculty career intentions are significant mediators that improve the likelihood of graduate students engaging in environmental health research careers (Jeffe et al. 2012).

To address this lack of global climate change and environmental sustainability training in higher education, the Mount Sinai programme and our partners in Latin America have fully integrated our training programmes into the fabric of current activities, making it a vital part of their structure within three areas: 1. ongoing health disparities research; 2. global health research and training; and 3. research training opportunities and requirements. These approaches have been documented in a number of publications (Sánchez-Román et al. 2006; Claudio 2007; Asgary et al. 2012; Truglio et al. 2012; Peres and Claudio 2013; Krawczyk and Claudio 2017). It is important to note that the focus of these programmes has been in Latin America for several reasons:

- Because of its proximity, there is a large immigrant population from Latin America, including the authors of this chapter. In spite of integration, cultural ties persist among Latin American immigrants in the US. This makes it feasible to establish and sustain collaborations with scientists in Latin America.

- The Mount Sinai programme also provides support for research and research training for scientists in Latin America (Peres and Claudio 2013). As part of those programmes, it has been possible to train professors in Latin America who can now serve as mentors for US students, thus establishing a reciprocal relationship.
- Many trainees participating in these programmes have ancestry that originates in Latin America, often including language and cultural skills that strengthen their ability to be effective in their research training in those countries.

In brief, trainees in the Mount Sinai programmes are selected from among the top applicants to a national call for applications and offered the opportunity to train with highly accomplished international and local research mentors in environmental health sciences. After the selection process, predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees receive intensive orientation, including guided readings on their research topic, programme requirements, training in the ethical conduct of research, cultural competency training and overviews on US and global health disparities caused by environmental degradation and climate change.

After orientation, students travel in pairs to their host institutions in Latin America for 11 weeks of research training. After students return from international or local research sites, they have one month in which to submit a report in the format of a scientific paper. These reports are then evaluated, and selected students are offered support to present their research results at professional scientific conferences accompanied by their Latin American research mentors. Graduate students are also supported in their research paper writing and publication (Claudio 2016). Alumni of the programme are later invited to present their research experiences to newly selected students, thus fostering continuity and collaboration. Rigorous evaluation is conducted throughout the process with an expert in the field of higher education. Recommendations resulting from evaluations are implemented in the following year. As part of post-research career development, students are also offered opportunities for additional research training at Mount Sinai or elsewhere. Since its inception, the Mount Sinai programme has trained 180 students in global environmental health sciences research, resulting in 51 peer-reviewed research articles co-authored by students with their international mentors and 41 papers presented by students and mentors at international conferences. Many students have received prestigious awards, including Fulbright, Fogarty, Luce and Marshall scholarships. In addition, 98% of the students and 96% of the mentors express a high level of satisfaction with the programme. And 97% of them are currently in research careers.

In addition to the students' outstanding successes, the programme itself has achieved several milestones, among which it has: 1. offered additional research, teaching and training opportunities for alumni of the programme; 2. received awards and recognition for the extraordinary success of the programme; and 3. received continuous federal funding for close to 20 years. Most importantly, we hope that students who have participated in our programmes become leaders in the fight against the devastating global effects of climate change and help implement environmental sustainability approaches for a better future.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have seen that there are many national and international efforts to develop climate change education as an integral part of preparing students for their futures. Approaches range from making the topics of climate change and sustainability part of existing STEM curricula, to more hands-on approaches, to whole-school approaches that engage the entire community. The Icahn School of Medicine programmes have decades of experience in incorporating environmental medicine and the health effects of climate change into the educational framework through a global perspective. Focusing on research collaborations with high-level scientists in Latin America, the Mount Sinai programmes have succeeded in providing environmental medicine research training for hundreds of students. Our experience in higher education focuses on experiential research mentoring in a global setting as a model for preparing effective medical research professionals. Together, all of these approaches promise to deliver a more aware and engaged generation of students who will be academically prepared to address the challenges of a changing climate.

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Chapter 9

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the role of higher education and democracy

Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito

The most ambitious plan for humanity

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the product of a long-term process that started decades ago. Adopted on 25 September 2015 by the representatives of the 193 member states of the United Nations through Resolution A/70/L.1 of the United Nations General Assembly, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (UN 2015), the agenda had different milestones that included:

- the Earth Summit in Rio (UN 1992),
- the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (UN 2002),
- the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio (2012b) and
- the 2000 Millennium Agenda (UN 2013).

The Earth Summit 1992

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or the "Earth Summit") was held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. This global conference, held on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the first Human Environment Conference in Stockholm in 1972, brought together political leaders, diplomats, scientists, representatives of the media and non-governmental organisations from 179 countries for a massive effort to focus on the impact of human socio-economic activities on the environment (UN 1992).

World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002

The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg adopted a Political Declaration and Implementation Plan which included provisions covering a set of activities and measures to be taken in order to achieve development that takes into account respect for the environment. In doing so, this Summit, which saw the participation of more than one hundred heads of state and government and

tens of thousands of government representatives and non-governmental organisations, adopted decisions that related to water, energy, health, agriculture, biological diversity and other areas of concern (UN 2002).

UN Conference on Sustainable Development 2012

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development took place in Rio de Janeiro on 20-22 June 2012. It resulted in a political document which contains clear and practical measures for implementing sustainable development. In Rio, member states decided to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals that would build upon the Millennium Development Goals and converge with the post-2015 development agenda. The conference also adopted ground-breaking guidelines on green economy policies (UN 2012b).

Millennium Agenda beyond 2015

The 2000 Millennium Agenda was adopted under the leadership of the former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and it united the international community in a collective effort to rise to the most pressing challenges of our era. In September 2000, building on a decade of major UN conferences and summits, world leaders came together at the UN headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets – with a deadline of 2015 – that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (UN 2013).

Fifteen years later, in 2015 and after a series of lessons learned and global consultations, the 2030 Agenda was adopted to set the path for global action for sustainable development by the year 2030.

The 2030 Agenda is universal, transformative and rights based. It is an ambitious plan of action for countries, the UN system and all other actors (UNSSC 2017). It is a plan that aims to have people at the centre of development and give them the freedom to define their future, exercise their human rights, fight climate change and eradicate poverty. The 2030 Agenda, containing 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 169 global targets and more than 250 global indicators, is not just an international promise but also a commitment that will allow people across the world to see results through the improvement of their lives and communities.

One of the particularities of the 2030 Agenda is the effort to ensure that people are engaged not only as beneficiaries, but as key actors at the different stages, including its development, implementation and review processes. In this respect, during the development of the agenda, people played a key role as partners and brought their and their communities' aspirations, dreams and ambitions to the commitments that UN member states adopted for the next 15 years. Through different consultations including the MY World Survey 2015 and the World We Want consultations, led by the UN Millennium Campaign, this process mobilised more than 7 million people worldwide.

MY World is an important part of a larger UN "global conversation" initiative. It has taken the discussion from the halls of power and policy rooms to the people of the

world and asked them: "Are we talking about the right things?" Using a combination of offline, online and mobile phone technologies, the survey has reached some of the most marginalised members of our society and helped them play their part in our shared future. Respondents were asked to pick six out of 16 priorities for a better life – and their answers have helped build a dataset like no other (ILO 2014).

The World We Want was an unprecedented global consultation led by the United Nations that involved more than a million people across all countries and from all backgrounds. A special effort was made to reach out to the poor, the marginalised and others whose voices are not usually heard. Modern communications technology, the mobilisation of UN agencies and the exceptional enthusiasm of countless volunteers made this unique endeavour possible. Through this exercise, the UN was determined to tap into the spirit of the first words of its founding charter: "We the peoples" (UNDG 2013).

Given the importance of people's participation to the success of the agenda, the existence of enabling environments that contribute to the active participation of stakeholders is critical. In this context, democratic societies with structures that comprise the essence of the agenda are important in encouraging peoples' participation across the world and at different levels, so no one is left behind.

Implementing and reviewing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for stakeholders to take action and join the efforts to advance the SDGs. Even so, at national and local levels, the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda falls under the leadership of the UN member states and their governance structures. Different stakeholders and groups across the world have responded to this call through actions and partnerships to advance the SDGs.

To ensure the appropriate means of implementation, matters such as finance, trade, capacity building and/or science, technology and innovation were given attention in the formulation of almost every Sustainable Development Goal. In addition, Goal 17 is dedicated to ensuring that the means of implementation are delivered to support member states' efforts. The means of implementation in the 2030 Agenda also include commitments to address systemic issues, including policy and institutional coherence, multistakeholder partnerships, data, monitoring and accountability.

Furthermore, considering the importance of monitoring, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, in 2012 established the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (UN HLPF), which is the central United Nations platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals at the global level. It is the apex of the architecture for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda as established by UN General Assembly Resolution 70/299. The General Assembly, in its Resolution 67/290, decided that the forum meets annually under the auspices of the Economic and

Social Council for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment, and every four years at the level of heads of state and government under the auspices of the General Assembly for two days.

As part of its follow-up and review process, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (UN 2015). These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the HLPF. As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state led and undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and they are to provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. In this sense, the voluntary national reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilise multistakeholder support and partnerships for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Stakeholder participation in the monitoring and implementing processes is achieved largely, but not exclusively, through the platforms and processes facilitated by member states. In other cases, where governments have not operationalised stakeholder engagement mechanisms at local and national levels, stakeholders have self-organised and in many cases developed parallel or shadow reports to monitor progress in implementation of the 2030 Agenda in their communities and nations and to deliver actions.

As part of the preparatory process leading towards the HLPF, UN member states gather in Regional Preparatory Forums for Sustainable Development convened by the UN Regional Commissions. The regional forums are platforms for assessing progress and exchanging knowledge, best practices and policy solutions to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in line with regional priorities and specificities.

Both regional- and global- level stakeholders contribute to the review process of the 2030 Agenda through the mechanisms established for their participation.

Stakeholder engagement and the role of democracy for successful advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by representatives of member states at the highest level, committing to what is likely to be the most ambitious plan of its kind in history. People across the world have a key role in the global call for action for the SDGs, ensuring implementation and accountability.

According to Duverger (2001), representation is the way in which elected persons act in accordance with the interests of those who elected them, that is, by representing the voters for decision making in public affairs. In this context, direct democracy enables citizens to get directly involved in public affairs, discussing or debating the decisions that should be made for the betterment of society (Rodríguez Burgos 2015).

Since the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 – known as the Earth Summit – it has been recognised that achieving sustainable development will require the active participation of all sectors of society and all types of people. Agenda 21, adopted at the Earth Summit, drew on this sentiment and formalised nine sectors of society as the main channels through which broad participation would be facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These sectors of society are officially called major groups and they include women; children and youth; Indigenous peoples; non-governmental organisations; local authorities; workers and trade unions; business and industry; scientific and technological community; and farmers (UN 2022a).

The importance of effectively engaging sectors of society was reaffirmed by the Rio+20 Conference. Its outcome document, "The future we want" (United Nations 2012a), highlights the role that major groups can play in pursuing sustainable societies for future generations. In addition, governments invited other stakeholders, including local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities, to participate in UN processes related to sustainable development, which can be achieved through close collaboration with the major groups (UN 2022a).

Major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) were integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its adoption, MGoS have been working towards its implementation through projects, initiatives, advocacy, knowledge sharing, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. MGoS often work in partnership with other sectors, including governments (UN HLPF 2022b). MGoS are self-coordinated and independent from the UN Secretariat and allow for the structured engagement and contribution of civil society in the intergovernmental processes on sustainable development (UN HLPF 2023a). Currently the MGoS are composed of the constituencies shown in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Source: Author's compilation based on information gathered for this article

Member states have stressed the need for the HLPF to promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the MGoS at the international level to make better use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions. While retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the MGoS shall have the right to:

a. attend all official meetings of the forum;
b. have access to all official information and documents;
c. intervene in official meetings;
d. submit documents and present written and oral contributions;
e. make recommendations;
f. organise side events and round tables, in co-operation with member states and the Secretariat (UN HLPF 2023b).

Participation, then, is a key component of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, participation alone will not enable the agenda to advance in ways that strongly connect people's voices with the decision-making processes, laws, policies and programmes implemented at the regional, national and local levels. Therefore, enabling environments that ensure democratic governance and stability are key for the international community and nations that are committed to this ambitious plan.

In this regard, how is democracy related to the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and what role does it play? According to Sáenz López and Rodríguez Burgos, participatory democracy includes a diversity of forms of participation. However, citizens must be more active, informed and rational not only in choosing their representatives, but also in participating in decision making. This must be based on better citizen education, development of a political culture and even public debates that allow discussing the different options (Sáenz López and Rodríguez 2010).

For O'Donnell (1994), both participatory democracy and citizenship are based on participation and on the need to provide active citizens with new opportunities to participate in the regulation of decision making in society. Therefore, to reach a greater degree of democracy, it is necessary to strengthen citizen participation, enabling them to be part of accountability processes.

On the other hand, John Dewey (2004) indicates that democracy will occur only to the extent that citizens are actively involved in the political process. In this regard, citizen education is an essential element in recognising mutual interests as a "social control factor" to generate a change in social habits.

Considering the previous paragraphs, the effort made by UN member states to ensure a mechanism for stakeholder participation could be considered as relevant practice to enhance democratic values in international affairs for sustainable development and international co-operation. However, this practice needs to be replicated at the national level as part of the reforms needed to strengthen participative democracy processes to procure the advancement of the SDGs. The role of stakeholders in this sense requires them to go from passive to active participation, engaging in the mechanism established by the 2030 Agenda and contributing to its implementation and

review at the regional, national and local levels. This active participation needs to be both ways, where stakeholders' voices and opinions are brought into decision-making processes and the carrying out of these agreements and these discussions are in turn taken back to their communities, in a localisation effort.

The call for action, mentioned above, represents a shared but differentiated set of responsibilities for stakeholders and member states on the path to success for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, basing their participation on democratic values.

Academia's role in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The academic community has an important role to play in the implementation of the SDGs. The scientific community has already provided significant contributions to the setting of meaningful and feasible goals, supported by scientific evidence, during the consultation processes leading to the formal negotiations on the SDGs (UN DESA 2015). Seven years from 2030, we now need engagement by academia more than ever in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. The active role of academia can ensure a massive democratisation of the SDGs' approaches and could help to create solutions, data and a new generation of people with sustainable lifestyles whose daily decisions can help achieve a more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world. In addition, the participation of academia specifically in the review and decision-making process could help decision makers at the local, national, regional and global levels to make science- and data-driven decisions.

Colleges and universities are expected to contribute not only to their local communities, but also to the global community. What better way to do so than to advocate for governments to keep their commitment to implement these 17 goals and to contribute to the body of knowledge around the SDGs? Additionally, universities are expected to instil their graduates with a well-rounded education and global awareness. The SDGs' framework models a systems approach for examining global and local challenges. It can help students understand that success in addressing issues they are passionate about depends on success in addressing other issues, including on their own campuses (IISD 2020).

On the other hand, students represent a transformative force themselves. Their new ideas and creativity could take the 2030 Agenda beyond the classrooms to the field. The time most students spend in higher education can vary from three to six years depending on their region or country. However, if we consider them as key actors since pre-school and elementary school, working with a curriculum that includes SDG approaches, we are looking at around 12 years of continued action around education for sustainable development. In this regard, it is in the hands of academia, in co-operation with decision makers, to work on transforming the educational sector to ensure the advancement of the SDGs and to engage students as a critical group to succeed in these efforts.

For universities to truly adopt the SDGs, the leadership must make sustainability a priority and hold themselves accountable. The creation of an office of sustainability

is a great way to start, but sustainability must make its way into the conscience of faculty and students to make the most difference (IISD 2020).

Academia is not only relevant in educational spaces. The review of the 2030 Agenda also requires their participation and critical attention. Therefore, it is important that academia be present and vocal where decisions on the SDGs are made, not only sharing the results of new research findings and practices in educational spaces, but also advocating that they themselves be included in the agenda's decision making, gathering of data and participation in the main elements in decision making, policies and resource allocation around the SDGs. Participation by the academic community is even more critical in countries or regions with precarious democracies, weak institutionalism, violence or corruption.

One of the main bodies for the review of the 2030 Agenda at the UN High Level Political Forum, mentioned above, is the Education and Academia Stakeholder Group (EASG). The EASG brings together human rights-based education by civil society organisations as well as academic organisations and networks that work on the right to education and that self-organise to engage with monitoring and review of the Sustainable Development Goals (EASG 2023). The EASG is part of the MGoS and during the past decades has been essential in catalysing academic engagement in the review process of SDGs at the global level.

In addition to the EASG, two compacts to which many higher education institutions have become signatories are the University Global Coalition (UGC 2022) and the UNITAR Declaration on University Global Engagement (UNITAR 2023). The introduction of the SDGs aids the development of students' global competence and their ability to collaborate and lead across national boundaries (IISD 2020).

Each year education acquires higher relevance for different stakeholders. In this regard, 2022 was key to the educational agenda and its role in transforming societies. The United Nations, under the lead of the Secretary-General, António Guterres, convened the Transforming Education Summit during the 77th sessions of the UN General Assembly (UN 2022b). The summit was convened in response to a global crisis in education – one of equity and inclusion, quality and relevance. The summit aimed to elevate education to the top of the global political agenda and to mobilise action, ambition, solidarity and solutions to recover pandemic-related learning losses and sow the seeds to transform education in a rapidly changing world. Therefore, now is the time for educators and higher education institutions to commit, take the lead and keep the momentum by contributing to the success of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The global call for action is still ongoing and the need remains for structural transformations that will help us to address systemic issues such as climate change, inequalities, violence, corruption and more. All of them still require the engagement of stakeholders. Only active participation can ensure better accountability for the 2030 Agenda, and academia plays a key role in enhancing democratic values for the localisation of the agenda to leave no one behind.

The next seven years represent not only an opportunity for humanity to advance in one of its most ambitious plans, but also to strengthen democracy and the role of

academia for sustainable development across the different stages of decision making at local, national and global levels. The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development also represents an opportunity for the education sector to put students and the communities they serve at the centre, going beyond the paradigms that see them as clients to new ones where they become a transformative force for the world that we envisioned and committed to achieve with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

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Chapter 10

What has political equality got to do with it? Framing and spelling out the university's democratic mission for a sustainable future

Rui Branco

Democracy as political equality

Democracy means self-rule by the people. In public and social science discourses, the concept of democracy is often narrowed down to its electoral and liberal components. Important as they are, they are not sufficient – if one defines democracy as political equality (Dahl 2020).

Democracy's electoral component ensures that rulers are responsive to citizens through competition for the approval of a broad electorate during regular elections. Absent this fundamental element, a regime cannot be described in any sense as democratic. At the same time, holding free and fair elections alone is insufficient.

The same can be said about the liberal component, which safeguards individual and minority rights against a potential tyranny of the majority through constitutionally protected civil liberties, rule of law, and effective checks and balances to the use of executive power. However, by itself, it does not bring about an equal distribution of political power, since economic and legal inequalities undermine the exercise of formal rights and liberties.

Robert Dahl conceived democracy as defined by the principle of equal consideration. This is the notion that "in cases of binding collective decision, to be considered as an equal is to have one's interests taken equally into consideration by the process of decision-making" (Dahl 1991: 87). Along similar lines, Sidney Verba states that "equal consideration just means that citizen voices are equally expressed and given an equal hearing, even if some receive a more beneficial response" (Verba 2003: 677).

Conceiving of democracy as political equality, therefore, requires one to complement the procedural and liberal elements with a more substantive and egalitarian dimension designed to ensure equal participation, representation and protection through the distribution of politically relevant resources.

As political equals, all citizens or social groups – be they defined by class, gender, religion or ethnicity – ought to be equally empowered by democratic institutions

of participation, representation and social protection to exercise their rights and liberties to influence government and public policies.

In this sense, the more egalitarian the distribution of material resources, education and health to social groups and citizens, the greater the political equality. The crucial issue is whether the political processes minimise (or not) the translation of existing inequalities into public policies.

The predicament of "new democracies"

Such considerations are particularly relevant for new democracies, those which transitioned to democracy after long spells of authoritarian rule, ever since the democratic "third wave" broke in southern Europe in the 1970s, and then spread around the world (Huntington 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996).

The worldwide proportion of democratic regimes rose from a quarter in 1973 to a third in 1980, to a half in 1992, to *circa* three fifths in 2000 (or 115 cases). The "third wave" of democratisation peaked in 2006 (121 or 63% of countries), and has been followed by a "democratic recession" ever since (Diamond 2011).

New democracies face entrenched social and political inequalities inherited from historical development paths marked by long periods of authoritarian rule and late transitions to democracy, economic and social modernisation.

Over the past decades marked by the global increase of inequality, the issue became even more important. Under late development conditions, the combination of low-capacity states with high economic inequality and the resilience of pre-democratic sources of authority makes it harder to convert the political opportunities inherent in democratic institutions into the effective and substantive exercise of citizenship rights.

New democracies face consolidation challenges stemming from the central task of preventing new inequities from reinforcing inherited patterns of inequality. First, reversing multiple inequalities (gender, race, class or social status) inherent in previous authoritarian regimes is an essential step to create a democratic citizenry based on the free and autonomous exercise of individual or collective action. Second, there is the challenge of mitigating the distributive forms of inequality inherent in capitalist economies, which have been exacerbated during the neoliberal period. Market capitalism limits democracy-as-political-equality potential by generating rising inequality in the distribution of political resources, adversely affecting popular and middle-class social groups. The third challenge, by managing the "twin transitions" in a socially balanced way, that is, combining the transition to a democratic political regime with economic reform by setting up relatively egalitarian welfare capitalism able to wed economic growth to employment, and social protection, is to avoid either the "planned economy" or the "pure market economy" dead ends (Branco 2023).

Current challenges to democracy

In the immediate post-Cold War period, the debate about democracy moved to the issue of democratic quality within the set of the seemingly ever-increasing number of

democratic regimes. The debate started to change once many "third wave" regimes consolidated, not as democratic, but as hybrid, "competitive authoritarian" regimes (Levistsky and Way 2010). Nowadays, democratic regimes, old and new alike, face threats and challenges variously designated as "democratic backsliding", "de-consolidation" or just "crises of democracy" (Bermeo 2016; Levistsky and Ziblatt 2018; Przeworski 2019).

Current challenges to democracy, particularly in the United States of America, have prompted a wave of scholarly work such as *How democracies die* by Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018), *Democratic resilience: can the United States withstand rising polarization*, edited by Lieberman, Mettler and Roberts (2021), Ginsburg and Huq's *How to save a constitutional democracy* (2018), or, in a different tenor, Tim Snyder's *On tyranny* (2017). In a recent *New York Times* column Ezra Klein invited international scholars of democracy to think about worrying developments in the US. He makes the insightful argument that the US suffers the problems typical of the new democracies that we have talked about in the previous section. Klein quotes Staffan Lindberg (from the Varieties of Democracy Institute):

> The thing that makes me really worried is how similar what's going on in the U.S. looks to a series of countries in the world where democracy has really taken a big toll and, in many cases, died …. I'm talking about countries like Hungary under Orban, Turkey in the early days of Erdogan's rule, Modi in India, and I can go down the line.

Klein then adds on his own account:

> One thing foreign observers see clearly is that multiethnic democracy in America is a flower rooting in thin soil. We sometimes brag that we are the world's oldest democracy, and that is true enough in a technical sense. But if you use a more modern definition of democracy, one that includes voting rights for women and minorities as a prerequisite, then we are one of the world's younger democracies.

"For me, as a democracy scholar, it's ridiculous to say America is the oldest democracy in the world," Lindberg said. "The U.S. did not become a democracy until at least after the civil rights movement in the '60s. In that sense, it's kind of a new democracy, like Portugal or Spain."

Klein's response was that,

> From this perspective, the Republican Party's ongoing efforts to silence certain voters and politicize electoral administration are not aberrations from a glittering past of fair and competitive contests. They are reversions to our mean. And that makes them all the likelier to succeed.
>
> "Younger democracies tend to be weaker," Lindberg said. "It's much more common that young democracies fail than older ones. If America became so bad that it could no longer be considered a democracy, it would be a return to America's historical norm: Some liberal rights for some people, but not to the extent that it is a true democracy. (Klein 2021)

Global democracy indices show that the world has entered a new wave of autocratisation (Lührmann and Lindberg 2019). Ever since 2006, one in six democracies around the world has failed. The Varieties of Democracy Project (V-Dem 2023) reports

that, while the majority of countries in the world remain democratic, more than one third of the world's population live in the 25 countries undergoing democratic decline. Unlike past waves of autocratisation, the current retrenchment affects mostly democracies and is occurring through legal transfers of power, concluding that the "level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen is now back to around 1990" (Hellmeier et al. 2021: 1068).

Democratic values such as freedom, the rule of law, equal opportunities and the dignity of all citizens have been eroded by multiple, cross-cutting challenges, which have risen in prominence since the turn of the millennium, and have been exacerbated in the period spanning the Great Financial Crisis of 2008 and the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 onwards. Let us try to break down the main challenges.

Democratic backsliding whittles down or scraps altogether the political institutions that sustain democracy, stripping back constitutional safeguards and letting democratic institutions be dismantled piecemeal by elected politicians, often illiberally inclined populists (Haggard and Kaufman 2021).

Nationalism and xenophobia are on the rise, targeting migrant workers and refugees. Electoral politics increasingly deploys xenophobic discourses as part of the efforts to mobilise support. The UN is worried that the "increasing movement of refugees and migrants has been exploited by political leaders to fan the embers of latent xenophobia and racism into the flames of abuse, hate speech, prejudice and in some cases violence" (Ruteere 2016).

Income and wealth inequality have risen in recent decades, though to a lesser extent in generous welfare capitalist societies, undermining a society of free, equal and autonomous individuals (Stiglitz 2012). Income polarisation brings about the shrinking of the middle class. Those at the bottom are increasingly estranged from political participation or inter-class coalition building and from the exercise of formal rights and liberties, while those at the top are able to evade democratic decisions that run counter to their interests.

"Post-truth" politics threatens democratic self-government because it disregards factual evidence as the basis for political discourse and policy making. It is not just that "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts", to borrow US Senator Moynihan's phrase (Moynihan 1983), but that the formation of individual opinion should not be impervious to verifiable facts. "Post-truth" politics downplays "policy", mistrusts authoritative "experts" and is willing to reject clearly documented facts when they contradict existing beliefs and values (Hopkin and Rosamond 2018).

Climate change, with the onslaught of natural disasters, food insecurity, economic decline, financial instability and climate-driven injustices, conflicts and migrations, presents a critical threat to democracy and, at the same time, is a difficult issue for democracies to tackle. Democratic governments find it hard to invest in long-term social benefits at short-term social cost due to three compounded problems: electoral risk, rooted in the scarcity of voter attention; hard prediction, deriving from the complexity of long-term policy effects; and low institutional capacity, arising from interest groups' preferences for distributive gains over inter-temporal bargains, and policy capture, corruption and fossil fuel dependency (Jacobs 2011).

The technological and digital transformation of work requires policy adaptations to prevent protection gaps from emerging, such as the employment risk of automation in terms of job shedding, loss of income and social protection or the stripping of labour rights and protections in platform work. Another example is that the cycle of mutually reinforcing social and digital exclusions as vulnerable strata with fewer digital skills and limited access reap less benefit from new technologies, leading to poor educational attainment, which feeds back into social exclusion.

The democratic mission of universities

Universities, and higher education institutions more generally, play a decisive role at this juncture. Our understanding of the democratic mission of the university is informed by Arendt's vision of the university as a non-conformist community ethically committed to the transformation of the social world, rather than a secluded contemplative community aloof from emancipatory struggles going on in society (Arendt 1946).

Harkavy has long emphasised that universities ought to make a substantial contribution to "developing and sustaining democratic schools, communities, and societies". Therefore, the core mission of higher education is to educate students "to be democratic, creative, caring, constructive citizens of a democratic society" (Harkavy 2006: 9).

If one heeds the call to take democracy seriously as a guiding principle of social organisation, and not merely an ensemble of formal institutions that make up a certain type of political regime, one should be ready to expand the scope or domain of the social units and collective issues to which democratic norms are applied.

A deepening of democracy requires an extension of democratic norms and procedures of self-government from the political domain alone to other spheres of social and economic relations (Roberts 1998). Indeed, such an extension could potentially touch any social unit containing a system of power relations with significant impact on the lives of citizens, such as business enterprises, the workplace, NGOs, neighbourhood associations – or the university. First, positions of authority and relations of hierarchy should be responsive to those whose lives are affected. Second, social and economic inequalities should not translate into concentrations of power that skew the articulation of bottom-up demands. Third, the modes of governance should open avenues for participation in decision making by the constituents of the university *qua* social community, both within and outside its walls.

Granted, often normative orientations are more easily described than put into practice. So, let us now turn to action in the world.

What democratic universities should do

Higher education institutions must be responsive to societal needs if they wish to become agents of change in solving the complex challenges of moving towards

a sustainable future. It should be clear that sustainability goes beyond the purely ecological dimension: political, economic and social compoenents are equally important and mutually implied.

Universities must continue to strive to be halls of freedom of speech, thought, learning and research. Academic freedom requires institutional autonomy. Freedom presupposes autonomy and pluralism to enable a meaningful exchange of ideas from different perspectives. As such, academic freedom cannot be seen as opposed in any way to freedom of speech. Rather they sustain each other from the viewpoint of the democratic citizen.

Deeply unequal societies become calcified and full of tensions. The more inequalities translate into (enduring) political power differentials, the less government is "of the people, by the people, for the people". Higher education ought to work to rekindle social mobility and opportunity, making sure that sociocultural inequalities in access are not socially reproduced and magnified by the university (Bourdieu and Passeron 1980). Here, particularly, an emphasis on access, staff recruitment and community outreach is paramount.

To create and disseminate knowledge that can check the excesses of power is a crucial contribution of higher education, ensuring that knowledge and evidence are rational bases for democratic self-government and individual autonomy. Creating interdisciplinary overlap in knowledge production generally results in knowledge innovation.

It is important that research engages with real-world problems manifested in the community, and is able to address new challenges and create knowledge to inform public policy, such as inequality, poverty, ageing, climate change or platform work.

Universities are key to promoting a citizenry that is active and tolerant, equal and diverse, open and able to think critically. This active role in preparing students to be well-informed citizens ranges from teaching and raising awareness to upholding scientific rigour to strengthen trust in scholarship and science (Bergan, Gallagher and Harkavy 2020).

Taking stock of digital technology development, universities need to develop skills and competences, promote innovation and adjust their organisation, knowledge production, research and teaching accordingly, but should take care not to let technological change dictate higher education's mission.

In addition to integrating sustainability issues and goals, while teaching competences and skills in the curriculum, universities ought to help teachers educate students for sustainable futures, bearing in mind that democratic sustainability in higher education should always include both content and process.

Indeed, sustainable development should not be limited to a learning or teaching topic, but should be seen, learned and taught as a way of relating to the world. The strategic implications of sustainability reach beyond individual curriculum changes, isolated environmental practices and environmental policies. Adjustments are also required to academic priorities, organisational structures and financial systems (Ryan et al. 2010). To comprehensively address sustainability universities should link

campus management to research, curriculum and administrative practice, such that a "learning for sustainability approach" is embedded across every aspect of institutional operations in a synergistic way (Ralph and Stubbs 2014). Indeed, efforts towards the greening of campuses should focus on technological solutions and operational activities, but also promote reflection on behavioural and cultural issues.

Research is key to the advancement of knowledge with evidence-based solutions and innovations, and it should combine traditional disciplinary approaches and newer interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary ones. Higher education institutions usually favour academic joint-curricula development, inter-university training and research, and exchange of best practices and resources. These collaborations should extend to external actors by setting up partnerships and networks.

As higher education institutions engage in multiple actions, ranging from curricula to research, they should extend their outreach beyond campus operations to advocacy coalitions. Universities should be a part of advocacy coalitions emphasising the political dimension of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA 2023) and interacting with actors beyond academia. The development of political advocacy coalitions includes government, civil society, business companies and development institutions. For example, see the struggles faced by the "egalitarian coalition" made up of the "unions in the public sector, the student movement, most of the top bureaucracy of the Ministry of Education, a relevant part of the central authorities at teaching-oriented public universities, the grassroot movements, some political actors in particular those placed on the left of the political spectrum and the members of the judiciary" in their efforts to influence Brazil's higher education policy making (Balbachevsky 2015: 207).

Conclusion

In this chapter we make the case for a renewed grounding of the democratic mission of higher education in democratic theory. In other words, we argue that in order to get clarity on the "mission" we should start by examining what is meant by "democratic". In our view, a correct understanding of the university's democratic mission requires us to fully think through the consequences of defining democracy as political equality. By political equality we refer to the extent to which citizens have an equal voice and receive equal consideration over binding collective decisions.

In thinking about the challenges ahead, one should remember that procedural democracy is important, but that does not take away from the need for more substantive, deeper democracies. Indeed, the much-needed defence of democracy against autocracy should not be made at the expense of democratic depth, leading to the expedient acceptance of narrow electoral democracies, important though they are.

The fight against autocracy cannot be self-defeating. In other words, because shallow electoral democracies do not sufficiently care about the notion of democracy as political equality, they create the conditions for the emergence of backsliding and new autocracies, which is the current trend. Extreme inequality is unacceptable, today and going forward, not just because it impoverishes democracy itself, but also because it invites recurrent illiberal or authoritarian challenges.

In this respect, one crucial arena is that of social and economic citizenhip via the institutions of welfare capitalism and the provision of public services. In the face of market-based inequalities, democratic government is able to rectify the adverse effects on those who are vulnerable and in need via the distribution of politically relevant resources such as social protection, health and education, including higher education.

As universities move and engage with our times of nested "polycrisis" (Tooze 2021), their agenda for action must be oriented towards securing the democratic foundation of political institutions, improving living conditions, providing public goods, reducing socio-economic inequalities, ensuring widespread access to education and knowledge, and addressing sustainability in a comprehensive manner.

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Part IV

How does academia redesign, and engage in, social and racial justice work in democratic collaboration with others within and beyond its campus?

Chapter 11

Universities redesigning and collaborating in social and racial justice work, on campus and beyond: the case of Nelson Mandela University

Sibongile Muthwa

Introduction

It is evident that, over the years, the notion of the university, its form and practices have continued to evolve. They are influenced by the multiple purposes and specific epistemic, intellectual, cultural, societal and political goals that they are required to fulfil in the local contexts where they are placed, and in the global ecosystems with which they engage, in order to respond to the amplified call for universities to be more accountable to fulfil their role of higher education as a public good. We are currently facing a historic moment, unprecedented in the transformation of higher education, propelled by advancements, permeability and portability of information processes. This comes on the back of the Covid-19 pandemic, worsening inequalities and, arguably, a distinct fracturing of global peace and international relations in recent times. Faced with these circumstances, clearly universities cannot stand aside.

In his insightful analysis of the seminal work by Brink (2018) titled *The soul of a university: why excellence is not enough*, Boyte sums it up as follows:

> universities need what he calls an "orthogonal axis" – a focus on what they are "good for" in addressing the problems of society, in addition to the conventional assessments of what they are "good at", i.e., disciplinary research. This type of university, which he calls the "civic university", supports "challenge-led research … responsive to the challenges faced by civil society, globally, nationally or regionally". Such responsiveness requires "civic engagement as another core function of the university", in addition to "what they are good at" (p. 286). To develop his case, he describes the rise and then substantial questioning, if not fall, of the "standard model" of the research university based on the principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, and emphasising the individual creativity of disciplinary scholars. In the standard model, academics' "task is to question, their right is to speak, their obligation is to be objective" (p. 42). Brink has a good deal of respect for the task. He also argues that it is radically inadequate to the challenges and potentials of higher education today in societies like South Africa, which face multiplying problems. (Boyte 2020: 1)

It is in this context of dynamic and accelerated transformation and evolution of higher education's mandate that this chapter explores the theme of how academia redesigns and engages in social and racial justice work, in democratic collaboration with others and beyond its campus. More specifically, it considers the ways and means by which a university sets out to fulfil, but also to transcend, its traditionally given mandate, secure, as it were, in the safety and behind the veil of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

This contribution sets out to share, as a case study, some ways in which Nelson Mandela University, a public university in South Africa, has sought to mount a progressive scholarly response to the daunting challenges we face locally and globally. In conclusion, some proposals for the advancement of the democratic mission of universities are advanced.

The South African higher education context

For nearly a decade, South Africa's higher education sector has been, and continues to be, beset with serious student protests. The latest of these, and by far the most impactful in recent times, was the campaign for "decolonisation" of higher education, including the waiving of university fees for the poor and working-class students wanting to access higher education institutions, mainly universities. This campaign across the higher education sector of South Africa, characterised and driven by the social media hashtag #MustFall, was a watershed moment in South Africa, resonating strongly with the 1976 student uprising against the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at South African schools.

Initially the student rebellion was framed against the colonial symbols and reminders of oppression (in this case the statue of Cecil John Rhodes). The Rhodes Must Fall movement clearly resonated with South African students. It swiftly gathered momentum and transitioned into the hugely dynamic #FeesMustFall movement that engulfed many higher education institutions. What started as resistance to fee increases for 2016, across the public higher education sector, subsequently morphed into a mass student campaign against any form of university fee payment, which later incorporated demands for the insourcing of externally employed contract workers and changes to the curriculum and language policies. The imperative for the "decolonial turn" of the university had been reborn.

Cecil John Rhodes was an imperialist, businessman and politician who played a dominant role in southern Africa in the late 19th century, driving the annexation of vast swathes of land. He founded the De Beers diamond firm. Rhodes was the donor of the land on which the University of Cape Town was built, and his statue was a symbol of his omnipresence on campus. The Rhodes Must Fall campaign began when some students defaced and vandalised it with paint as a sign of their discontent/disgust at this perpetual reminder of their oppression. The statue was ultimately removed, and it is believed that this lent significant momentum to the #FeesMustFall campaign.

Student demands morphed from initial calls for free education through the insourcing of casualised support services workers, to the overhaul of academic offerings and

academia itself, and in fact the entire university governance structures, its practices and stakeholder ecosystems, to realise an authentically African university system.

Added to this, and undoubtedly lending impetus to the demands, was the perceived ongoing widespread "decentring" of all that is Africa and African, that permeates our dominant discourses nationally, continentally and globally. (In this context, "decentring" implies the ongoing sidelining, or relegation, of all that is African in dominant discourses and the knowledge canon.) These are the central challenges which our (South) African universities must confront, and which we have committed to work to change. Interestingly, one notes that these calls for inclusion and relevance are emerging in institutions and discourses across the globe. These globally resonant calls relate to the need for higher education to assert, take its place and revive its image with regard to the positioning of the knowledge project as both an equalising and an enquiring enterprise.

Our own university, Nelson Mandela University, continues to be deeply enmeshed in these dynamics, and we have felt both compelled and impelled to introspect and respond with agility, to make changes in real time to ensure not only the sustainability of the institution, but also its continued relevance as a 21st-century African university.

Aligned to global and continental higher education missions, the mandates of universities in South Africa, as expressed in our higher education legal prescripts, are teaching and learning, research, and (community) engagement. At public universities (of which Nelson Mandela University is one) the first two of these, namely, learning and teaching, as well as research, are state funded, while (community) engagement receives very little or no funding. Additionally, the engagement mission is interpreted and deployed differently by universities. Our institutional strategies are thus crafted with our three-pronged mandate uppermost in mind, while being simultaneously cognisant of the national and global policy imperatives with which we are all familiar. The academic project holistically remains paramount, but its shape, content and situatedness must adapt to speak more loudly and persuasively to the praxis of engagement as a fundamental, embedded and synergistic pillar of higher education and a mission that essentially cross-cuts the other two (learning/teaching and research).

Towards a more just world: expanding/reimagining the academic project

Nelson Mandela University is committed to the deliberate transformation of the knowledge project for greater relevance and impact in both the national and global contexts, while ensuring excellence in the delivery of its academic missions. This has encompassed a number of areas in our strategic redirections. For the purposes of this chapter, I will outline four areas: reframing the scholarship of engagement; revitalisation of the humanities; advancing transdisciplinarity; and recentring the student. I will also comment briefly on the role of institutional culture and leadership in fulfilling our mission.

Imagining the scholarship and praxis of engagement afresh

As already mentioned, universities pursue their work through three missions, namely learning and teaching, research and innovation, and the scholarship of engagement. For reasons already outlined, we have set out to reimagine engagement as a lever and opportunity to improve the relevance and impact of the university in its quest to do its social justice work. In South Africa this also requires universities to be cognisant of their role in levelling out racial and social inequalities that are so strongly embedded in our past as a nation that emerged from the system of apartheid, whose "divide and rule" philosophy was primarily informed by racial classification.

In the past few years, we set out to establish so-called Hubs of Convergence (HoC) as an articulation of our university's initiative to provide an outward-facing focus of our scholarship praxis. (The HoC initiative endeavours to co-create "physical spaces where the university meets the community to engage on common platforms to find solutions to problems that affect our immediate communities". (Muthwa 2018: 14))[2] The intention of the HoC is to tap into knowledges present in communities, to learn from these and improve the response in solving the problems of our time. The programme, which works through organised focus areas, sets out to draw on both the intellectual and other assets of the university and the conscious wisdom of the communities that surround us. We are learning, with some excitement, what may be possible if a university and community engage in equalising relationships to co-create solutions through knowledge.

The work of the Community Convergence Workstream of the HoC has brought together skills, capacities and connections from across the university in various projects, working with marginalised communities. For example, it responded with great agility to the Covid-19 pandemic, co-ordinating responses in areas such as sustainable food systems, material food relief, anti-gender-based violence interventions and community journalism.

Networks have grown and connections across faculties, disciplines, civil society organisations, government and the private sector have been strengthened and become more impactful over time.

The Hubs of Convergence work is an example of the kind of paradigm-shifting innovations, processes and systems that reimagining engagement might require.

Revitalisation of the humanities

Currently the humanities and many of the social sciences are in a beleaguered position in many universities, because of the prioritisation and advancement of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. These are aimed at propelling South Africa into a central position in the global scientific and technological economies. While acknowledging the clear need for STEM, we believe that the humanities stand to provide us as a university and higher education generally with an appropriate framing, curriculum content and the intellectual tools needed to

2. A full explanation of the HoCs may be accessed at: https://hoc.mandela.ac.sa.

contribute to the alleviation of the pressing challenges facing all our nations, including peace and stability, public governance and leadership and appropriate responses to challenges of exclusion, including those associated with poverty and inequality.

At Nelson Mandela University, the humanities are being deliberately revitalised through a number of key strategic initiatives.

The University's Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) includes a Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation, which is contributing through dedicated and targeted research and advocacy to a society that is more humane and equal. The task of the chair is to advance a better understanding of the interface of communities, society and academia. The portfolio also houses the Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy, whose transformative programming and social facilitation contribute towards a new non-racial and democratic social and economic order.

As part of its educational and advocacy mandate, the Centre for Women and Gender Studies in the Faculty of Humanities has developed training manuals and has been conducting training among a range of stakeholders to combat gender-based violence, along with providing scholarly and intellectual leadership, and advocacy, in promoting gender equality and transformation. The centre is conducting research that puts African women's biographical representations, intellectual productions, political histories and legacies in the forefront. This scholarly work has been significantly bolstered by the awarding of a prestigious Research Chair in African Feminist Imagination by the South African Research Chairs Initiative, which was set up by the Department of Science and Technology and the National Research Foundation. The centre is also fulfilling a crucial role in championing sectoral efforts to advance intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to the promotion of gender equality and transformation, as well as the combating of gender-based violence on our campuses through the development, alignment and implementation of a dedicated policy framework.

Institutional racism is still an intractable part of the fabric of university spaces, permeating the experiences of students, employees and communities. Responding to the debates about decolonisation, democratisation and non-racialism, the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation as well as the Centre for Non-Racialism and Democracy are driving the transformation agenda by grounding these debates in critical studies and framing them within the concept of an Africa-purposed curriculum. Since its launch in 2018, the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation has also made great strides in working towards its vision of being a premier national, regional and international site for critical studies and praxes in higher education transformation.

Under the rubric of "Critical Mandela Studies", the Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) has been established. Working in collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Foundation as an initial and key partner, TIMS will constitute a key distinguishing intellectual trait for the university. Established by former South African President Nelson Mandela, the Nelson Mandela Foundation's mission is to "contribute to the making of a just society by mobilising the legacy of Nelson Mandela, providing

public access to information on this life and times, and convening dialogue on critical social issues" (Nelson Mandela Foundation 2023).

Other entities and chairs contributing to the scholarship of engagement include the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (focusing on transformative educational praxis in the field of community, adult and worker education) and the Chair for Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment which works to establish Mandela University as a leader in cutting-edge and engaged research in skills and livelihoods. The centre is also co-ordinating important work on solidarity economies and food sovereignty.

Also central to our work on the revitalisation of the humanities is the advancement of the African agenda, through the excavation of African knowledge systems. In South Africa, and indeed in much of the African continent and other marginalised societies, the question of "cognitive justice" has become a loud and legitimate demand for people whose very humanity has been questioned, whose rationality has been denied, whose histories have been silenced and whose knowledges and languages have been relegated (Odora Hoppers 2021; Leibowitz 2017; Visvanathan 2009).

Addressing this demand means, in the first place, acknowledging the importance and legitimacy of non-Western paradigms and idioms, and reimagining and contextualising the university around these. Aspects that need to be addressed include the need for a university to find the best possible balance between reflecting its specific national and geographical location, and remaining globally relevant and competitive, addressing "language imperialism" (Rose and Conama 2018) through the systematic introduction of endogenous/indigenous knowledge systems, the use of other languages and an infusion of African and Caribbean thought into all the academic and intellectual endeavours of the university. In addition the democratisation of teaching through inclusive, dialogial forms of learning and assessment, which place the student at the centre while broadening scholarship beyond received forms, must be addressed. These imperatives must in time filter through the entire functioning of the university.

Deepening transdisciplinarity

For a number of years, as a university, we have been paying particular attention to the deepening of transdisciplinarity in the way we organise knowledge and deploy our missions. Through our effort to work across faculties and entities, we are committed to redrawing frontiers among knowledge domains to generate socially responsive research and innovations. The recently established Ocean Sciences Campus, which consciously pursues transdisciplinarity, includes the Institute for Coastal and Marine Research. The institute and other ocean sciences transdisciplinary work span all seven of our university faculties, and it includes members from external research entities and stakeholder groups, nationally and internationally.

The institute conducts cutting-edge research, builds capacity and advances our understanding of the coastal and marine environment to serve the needs of South Africa, the African continent and beyond, in a sustainable manner. The Coastal and

Marine Research institute also strives for excellence in transdisciplinary research and training related to the ocean and coastal environments. Members address both fundamental and applied problems through their research under three broad themes that are not necessarily mutually exclusive: global change; living resources and marine food security; biodiversity, conservation and management. This advances scientific knowledge, provides a basis for management strategies that optimise the maintenance of biodiversity and sustainable use of our resources, and contributes to the education of the community at large in all matters pertaining to the ocean and coast.

Similarly, our medical school, which utilises cutting-edge technology, is located in an impoverished township, serving underresourced communities with students drawn from diverse backgrounds. An innovative, transformative and distributive teaching model is used, with an emphasis on comprehensive primary healthcare, as well as a focus on leveraging the benefits of technology to deliver effective education for the health professions. An interprofessional approach that will see students come together to study across health science disciplines towards their service to society is being developed. The Transformative Interprofessional Education Model (IPE) will see doctors work and study alongside nurses, radiographers, psychologists, environmental health practitioners, pharmacists, emergency medical care students and the like, to offer holistic and integrated healthcare that is well suited to our African context and realities.

Putting the student at the centre of the academic project

As a student-centred university, the focus on promoting holistic student access for success remains paramount, particularly in the face of the learning and teaching challenges associated with the disruptive effect of the pandemic. This has translated into an opportunity to leverage the ubiquity of technology in support of remote learning and work. Accelerating the transition to hybrid, flexible modes of learning and teaching has enabled students to pursue their studies along various learning pathways without compromising the quality of education provision or student success. Furthermore, the university conceptualises student success broadly to include curricular and co-curricular student life and development interventions aimed at cultivating socially conscious graduates who are responsible citizens capable of transferring their knowledge and skills across multiple contexts for the benefit of society.

We strongly believe that promoting and liberating student agency is key to fashioning responses to education that will better prepare students for the future world of work, the world and complexities which we do not yet fully know. Critical to our humanising educational philosophy is a commitment to foster students who have adaptive expertise, and who are responsible, civic-minded global citizens, with respect for social justice, human rights and diversity of thought, and who respect the natural environment. These intentions are articulated in our capstone Social Consciousness and Sustainable Futures curriculum, as well as in university processes and structures of student governance.

Institutional culture and leadership as facilitators of transformation

Over time there has also been a growing acceptance of institutional culture as a key predictor of institutional success and, as part of that, the ability to adapt with agility and sensitivity to changing contexts (Peterson et al. 1986; Chaffeee and Tierney 1988). Further studies have shown how different institutional cultures may impact on and shape a variety of institutional functions including governance (Chaffee and Tierney 1988) and leadership (Birnbaum 1992). This is a key transformational component that requires broader, more nuanced and contextually informed interrogation.

At Mandela University our core missions are supported and enabled through a values-driven, inclusive institutional culture that liberates the full potential of students, employees and communities as we seek to embody the legacy and ethos of our iconic namesake, Nelson Mandela. Further critical enablers that support our strategic intentions include ethical governance and leadership, fostering a values-driven institutional culture and empowered employees, creating an enabling environment for innovation, accelerating our digital transformation trajectory, optimising the utilisation of modernised and flexibly designed infrastructure and deepening our commitment to long-term sustainability and responsible resource stewardship.

As stated above, we have have been and continue to be, confronted with a host of complex leadership challenges in South Africa, many of which had never been experienced before and were (and are) not entirely manageable within the parameters of prevailing policy and regulations. This required a management and leadership team capable of demonstrating the necessary agility and fortitude by anticipating emerging dynamics, responding appropriately in real time and in keeping with our core values. We are of the view that a team leadership approach underpinned by shared values, to which we hold ourselves accountable and which inform every aspect of our operations, is the most effective means of leading with integrity. At Mandela University our values are respect for diversity; excellence; and social justice and equality. These reflect our institutional priorities, while informing our transformational and transformative leadership approach.

In this view, transformational leadership focuses on improving organisational qualities, dimensions and effectiveness, while transformative leadership begins by challenging inappropriate uses of power, interrogates questions of justice and democracy, and posits the promise of "a better life lived in common with others", as well as "moral purpose, intellectual and social development, and a focus on social justice" (Shields 2010: 559). Key to successful transformational and transformative leadership is reflexiveness, which entails honest and sober reflection as an individual or a team, on actions, conduct, behaviours and responses, in a manner calculated to promote and strengthen leadership skills and capabilities. This reflexiveness, with a concomitant preparedness to place others before "self", provides for a far more nuanced and responsive approach to leading and managing a university undergoing fundamental transformation.

The way forward: pathways towards the future we want

For universities, as a global community, to meet and shape the future that is emerging, a set of redirections in thought, posture and mindset have to emerge. Universities are called upon, through scholarship, to anchor their response in places where they are situated. They also have to fulfil their global democratic mandate of expanding the social justice footprint beyond their borders. This, of course, is underpinned by how the university is organised internally to promote courageous conversations on issues of social embeddedness and social justice.

Below, I outline some of the key imperatives worth considering.

Foster a movement of scholars

We should deliberately foster, strengthen and support the evolution of a movement of scholars committed to social and racial justice work. To this end we need to conceptualise and formulate practical steps and programmes that will bring together a global collective of scholars, including Scholars at Risk, to converse on vexing challenges around which we could all collaborate, as institutional leaders and scholars.

Promote immersion opportunities

We need to promote immersion opportunities for students and graduates in different cultures and schools of thought through the exchange or migration of students to various environment and geolocations. To be truly evolved on matters of social and racial justice, students and young graduates have to be in constant conversation with one another and to gain personal experience physically from places and contexts that are different from what they are accustomed to, so that they internalise issues that unite humankind and work against those that divide humanity and nations.

Promote intergenerational conversations

Social justice and racial harmony are products of knowing one's past and mobilising that knowledge to lead in, and for, the future. As universities we need, through formal curriculum design and the organisation of learning-as-encounters, to create opportunities for the memorialisation and appreciation of diverse histories and events that have shaped humanity over time. More opportunities for engagements and conversations between different generations, organised within and beyond the confines of a university, will go a long way in building a pipeline of young scholars and future leaders committed to social justice and racial harmony.

Develop collaborative relationships and transdisciplinarity

There has to be a realisation that none of the institutions' domains of science can achieve anything working on their own. The humanities need to be harnessed more productively and deliberately for the critical role they stand to play in helping to make sense of the world, focusing on social justice, and the conceptualisation of

new philosophies that will catalyse and cohere all our knowledge and capacities in more effective and productive ways, for a different world.

Advance the African and south–south agendas

This should be done through scholarship and the excavation of African knowledge systems. The democratisation and diversification of knowledge that is not currently mainstream should be considered by universities, in order to better fulfil their social justice mission. Foregrounding the oral archive, and recentring maternal leadership legacies, are some examples of learning methodologies whose potential remains only marginally explored.

Maximise access to technology

Maximising access to technology will shorten social distance and optimise knowledge sharing and access. The lessons given to us by the pandemic have reasserted the importance of technology as an enabler. The world of higher education internationalisation can only improve and expand if we engage creatively with and through technology.

Conclusion

Higher education in South Africa (as elsewhere) is at a historical conjuncture that requires an honest appraisal and reimagining of its role and function (both academic and operational) to ensure its future relevance and sustainability as a force for building socially just, collaborative, inclusive, equitable and deracialised societies.

This requires universities to innovate and reassess their internal organisational milieu, as well as their institutional cultures and leadership styles, because it is through that exercise in self-organisation and self-understanding that we, as universities, will be better placed to contribute to higher education's democratic mission.

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Chapter 12

Universities' democratic mission: community engagement reconsidered

Snježana Prijić Samaržija

The crisis of democracy and the crisis of enlightenment

Global democracy is at risk. We are witnessing manifold challenges to democracy, human rights protection and the rule of law. Democracy, although it has been declared a paramount European and global value, is under threat, manifested by the steady advance of authoritarian regimes and leaders as well an open endorsement of "illiberal democracy". This form of populism opposes democratic pluralism and mutual respect and relativises fascism, racism, supremacism and even bloodstained imperialism.

These trends have been documented by daily news and diverse yearly reports on the state of democratic practices, exemplified by that of the European External Action Service: "We witness widespread violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law at a scale not detected in over 75 years" (EEAS 2022: 6). More than 70% of the 167 countries investigated registered a decline in their overall score, including many in western Europe and central and eastern Europe (Economist Intelligence Unit 2021). The average global score fell to the lowest level since the index commenced in 2006, and the anti-democratic turn is well documented (Freedom House 2021a; 2021b; 2022). It inferred that "attacks on democratic institutions are spreading faster than ever in Europe and Eurasia, and coalescing into a challenge to democracy itself" (Freedom House 2021a: 1).

A space for critical disagreement, the rights of minorities and refugees, the fundamental freedoms for everyone, democratic ideals in foreign policy and a sincere commitment to the rule of law have all been warned about for several years. The global freedom status for 2022 recorded the 16th consecutive year of decline in global freedom (Freedom House 2022).

Concurrently with the crisis of democracy, we are witnessing the political and ethical deterioration of democratic values. We are speaking of the crisis of enlightenment or the phenomenon of a "culture of ignorance" that encompasses phenomena such as a "cult of amateurism", "alternative facts", "radicalisation through echo chambers" and the like (DeNicola 2017; Nichols 2017; Talisse 2019; Brennan and Landemore 2022; Samaržija 2022). The more familiar embodiments of the culture of ignorance comprise various pseudoscientific movements, such as those against vaccination and in favour of teaching creationism at public schools, conspiracy theories and climate change

denial. Likewise, the culture of ignorance also encompasses a nascent scepticism towards science correlated with political ideologies, religious attitudes, moral beliefs and lifestyles. At best, it is based on rudimentary understanding and selective use of science. Finally, it incorporates explicit assertions of anti-intellectualism, criticisms of "bookish" knowledge and repudiations of institutional and acquired standards of expertise in favour of sanctifying informal amateurism.

At the end of the 18th century, Immanuel Kant warned about the ongoing crisis of enlightenment, which he characterised as a crisis of public reason and the rule of the intellect (Kant 1959). Similarly, we could speak of the culture of ignorance as a crisis of confidence in rationality and expertise, or the domination of will and passions over reason. It is important to underline that the term "culture of ignorance" refers not only to factual ignorance – the possession of incorrect answers that are accepted as valid or the mere indifference about their accuracy (Nottelmann 2016). It refers also to rational and motivational ignorance – the lack of motivation for rational argumentation and obtaining relevant information essential for belief formation or revision (Somin 2015). Above all, it refers principally to the ignorance of ignorance, or normative ignorance (Peels and Blaauw 2016). This distinct ideology of ignorance describes the social conditions where the intellectual norms and standards have been purposefully altered and mutated. The influential humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam claimed ignorance has the most detrimental influence upon humankind. J. W. Goethe later prophetically stated that there is nothing more frightening than ignorance in action. It is of the utmost importance to recognise both components of the crisis, the threats to political and epistemic values.

The correlation between these two types of regression – political and ethical regarding the crisis of democratic values, and intellectual or epistemic concerning the crisis of enlightenment – is not incidental. The European values of dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, enjoyment of civic rights and justice – summarised in the triad of democracy, human rights and the rule of law that guides the Council of Europe – constitute the concept of the European Idea as initiated during the Age of Enlightenment. The European Idea articulated during the Enlightenment embraces this interdependence of political and epistemic pillars: while the first regards the ethical and political values of peace, harmony and mutual respect, the second pertains to those epistemic or intellectual values, such as intellectual responsibility and rationality. It rests on the philosophical traditions of European cosmopolitanism and federalism, the notion of the universal republic and the concept of perpetual peace and enlightenment (Kant 1959, 1991).

Preserving and strengthening democracy and empowering democratic political institutions and practices alongside the democratic political mentality are interconnected with fostering academic and scientific institutions. The role of higher education, with an emphasis on universities, is essential to achieving this important task. Higher education's significance transcends the traditional role of research and education. It cultivates rational discourse and the scientific method and bolsters the democratic culture of mutual respect, critical disagreement and the civic duty of making informed decisions by consulting pertinent sources. However, anti-democratic challenges make evident the requirement for enhanced university engagement. We face severe threats to global peace and the deterioration of hard-fought values

and rights. In this sense, the democratic mission of universities presumes an active involvement in the social protection of democracy by developing long-term resilience and sustainability of the values of social justice. Higher education's engagement in building resilience and democratic sustainability is not only without a feasible alternative but requires urgent action and a novel approach.

The unique role of universities – The paradigm shift

Numerous European reports, policies and practices have documented threats to democracy and the necessity of university engagement to foster the European political and intellectual virtues that promote democratic values. Among them, let us mention *Universities without walls – A Vision for 2030*, issued by the European University Association, an institution gathering over 800 European universities. This document distinctly articulated the priorities of university–community engagement and democratic sustainability.

> Democracy and political systems are under pressure in all European countries to different degrees. This social shift is due to the radicalisation of those parts of society that question democratic values, including the freedom of expression. This requires Europe's universities to make a delicate assessment of collaborations based on their academic values. There is attrition of public discourse through misinformation. The spread of false information, fabricated evidence, and the concept of "alternative truth" undermines the weight of evidence and the role of science in society. Universities need to position themselves on this issue and find new and more efficacious ways to help counter this trend. (EUA 2020: 4)

Similarly, the European Commission has published a Communication on a European Strategy for Universities, which offers a straightforward understanding of the imminent threat and argues that European higher education ought to be a beacon of European values and the European way of life:

> Fundamental academic and democratic values are under pressure. Universities have voiced deep concern over threats to academic freedom and university autonomy. The number of scholars and researchers at risk in European neighbourhoods is rising, and foreign interference in higher education institutions poses yet another threat. (EC 2022a: 6)

Furthermore, the Commission says that "Universities are key to promoting active citizenship, tolerance, equality and diversity, openness and critical thinking for more social cohesion and social trust, thus protecting European democracies" (ibid., 15).

The European Union's key instrument for executing this aim and for its exhaustive transformational educational agenda is the European Universities Initiative. European Universities are a critical pillar of the European Education Area, aspiring to bring European universities together in increasing their competitiveness and amplifying their capacities for strengthening the European democratic values of diversity, openness and inclusiveness. When combined with other financial programmes (Horizon Europe, Digital Europe and the like), transnational alliances of higher education institutions and European inter-university campuses can utilise their character of

stable, structured and durable international legal entities to become more efficient in their collaborative and innovative promotion of diversity, intercultural dialogue and community engagement.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe is undoubtedly a central institution for advancing the values approach and comprehensive and systemic education for active citizenship and democratic competences throughout Europe, including through all forms of education. Keeping in mind the burgeoning challenges to democracy and the need for the educational system's intensified and focused holistic engagement, the Council of Europe is running a series of projects about the development of democratic culture and implementing the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture as its vital instrument (Council of Europe 2018). In addition, the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) is currently in the final phase of developing a Council of Europe Educational Strategy, which will concentrate on articulating the role of education in strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Understanding universities' exceptional role in fostering democratic culture, the Council of Europe is presently developing a project on the local democratic mission of higher education, striving to intensify activities focused on universities' community engagement, emphasising local environments. The project aims to establish a platform to further higher education's local democratic mission. The plan is to create a pan-European framework that will connect different aspects of higher education's engagement with society and therefore support universities in institutionalising their co-operation with local communities. The platform is a unique initiative that aspires to give practical support to the role of higher education in advancing democracy through working in and with the local community.

The critical role of these and similar bodies, platforms, documents and initiatives is undoubtedly to comprehend that the universities' public mission and social responsibility are not fulfilled only in their standard co-operation with non-academic institutions to cultivate pertinent education and the community's competitiveness. They are not even comprised of familiar activities such as academic service learning, citizen science or volunteering. Instead, they strive to encourage higher education to provide more comprehensive assistance to alleviate the threats to democracy and extend their public mission to what is now the most transparent and present challenge for European and global society and a critical element of democracy – sustainability. Higher education institutions' local democratic mission ought to be articulated as the cultivation of democratic civic universities (Harkavy 2022) as the centres of social change due to their enormous collective intelligence and societal potency that could be mobilised for the community's benefit. As institutions with the potential for forceful strategic partnerships with national and local administrations, industry and the non-governmental sector, universities must act as anchors of social protection and societal change.

Since this task, on the other hand, assumes a more active engagement within and for the community, we must devote additional efforts to alter the academic, often elitist institutional culture and recognise the beneficial effects of genuine community engagement. Numerous universities, both in Europe and globally, are already conducting

many activities to educate students about engaged citizenship and democratic values, cultivating the social dimension of education that underlines vulnerable and underrepresented social groups and similar subjects of social justice. Even so, truly democratic civic universities that "possess the depth and breadth of engagement required at this time" are still a challenging mission for the system (Harkavy 2022).

In a context where a lethal pandemic, economic and physical uncertainty, warfare and violent conflicts are tearing the world apart, and proponents of democracy are suffering considerable losses in the fight to preserve human rights, equal legal treatment and social justice in the face of authoritarian regimes, the global balance is tilting towards international tyrannies. Universities must, therefore, develop innovative modes of action, mutual connection, community and co-ordination. Higher education institutions "can no longer try to remain an oasis of affluence in a desert of urban despair" (Benson et al. 2017: 14). A significant change to the higher education system can result in the system and its institutions genuinely accomplishing their democratic mission and earnest community engagement.

The central question is, of course, what kind of reform are we speaking about? Is it solely about concentrating and intensifying the existing mechanism of universities' social responsibility, or something else? I argue that we require more than promoting the present strategies and activities within the so-called third mission of universities. Unique circumstances compel us to reconsider the concept of community engagement and a paradigm shift in the university's approach to the community. The democratic mission requires the development of a democratic culture through universities' authentic democratic engagement and thorough democratisation of society by employing democratic methods (Harkavy 2022). Such an argument goes further than generating knowledge at universities and applying it, transferring it from the academy into society.

Our paradigm shifts in community engagement consist of an exhaustive change in the direction of our research. Starting with a community's complex but specific and practical social issues and democratic challenges, an engaged university endeavours to resolve them by employing its inimitable scientific methodology and rigour that guarantees stability and a focus on the common good. Universities' local mission is crucial because their engagement must be heavily contextualised and tied to specific community challenges. "Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborly community" (Dewey 1954: 213).

Such a paradigm shift, it ought to be emphasised, does not aim to annul or revise fundamental research goals, the development of theoretical knowledge, research autonomy or the concept of knowledge transfer. However, it is fundamentally transformative because it extends and revises the traditional concept of academic impact as research too often unrelated to real life, which can, but does not have to, be applied to resolving communal issues. The local community ceases being merely a living lab for applying and assessing finished theoretical solutions, suggestions and policies. It becomes a space for articulating educational problems resolved by mobilising universities' collective intelligence and scientific methodology. This paradigm shift in university engagement and its departure from the theoretical ivory tower involves the genuine integration of universities with the community.

Reconsidering community engagement

Work on empowering universities in their democratic mission is more comprehensive when compared to most previous reforms, such as, for instance, the Bologna Process, because it is a departure from our comfort zone of education and research. It is more abstract because it involves nurturing values that cannot be quantified, and more demanding because we require a rapid shift in anti-democratic trends. In that sense, it is essential to reconsider the meaning and the scope of universities' community engagement to render their democratic impact as quickly and effectively as possible. It is critical to comprehend that community engagement is not synonymous with knowledge transfers to the community or applying "laboratory-made" theoretical solutions.

Genuine community engagement requires universities to go into the local community and aid it in articulating specific issues that are then resolved and tested with the local community. Applying principles and theoretical solutions, when compared with the effect of tailor-made solutions to specific local issues, requires little elaboration. The mere application of the best theoretical solutions is not guaranteed to produce a result or consistent results in diverse local contexts. Genuine engagement requires experts to join citizens in articulating and identifying urgent democratic deficits and priorities that generate social injustices, polarise citizens, radicalise their community or have similar adverse effects on civic well-being. In short, citizens need to devise methods to untie knots in their local community. This shift in the direction of expert engagement is not a merely trivial modification in the intensity of their work but it challenges the very nature of the engagement. It is about democratising the very process of university engagement and annihilating a certain elitist aspect contained in current concepts of knowledge application and transfer.

Most scientists in all research areas enter the scientific world with the desire to arm themselves with high-quality theoretical knowledge that will enable them to change the world or, at least morally and competently, act on the basis of an adequate understanding. Many of them, however, too often end up publishing research papers, debating with colleagues at conferences and conducting curiosity-driven rather than problem-based projects. The mission of changing the world is thus delegated to other professionals who, we hope, read our books and articles – so that we could at least indirectly contribute to a better world. Many of us understand that our books are read solely by other scientists, as they are written in the abstract language of theoretical argumentation.

Some researchers, striving to contribute to practical action, encounter obstacles because community members tend to resent our efforts to help as being excessively theoretical and scholarly, severed from the factual possibilities of problem solving. At the same time, our academic peers perceive the same efforts as betrayals and departures from legitimate, curiosity-based theoretical activity. There remains some profound tension between academic research and problem solving in the real world, whose first step comprises the universities' third mission. Developing social responsibility will be a sizeable and challenging endeavour.

For this reason, persistency in applying science or knowledge transfers to broader society is already a significant step forward, since applied research is still considered to belong to some inferior form of scientific activity, as if it is not "real science". This objection only comes from those fundamental researchers who perceive scientific publishing as the only valuable criterion of our research efforts. However, it is firmly held by publishers and similar research organisations with a significant economic and reputational interest in maintaining the status quo. Changes at the European policy level are still apparent in comprehensive initiatives to promote open science, research assessment reform and wider knowledge valorisation, all of which aim at a far more extensive space of influence than publishing in classified journals, such as the diversification of scientific results. In short, the concepts of applied research and knowledge transfers as essential constituents of the universities' third and public mission is a step forward that still needs to be entirely realised in the academic community and demands more intensive work.

In that sense, many academics as well as policy makers understand community engagement as the requirement to strengthen the applied approach further and promote knowledge transfers. However, it is fundamental to comprehend that the difference between applied and engaged research is rather substantial. Applied research has its role defined by research and innovation policies, but it must not be identified with community-engaged research and corresponding policies related to the democratic mission of universities. Reconsidering the concept of community engagement aims to recognise that these are two fundamentally different activities. First, before all else, community engagement is closely tied to developing democratic civic universities, cultivating engagement in protecting, preserving and developing democratic competencies and civic well-being, rather than merely applying research results to the community. Second, the ability of applied research to resolve ongoing but very concrete and specific democratic challenges is limited and suffers from a democratic deficit. Elucidating the disparity between applied and engaged approaches certainly deserves a more extensive elaboration.

Democratic civic universities: the applied v. the engaged approach

The applied approach

At universities, the academic staff conduct research that is habitually not directly related to resolving specific, complex problems but instead to develop principles and theoretical foundations for some future or further application. However, such an application of theoretical scientific solutions is not both automatic and straightforward. Above all, theoretical solutions are particularly focused on the academic discipline, as they delve deep into precise research subjects. In addition, theoretical solutions are general, because they aim to be applicable to diverse issues rather than one specific situation. Unlike disciplinary and general theoretical solutions, specific social problems require an interdisciplinary approach to resolve their specific and frequently contextually determined issues. Reality abounds in diversities, particularities and localities that general theories cannot adequately resolve. A theory's comprehensive implementation of a solution to a social problem can be complex and long-lasting, and may require adjustments, corrections and analysis of its results.

In real-life situations, we frequently meet distractions, different interpretations of values and comprehensive standpoints that cause heavy value conflicts that we must harmonise and prioritise (Wolff 2019).

In other words, applying principles and theories entails inherent limitations derived from the very nature of theories:

- theories are general in their conceptual apparatuses and principles,
- theories contain an element of idealisation, i.e., the implicit assumption that the theory will be applied in ideal conditions,
- theories contain assumptions of value objectivity, and
- theories assume cross-situational or cross-contextual pertinence of the same principles.

As a result, theories are, by definition, different from practical solutions. In contrast, everyday life is plural in that it is comprised of particularities and specific situations and relationships. It cannot be treated and normed in terms of ideal conditions, but only under sub-ideal or contextual conditions. Specific situations are never identical and always entail different levels of intensity. Each is a unique case. These conditions are precisely why applications of theoretical, conceptual apparatuses, generalisations, values and principles to specific practical problems can be neither automatic nor direct, a mere deduction of required actions from theoretical principles and thus derived policies. Application – precisely as we are applying idealisations and generalisations to sub-ideal circumstances, plurality and particularity – requires heavy contextualisation and pragmatics, compromises, gradation, withdrawals, postponing and, in the end, acquiescence with sub-optimal solutions that possess better or worse short- and long-term consequences compared with feasible alternatives.

These challenges in applying theories are the fundamental chasm between theory and practice. For those very reasons, we need to distinguish between two different *kinds* of approach – applied and engaged – as well as between two different kinds of principle, corresponding to the two different *roles* they may play. On the one hand, there are theories and principles that provide the deepest *explanation* of why certain actions are right or wrong. On the other hand, there are the principles that ordinary agents ought to follow in their day-to-day problem-solving practices. The first principles could be applied, but the second need to be developed locally, through engagement with the community.

The engaged approach

The engaged approach assumes the opposite direction, moving from actual complex problems to their solution-driven principles.

We must commence by identifying specific social issues – which presuppose a critical role for citizens and the local community – and seek efficient solutions to the problem in a manner that will enable citizens to experience the resulting benefits. This impact on a community's welfare is the essence of the universities' democratic mission and local community engagement.

In the first step, we must identify a problem not as an exemplification of a theoretical situation but merely as a problem representing an apparent instance of a social injustice that breaches someone's rights, dignity and quality of life. In the second step, we identify reasons for and against resolving the problem, such as its dimensions, consequences and the like. In the third step, we must analyse the broader value dimension of the problem, possible mistakes in resolving it, its international dimension, foreign experiences and the like, aiming to conceive a stable foundation for optimal problem solving. In the fourth step, we create a profile of possible solutions or what we perceive as feasible practical responses, including the prospect that the status quo is the least imaginable wrong. The fifth step evaluates possible solutions and the values at their foundations to recommend how to respond to the matter. In the sixth and final step, we articulate a concluding suggestion based on analysing actual social conditions and the foreseeable consequence of its application.

General theories and principles are not applied but utilised as value standards, as reliable, ethical parameters for how to act. Universities and their academic staff's roles are indispensable – although not equal – at every step of the process. They generally require co-operation with citizens and other stakeholders from the local community, ranging from representatives of the non-governmental sector and the media to official decision makers. This problem-solving methodology presupposes the involvement of interdisciplinary research, project work and case studies, developing flexible curricula that recognise specific micro-qualifications, so students can already begin resolving real community problems during their studies, while evolving a system of micro-credentials to elevate the competencies required for identifying and resolving tangible societal issues, including skills of active citizenship in students, staff and the like. Furthermore, it presupposes including universities and experts in the local community's corpus, public institutions and civil society, especially in official civic assemblies.

This counsel to change the direction of the engaged approach might encounter objections – criticisms sterner than those applied approaches received from purely disciplinary and curiosity-based science proponents – which could consider such a shift a threat to universities and science in their inherent research autonomy. On the other hand, stakeholders from the local community may believe that elites and experts can only analyse and advise but not resolve tangible problems so far removed from their lived experience. In this view, communities should delegate genuine problems to official decision makers who represent traditional political parties in the local government.

Responding to the first criticism, we could argue that "generalist" approaches are inefficient and inappropriate for the particularities of everyday practice, that they cannot proffer solutions to moral and political conflicts and that a strict focus solely on actual problems can divulge genuine solutions to ethical quandaries, such as the widespread scepticism towards the concept of moral experts (Dancy 2004). Advocates of the more radical version of the engaged or the "particularistic" approach consider general principles "at best useless and at worst a hindrance" (McNaughton 1988: 191). Although nobody can truly question the value of theories and of the academic staff's lofty scientific research, universities should recognise two different approaches and

two different kinds of principle: the first is generated by experts in their "labs" and the second is generated by experts engaged in their local communities.

It is essential to note that this understanding of community engagement is not novel, as philosophers have been underlining the non-feasibility of the thesis about the cross-contextual and cross-situational pertinence of values and principles for centuries, as well as the necessity of acknowledging the specificities of the empirical world. In antiquity, Aristotle emphasised that theories, principles and moral generalisations do not possess the exactness required for everyday problems (Aristotle 1999). As a rule, theories are only partially beneficial for resolving real-life problems, as reasonable moral and political judgments must hinge on actual examples. John Stuart Mill was also sceptical about the universal application of his own utilitarian principles and defended the second kind of principles derived from commonsensical morality as heuristics that we can use as guidelines in everyday problem solving (Mill 1998). Naturally, these two kinds of principle are closely connected through continuous mutual falsification and corroboration.

On the other hand, the response to others who fail to perceive the benefits of engaged universities is the stance that practical problem solving is not feasible without epistemic authorities possessing the most precise factual knowledge of the problem and who, when possessing that knowledge, are the best guides to truth or to recognise what is not valid (Prijić Samaržija 2018). While dealing with principles and general problems, theories and scientific epistemic responsibility provide value guidelines for action. Without experts from universities, the directions, methods and aims of problem solving are too often reduced to the arbitrary and frequently politically motivated detection of pertinent social issues, their significance and randomly established acceptable aims in resolving the problem as constrained by discourse and available goals.

The ignorance crisis is partly generated by the political misuse of the "wisdom of crowds" in the direction of populism and resentment of expertise. Researchers' engagement at the local level can optimally ensure that in specific local cases the community will not end up with domination by someone's particular interest or the sub-optimal quality of decisions or solutions, as their engagement helps in preserving the values of justice, equality, dignity, humanity, truth and epistemic responsibility. The universities' democratic mission encompasses nothing more and nothing less than the need to devote the massive potential of universities as rational centres to community well-being in a manner that will be both more efficient in problem solving and virtuous to the highest possible extent.

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Chapter 13

Broadening the reach of racial justice in US higher education

Renée T. White

Racism is a public health hazard as well as a societal one. As scholars have demonstrated, the long reach of racism as an institutional force in the United States has resulted in everything from shortened life spans and disproportionate risk of a litany of negative health outcomes, to vast gaps in wealth accumulation, disparities in arrests and court sentencing, and hypersurveillance in public spaces (Sullivan 2013; Smith et al. 2016; Weil 2022). Even though there is over a century of scholarship, testimony and evidence of this, the lived experience of marginalised people and the impact of systemic injustice disappears from public view until more documented evidence of the reality of injustice thrusts these experiences back into focus. The past few years of public demonstrations – the rallying cries of activists that Black Lives Matter, that MeToo is persistent and real – have forced into the public eye the reality of bigotry of many forms. Racial reckonings, town halls, public repudiations and confessionals have burst onto the public stage with great speed (Baldwin 2021).

This was not the first moment in which we had documentary evidence of the violence of racism. Consider Ida B. Wells, whose book *The red record: tabulated statistics and alleged causes of lynching in the United States* was published in 1895, or Mamie Till,[3] whose 14-year-old son Emmett Louis Till, was abducted, tortured and lynched in Mississippi in 1955, after being accused of offending a white woman, Carolyn Bryant, in her family's grocery store. At the request of his mother, his funeral was held with an open casket to show the world the violence that he had suffered.

On 7 March 1965, more than 600 people joined a civil rights demonstration in Selma, Alabama, organised by civil rights leader and future Congressman John Lewis, to protest against segregationist repression and to demand the right to vote by African American citizens. The day now known as "bloody Sunday" ended in horrific violence when marchers were attacked and beaten by state troopers and sheriff's deputies. Shortly after the march on Selma, in a special address before Congress called "The American Promise" President Lyndon B. Johnson said:

> What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it's not just Negroes, but really, it's all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome. (Johnson 1965: 7)

3. Educator and activist Mamie Elizabeth Till-Mobley, generally referred to simply as Mamie Till.

Johnson recognised the legacy of racism and its corrosive effects on the nation.

Sadly, it is only following public acts of aggression that many people are jolted back to the reality that the work to end racism is not done. We forget that progress and injustice can coexist. We can forget because we may not see systemic racism and do not understand the ways systems reproduce inequality. But we can see acts of violence. In the 1960s in the United States, the images of young adults being assaulted as they challenged state-sanctioned inequality by desegregating public spaces – images of dogs and firehoses, of faces contorted in rage, of people wielding weapons – helped move the nation from abstraction to humanist principles and to see the harm of racism.

Racism is a complex system, one that exacts harm on people's lived experiences.

> The great challenge of any democracy is to ensure that all of its citizens are "stakeholders" in a common project called civil society. Millions of radicalised "Others" are today experiencing "civil death" – the destruction of their social, legal and economic capacities to play a meaningful role in public life. We must find creative paths to reinvest in citizenship, to build civic capacities within the most disadvantaged sectors of our society. Combating civil death is the key toward revitalising democracy for all of us. (Marable 2002: xiv)

However, people often believe that this "civil death" is caused only by individual, irrational actions, which makes it easy to claim that, in the absence of an identifiable actor, we have moved beyond racism. It is not us and not here. For example, having elected the first Black US president in history means the nation is post-racist. But following the election of President Barack Obama, acts of white supremacy certainly did not disappear and, in fact, may have escalated. What that should tell us is that redressing the past requires more than one event – albeit a historic one – to reorient centuries of injustice. Countering racism requires regular, dedicated antiracist work. Antiracism requires dismantling systems, and systems do not change overnight. We forget that because we think moments of progress are proof of full systemic change; in fact, progress can be reverted if it is taken for granted.

Why, then, do those of us in the US experience collective amnesia as a nation when oppression and racism are concerned? Why does some racial progress lead us to believe we are post-racial when we should know better? We are in a moment, arguably, where everyone should know the very real and tangible costs of the daily corrosiveness of anti-Black racism and structural inequality. The ability to forget is a privilege afforded to those who have little to lose in the forgetting. Higher education institutions are sites of archiving, analysing and disseminating the kinds of memories that should make it much more difficult for the act of forgetting to occur. Colleges and universities are sites of production of exactly the kinds of knowledge that not only preserve the past but also propose a different and more equitable future.

Given that fact, how can and should institutions engage in antiracist work? What scholarship on countering racist practice suggests is that antiracism should be understood as a verb in effect. Antiracism is a process of change requiring continual action and reflection and is the antithesis of stasis or complacency (Tate and Bagguley 2017; Cottom 2019). Antiracism deploys the tactics of diversity and inclusion, which are necessary but not sufficient for real change. In their framework for advancing

antiracism on campus, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) defines antiracism as:

> the active process of identifying, challenging, and confronting racism. This active process requires confronting systems, organisational structures, policies, practices, behaviors, and attitudes. This active process should seek to redistribute power in an effort to foster equitable outcomes. (NADOHE 2021: 8)

As institutions endeavour to become antiracist, it is important to consider this as a mode of practice that requires active engagement towards a goal. It is also important to understand that one does not complete the task of being antiracist; it is rather a commitment to becoming – thus, it is a constantly moving and changing process. This is because social forces are not static, which means the racist expressions or practices (whether individual, collective or institutional) of this decade may manifest in different ways from the past.

Higher education institutions were also swept up into these debates about antiracism, and on college and university campuses, it is especially students who have become more vocal as they ask what it means to reckon with deep-seated elements of racism and bigotry within our own colleges and universities. They are challenging us to make sure our work is long-term and not a response to specific events, which often result in public statements, investigations and/or convenings. We need to shift from reacting to planning and move beyond individual change to structural and systemic improvements (Law 2017; Welton et al. 2018; Baldwin 2021).

Black feminism as a theoretical framework

Higher education institutions should provide active public intellectual service by documenting the lives of marginalised people and demonstrating the mechanisms necessary to effect change and they must apply those same methods to their own structures and functions. In 2003, Ruth Simmons, then President of Brown University, charged a Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice with investigating the university's relationship to enslavement and the transatlantic slave trade. In 2006 Brown released its report, in which they also documented its legacies of anti-Blackness, racism and injustice. This work led to several reparative measures and ongoing reporting. Georgetown University followed suit in 2015 with the Working Group on Slavery, Memory and Reconciliation, which explored the history of the university's relationship to slavery and outlined a series of recommendations with an implementation timeline.

Black feminist theory provides a useful set of tools for meeting those goals. Black feminist scholars within higher education have served as canaries in the coal mine regarding the importance of antiracism in the academy (Baxley 2012; Davis and Brown 2017; Cottom 2019) and have made the case for decolonising the academy: In decolonising the academy, "the work of making the academy a more egalitarian space as it pertains to knowledge has to become part of the practice of teaching, scholarship and writing …. The embedded hierarchy of knowledge must necessarily be dismantled" (Davies et al. 2003: x).

Black feminist thought provides both a methodological and a theoretical lens and offers up the tools for transformation within it. This is because Black feminism sits at

the nexus of theory and praxis, history and lived experience, the structured and the amorphous. It utilises sociohistorical, political and cultural contexts (among others) to uncover the causes, impact and implications of inequities that are heightened and exacerbated by intersectional locations. It calls for systemic disruption and transformation rather than change that is individualised or localised.

When utilised in the examination of the academy as a symbolic and lived space, Black feminist theory challenges scholars to do two things: first, to define marginalised groups as the centre of the narrative rather than in relation to white normality, which renders Black and other marginalised experiences as marginal and spectacle; and secondly, to transform what constitutes scholarship and knowledge production, to open and expand the possibilities in pedagogy, and to complicate how we talk about the experiences of faculty, staff and students who identify with traditionally marginalised identities. It empowers us to deftly call on core values such as democracy, access and justice as fundamental to create more accessible and liveable spaces in higher education.

Broadening the reach of racial justice in institutions of higher education

Current debates within the US have been critical of institutional commitments to antiracism or, more specifically, anti-Black racism. Primary, secondary and post-secondary curricula have faced the scrutiny of elected officials, parents, journalists and other critics who argue that such commitments politicise education. However, education has always been political terrain. From enslaved people being denied the right to literacy out of fear that it would embolden their search for freedom, to the punishment of Indigenous children who studied their tribes' native languages, to current battles over the teaching of race and inequality in textbooks, banning books is the evidence that education is a political arena. Students understood this in the 1960s and 1970s: Black, Indigenous and Latinx studies programmes emerged only once college students disrupted campuses demanding the expansion of the curriculum.

In her closing plenary at the 2022 AAC&U (American Association of Colleges and Universities) Conference on Diversity, Equity and Student Success, Suzanne M. Johnson, President of Green River Community College, observed that, since the Western higher education system was constructed hundreds of years ago during a time when racial hierarchy in the western hemisphere was being created, it is logical to presume that the system has to be affected by those same norms and values. If we contend that higher education is political terrain in which power, agency and authorship are always in debate and in flux, it follows that it would necessarily be expected to contend with contemporary social discourse, such as the existence and impact of systemic racism.

The public good

The importance of antiracist practice in higher education is tied to its value as a public good wherein it prepares people for full participation in public life through being economically self-sufficient and civically engaged. After the end of the Second World War, in 1947 President Harry S. Truman convened the President's Commission

on Higher Education. Their report, "Higher education for American democracy", noted that the principal goals of higher education are:

> To bring all people of the nation: Education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living; Education directly and explicitly for international understanding and cooperation; Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems. (Cited in US Department of Education 2011: 25)

Among the many proposals was a call to desegregate post-secondary education, commit to improved access for women and ensure that education was affordable and accessible regardless of social class.

Scholars have since queried what it means to act on the commission: what does it take to be inclusive and equitable institutions that educate students for civic engagement, the preservation of democracy and peacebuilding? (Gilbert and Heller 2013; Strohl 2015; Vanover 2018). AAC&U President Lynn Pasquerella observes that:

> higher education has consistently been ideologically linked to its fulfilment, whether in its capacity to serve as a catalyst for economic success and social mobility, in its ability to convey the values upon which our society rests, or in its preservation of democratic vitality through an educated citizenry. (Pasquerella 2017: 2)

Perhaps, then, by extension, we can argue that preparing students to commit to antiracism and engage in public works also dedicated to this goal is in the service of the public good and democratic practice.

> A lasting commitment to democracy must be founded on the conviction that individuals committed to the public good can and should make a difference. It had to be founded on the conviction that politics is important, and that civil society is vital to the success of our societies. We need the knowledge economy, but we also need the wisdom society. (Bergan 2013: 47)

How can higher education function as a social good – a vehicle for equity and justice – while providing tools that help shape a complex worldview? Systemic exclusion requires systemic redress, and higher education is one institution in which this is possible. This is important as the United States is becoming increasingly more diverse, particularly with the growth of residents from the global south and US-born Latinx citizens, and most demographers predict that the nation will be "majority minority" by 2040 (Frey 2020; Jones et al. 2021; Tamir 2021). Therefore, the social issues explored within colleges and universities, the composition of these institutions and the communities in which they are located could also become more racially and ethnically diverse.

Using Black feminism: laying the foundation for an antiracist education

Building upon Black feminist thinking, an antiracist education will equip students to:

1. know that racism is insidious and experienced in multiple ways;
2. care about habits of the mind and heart, a commitment to collective well-being;
3. ask critical questions about systemic inequities;

4. recognise the power and legitimacy of lived experience;
5. use interdisciplinary and intersectional analysis; and
6. connect theory to action.

This framework opens and invites the intersectional analysis and study of social movements, political systems, culture and history (in both US and international contexts). It provides students with the ability to think critically about complex issues and to seek and evaluate information about issues that have public consequences. When inequality is embedded within institutions, replicated through practice and justified by cultural norms, educating students to see the sophisticated ways in which it operates will require as sophisticated an analytical lens (Hayes et al. 2021).

An intersectional analysis allows for the examination and unravelling of the complex web of inequality. Intersectionality, as introduced by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, has been misused as a shorthand for recognising that people are complex and inhabit different identities. What this loses sight of is that intersectional analysis is the recognition that inequities are the outcome of intersections of different social locations, power relations and experiences (Hankivsky 2014).

> Intersectionality operates as both the observance and analysis of power imbalances, and the tool by which those power imbalances could be eliminated altogether. And the observance of power imbalances, as is so frequently true, is far less controversial than the tool that could eliminate them. (Coaston 2019)

Such a strategy will encourage students to recognise their own social position in relation to what they study and to understand that systemic racism is a societal problem rather than a neutral, ahistorical fact. Clearly, any commitment to the full integration of an antiracist approach to student learning requires that higher education institutions develop and maintain policies and practices that embrace, invest in and reward such pedagogies.

Antiracism at the institutional level

The past few years of reflection and debate have often led to a return to the foundation: one's mission and vision statements. Do the basic stated institutional goals align with the principles of racial equity and justice? If so, there is already the beginning of a roadmap for change. If not, perhaps strategic planning, accreditation and/or programmatic review offer opportunities for change. Such fundamental work – the root work – is difficult because it requires considering the institution's core identity and value orientation, where there is progress and where it is obstructed, as well as grappling with who does the work. Relegating antiracism to the domain of diversity and equity offices (which are known by a multitude of names) is problematic since this presumes that examining where inequality exists is the work of some but not all campus community members. Also, such work is often considered the purview of underrepresented and marginalised faculty, staff and students because it is related to their daily experience. Such an assumption can result in further marginalisation; it becomes only some people's issue, not everyone's issue. This also means that any time and labour expended on it are not understood as central to the university enterprise but as ancillary or peripheral. Instead, asking for, incentivising, assessing

and rewarding multiple channels within an institution increases the likelihood that it is embedded within the daily practice and keeps people accountable for outcomes.

Institutional practices must be tied to the ethos governing campus life. Social norms and habits require the infusion of democratic values into the customs and habits of everyday practices, structures and interactions. Such an approach emphasises open-mindedness, the worth of each person, ethical behaviours and concern for the well-being of others and a spirit of public-mindedness that influences the goals of the institution and its engagement with local and global communities. One of the signals that universities have not done this basic work often comes in the aftermath of a campus crisis or when leaders issue public statements in response to a specific crisis (e.g., civil unrest, police brutality, controversial social policy changes). Statements of support following a crisis event may invoke terms like "unprecedented", "shocking" or "unexpected". But to people in socially vulnerable or marginalised positions, such events are rarely a surprise given their positionality.

Thus, campus statements may provoke a backlash because they are seen as disingenuous given US history. What critics want to know is: what is the university going to do? This kind of response to inequity and injustice is problematic because it occurs without an articulation of real plans, considering the local implications of social forces in the community and on campus. Sarah Ahmed (2006) calls public declarations devoid of action plans "non-performative" expressions of solidarity. The public utterance is presumed to be adequate and effective in and of itself, whether this is acknowledging injustice, unfairness or systemic failure.

A university that commits to antiracism might also be one that does not recognize racism as an ongoing reality, or if it did recognize such racism it would be more likely to see that racism as coming from "strangers" outside of the institution rather than "natives" inside it. It is as if the university is now saying, if we are committed to antiracism (and we have said we are), how can we be racists? The work of such speech acts seems to be precisely how they function to hinder rather than enable action. In other words, the failure or the nonperformativity, of antiracist speech acts is a mechanism for the reproduction of institutional authority, which conceals the ongoing reality of racism (Ahmed 2006: 110).

The obverse of "nonperformativity" is to act with intention and be strategic (Tate and Bagguley 2017; Hayes et al. 2021; Pirnavskaia and Kalenzi 2021). Addressing institutional and structural problems can span multiple domains such as hiring practice, performance reviews and promotions; assessments of faculty scholarship/creative practice, teaching and service; student admission, retention and persistence; curriculum and programme revision; student course evaluations; salaries and wages. Given the complexity of colleges and universities, what follows are some general examples of dos and don'ts, and a few proscriptions.

- Use precise language: be clear and consistent in the use of terminology and ensure the use of current concepts that demonstrate user familiarity due to rigorous and deep engagement. All who are in positions of power and leadership should have some facility with fundamental concepts concerning diversity, equity, justice, inclusion and antiracism.

- Do not be extractive: avoid asking those who identify themselves as marginalised or coming from an underrepresented group to explain or define why an issue or situation is problematic. Do not presume that they will propose or lead change initiatives.
- Acknowledge policies that cause harm and reproduce inequality: assume that internal processes and practices have caused harm and recognise that unintentional harm is still just that, harm. Starting from the vantage point of what harm is caused rather than whether harm has occurred demonstrates an understanding that institutional process and practice are built on systems of inequality that require redress. This also shows an awareness that those experiencing harm may not have used existing channels to air their grievance or for mediation. Understand that often systemic inequality is not legible.
- Make clear the impact of hierarchy and rethink distributions of labour and risktaking: make a note of those who are typically asked to lead initiatives and those who argue they cannot because they are poorly prepared or lack knowledge.
- Define accountability: widen the circle of those responsible for effecting change by requiring goal setting across the institution and linking these goals to measurable outcomes; provide scaffolded education and professional training.
- Listen to the voices of those who are most marginalised.
- Prioritise the extension of shelter to those who bear the brunt of constitutive white supremacy: not asking those harmed by practices to take the lead in building solutions can exist in tandem with offering them meaningful empathy, care, justice, healing, restitution or reparative justice.
- Work to unsettle, challenge and educate those who benefit from existing inequality.
- Admit organisational injustice and inequity: reflecting upon institutional history and practice will require acknowledgement of past historical wrongs, such as exclusionary practices, and sharing these publicly.[4] This includes behaviours that have had an impact on the communities where institutions are located and ones with which universities have regular contact.

Antiracism and community engagement

Universities function within ecosystems and networks of commitments and ties with their local communities. The storied descriptions of "town–gown" tensions are often due to the complicated presence of the university within the community.

4. In 2003, Ruth Simmons, then President of Brown University, charged a Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice with investigating the university's relationship to enslavement and the transatlantic slave trade. Brown released its report in 2006, which also documented its legacies of anti-Blackness, racism and injustice. This work led to several reparative measures and ongoing reporting. Georgetown University followed suit in 2015 with the Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation, which explored the history of the university's relationship to slavery and outlined a series of recommendations with an implementation timeline.

Two commonplace issues concern how institutional leaders utilise local resources (property, capital and labour) and the ways faculty and students conduct research on residents (Grau et al. 2017; Metivier 2020).

> Often community engagement programs endeavour to do work in communities, but we miss the important step of acknowledging how sometimes our very presence has reinforced the challenges that underrepresented groups have within that community …. From this place of recognition, we can move forward and strive to be part of a jointly constructed solution where we work with the community in order to be part of antiracist community engagement efforts. (Smith et al. 2022: 122)

Fundamental commitments to equity and justice require recognising historical struggles, campaigns and social movements undertaken on campus and in the community, including the following.

- Practice of considering the social dimensions and public consequences of community-engaged scholarship on subjects of study: such scholarship should be built upon the recognition that residents and local organisations are partners in the research, with unique and relevant knowledge and skills that complement those of the researcher.
- Exploration of the impact of choices on different constituencies and entities that have a long-standing relationship to the institution. Often, policies and practices targeting internal operations such as capital construction, hiring independent contractors, partnerships with vendors and waste management can have a direct and sustaining impact on local residents' economic viability and quality of life.
- Capacity and commitment to participate constructively with diverse others and to work collectively to address common problems.
- Practice of working in a pluralistic society and world to improve the quality of people's lives and sustainability.
- Ability to analyse systems to plan and engage in public action.
- Provide community members regular access to institutional resources.
- Moral and political courage to take risks to achieve a greater public good.

Conclusions – Where do we go from here?

Being effectively antiracist requires that we look at how we are organised, which voices are amplified and when, who is called to labour on these issues and why others are not, what we explore in our classes and what is missing, the impact of policy and practice both within and outside of institutional walls and our institutional histories and legacies. It is complicated work because it requires grappling with the ambiguity of truth, interrogating the lenses through which we each see the world.

> If [higher education institutions] and systems have to play a transformative role for society in changing times, they must be able to transform themselves first. Adapting and creating appropriate structures, procedures, recognition systems and governance at all levels is key for addressing new challenges. (Grau et al. 2017: 45)

Because antiracism is a process and a practice, it necessitates accountability via regular review and evaluation to gauge whether the work is having the kind of impact we intend. Policies and practices, curriculum, pedagogy and community engagement will all require deep scrutiny so that, in the end, higher education institutions can model antiracism as a practice and decentre modes of thought and action that reproduce injustice.

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Part V

What new institutional practices help sustain and engage the most at-risk students?

Chapter 14

Paris 8 Vincennes–Saint-Denis: a "world university"

Annick Allaigre

The University of Paris 8 Vincennes–Saint-Denis has a long tradition of welcoming and opening up to the world, so much so that at the turn of the millennium the expression "world university" became the preferred way of defining its identity. A committed, multicultural and multilingual university, it was born after May 1968 as the Experimental Centre of Vincennes to respond to society's expectations of openness and renewal in higher education.

Two years after its opening, it became University of Paris 8, as the University of Paris disappeared in order to give room for 13 new universities. Transferred in 1980 to Saint-Denis, in the Seine-Saint-Denis département – hence its composite name – the university brings together 24 000 students in the arts, humanities, languages, social sciences, psychology, and science and technology (mainly computer science and mathematics). Each year 7 000 foreign students enrol at Paris 8, making it the leading French university in terms of the proportion of foreign students (28%). Most of them come from the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America, but there are around 140 different nationalities. The university shares this characteristic with the area to the north of Paris, which attracts the largest number of migrants. Paris 8 also plays an important role in social promotion: 24% of its pupils come from families living in the so-called priority neighbourhoods and 25% receive grants from the French Government.

Paris 8 also employs a significant number of multilingual teachers of foreign origin.

Due to the character of its students, its staff and its international influence, Paris 8 first defined itself as a "world university" at the turn of the year 2010. Although the international student intake varies according to the discipline (for example, the plastic arts attract more young people from Asia), most students need as much guidance and support as first-year students from families in the locality.

A critical and committed university since its creation

Paris 8 has a proactive policy and a recognised tradition of openness and hospitality (foreign partnerships, hosting arrangements for students and researchers who are at risk), experimentation and innovative research, such as the development of new knowledge in the academic field: psychoanalysis, geopolitics, deaf studies, gender studies, creative writing and digital humanities. It is known for its commitment to fundamental human rights, academic freedom, inclusion, social and

societal inequalities and north–south relations. It participates, within its means, in the intellectual and cultural protection of learners to promote the transmission of knowledge.

Shared values in the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA)

Paris 8 co-ordinates the European Reform Universities Alliance (ERUA), of which it is a founding member, together with four other universities: in Germany (University of Konstanz), Bulgaria (New Bulgarian University), Denmark (Roskilde University) and Greece (University of the Aegean). ERUA is based on a shared ambition to develop a new kind of collaboration that not only links universities in Europe, but also reimagines the role of European universities in a global context. The recent addition of five new universities from five more countries will further broaden this cultural openness: the universities of Social Sciences and Humanities (SWPS) in Poland, Viadrina in Germany, Macerata in Italy, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in Spain and Mykolas Romeris in Lithuania. As a reforming university, Paris 8 promotes the critical function of the modern university by reflecting on, evaluating and proposing alternatives to current models. It supports a vision of universities as creative spaces, aware of the power of experimental approaches.

Covering all European regions, ERUA embraces diversity, including students from upper and lower socio-economic, rural and urban, local and global backgrounds. It offers an original disciplinary ecosystem, thanks to our strength in the humanities and social sciences and the arts, and our links with science, computing and engineering. And it offers students a rich and diverse environment with a common pedagogical approach focused on project-based learning, societal challenges and critical thinking.

ERUA aims to drive change to better respond to a crisis in higher education that is linked to a wider societal crisis, risk processes, trends but also opportunities. It aims to contribute to shaping a more just, open and inclusive society.

Actions and programmes implemented at Paris 8

Student engagement

Since 2018, the University of Paris 8 has emphasised its policy of recognising engagement by linking it to its policy of educational innovation. First, European Credits (EC) and EC Engagement allow 600 students per year to have their solidarity, cultural and sports activities taken into account for the validation of their qualifications. This policy has been continued and extended in recent months with the Engagement University Diploma (DU), open to students who wish to specialise in management and community life, as well as to employees of associations, co-operatives or NGOs. In its first year 25 people enrolled, and 50 have already signed up for 2023/24. DUs are not national diplomas; they are short diploma courses (6-12 months) organised at university level, with specific objectives focusing on content that is not taught as such in a bachelor's or master's degree.

The new curriculum at university (NCU): So Skilled

So Skilled, also created in 2018, is an innovative programme in the humanities and social sciences in terms of its objective and its linking of pedagogy and research. This programme involves around 11 000 students per year and aims to facilitate their professional integration by strengthening the 40 fundamental, transversal and sustainable skills (such as "Work methodically and independently", "Expression and communication", "Getting to grips with maths") acquired during their studies and their investment in the university. Teachers can also innovate in their practice and scientific research, receive training in soft skills and share pedagogical knowledge.

Civic Service

Civic Service is a government programme that allows young people to carry out missions of general interest for six months or one year in several fields, including higher education. At Paris 8 University, more than a hundred students have completed it since 2016, including 17 in 2022.

Inclusion, human rights and academic freedom

The issue of the reception of students and colleagues in exile is an integral part of the values defended by Paris 8 and a factor that unites most of its actors, whether they are students, teachers or administrative staff. When the problem arose in Europe, the official programmes (PAUSE and others – see below) were able to find a response in existing initiatives and practices.

France's migration policy has not evolved in recent years (compared to other European countries such as Germany) towards offering a broad opening to foreign students and refugees. For example, France accepted very few Afghan students fleeing the Taliban in 2021 and has not extended European protection to all students who are victims of the war in Ukraine. In these circumstances, the dialogue between universities and prefectures is all the more delicate because they may be confronted in their courses with a significant number of students in an irregular situation in the country.

International students

Reception facilities

Long before any other French university, the Paris 8 Student Centre created a single contact point to facilitate registration and administrative procedures and offer a range of services: medical, cultural, sports, digital, access to French courses, etc. Its services provide one-off or regular medical and food assistance to help students in vulnerable situations. This system was deployed on a large scale during the Covid-19 pandemic to help all students in difficulty. A budget of 1.3 million euros has been allocated to the centre. In November 2021, a facility to combat menstrual insecurity was set up.

The DU Passerelle

In 2015, the university pioneered the creation of a university qualification for refugee and exile students, offering French language and university methodology courses with a view to their integration into a national degree course (bachelor's or master's) and a multicultural approach. Students are exempt from enrolment fees and have access to all the services provided for other students. This DU welcomes between 30 and 40 students per year, and more than 250 students have graduated since 2015.

PALSSE Programme

Given the urgency of the situation in Afghanistan in the summer of 2021, the University of Paris 8 decided to welcome students fleeing that country and implemented a policy of active intellectual solidarity led by Paris 8 students, accompanied by academic staff and administrators interested in this project. PALSSE (Programme d'Accueil Langues et Savoirs pour Étudiants.e.s en Situation d'Exil) was created with the support of the city of Paris, which co-financed it. From January to July 2022, this programme welcomed 30 Afghan students, beginners or advanced, for training in French language and culture. This programme has now been renewed.

The originality of our approach lies in its being based on research taking a participatory and inclusive didactic approach, as the courses are based on the contribution of master's students in French as a Foreign Language, supervised by academic staff from the Department of Language Sciences specialising in acquisition and didactics, who validate their master's internship by taking charge of the learners.

The activities are either language activities (courses, language workshops), cultural activities or social situations that require spontaneous exchanges between students and learners. This is another possible area of involvement for students.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Refugee Agency, is a global organisation dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building better futures for refugees, forcibly displaced persons and stateless people. Paris 8 University, in partnership with UNHCR Europe, has opened a university corridor for refugees. This corridor allows us to welcome a student who is a refugee in another European country and who wishes to study in France at Paris 8. The first student has been studying in the Social and Solidarity Economy master's programme since September 2022. Two other students will be welcomed at the beginning of the academic year 2023/24.

Paris 8 helps Ukraine with two programmes, DLSU Ukraine and Ukraine DMSU

In order to welcome students and colleagues who are victims of the war in Ukraine, regardless of their nationality and whether or not they benefit from functional protection, Paris 8 launched two programmes in the spring of 2022, which it financed entirely.

The Dispositif Langue Solidarité Ukraine (DLSU) for non-French-speaking students enabled them to take courses in French as a foreign language. The Department of Communication–French as a Foreign Language (COM-FLE) and the Department of Campus Life, the University Library and the Office of International Relations and Cooperation are involved in this programme. The university will also provide Erasmus+ grants to support all these students, who currently number 15.

The Dispositif Méthodologie Solidarité Ukraine (DMSU) for French-speaking students allows them to participate in the university methodology courses given by colleagues from the COM-FLE department. This project is piloted by our colleagues from the campus life department, the Joint Information and Professional Integration Office (SCUIO-IP) and the University Library. These students, who are at the beginning of their university career and who wish to pursue their university career in the humanities and social sciences taught at Paris 8, are offered methodological support. Currently 30 students are enrolled.

Through a call for proposals open to all, ERUA funds a six-month postdoctoral fellowship to host a postdoctoral researcher at one of the Alliance's partner universities.

Programme for the Emergency Assistance and Reception of Scientists in Exile (PAUSE) and Scholars at Risk

The University of Paris 8 is also committed to the defence of scholars and doctoral candidates at risk, mainly through PAUSE (Programme d'aide à l'Accueil en Urgence des Scientifiques en Exil), launched in January 2017 by the Ministry of Higher Education. PAUSE supports scientists and artists in exile by facilitating their reception in higher education and research institutions or cultural institutions. PAUSE also conducts advocacy activities for the defence of academic and artistic freedom and respect for human rights. This programme provides support funds of up to 40% of the cost of the position to universities that apply for them, enabling them to host researchers who are at risk (PhD students, postdocs, fellows). These funds are managed by the Collège de France.

Paris 8 is a member of national and international networks defending academic freedom, such as MEnS, Scholars at Risk and the New University in Exile Consortium.

The MEnS network – Migrants dans l'Enseignement Supérieur (Migrants in Higher Education) – is made up of French higher education institutions, civil society partners and public institutions. They are all bound by a charter that brings together their commitments and missions. The members are committed to respecting the principle of unconditional admission of students, with academic level as the only criterion, without distinction of nationality, gender or political orientation. They have all implemented programmes for the resumption of studies, training and professional integration of students in exile, as well as reception arrangements for scholars in exile. Their policies are reflected in an often substantial financial commitment. The MEnS network and its partners are committed to assisting institutions in their search for external and complementary funding.

Scholars at Risk Europe, based at the University of Maynooth (Ireland), is the European branch of the global Scholars at Risk network. Scholars at Risk is an international network of higher education institutions and individuals which works to protect threatened academic staff and promote academic freedom.

The New University in Exile Consortium gathers universities and colleges to build an international academic community committed to assisting persecuted academics and those in danger, to contribute to protecting intellectual resources that are endangered when universities and academics are attacked and to defend academic freedom all over the world.

Welcoming foreign students: a breeding ground for the transformation of teaching and training practices

The reception measures presented here are part of a general policy of integration that the University of Paris 8 is seeking to strengthen in order to better support its students and facilitate their success through a more personalised approach to their studies. The idea was therefore to go beyond the traditional model that separates campus life from education and to combine student life with civic life and global citizenship in its various aspects, in a perspective of global education within the university as a place of life.

At the heart of the University of Paris 8's values, the commitment of its students and staff is the backbone of the institution and the driving force behind a rich and dynamic campus life. This commitment is increasingly recognised in the curricula and training courses. The aim is to enable our students to learn by doing, to take ownership of a range of issues and to become transformers of their institution. By participating in the development of their institution, students have a better perception of their university because they feel recognised and that they belong. The relationship between students and their university is thus transformed by projects such as the participatory budget, the Student Life Council and the House of Associations.

Paris 8 responded to the first call of the PAUSE programme in February 2017, offering the possibility to host academic colleagues at risk. A budget of 60 000 euros is allocated each year by the university, which allows us to co-finance the hosting of researchers and doctoral students at risk. Since 2017, 11 academics from Turkey, Iraq, Brazil, Cameroon, Haiti and Afghanistan have benefited from this support.

A Ukrainian and a Russian colleague were welcomed this summer. Paris 8 also worked with the Scholar Rescue Fund to host a Syrian colleague in 2014 and the IIE Artist Protection Fund to host a Brazilian colleague in 2019.

Conclusion

Paris 8 has a long tradition of welcoming foreign and international students. This tradition contributes to the enrichment of the university through the languages spoken, the cultures encountered and the knowledge shared. Paris 8 has also developed an expertise in welcoming teachers and students who are in danger in their own countries. In recent years, this commitment has led to the implementation of

solidarity actions in response to emergency situations. We believe that it is also one of the functions of the university to participate, within its means, in the intellectual and cultural protection of students, in order to promote the protection and transmission of knowledge. In addition, we believe that by helping them to uphold their dignity, our approach will contribute to their social integration and their possible projection into a professional and civic future, including in their country of origin if return is possible.

Chapter 15

Bursting the bubble of higher education institutions

Marcelo Knobel and David John Lock

Introduction

In 2018, the 100th anniversary of the University Reform of Córdoba was celebrated throughout Latin America. This reform, which occurred in 1918 in Córdoba, Argentina, was an event that has had a significant impact on the universities of Latin America and the world (Aguiar Pereira 2019). At that time, there were several concerns among Argentine students related to the transformation of society that burst out at the University of Córdoba. This university, founded in 1613, maintained, like many other universities at the beginning of the 20th century, various norms and procedures incompatible with the reality of the time. The student struggles in Argentina began in 1917, at the Faculty of Medicine, which had suspended the boarding school at the Hospital de Clínicas. The movement grew and to this demand were added other claims that required academic reforms and more democracy in decision making. The students organised the Pro-Reform University Committee and the Argentine Federation of Students, with representatives from several universities in the country. Several strikes and stopovers were carried out, but the movement had its strongest expression on 21 June 1918, with the publication of the Injunction Manifesto in the *University Gazette*, which became the platform of the movement.

Among its achievements we can highlight: university autonomy, which allowed the authorities to choose and plan the study programmes internally without intervention by the government of the day; co-government, which occurred with the creation of representative bodies, in which the voice of the different categories would be considered; academic freedom, according to which teachers could teach without censorship (a situation that had previously led to the expulsion of faculty members); and the proclamation of the social mission of the university, which today corresponds to what we call university extension.

Now, over 100 years since that university reform, we can say that the students' struggle at Córdoba has guided the path of higher education, besides having postulated democratic and academic principles that are in force in almost all public education centres in the world, leading to an improvement of these institutions. Naturally, the 21st century imposes new challenges on the higher education sector, with the concomitant need to continually redefine the idea of the university.

Universities have been able to reinvent themselves and adjust to the various realities of each period, and this has enabled them to endure over time and maintain their relevance. More than ever, we are observing the necessity for higher education

institutions to strengthen their interaction with the numerous groups that make up society. In fact, a closer alignment between societal aspirations and university operations is already perceptible. That many institutions have updated their admissions procedures and retention procedures as a result of the growing interest among social groups that, up until a few years ago, would not have even considered enrolling in a university, is evidence of this trend.

Without integrating the social dimension in a cross-disciplinary manner in their three main areas of activity – teaching, research and extension – universities risk losing their leading position in the development of scholars and the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Such changes require planning and discussion, and we must now discuss how universities can prepare themselves to meet the demands of the modern world in a creative and dynamic way.

In this chapter we discuss the importance of mission-driven leadership which takes into account the strong commitment to society, taking as examples the Magna Charta Universitatum, the necessary and urgent need for equitable access to higher education in many countries around the world, and the role of so-called extension activities and communications. We use some examples from Latin America, and more specifically from Brazil, to illustrate the challenges as well as some good practices that can be learned from different global perspectives.

Values, democracy and the commitment to society

There have recently been numerous assaults on the fundamental principles of autonomy and academic freedom in universities around the world. Unfortunately, this trend is not new, but it has intensified in the last few years, with a clear rise of global autocracy (Knobel and Mohamedbhai 2022).

In this regard, it is significant that in 1988 a group of leaders from European universities drafted the Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU), a document containing principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy as guidelines for good governance and self-understanding of universities in the future. The Magna Charta Observatory of Fundamental University Values and Rights (MCO) was established by the University of Bologna and the European Rectors' Conference (CRE – one of the two bodies that merged to form the European University Association) in 2000 to "play an active role in guaranteeing the respect, protection and promotion of the fundamental values and university rights established in the Magna Charta Universitatum signed in Bologna in 1988" (MCO 2000: Article 2). This it does by assisting universities and higher education systems to operate effectively in accordance with the principles set out in the MCU for the benefit of students, staff, society and universities themselves.

The MCO carries out various activities to consolidate, disseminate and discuss the values and principles contained in the declaration. It has developed a Living Values methodology (MCO 2022) to help universities to establish whether their values remain appropriate and whether they are conducting their affairs in accordance with them. Should they identify gaps between their actual and desired situations, the MCO provides assistance in putting their desired values into practice. The Observatory monitors

critical situations that occur in some countries, and its existence enables global community mobilisation around a cause as crucial as bolstering higher education.

As the situations faced by universities and the world had changed significantly since 1988, in 2018 the MCO initiated a review of the MCU. A new version of the MCU (MCO 2020) was drafted after extensive global consultation and discussion. It was unveiled in a ceremony in June 2021. Up to now the original MCU and/or MCU 2020 have been signed by almost 1 000 universities across more than 90 countries.

In fact, for higher education institutions, values have risen in importance. Each higher education institution is set in a different context, and the values that universities adopt to support and express their missions are added to those that are stated explicitly in the MCU. This is caused by a number of factors, such as the complexity of the environments in which universities operate; the diversity of university missions; the extremely diverse expectations of internal and external actors (including governments, national agencies, civil and commercial corporations); increasing competition, often for limited resources; globalisation and internationalisation; information technology and communications developments; and complex situations related to political, social and economic issues. This complexity leads to questions about how higher education should respond and requires increased resilience.

These elements, along with other significant global events, have contributed to uncertainty and unpredictability, making decision making even more challenging. As a result, values become more important as a foundation for choices and actions. The degree to which universities are able to put these values into practice – not only in response to the various factors already mentioned, but also in order to create a dynamic that allows them to influence social change – will determine their success. In this regard, values are unquestionably strategic for an institution.

There are many strategic issues that must be taken into account, for example: accelerated innovation and globalisation; shifting demographics and wealth distribution; preparing children and adults for a more complex and unpredictably changing labour market; and technological advances in digitisation, artificial intelligence and biotechnology. In order for institutions to be able to not only adapt, but also lead change and play a significant role in creating a better future, these transformations pose enormous challenges to each university and call for the configuration of international strategies in the face of what will be a radically different world in the future. Just to mention one example, it is necessary to take on the challenge of preparing qualified human resources for a labour market that is constantly changing. How can we accomplish this, given that many future professions have not even been invented yet? In order to keep up with the rapid changes of a more connected and globalised world, the path undoubtedly involves educating ethically aware citizens with broad and solid foundations. Another example is the challenge for universities of designing and delivering multidisciplinary programmes to meet these future labour market needs, while they are typically organised into faculties which are focused on a single discipline.

To advance the education of complete citizens prepared to meet the challenges of a dynamic labour market, it is crucial that university community members are

continually up to date to meet societal demands. To respond to sustainable development objectives, universities must reflect strategically. This is especially important in the context of university social co-operation policies that aim to form students in a holistic manner. Access, equity, diversity, excellence, internationalisation, and an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit are all essential components of this strategic vision. To accomplish these goals, it is crucial to look for fresh perspectives and effective strategies, as well as to be adaptable enough to change and adjust as necessary.

Generally speaking, there is a certain lack of knowledge about the fundamental role that higher education systems play in terms of promoting democracy and sustainable development. Significant progress is stymied by a lack of comprehensive and strategic long-term policies. We focus next on the right of access to higher education in Latin America, particularly in Brazil, and the importance of a strong connection between universities and their communities.

Access to higher education in Latin America, particularly Brazil

Worldwide, the stressful process of admission to higher education affects millions of students and their families each year. The situation is even worse in Latin America, a continent with significant inequalities and a relatively poorly developed higher education sector. In fact, increasing enrolment in higher education has been one of the main policies in many nations over the past few decades. It is recognised as a crucial factor in economic development and a way to promote social inclusion, with a corresponding impact on people's income levels (Lustig et al. 2013). However, the recent growth is still modest in comparison to the region's needs, and the students who have access to higher education must overcome many obstacles in order to graduate.

Latin America has 500 million inhabitants in 19 countries, with an annual population growth rate of about 2%. With nearly 6 000 public and private post-secondary institutions, higher education is rather diverse and persistently underfunded in the area. Only 15% of the institutions are universities, but they enrol about 70% of the students in the area.

To give an idea of the complexity of the issues faced, we concentrate on Brazil, which is the ninth-largest economy in the world and has about 210 million inhabitants. In the past 15 years, enrolment in its higher education system has increased by a factor of two, a growth that is unprecedented. The number of undergraduate students enrolled in post-secondary education today exceeds 8.6 million. However, this figure only accounts for 22% of the 18-24 age group. Of these students, 77% are enrolled in private institutions, half of which are for-profit institutions (FPI). Brazilian higher education is split between a sizeable private sector (more than 2 000 institutions), which primarily offers inexpensive evening courses to students who cannot get into the public institutions, and a small number (107) of selective public universities with free tuition (funded by the federal or state governments).

Due to its crucial role in establishing policies and regulations as well as providing funding, the federal government has a significant influence on the development of higher education, science, technology and innovation. Since the 1970s, policy makers have relied on the private sector to help with institutional authorisation

and have provided alluring financial incentives in order to meet the rising demand for higher education. With the approval of more FPIs during the 1990s, the federal government further strengthened its pro-privatisation policies. After 2005, a number of things contributed to their growth, including the expansion of the nation's student loan programme, the use of the stock market to raise investment capital and the implementation of a federal tax exemption programme for private institutions that offered scholarships to low-income students.

FPIs experience issues with infrastructure, faculty qualifications and financial sustainability, and they frequently perform less well than other higher education institutions on official student learning assessments. The majority of students in FPIs are enrolled in low-cost courses that prioritise larger classrooms, low faculty salaries, lowered academic standards and a lack of retention-supportive policies. Such policies can include full scholarships, partial financial help for food and/or commute, extra classes for levelling up students, social assistance support and housing. Although the FPIs assert that social obligations will never take precedence over financial goals, it is likely that short-term financial gain will trump long-term educational goals.

An extended period of economic crisis has complicated the context of higher education even more. For private institutions, this has resulted in a decreased number of students able to pay tuition fees, which has been made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic and a significant reduction in the supply of federally subsidised student loans since 2015. As a result, many FPIs have experienced severe financial setbacks, which have prompted mergers that are reshaping the private higher education landscape by creating enormous, extremely profitable organisations.

The public sector, on the other hand, faces unique funding issues. Public universities are research oriented and do not charge tuition fees but their expansion has been severely limited by a combination of high costs and diminishing government resources in recent years. Public universities have increased their support for low-income students by providing housing and various scholarships since the 2000s, but the public system is relatively small, and it is experiencing high dropout rates.

The entire higher education system's high dropout rates are a result of a combination of factors, including students' financial difficulties as well as inadequate preparation at their previous educational levels, which has left them with significant gaps in their knowledge of mathematics, reading and writing. Even in cases where tuition is free, the cost of study may be greater than just tuition fees, placing a considerable strain on finances. Students frequently struggle with the lack of flexible hours and course requirements as they attempt to juggle the demands of college with a job to cover their living expenses.

One may wonder whether widening access to higher education and reducing inequalities during expansion cycles reduces inequalities "by providing more opportunities for persons of disadvantaged strata" or instead amplifies them "by expanding opportunities disproportionately for those already privileged" (Arum et al. 2007: 1). On the one hand, the adoption of affirmative action programmes at public institutions did improve social inclusion and diversity, but on the other hand the persistent low quality of public secondary education – and its low graduation rates – adds severe limitations on the effects of such policies and on the expansion itself. There are

clear indications that the quality of secondary education already limits the positive effects of the expansion in the case of Brazil (McCowan 2007; Pedrosa et al. 2014).

In order to continue growing and improving quality, the current financial model for higher education is unsustainable in Brazil, as it is in the rest of Latin America. Radical changes are therefore required. It is necessary to design a new higher education system that is integrated, decentralised, flexible and diversified. In this arrangement, the private sector must play a significant role and should concentrate on current global trends for delivering high-quality education, such as innovative teaching methods and long-term learning. Evidently, to build such a system it is fundamental to improve the accreditation procedures and the quality assessment of the Brazilian higher education sector, which is extremely centralised in the Ministry of Education, and these procedures should be fully reformed (Pedrosa et al. 2013).

In turn, the public sector should diversify its institutions, creating high-quality teaching-oriented universities and modernising curricula to include more general education. In any case, government funding is essential to maintain social inclusion initiatives, affirmative action programmes, science, technology and innovation, as well as the idea that education serves the public interest.

The fundamental part that higher education systems play in lowering external dependence and moving towards building sustainable development is not generally understood at the political level. Significant progress is stymied by a lack of comprehensive and strategic long-term policies. Governments are hesitant to increase public investment, and the private sector has accounted for most of the growth. Tension has emerged as private institutions are now able to compete for public funding across the region. Other issues being discussed include who should pay for what, which public goods are worth subsidising, what funds should be allocated competitively, what the quality thresholds for public funding should be, how to create quality assurance programmes, how to regulate the expanding diversity of institutions and programmes, and how effective affirmative action policies are.

Indeed, it is necessary to better communicate not only the role of higher education in sustainable development and in reducing inequalities, but also how higher education institutions interact with their local communities and regions. There are many initiatives that are not disseminated to the public, or even to the internal community of the university. In many countries the "third mission" of universities (also known as "extension") is rather well developed.

Extension activities and communication strategies

Although already present in the Córdoba reform of 1918, the concept of "university extension" is not yet fully developed worldwide. In several countries and regions, the nomenclature and meaning can include a wide variety of concepts (each one with its own definitions and limits): outreach, extension, civic mission, civic engagement, social engagement and the third mission, among others. Even without a clear understanding and definition, extension activities have been strengthening in Latin American higher education institutions in recent years, with many new extension projects and actions acting as benchmarks. Just to mention a few examples, universities have participated

massively in the formulation and in support of public policies in the federal, state and municipal spheres and in terms of providing third-party services to help public and private institutions as well as in transforming the nature of continuing education.

Universities play a crucial role in the economies of many nations, giving the local workforce opportunities to qualify for positions ranging from senior officers to maintenance workers. By carrying out their educational mission, higher education institutions benefit cities. They appoint faculty and staff, produce new knowledge and, ideally, generate knowledgeable and competent graduates. Universities have maintained numerous points of contact with the towns and regions in which they are located, despite occasionally being perceived as isolated in ivory towers. There are numerous outreach initiatives among them, in addition to forums and programmes for lifelong learning, public sporting and cultural events. Higher education institutions spur local economies in several ways – by leasing real estate to private entities, supporting research that produces new and marketable technologies, and investing in business incubator or start-up projects.

Universities frequently offer cultural events where none might otherwise be available. The only healthcare facilities in some communities are frequently university hospitals and clinics. Given this crucial role, it is surprising that institutions do not receive full recognition for these significant contributions and that they do not take advantage of their ties to society to raise awareness of their own value to the public. In other words, people who use these facilities do not associate the university with the service they are receiving. A recent pre-pandemic survey in Brazil, for instance, revealed that only 9% of the populace could name even one university or research facility there (CGEE 2019), yet millions of Brazilians receive their medical care from public university hospitals.

In many parts of the world, if a citizen is asked about a university, the name will probably come to mind, but not necessarily in relation to the entirety of the academic activities in which the institution engages. One may occasionally receive a response related to a hospital, a cultural institution or even a sports team. In countries where there is a culture of philanthropy, universities typically develop somewhat better communication strategies directed at alumni, local companies and entrepreneurs for the purpose of fundraising. Obviously, this marketing propagates goodwill beyond the target audience and helps to promote the contributions of the university, but still within a very specific public. Universities must carefully develop their branding strategies as a crucial part of their communication plan to better explain to society what "they are good for", not only "what they are good at" (Brink 2018: 285).

The fact that universities serve as mirrors for society's profound socio-economic, regional and racial disparities has been widely discussed, but eliminating them is not solely their responsibility. Universities can and should play a significant role in the search for solutions by acting as agents of change for the economic and social system to varying degrees and in various ways. Certainly, universities alone will not be able to address the severe inequalities that currently exist in most countries. To do this, they need to strengthen connections with various sectors, including, but not limited to, the media, private enterprises, the political class, non-governmental organisations and other public institutions.

Higher education institutions must place a high priority on effective communication (Knobel and Reisberg 2022). This communication must encompass all facets of academic life and seek to engage the whole of society. It must go far beyond simply recruiting new students. Better teaching and learning techniques, as well as contemporary internal and external communication tools, including all forms of social media, are all part of a comprehensive communication plan. Faculty members must be trained to learn and develop new skills to engage with their students and the public using social media and other contemporary communication strategies. On the one hand, public universities should reconsider their information diffusion strategies to justify the importance and value of public investment. This last aspect is already well developed in private higher education institutions and large research facilities that depend directly on tuition or government resources to survive.

In contrast, public institutions in many countries need to develop better channels to inform society (and also politicians) about their fundamental role in the progress of their region and country, explaining the particular ways in which they operate. Otherwise, the fundamental principles of academic freedom and autonomy will be in real danger, lacking supporters in the rather incomprehensible, but really scary, anti-educational and anti-intellectual reality that is increasingly taking shape. This will undoubtedly result in greater internal and external stakeholder participation in decision-making processes, greater transparency and a better environment for the community. In the end, it will demonstrate to society the significance of higher education for a viable, equitable and better future for all.

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Chapter 16

Education and engagement for democracy in Moldova

Galina Rusu

According to its constitution, the Republic of Moldova is a sovereign, independent and democratic state, free to decide its present and future, without any external interference, in keeping with the ideals and aspirations of the people within the historical and ethnic area of its national making (Moldova 1994). Governed by the rule of law, Moldova is a democratic state in which the dignity of people, their rights and freedoms, the free development of the human person, justice and political pluralism represent supreme values that shall be guaranteed. Democracy in Moldova shall be exercised under the conditions of political pluralism, which is incompatible with dictatorship or totalitarianism.

The Education Law of Moldova is regulated by the constitution as well as by international treaties: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Social Charter, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Bologna Declaration and commitments undertaken through the various communiqués adopted in the framework of the European Higher Education Area, and other international treaties to which Moldova is a party.

According to the Education Law (Moldova 2014), education is one of the national priorities and the primary factor for the sustainable development of a knowledge-based society. Through its policy in the education area, the state must ensure: the fundamental right to education, indispensable for exercising other human rights; implementation of the basic mechanism for training and developing human capital; fulfilment of the educational ideal and objectives; formation of the national identity and consciousness; promotion of general human values; and the European integration aspirations of the society (Article 4).

The mission of education is to meet the educational requirements of citizens and society; to develop human potential to ensure quality of life, sustainable economic growth and people's welfare; to develop national culture; to promote intercultural

dialogue, a spirit of tolerance, non-discrimination and social inclusion; to promote lifelong learning; and to facilitate the reconciliation of professional work with family life for men and women (Article 5).

The educational ideal of schools in Moldova, as outlined in Article 6 of the law, is to develop an individual's personality, to imbue it with a spirit of initiative and to make it capable of self-development. The goal is not only to provide students with the necessary knowledge and competences for them to be employed, but also to develop independence of opinion and action, and to foster openness to intercultural dialogue in the context of national and universal values.

The fundamental principles of education are based on:

- equity – under which access to learning is ensured without discrimination;
- quality – under which education activities are related to accepted reference standards and to the best national and international practices;
- relevance – under which the education offered meets personal and social-economic development needs;
- learner-centred teaching;
- the freedom to think independently of ideologies, religious dogma and political doctrines;
- the right to freedom of opinion for pupils and students as the direct beneficiaries of education;
- social inclusion;
- recognition of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including the right to maintain, develop and express their ethnical, cultural, linguistic and religious identities;
- the unity and integrity of the educational space;
- managerial and financial efficiency;
- decentralisation and institutional autonomy;
- public accountability – under which education institutions are responsible for their performance;
- transparency;
- the participation and accountability of the community, parents and other social stakeholders;
- the support and promotion of the education staff;
- a secular education.

The citizens of Moldova have equal rights to education and initial and continuing professional training through the national education system. The state must ensure the financing of the standard package of educational services for preschool, primary and secondary education, regardless of the educational institution's ownership form. Vocational and higher education are to be financed from the state budget within the limits of the admission plan approved annually by the government, in accordance with the priority areas and the needs of the labour market. The state must support individuals with special educational needs as well as talented students. The state

must ensure the training and development of efficient communication skills in Romanian or in the languages of national minorities, as appropriate, and in at least two widely spoken foreign languages. The state must also promote and support lifelong learning. Foreign citizens residing in Moldova, as well as stateless persons, have access to education through the national education system.

Higher education in Moldova is a key factor for the cultural, economic and social development of the country as a knowledge-based society, and is a promoter of human rights, sustainable development, democracy, peace and justice. Higher education aims at keeping, developing and promoting national cultural and historical values in a context of cultural diversity.

In Moldova, education is a national priority area because it is an essential factor in promoting democratic values, ensuring human and citizens' rights, developing human capital and promoting national consciousness and identity. Education is also a key factor in realising our aspirations for European integration. It plays a primary role in creating the context for sustainable human development and building a knowledge-based society.

The Ministry of Education and Research has developed a series of policies and tools to strengthen the role of education in the development of a culture of democracy and human rights. In this, Moldova uses the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe 2018a, 2018b, 2018c.), and preparation for democratic citizenship is one of the main objectives of education.

According to the Moldovan Development Strategy Education 2030 project (Moldova 2022a), the goal of ensuring access to quality education is to be achieved by:

- ensuring inclusive education for all children, pupils and students, including those with special needs, those from vulnerable groups, those at increased risk and/or with deviant behaviour, and the children of refugees from Ukraine;
- promoting learner-centred education at all levels of the education system;
- promoting well-being in school as a basis for improving educational services;
- stimulating and motivating pupils and students capable of high performance, by supporting them in realising their personal potential, on the basis of merit;
- developing and implementing support mechanisms for children and students at high risk of dropping out of school;
- promoting gender equality in and through education as a factor for achieving social equity;
- ensuring the conditions for the development of a healthy, non-violent generation with psycho-emotional resilience and well-developed life skills;
- expanding alternative childcare services;
- supporting progress in learning and development for all by remediating, recovering and overcoming the repercussions of pandemic, climate, disinformation and other risk situations;
- expanding education for democracy, peace and active citizenship, intercultural and multilingual education, and education for health and environmental protection.

In order to promote the Council of Europe approach to citizenship education, Moldova promotes a holistic view of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, while also focusing on democratic school development and the integration of young people's civic experiences in the wider community, through the Moldova: Fostering Active Civic Engagement Programme (Moldova 2018), which refers to "inclusive voter education" (UNDP 2022a), as well as the project Education for Democracy in Moldova (Council of Europe 2023). The aim is to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic society in Moldova by helping to strengthen the capacity of the Moldovan education system to develop the knowledge and competences that schoolchildren need to become engaged citizens. The ongoing reform process, led by the Ministry of Education and Research, helps to:

- develop the policy and methodological framework for the civic education subject "Education for society" (Moldova 2022b) in line with Council of Europe standards;
- promote the integration of competences for democratic culture in different subjects;
- strengthen the capacity of national institutions, teachers and other education professionals to develop democratic competences in learners and apply the new educational approaches in practice;
- develop a methodology for democratic school governance;
- raise awareness and promote an understanding of the role of citizenship education in the wider society.

To foster active civic engagement and to promote education for democracy in Moldova, the authorities have devised and are currently implementing modules on

- education for society,
- education for sustainable development,
- intercultural education,
- personal development,
- education for human rights, and
- education for legal socialisation.

Electoral education (UNDP 2022b) has now been added to the national curriculum, and polices have been developed for the inclusion of students in decision-making councils. Also implemented are a national programme for teaching Romanian to minorities and a programme to improve inclusiveness in general education. The Ministry has approved a strategy for consolidating interethnic relations in Moldova for the years 2017-27, a programme for supporting the Roma population for the years 2022-5 and a methodology for preventing and combating bullying and cyber-bullying.

Moldova also develops and implements policies to support the most at-risk students, who encounter various social, political and economic issues, and to ensure that higher institutions and vocational training schools develop their social engagement. These policies include a 15% quota of government-funded scholarships for orphans, people with disabilities, national minorities, refugees and families with four or more children,

if at least two of these are students. These categories of students do not pay tuition fees. For good academic results, 70% of students at higher institutions and 100% of students in secondary vocational educational institutions can get a scholarship. In higher education, special social scholarships are available for orphans, people with disabilities and other social groups. Some universities have good practices of their own in supporting students by providing places in dormitories.

During the Covid-19 pandemic digitally excluded students (those who lack access to the internet, ICT devices or, generally, web-based communication) were added to the list of students at risk. At the beginning of the pandemic, the percentage of failing students increased. To mitigate the effects, some universities provided computer classes in dormitories and universities also offered internet access, organised additional hours and developed polices to enable students to resit examinations.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, thousands of Ukrainian refugees, most of them women and children, have crossed the border into Moldova. This increased the number of students at risk at all levels. Even though the government has simplified the procedure of tuition and schooling by providing short-term motility support for university students and giving access to school for pupils with no documentation, the number of refugee children participating in education is very small. Some of these children participate in online classes in Ukraine. To support Ukrainian refugees, final examinations for undergraduate students were organised according to Ukrainian regulations. To allow adult refugees with no documents to prove their qualifications to join the labour market, Moldova organised the validation of the competences they had obtained in non-formal and informal contexts.

Another group of at-risk students in Moldova are students from the self-declared state of Transnistria. To include them in the education system, special scholarships have been provided for these students. To mitigate the challenges they face because of differences in the study programmes, a preparatory year with teaching in Russian, as well as Romanian language courses, has been organised.

Working students, some of whom work full-time, are another category of at-risk students. The issue is particularly pertinent for master's programmes. To help the students concerned, many universities offer part-time studies. Classes and activities for master's programmes are organised outside working hours, typically in the evening or on weekends.

After suffering years of corruption, Moldova and its current government are now fighting for justice in all areas of society. In spite of the many challenges it faces, Moldova is determined to continue to improve its education system and provision. Moldova sees education as a key to building a stable, sustainable democratic society. The democratic mission of higher education is essential to building a society that will be democratic not only because of its institutions and its laws but above all because of the attitudes and behaviour of its citizens.

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Part VI

Building new and deeper relationships with local communities

Chapter 17

New and deeper relationships with local communities

David Maurrasse

The Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF) is a values-based network and think tank promoting the role of anchor institutions in strengthening local communities through democratic partnerships (Marga Inc. 2022a). AITF brings together individuals representing anchor institutions as well as other associations that also encourage an active role for anchor institutions in localities.

Defining anchor institutions

AITF defines anchor institutions as enduring organisations that remain in their geographic settings and play a vital role in their local communities and economies. This definition is highly relevant to higher education, as colleges and universities tend to be rooted in their communities. But this definition is also intentionally broad. It is neither exclusively urban nor rural. It includes both large and small institutions. It is also not focused on a particular field or industry. Anchor institutions can be museums or hospitals or any other types of organisations (Maurrasse 2019).

Certainly, this definition denotes an objective reality of institutions that are stable in place. But AITF stresses how anchor institutions can transcend their mere presence and actively engage in their communities. AITF is essentially a "big tent" that brings together a wide range of actors from various organisations and fields of practice into a network that is based around values. For AITF, an organisation rooted in its location can continually deepen its commitment to its locality in a mutually transformative manner. This means that anchor institutions should strive not only to collaborate in order to solve pressing problems in their localities but also to evolve. They should be willing to change and adapt to become more effective institutions, which will ultimately enhance their local impact as well strengthen their systems, policies and practices (Netter Center 2008).

Because anchor institutions and their local contexts are highly varied, there is no single strategy for how anchor institutions engage in their communities and reflect on their own roles and working practices to evolve. But a commitment to values can transcend this variation. AITF promotes a commitment to place, collaboration, democracy and democratic practice as well as social justice and equity. AITF increasingly emphasises racial justice and equity. A range of types of anchor institutions can pursue these values in their particular contexts, which ultimately inform numerous different strategies and practices.

An evolving field

Founded in 2009, AITF has been continually developing programmes and initiatives informed by the evolution of this dynamic field of work. AITF is a continuous project exploring the interface between theory and practice. AITF is a forum for mutual learning and application – an action-oriented learning community. Within AITF's network of nearly one thousand members, a few groups provide spaces that act as communities of practice. AITF has numerous subgroups that enable learning exchange about peers with common interests and experiences. AITF also has an Anchor Fellows Program for future leaders of anchor institutions (Marga Inc. 2022c). The Anchor Fellows Program adds a dimension to the existing training of future leaders of anchor institutions by preparing a next generation committed to AITF's values to successfully navigate the engagement of anchors in their local communities. It also has an Advisory Council that provides guidance and leadership to inform AITF's overall strategy and programming (Marga Inc. 2023).

It is through these formations that mutually reinforcing theory and practice are explored. This kind of engagement has helped AITF identify as well as catalyse innovations in the nature of anchor institutions' role in communities. One example of an evolution in the field is the proliferation of multi-institutional anchor partnerships that bring together a range of organisations transcending fields and industries. Whereas earlier discussions in the field emphasised the programmes of particular anchor institutions, theory and practice as well as trial and error have led many anchors to pursue more extensive collaborations with other organisations in their localities that might even be considered competitors.

Multi-anchor institution partnerships

If the goal is to transform communities, the objective should be to leverage resources across sectors within a geographical setting (Maurrasse 2018). A community is an ecosystem of various types of organisation, from institutions to local authorities to businesses to community-based organisations. This blend of actors exists in interdependence. Their fates are tied together. Even if their interests might diverge in some ways, they have in common a shared vested interest in the future well-being of their locality or region. These multi-anchor institution partnerships (which may also be referred to as "networks" or "collaboratives") are the embodiment of activated ecosystems (Maurrasse 2021a).

Newark Anchor Collaborative

The Newark Anchor Collaborative (NAC) is one example of a multi-anchor institution partnership that has emerged in recent years. This example of one of these strategic collaborations brings together 18 institutions representing numerous sectors and industries. Rutgers University–Newark plays a leading role in NAC, and Nancy Cantor, the university's chancellor, is one of two co-chairs of this effort. This is an example of the catalytic role that institutions of higher education can play among various organisations in their local ecosystem (Marga Inc. 2022a). Chancellor Cantor and her

colleagues were instrumental in NAC's formation, and continue to be instrumental as the partnership matures (Cantor et al. 2019).

The other co-chair, Shané Harris, represents Prudential (2022), a large corporation, and is the President of the Prudential Foundation. The contemporary anchor institutions movement is characterised by the important role of large non-profit organisations, such as institutions of higher education, hospitals and health systems, in their localities. This is not accidental, because the dynamics that led to growing interest in anchor institutions included a shift away from manufacturing and other forms of for-profit industry. As technology began to change the nature of work, and many businesses that were once anchors in their localities departed, communities were in greater need of stable capital. As factories and other physical corporations downsized or left, the largest non-governmental employers remaining in numerous cities or towns were institutions of higher education or hospitals (Taylor and Luter 2013).

NAC includes not only Prudential, but a few other for-profit corporations in Newark in its membership (Marga Inc. 2022b). This is an almost unique feature among similar collaborations. It is a function of the city of Newark, which is home to a number of corporations representing various industries. The various NAC members are significant local employers. But Newark is a city that has faced significant capital flight over recent decades. When the city lost a considerable part of its population, the corporations and other institutions remained, but their employees tended to live outside the city, which depleted the local tax base.

The local government – Mayor Ras Baraka in particular – took notice of the institutions that remained and used the opportunity to leverage various anchor institutions to increase their hiring of local workers. Newark 2020 was a city-wide initiative that challenged anchor institutions to hire over 2 000 Newark residents by 2020 – a goal which was easily met. This was an early accomplishment for NAC. Hire.Buy.Live is the heart of NAC's programming. This effort continues to encourage local hiring. It also promotes anchor institutions purchasing from local businesses and encouraging existing employees who are not Newark residents to move to the city.

Some emerging lessons from NAC's experiences speak to some of AITF's observations on the evolution of this work. The inclusion of for-profit corporations in NAC speaks to the multifaceted definition of anchor institutions. A multinational corporation such as Prudential commits to Newark. It is not as objectively rooted in a community as a university. However, it chooses to remain in and to continue to invest in and be an engaged active partner in strengthening the community.

NAC also includes various other institutions of higher education, numerous cultural anchors (such as a performing arts centre and a museum) and various local health institutions. Therefore, NAC is a true cross-sector partnership that is fairly representative of the local ecosystem. Its close communication with local authorities adds another dimension to this work. NAC was partly inspired by the Mayor's encouragement to increase hiring among the local anchor institutions. One of AITF's general observations is that many anchor institution initiatives are not directly co-ordinating with local authorities. This appears to be another area for growth and evolution in the field. NAC is contributing to our understanding of this potential.

NAC operates as a community of practice among its members. It includes various opportunities for members to learn from each other as they each embark on efforts to improve Newark. NAC has workgroups in hiring, purchasing and living to correspond with its Hire.Buy.Live goals. NAC is also determined that racial equity is a signature programme. A strategic plan developed in 2021 centred equity in general and racial equity in particular. More recently, the anchor institutions movement has been increasingly intentional about naming and emphasising racial equity. NAC has been a leading voice about the importance of bringing a racial equity lens to anchor institution strategies such as local hiring and procurement. This is another important lesson that NAC is bringing to understanding about the next frontier in this field.

Marga Incorporated, which also houses AITF, acts as a Learning Partner to NAC. This role has taken many forms. But one of the most significant activities has been developing and implementing a Racial Equity Framework (Marga Inc. 2022b) designed to help NAC members assess how racial equity is integrated into their practices in areas relevant to NAC's work, such as hiring and procurement, as well as in their broader institutional systems and operations.

This is an important endeavour in various ways. First of all, it provides a practical approach to giving priority to racial equity in NAC's strategy. Newark's population is primarily comprised of people of colour. Racial inequities have been very evident throughout Newark's history. NAC's work is poised to reduce racial disparities, particularly economically. The urgency of a racial equity strategy has been underscored by recent developments. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated existing racial inequities, not only in health, but in economics, education, technology and other areas (Maurrasse 2021b). Additionally, the same period highlighted the persistence of racial inequities, particularly through various high-profile acts of racial violence, such as the murder of George Perry Floyd Jr. (14 October 1973–25 May 2020), an African American man, by a police officer in Minneapolis on suspicion that Floyd might have used a counterfeit $20 bill. His death sparked American and worldwide protests and resulted in changes in public attitudes to racial and social injustice. The public response to these circumstances came to be known as a "racial reckoning". It is particularly notable that NAC's selection of racial equity as a signature area of emphasis occurred prior to this racial reckoning and the pandemic. These recent conditions only strengthened NAC's commitment.

The Racial Equity Framework examines areas such as equitable hiring, recruitment and retention, internal culture, structure and communication, community drivers and core business and services along with related subcategories. NAC intends to use this framework to help assess where individual anchors are in their racial equity journey, as well as where NAC is as a collective, in order to identify shared commitments around racial equity that could be advanced. It has provided not only an opportunity to help NAC members reflect on the role of race in their work, but also a model for how to consider and carry out institutional transformation. As AITF stresses mutually transformative partnerships that lead to change in communities as well as in institutions, this framework and the process around it is an institutionally transformative pursuit. It provides a system through which institutional representatives have to co-ordinate internally to discuss their practices, reflect upon where

they have been making progress and envision how their work can evolve. This is another area in which NAC is providing valuable lessons to the field.

Many anchor institutions must change their systems, operations, policies and practices in order to be successful community partners. For example, when a university hopes to incorporate faculty research into its local engagement, it must ponder the implications for internal review and rewards. If an anchor institution wants to increase hiring among underrepresented populations, it may have to change policies on requirements in areas such as degrees and certification or formerly incarcerated persons. Therefore, there is significant need for models or frameworks that help anchor institutions handle internal transformation.

Overall, NAC is an important example of an anchor partnership that has managed to harness the resources and expertise of multiple anchor institutions across sectors through a common set of programmes and strategies. NAC is unique in its large number of members, the degree of its cross-sector representation, its commitment to racial equity and its attention to mutual transformation. Many other anchor partnerships are contributing in different ways. The challenge for AITF is to be a valuable resource for existing anchor partnerships as well as to stimulate the development of greater local collaboration. While we are seeing an increase in the existence of anchor partnerships, many other potential partnerships have yet to be created.

Anchor Partnerships Subgroup

In 2022, AITF created an Anchor Partnerships Subgroup in order to provide a forum for mutual exchange and learning among various multi-anchor institution partnerships. The subgroup has eight members, including NAC. The other members are the Central Corridor Anchor Partnership in Minneapolis, the Denver Anchor Network, the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Association in Hartford, the Near Westside Partnership in Milwaukee, the Saint Petersburg Anchor Institutions Initiative and the Tacoma Anchor Network. This group also includes an emerging partnership that has yet to be named, which has been initiated by the University of Pennsylvania. This is an interesting development in itself, because the subgroup setting is helping this emerging partnership in Philadelphia consider the lessons from other partnerships. This is also significant because AITF has been pondering how to be a catalyst for the development of new collaborative activity.

Informed by AITF's communication with European partners in higher education by way of the Council of Europe, a method to help create new partnerships – Local Strategic Dialogues – was developed. This method asks a host institution to imagine a challenge that could be addressed by a collaboration that does not already exist. Upon identifying the challenge, the host develops a list of institutional partners that would be required in order to meet the particular challenge. These partners are invited to conversations that explore the potential creation of a new collaborative initiative to address the challenge.

This method was tested in San Diego in 2019. The University of San Diego was the host institution. Affordable housing was the issue. Up to 25 participants, representing

various sectors, were invited to participate in a strategic dialogue. The conversation focused on the lack of investment in and attention to moderate-income housing. This was an issue impacting local anchor institutions directly, as housing prices were dramatically increasing in their area, forcing employees to move far from work and presenting difficulties in recruitment. A Missing Middle Fund was created as a result of this discussion. The anchor institutions contribute to a fund designed to provide additional capital to incentivise the development of moderate-income housing.

AITF has also been taking inventory of anchor partnerships in a continual research project. We can see that many of these partnerships have been created in the last 10 years, which reminds us that this is an emerging aspect of the anchor institutions movement.

Conclusions and considerations

The anchor institutions movement is influencing the development of new systems and structures that institutionalise deeper connections with additional local partners. These anchor partnerships are crucial to the future of communities. Because of this significance, AITF has been stressing the policy implications of this work. Policy incentives for anchor institutions to leverage their resources and expertise to strengthen communities and help solve pressing matters of concern to public policy, such as economic inequities, are minimal. AITF has been expanding lines of communication with US federal elected officials on the ways in which anchor institutions can be partners with government around common concerns. The reality remains that the macro policy concerns of national governments are manifested and implemented in particular localities. Anchor institutions, which are rooted in these localities, are thus uniquely positioned to collaborate with various community partners across sectors in order to address these challenges.

Another important consideration looking to the future of this work is to underscore the significance of racial justice and equity. Racial inequities (within and between nations) continue to persist. It is difficult to solve any of the most persistent inequities without acknowledgement of the role of race and ethnicity. As anchor institutions play a role in their communities, it is important to understand the dynamics of race and ethnicity, as well as gender and other demographic factors that influence inequities and injustices, in their local contexts. Recognition of these factors will improve the contributions that anchor institutions can bring to their communities.

Finally, as the field of anchor institution work matures, there is greater awareness of what it takes to sustain an institutional commitment to place over time. It is not easy to maintain collaborative work in the community, nor is it easy to sustain a commitment within anchor institutions. Anchor institutions must consider the impact of both internal and external factors in order to sustain this work over time.

The role of leaders of anchor institutions is crucial in forging, maintaining and sustaining a commitment to community engagement. Some college and university presidents and chancellors have been instrumental in deepening their institutions' engagement in the community. There is no guarantee that the next leader will share the same commitment. AITF has been increasingly pondering these dynamics.

AITF has witnessed higher education leaders who are committed to these values moving from one institution to another. What has been even more noticeable has been retirements, as many of the visionary higher education leaders who helped establish this field have departed from their positions.

AITF has been considering how to contribute to increasing the likelihood of sustaining an institution's commitment to this work over time as well as building a cadre of future leaders committed to AITF's values. In 2019, AITF created an Anchor Fellows Program, which annually convenes a cohort of future leaders. These Fellows spend a year visiting the campuses of seasoned anchor leaders, who have successfully maintained a commitment to community engagement at their institutions. These visits provide Fellows with an opportunity to learn from the experience and knowledge of these leaders as well as to hear from their staff and community partners.

Additionally, AITF is developing a Leadership Guide for existing and aspiring anchor leaders on the internal and external factors to consider and address in order to create and sustain an institutional commitment to community engagement and build lasting democratic partnerships with external constituents. The need for tools and strategies to help sustain this work over time feels as urgent as ever.

AITF is constantly monitoring development in the anchor institutions field, and learning and adapting accordingly. AITF has created a space for dialogue and exchange through which priority issues can be identified. These discussions, taking place in various clusters within AITF's membership, are informing the development of new tools and strategies. In this regard, AITF is an action-oriented learning community that serves as an engine for innovation in order to continually improve the role of anchor institutions in their communities.

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Chapter 18

Universities enable positive change

Ryan Feeney

Universities are a crucial institution in the place where they are located. They help generate wealth through employment and spending and drive the local economy through research, development, business links and partnerships. More broadly, they enhance the quality of people's lives through education, arts and culture. Traditionally, it has been accepted that higher education institutions contribute to the public good, but the role of universities remains under scrutiny.

In 2018, the University Partnerships Programme Foundation (UPP 2023), a registered charity whose aim is to help address the most significant issues facing the higher education sector across the UK, launched the Civic University Commission. It ran through to 2019 and examined how universities successfully serve their locality, in addition to playing a global role in the 21st century.

The UPP Foundation Civic University Commission, supported by Universities UK and Shakespeare Martineau,[5] brought together experts from within and outwith the higher education sector to explore how civic universities operate today, how they operated in the past and how they should operate in the future. In reviewing evidence from a wide range of sources, the commission determined the characteristics of a "civic university". The final report was published in February 2019 (UPP Foundation 2019).

The commission recognised the challenges facing civic universities, such as the need to communicate the positive impact they have on their towns, cities and regions in addition to their global role; the importance of collaboration and partnership; and the challenges of civic engagement versus civic university.

It is the last of these points that is of greatest significance. The report suggests that few institutions make a distinction between being a truly civic university – one whose purpose, strategy and activity is based around the locality – and civic engagement. While civic engagement of the kind that all universities should and can do is commendable, it is not the same as a civic mission and strategy – which is likely to be a choice made by only some universities.

In developing a civic strategy – a Civic University Agreement (CAU), as the report names it – the university moves beyond a list of civic activities and develops, in partnership, a place-based strategy about how it connects to its local city area and

5. www.shma.co.uk

local community. This CAU, co-created and signed by the university in partnership with civic institutions in their area, sets apart a civic university from a university that is civically engaged.

The UPP Foundation Civic University Commission suggested that a CAU might be framed to:

1. support the educational growth of a place;
2. support the economic life of a place;
3. support the cultural well-being of a place.

A Civic University Network has since been formed, with over 100 universities across the UK joining the #TrulyCivic movement, committing to design a CAU which will strategically address the shared economic, social or cultural challenges of their place.

Among those committed to the co-design of a CAU are the Russell Group, which comprises over half of the 24 leading UK research-intensive universities (Russell Group 2023). It was set up as a professional, incorporated organisation in 2007, whose aim is to help ensure that its members have the optimum conditions in which to flourish and continue to make social, economic and cultural impacts through their world-leading research and teaching. Half of the members of the Russell Group have added their names to this list, including Queen Mary University of London, University of Bristol, University of Liverpool, Cardiff University, University of Glasgow, University of Birmingham, University of Exeter, Newcastle University, University of Sheffield, University of Nottingham, University of Warwick and University of York.

As a signatory to a CAU, a university conveys how it contributes meaningfully to the economic, social, cultural, educational and environmental prosperity of their place. It is a form of "quality mark" for the work of an institution in this space. It contributes to an enhanced local reputation and affords the opportunity to showcase the values and mission that underpin the institution. By formally supporting partnerships working to realise its ambitions for its people and the region, it helps create strong civic advocates from among the public, business, community and political sectors and it involves the university in more critical decision-making processes.

From an impact perspective, this strategic commitment can contribute to making higher education and research as accessible as possible; it can strengthen links to local employers, improve staff satisfaction and appeal to prospective students and staff alike. Undertaking this process ensures that the university strategically prioritises and appropriately resources its civic mission, in particular providing a key indicator in any new university strategy and cascading into other university priorities and objectives, from recruitment of staff to teaching and research strategies and targets.

Queen's University Belfast has a strong track record of working with external partners to jointly address shared challenges both locally and internationally. The university is a community partner of Belfast City Council, is central to the delivery of the Belfast Agenda (the city's Community Plan) (Belfast City Council 2017) and is playing a leading role in the Belfast Region City Deal (Belfast City Council 2021). The university has developed meaningful partnerships across the region and plays a convening role in helping to shape decisions which affect people locally.

The Queen's University Social Charter (QUB 2023a) was launched in November 2017, with a reaffirmation event in January 2019 to celebrate the success of its inaugural year. The university's Social Charter commits the institution to equality and social justice, providing leadership locally and globally and promoting a positive impact on society through research and education. The Social Charter is in keeping with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA 2023) and highlights the positive impact the university makes on society economically, socially and culturally.

The Social Charter reaffirms the university's commitment to engaging with society and is a means by which the teaching, research and other activities taking place at the university can be adapted to a range of audiences. It provides a platform to recognise and celebrate the many ways that students and staff contribute to our region and the positive impact they have on society. It also provides the imprimatur for the creation of mutually beneficial partnerships based on the values of co-design, innovation, listening and respect.

It plays a key role in recognising and supporting the university's commitment to bringing global expertise and impact to the region, while also highlighting local interventions and partnerships to a national and international audience.

The Social Charter is the university's commitment to "giving back" to society by invoking and supporting a wide range of socially responsible activities with external stakeholders from the business, community and civic sectors. While Queen's is recognised as being crucial for Northern Ireland economically and socially, the Social Charter has gone some distance in countering a previously held perception of the institution as "historically aloof".

The Social Charter reflects the wide range of activities undertaken by colleagues across the university. From student volunteering to providing local homework clubs to global alliances for leading-edge cancer research, and from ground-breaking research in children's healthcare to developing future leaders, the Social Charter reflects how the activity of staff and students makes a significant impact both locally and internationally.

The Social Charter Signature projects, as identified through the Corporate Plan 2016-21, served to demonstrate the impact of QUB's work in society locally and globally.

Among them the Shared Education programme (QUB 2023b), developed and led by Professor Tony Gallagher and Professor Joanne Hughes, has not only delivered policy change within Northern Ireland, but is also supporting educators in divided cities and communities like Jerusalem, Beirut, Los Angeles, Kosovo and North Macedonia. Work within the Cancer Inequalities programme, led by Professor Mark Lawler, has shaped thinking at a European level, including the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights (ECPC 2023) and the European Code of Cancer Practice, and has the potential to deliver more locally on an All-Island Cancer Research Institute. These projects reflect the general acceptance that a strong focus on developing globally also delivers local impact, and the reverse is also true.

Sustainability, social justice and equality, key themes in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, are also principles of Queen's University's Social Charter. The

university is home to a broad range of teaching, research and practical actions in these fields, across the whole institution.

The Steering Committee for Education, which oversees the Council of Europe's programmes in the field of education and advises the Committee of Ministers on education issues, has identified Queen's University as an institution that plays a key role in working with the local community in the spirit of mutuality.

During the development of the university's Strategy 2030 (QUB 2023c), civic and social responsibility emerged as one of the key underpinning pillars and has resulted in the creation of the Directorate for Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility. This marks the next step in the ongoing development of the university's Social Charter.

In addition to the directorate, and reflecting the university's "place-based" approach to its civic contribution, Queen's University has also supported the creation of Queen's Communities and Place (QCAP). Launched in 2021, QCAP is a community–academic partnership, which, guided by the university's Social Charter, works to find lasting solutions that tackle disadvantage and improve outcomes for children, young people and communities (QUB 2023d).

Combining academic and experiential knowledge from the community, QCAP focuses on a place-based approach to co-create new solutions to address persistent social challenges. Through national and international partnerships, QCAP can draw on experiences and lessons learned, from a wide range of children's and community initiatives, with the intention of creating a more durable model of community and place-based working tailored to the communities that the university works with, to bring long-lasting change.

As the debate around higher education continues, with a renewed focus on value for money and the requirement to demonstrate positive local impact, there is little doubt that civic strategies (CAUs) will become more important as a means of demonstrating the contribution, but also building new, mutually beneficial relationships with local partners.

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Chapter 19

Connecting Dublin City University to its local community

Andrew Montague

An educational facility was first established in the vicinity of Dublin City University (DCU) back in 1838, when John Pitt Kennedy set up a training establishment for National School teachers and a central model farm. (See Kinsella 2020 for a full history of DCU.) It has evolved slowly over the 185 years since then into a university that currently has nearly 20 000 students over four campuses.

In many ways, the development of the university has gone unremarked by locals, as the facility has not been seen as an essential part of the community, but rather as an independent entity, largely segregated from its environs. If it impinged on the local community's imagination it was more due to the frustrations of a large institution developing in a residential area, such as the traffic, the parking problems in surrounding neighbourhoods or disturbance from sometimes unruly students.

In the past 15-20 years, DCU has made important efforts to break down some of the barriers and to start to see itself as part of the community. Some of DCU's facilities, such as the gym and swimming pool, are open to the wider community. Many local residents have volunteered in the Helix theatre, established in 1996 as a major cultural hub for north Dublin that also attracts local schoolchildren on organised visits (Helix 2023). The Helix contains a concert hall, theatre, studio theatre, exhibition space, artists-in-residence studios, a green room and other support spaces, along with an onsite café.

DCU were very involved in the regeneration of Ballymun, a nearby disadvantaged neighbourhood. Danny O'Hare, the first President of DCU, chaired the board of Ballymun Regeneration Ltd for many years, and when Danny retired a representative of DCU remained on the board throughout the regeneration period.

Together, DCU and Ballymun Regeneration set up the DCU in the Community project in Ballymun – an outreach project to help disadvantaged students make a start in further education. Over the past 10 years DCU in the Community has had a measurable impact on access to higher education for the local community (with the very low local numbers now increasing appreciably) and has become a national model in Ireland for what can be done when universities and city authorities work with local communities in partnership (for an overview of impact, see Munck et al. 2015).

But I think it is now time for DCU to take the next steps towards becoming a central hub for the community. Like many colleges, DCU was built with a wall around it,

as if to say these facilities are for the staff and students, not the local community. One of the biggest buildings on Collins Avenue, facing the community, is a multi-storey car park.

DCU should work to break down these physical and social barriers to invite the community into college life. Buildings on the periphery should have an entrance for the public, to invite them in. Facilities like shops, chemists and restaurants could be shared, with entrances from the exterior and interior. This will strengthen these businesses, providing improved amenities to both students and the local public.

Pre-degree courses could be offered to local people in a variety of subjects to draw people into further education. These could be aimed at young people starting further education, at people in work hoping to build new skills or at retirees. This would go beyond the current offerings of DCU in the Community in terms of both scale and the variety needed.

Stronger relationships should be built with local schools through work on joint projects with students. This could help normalise student life and encourage people into further education, which would be particularly helpful for students with no family history of third-level education.

At present there is no access to the library for the local community or secondary school students. Unlike other colleges such as Technological University Dublin, the local community cannot even come into the library to read books or journals, never mind borrow materials. If local researchers would like access to online journals and databases, perhaps they could pay a fee for this service?

Clearly, providing library materials would put a financial burden on DCU, but Dublin City Council is mandated to provide just such library facilities. A joint initiative between DCU and the City Council could help fund such a valuable resource. And it would have a significant impact on the community.

DCU has made significant strides towards connecting with its local community, but it also faces significant obstacles such as the legacy of walled-in built environment and funding challenges to enhance integration between the university and the local community. With imagination and determination, deeper relationships can be built, making DCU an essential part of its local community.

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Chapter 20

Accrediting student community engagement: the key to unlocking new and deeper relationships with our local communities and addressing persistent inequalities?

Martina Darmanin

Introduction

In this chapter, adapting the definition proposed by Farnell (2020), "community engagement" refers to all the processes and practices through which universities engage with external individuals or entities in joint activities that can fulfil universities' social responsibility. The term "universities" is used generically to refer to all officially accredited or recognised providers of higher education, and the term "students" is used generically to refer to all learners.

This chapter aims to demonstrate the potential that community engagement could have if students were supported and accredited for it by universities globally – for example, if community engagement were to be recognised in the fulfilment and award of any university programme. What are the conditions evidently leading students, along with universities, to work symbiotically in and with their local communities? While identifying these conditions, the overarching premise will be that – as one of the most increasingly diverse cohorts of communities globally – students have been and will continue to be indispensable to solving the social, economic and environmental problems fuelling inequalities in our communities.

In the publication following the 2017 Global Forum on Higher Education, Bawa (2018: 164) posed the very question that this chapter seeks to answer: "How best is [community engagement] to be done?" Some of the pointers he gave while referring to the challenges faced by the South African university system may be paraphrased as follows.

- Universities are social institutions, fundamental for social mobility, and – even when considering all their limitations – still the preliminary source of human capacity capable of critically engaging in the functioning of our very complex society.
- Addressing society's major challenges cannot be done if this source of intellectual capacity is restricted to conducting its learning, teaching and research within the physical walls of universities. Furthermore, solutions to global challenges

are not divided into academic disciplines – they require interdisciplinarity, which in turn demands more flexible pathways to learning.

- Without bottom-up approaches for community engagement, solely top-down policies have proved to devastate communities, fuelling the vicious cycle of public mistrust in education. Democratic practices are the most likely way to achieve a legitimate, fit-for-purpose architecture for community engagement, which must be developed with the community, while universities provide its architects. The continued promise that communities see local universities as "their" institutions, through which their challenges can be addressed as well as where they can be represented, should drive the architecture's planning, implementation and review.
- If this architecture for community engagement is to be sustainable, it cannot avoid being porous to new ideas or critique. Universities have a key role to play in listening and linking critique to new ideas as well as building the capacity of local community members – without bias – to participate in debates for the continued development of policies and practices.

Bawa's in-depth assessment of the university's core social responsibility is, for the purpose of this chapter, considered to be the foundation upon which symbiotic relationships can be built between the university, its students and the community. This chapter does not claim to identify what the exact solutions to inequalities are. It does, however, consider policy actions which when implemented strategically could lead people to solve inequalities – whatever the exact solutions they find. Existing examples of university and students' community engagement are assessed to identify how diverse forms of engagement benefited the community. These conditions are compared with those concerned by how student engagement improves university quality. After proposing a set of recommendations for accrediting student community engagement as part of university programmes, the chapter ends with a reflection on why legitimately representative bodies matter for guiding reforms on the topic.

How does university/student–community engagement benefit local communities?

Bourner and Millican (2011) make a case for the positive impact that student–community engagement has on communities through student employability. This impact is linked with the work-based learning experience that a student gains when involved in projects with organisations based in and working for, as well as with, the community.

Student–community engagement can increase employability by giving students the opportunity to acquire transferable competencies, such as hard skills (e.g. policy and data gathering/analysis or use of information communications technology) and soft skills (active listening, time management, communication, teamwork, strategic planning and problem solving), which are valuable for both communities and employers (Bourner and Millican 2011). Teamwork has always been the backbone of human prosperity. The latter – regardless of how varied our views of what a society is or should be – is now significantly impacted by our ability to use digital technologies and to assimilate the policies governing our way of life.

According to Bourner and Millican (2011), some of the conditions in the implementation of student–community engagement have served to prove that transferable

competencies are being put into practice by the students. A summary of these conditions is substantiated by further literature demonstrating the benefits that local communities can reap from community engagement, particularly when it:

- is integrated into the study programme for long enough to provide a range of experience within a team and with the public, and ideally with more than one community organisation, and
- includes the means for transforming the impact of the engagement on the learning experience.

Integration into the study programme

Although this does not apply to all forms of student–community engagement that increase student employability, this condition has a social dimension in validating work experience that would be accessible to all students. Engagement that requires time outside of and beyond the course, instead of during it, often means that students with domestic or employment commitments – the latter a reality more commonly affecting students from lower socio-economic backgrounds – are in fact excluded from this experience (Bourner and Millican 2011).

A study carried out by the Malaviya National Institute of Technology in Jaipur, India, recommended that policy makers and higher education institutions should consult with their students and local communities on integrating community engagement into the curriculum. The community was identified as an important resource for demonstrating the practical application of the theoretical knowledge that higher education institutions impart to their students. The recommendations were developed in response to, among others, the observation that:

> more often [universities] alienate themselves from the community in terms of development and the present curriculum is more influenced by the demand of the industry than by the challenges faced by the society. As a result, the curriculum is producing individuals that lack their ideology and capacity to develop their own views on the issue …. The intelligence of a student is judged only on the basis of their final grades and certificates, limited importance is given to their contribution towards empowering the community. (Bhatnagar et al. 2020: 9)

In the study conducted by Bourner and Millican (2011), some argue that, among the negative consequences of student–community engagement, students may perform poorly in their subject-specific studies because their attention is taken up with engagement activities. On the other hand, students' performance could also be improved by gaining practical, hands-on experience in problem solving that might be applied to subject-specific studies. Regardless of how well allocated the workload of the programme might be to allow enough time for both studies and community engagement, students who have less interest in subject-specific studies or who put less emphasis on attaining the highest grades may still choose to devote more attention to community engagement activities, which they prefer. Ultimately, the benefits for both students and the community could heavily outweigh the limitation of diverting a percentage of students' time from formal studies.

Enabling long and interdisciplinary engagement

Engagement, like project-based learning, needs to allow enough time for students to take the lead as core members of the team in addressing, and hopefully overcoming, the problems standing in the way of achieving the goal. Through leadership, students can go beyond practising transferable competencies to discovering new talents, which help them to shape their identity and understand their strengths and weaknesses. Students have a better chance of making this discovery in longer periods of community engagement, for example 100 hours split into five hours daily over 20 days rather than 100 hours split into two hours daily over 50 days. The former, without a doubt, gives more time for putting competencies into practice and building social connections – another factor in increasing student employability (Bourner and Millican 2011).

Ira Harkavy (2018) highlights the aim of the Anchor Institutions Task Force to realise the potential of universities in partnering and combining resources with the variety of local institutions surrounding them, so that together they can be catalysts for social justice. To mention one example in the United States, Washington State University took on the role of an anchor institution through its Community Service Learning Center. The latter convened members of the university faculty and student body with local community organisations to tackle food insecurity that was exacerbating poverty rates in rural parts of Washington and Idaho. The solutions to address this form of inequality were developed by a cross-disciplinary group which met in spaces outside the university. This paved the way for the Palouse Food Project, the outcomes of which ranged from public landscape designs to prototypes in the interest of improving food security (Brown and Moore 2019).

One of the key features or responsibilities of anchor institutions, demonstrated by the example above, is bringing people together in what Cantor and Englot (2018: 210) refer to as "third spaces" of collaboration where the engagement occurs in safe communal spaces outside the university. People in the community who have the expertise and resources necessary to solve the targeted problem should feel on par with the people bringing expertise and resources from the university. This cannot be guaranteed in a space that not everyone has access to on a day-to-day basis. Communal spaces are in fact where unequal relationships of power are transformed into acknowledging simply what you bring to the table. This is particularly important for people in the community who need to be included but who feel they have been victims of the inequalities manifested either directly or indirectly by the actions or inactions of the university (Cantor and Englot 2018).

In addition, the background of the people who are brought into the project is another condition determining its impact. The Palouse Food Project involved five different entities and organisations in the community to deliver the products or solutions to tackle food insecurity. Together with faculty members and students, this constituted a group of people from disciplines such as education, crop and soils, horticulture, history, human development, landscape architecture, education, communication, apparel merchandising and design, sociology and digital technology disciplines (Brown and Moore 2019). As simply stated by Cantor and Englot (2018: 209), "diverse groups are better at problem solving than homogeneous ones". They also eloquently

describe the significance of community engagement in forming sustainable relationships of trust with the following statement:

> this kind of community-engaged work brings us back to both the promise of higher education amidst the exploding diversity of our communities around the globe, and the responsibility to forge inclusive communities of experts – in the students we train, the faculty members whose scholarship we reward, and the partners with whom we dialogue to jointly create a more equitable future. There is no substitute for building those relationships face to face and person to person. It is in doing so that we acquire the new lenses we need to see through the "otherness" of others, to bridge divides real and imagined, and to make common cause. We have an active, progressive role to play in turning the tide of bigotry, in reversing the perception of diversity as a threat, and lifting up the opportunity that awaits us all if we can cultivate and embrace a broader talent pool, overcome our fears of each other, and build prosperity together. (Cantor and Englot 2018: 213)

Including means for transforming the impact of the engagement on the learning experience

Trust is an important factor in transforming the learning experience. It can be established when those impacted directly by the transformation have an active role in reviewing and shaping the experience. As mentioned earlier, the ability to assimilate policies so as to participate in debates and reforms for their improvement is integral to sustaining transformations in or from any architecture for community engagement. Debates could go beyond addressing how the policies, processes or practices of the engagement itself could be improved. Accrediting and recognising the learning outcomes from the engagement has the potential to organically transform the learning experience such as by enabling interdisciplinarity – an important key to addressing the complex challenges of our society. Enabling this to become a widespread opportunity for all, though, would require continued debates around the impact of the engagement's learning outcomes on the whole learning experience, including the learning environment and learning pathways. Such debates should consider the student, university and community perspectives of those involved in the engagement.

Another way by which community engagement benefits local communities is in developing citizenship post-conflict (Millican 2014), in that by working with people who hold or express different values and opinions, we can better understand what makes up who we are. Strengthening our collective and individual identities through the collaborative development of processes for problem solving supports the development of citizenship which could outweigh private, ethnic or family allegiances. This helps to establish the necessary trust for building up social capital as well as a sense of belonging and "generalised reciprocity" within the community which, alongside citizenship, are prime factors for recovery and reconciliation post-conflict (Millican 2014: 110).

According to Teixera and Klemenčič (2021), the construction of people's self-identity is also a condition for fostering the civic role of university education, which is in turn a precondition for better public health and education prospects. This causal

link is best realised when learning is allowed to be conducted experimentally with community partners and outside of the classroom and, secondly, when every student – regardless of discipline – is on a par with academics in the evolution of knowledge (Teixera and Klemenčič 2021). Given the various factors that condition student engagement, the next section investigates further how students enhance the quality of universities and notes similarities and differences in what they can contribute to community engagement.

What lessons can apply from students' agency in the quality enhancement of universities to community engagement?

Klemenčič (2015) describes three conditions of students' agency (the ability to exert influence and change) on the quality of their universities, regardless of whether the student benefits directly from that action or not. The three conditions are:

1. student capital, that is, what students specifically can bring to the table to improve the quality of their universities;
2. students' agentic possibilities, that is, students taking agency, considering their university's provisions, procedures and culture;
3. students' agentic orientation, that is, students' willingness and motivation to be involved, considering the relations between students and their university.

What do students bring to the table? As the foremost beneficiaries of education, students' first-hand experience in their learning environments is one source of capital conditioning the quality of education. Students can share their experiences in a survey or by filing a complaint (examples of individual agency), through a student representative (proxy agency) or via collective agency such as in a protest. Second to experience, student involvement in governance processes, including quality assurance, legitimises the university's quality claims and policies. The organisation of different on- and off-campus activities, as well as the management of student support services by students, student organisations or student governments are other resources that can enhance quality education (Klemenčič 2015). Similarly, students' time and experiences are resources for better implementing community engagement activities. Students' own involvement in the engagement, along with the support of the university, serves to further legitimise the university's claim as a socially responsible institution. Furthermore, as the previous section has already explained, the reflective review of community engagement activities (through students' first-hand experience among that of other actors involved) can ensure the continual commitment to benefit communities.

"What students are able to do and to be within their university" is the second major condition of student agency considered (Klemenčič 2015: 530). Both the legal status of students and the university governance model are the roots from which stem the formal provisions and informal cultural norms regulating student participation in governance and quality assurance. These provisions and norms serve to bolster or reduce the power (agentic possibilities) of students. The managerial-corporate model of university governance is one example of how the power of students can be depressingly reduced if the view of students as consumers predominates over students being

viewed as an active constituency. Rather than assuming that students are producers in developing competencies throughout the learning experience, the consumer approach automatically implies that the university is primarily responsible for providing competencies to students (Klemenčič 2015). Preparing students to be solely responsible for developing competencies (which everyone faces in real life) requires universities to protect and promote students' right to be equal partners in education governance. There is no substitute for doing this and it is only the democratic-collegiate governance models which enshrine this right. Similarly to having structured provisions for students to decide on aspects of the university's governance and quality assurance processes, university provisions should enable students to govern community engagement. When these are absent, student apathy is not only the likely result but also a consequence of the vicious circle substantiating the consumerist view of students.

Whether or not provisions are in place to protect the right of students as equal partners in education, the third condition for student involvement in university quality enhancement is as important as the previous two in making meaningful student engagement possible. Students' agentic orientation is described as their intentional will "developed in the context of multiple demands on their time" (Klemenčič 2015: 536) to contribute to university quality enhancement. On the one hand, the motivation of students can be increased if their involvement is considered appropriate and encouraged by the university. On the other hand, even if involvement is considered a norm, whether the students feel some degree of attachment or loyalty towards the university is another condition of their will to "act in the interests of the entire university community, when this means acting beyond or even despite of their immediate self-interests" (Klemenčič 2015: 537).

Students gain a sense of belonging if the aim of the university meets their own expectations, if they perceive that their well-being matters to the university, or simply if they feel like an important part of the university. These factors open the doorway for students' motivation to take responsibility in supporting the quality enhancement of their university as well as its functioning. Furthermore, this motivation helps create a positive university experience that in turn can increase student retention as well as students' perception of achievement and health (Klemenčič 2015). Aside from being conditioned by a sense of belonging and logic of appropriateness, student community engagement can also serve to increase a sense of belonging towards the university in the students as well as in the community. The university demonstrates it cares for their students' well-being by supporting them to take ownership of the governance and accreditation of the engagement. The community's well-being is also being addressed when the engagement seeks to realise solutions to the problems and inequalities it faces. Finally, the well-being of the university itself is strengthened when its social responsibility is put into practice by its own members' engaging in and with the community.

Student power would see a steep rise if their agency in governing and accrediting community engagement was protected through formal provisions and a logic of appropriateness in their universities. Compared to the smaller proportions of students currently involved in structures governing universities and its quality assurance reviews, all students could have the opportunity to take agency in developing competencies through a form of community engagement of their choice. This maximal approach in shared opportunity might thus apply to the sense of belonging and

well-being of students, universities and communities. Based on the evidence that demonstrated the benefits from community engagement activities and from student engagement in quality assurance, the next section proposes a set of recommendations to accredit student community engagement.

Aligning recommendations for the accreditation of student community engagement with existing international policy and practice

The project Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education or TEFCE, now SHEFCE (IDE 2023) underlines four key principles to achieve a flexible framework for community engagement. With a flexible policy framework, O'Brien et al. (2021) emphasise the importance of a participatory approach towards community engagement that would not restrict the context-specific needs in the community from being addressed. Table 20.1 proposes three recommendations for accrediting community engagement – based on the evidence highlighted in this chapter – which could meet the principles for a flexible and meaningfully participative framework.

Table 20.1: Recommendations for accrediting student community engagement aligned with the principles in Benneworth et al. (2018)

Recommendations for accrediting community engagement in university programs	Principles for a Framework on community engagement (Benneworth et al. 2018)			
	1 . Commitment to authentic, mutually beneficial community engagement	2. Empowerment of individual academics and other actors	3. Allowing users to influence the level of value assigned to different engagement practices	4. Collaborative learning rather than competitive comparison of performance
1. Students along with the respective university staff, through their legitimate representative bodies (e.g. student and teacher unions), can take agency (i) in integrating community engagement into their programmes, (ii) throughout the engagement and (iii) in reviewing and reforming in real time policies relevant to the engagement.	Recommendation 1 can meet Principle I.	Recommendation 1 can meet Principle 2.	Recommendation 1 can meet Principle 3.	Recommendation 1 can meet Principle 4.
2. Community engagement activities (i) are sufficiently long, (ii) promote the fulfilment of the university's social responsibility and (iii) bring diverse teams of people from all parties* on-site -both in local communities and universities - for what they can and want to bring to the table.	Recommendation 2 can meet Principle I.	Recommendation 2 can meet Principle 2.	Recommendation 2 can meet Principle 3.	Recommendation 2 can meet Principle 4.
3. The university establishes Community Engagement Centres to, without bias, (i) facilitate open access to information on community engagement policies, processes and practices, (ii) support the development of new or existing learning outcomes and (iii) organise regular open debates among the parties involved on the impact of community engagement through which they can advise and inform reform processes.	Recommendation 3 can meet Principle I.	Recommendation 3 can meet Principle 2.	Recommendation 3 can meet Principle 3.	Recommendation 3 can meet Principle 4.

*Referring to students, members of the local community and university who were involved in the engagement.

Accrediting student community engagement in university programmes is, in Recommendation 1, metaphorically fitted with a "transformation button". The power to decide when the button is pressed entails more accountability than advising or informing the transformation itself. The latter is a power that all engaged parties, including the local community, should have. This is why Recommendation 3 outlines how Community Engagement Centres can make participation in community engagement more meaningful and organic for all those involved. Through representative bodies such as, among others, student unions or their counterparts for teachers and universities, the constituents of these bodies take collective agency on the transformation and legitimise it by electing and holding to account their representatives.

The TEFCE project gives further recommendations through which capacity building on community engagement can be supported, for example by allowing the recognition of community engagement as one of the criteria for promotion and career progression and as a part of the designated workload of either teaching or research. Another recommendation is for networks of universities, such as the European Universities (EEA 2022), to host structured debates and discussions with stakeholder organisations such as the E4 Group to better mainstream policies for community engagement (Farnell 2020).

Community engagement took a major step in becoming one of the guiding objectives for the European University Initiative as adopted by EU Council Conclusions in 2018. Today, around 44 transnational alliances involving over 300 universities are being supported by this initiative and, since the first call for proposals in 2019, just over half a billion euros have been invested in the alliances (Council of the European Union 2022, European Commission 2019, 2020, 2022). From the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) policy-making side, the ministers for higher education of 49 countries have committed to support the integration of community engagement into the core missions of higher education from teaching, learning and research to the very management of institutions (EHEA 2020). The wide-scale implementation of these initiatives and policies, however, puts into question whether these commitments require policy recommendations such as those in Table 20.1 which support the engagement of students, universities and local communities in a more sustainable and organic way.

The 1998 World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century serves as a stark example of very ambitious goals for community engagement that ministers for higher education committed to but which have to date not shown evidence of wide-scale implementation. It was agreed that partnering with students and the community – among other stakeholders – "based on common interest, mutual respect and credibility, should be a prime matrix for renewal in higher education" (UNESCO 1998: 10). Community engagement was linked to enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education, as well as to a more student-centred approach in meeting a diversity of needs. It was not only indicated that substantial reforms and policies for open access go hand in hand with this new paradigm of higher education but that universities:

> should take all necessary measures to reinforce their service to the community, especially their activities aimed at eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger and

> disease, through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach in the analysis of challenges, problems and different subjects. (UNESCO 1998: 13)

So, if both global political commitment and evidence for such a community engagement framework already exist, what is missing for its widespread implementation?

Why legitimate representative bodies matter in the debate on governing and accrediting student community engagement

Many successful education reforms all around the world have happened when organised representative movements, particularly those of students, were key players in the decision-making processes. It is, for the most part, due to the work of the elected representatives of the European Students' Union (ESU) that most prominent policies for students' rights to be involved in university governance and quality assurance have happened in Europe. Legitimate representative bodies – beyond being accountable for the agency taken on behalf of their constituents as already described in the previous section – can also serve as key sources of organisational memory supporting the further development of competences on movement building for reform.

Today, ESU continues to participate actively in the working structures of the European Higher Education Area where decisions among the ministerial representatives seek to achieve consensus with the consultative members, although the latter hold no voting rights. As current co-chair of the social dimension working group, ESU is leading the debate around the development of indicators to support the implementation of community engagement in the EHEA, among other principles and guidelines for enhancing the social dimension. On the global level, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 High Level Steering Committee would be a key structure through which the Global Student Forum could debate policies for community engagement. However, until the time of writing, there is still no dedicated seat for students in the governance of the Global Education Cooperation Mechanism despite long-standing calls from the teachers' trade union movement and education civil society organisations, alongside student unions from across the world.

Accrediting student community engagement would mean that all students and community members have a stake in gaining a share of the power to govern education. Doing this on a wide scale would require co-ordinated organisation at all levels of governance, especially at the institutional and programme levels. This recipe is far from easy as the success of the formula can require long exercises of trial and error, with each level of governance having its own intricacies of issues to overcome.

While research on models of community engagement is not exhaustive, the recommendations in Table 20.1 were identified from studies evidencing good practices in the southern, northern, eastern and western regions of the world. Together, they point to a framework that could be empowering to students, universities and local communities by enabling all parties to take ownership of community engagement. It was also demonstrated how the well-being of all parties and the legitimacy of universities' social responsibility could be meaningfully improved. Last but not least,

the framework seeks to be sustainable over time by providing means to genuinely foster active capacity for open debate, review and reform among the very people it is affecting.

Given that community engagement and its potential benefits are dependent on and matter deeply to students' agency, this chapter recommends actions that would keep students central to the decision-making processes in any framework. No lists of engagement activities are recommended, just as no exact solutions to inequalities are suggested. The freedom to choose the engagement activity enables different solutions to be found by those choosing to be involved. While this is an important key to facilitate interdisciplinarity, it also highlights the importance of having a review system to build on institutional memory, because the freedom of choice could also mean that there will be a lack of certainty of the success of the community engagement framework.

The window of opportunity to debate and test ambitious education reforms is not to be taken for granted. In regard to humanity's most urgent commitment of preventing earth's temperature from warming above 1.5 degrees Celsius, the United Nations Secretary-General, in an address during the COP26 Summit, called for "maximum ambition – from all countries on all fronts" (UN 2021). On the education front, could not accrediting community engagement globally lead to ambitious engagement activities, among them those working towards keeping the 1.5°C goal? Testing such a reform could also serve to increase public trust in education. Otherwise, at worst, this need to be reviewed and better adapted to do that in the future. At any rate, these scenarios may have the potential to stop us from (what Guterres bluntly described as) "treating nature like a toilet" and "digging our own graves" (UN 2021).

If the inequalities affecting our communities require our education systems to transform more than they have already, then the next logical step seems to be enabling students and universities to directly engage as equals with their communities to find out what more is really needed. Preventing this new paradigm of potential may further prevent us from addressing inequalities, possibly fuelling further public distrust in education and science to cause problems that we do not yet foresee. The 2022 report on the progress of the SDGs shows us and younger generations how years of progress and hope for a better future could be flushed away so quickly. It is high time our universities start recognising more officially the ways in which students are engaging with local communities to realise the very future our SDGs are aiming at. Otherwise, why shouldn't community engagement be accredited? It only seems to go against our long-term interest if we do not harness this potential. Which arguments, guided by evidence, are holding universities from investing more time and resources in building their own capacity, as well as their students and local communities on debating reforms for community engagement?

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Chapter 21

Deepening community connections as we face tragedy together

Katherine Conway-Turner

Introduction

Buffalo State University is a comprehensive, public, regional higher educational institution within the State University of New York system, which also includes university research centres, community colleges and technical colleges. The university celebrated its 150th anniversary during the 2021-22 academic year. For a full year, the campus community combed through the history of our campus, discussed the many successes that the campus has seen and investigated the stresses and strains that the campus has weathered during the last century and a half. Buffalo State has its roots as a teacher education institution and opened its doors in 1871 to prepare teachers to perform the important work of educating the youth of New York and especially those in the western portion of the state. The "teacher's college" changed names over the years and broadened the scope of its academic programmes to include arts, sciences, education and professional programmes.

The rich history of Buffalo State has allowed the university to address the needs of thousands of students including first-generation students, students from diverse ethnic, culturally and racial backgrounds, veterans returning from wars and students who sought an affordable and outstanding education. The educational attainment at Buffalo State placed many students on an upward trajectory for social mobility. Our first African American graduate was Charles A. Thompson in 1880, and he along with many other students from diverse backgrounds illustrated that even in its early days Buffalo State sought to provide access to our richly diverse communities. Today our campus boasts a majority of students from traditionally unrepresented backgrounds reflecting a diversity of experiences, cultures and perspectives. During the year of reflection on our sesquicentennial celebration current and former members of the campus community and alumni across generations and their relatives shared the importance of the transformative education they had received from Buffalo State.

As the years passed, Buffalo State – situated in the second largest city in New York state and a place which was once a rust belt city centring on the steel industry – has deepened and embraced its anchor mission. The urban-engaged anchor mission of the university has allowed us to build pathways for students to enter higher education and to succeed on campus, within the community and post-graduation. We stand steadfast in our desire to advance our broader community as well. This advancement

includes elevating the communities around us, advancing our Jedi mission of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion and participating in the resolution or remediation of complex community and social problems that surround us. The examples of this work are numerous and can be found in every division within the university.

The Buffalo State Small Business Development Center (Buffalo State 2023a) works with individuals and groups who wish to understand how to start small businesses, how to develop business plans, and all aspects of supporting and developing a business, including technical assistance in areas like accounting, loan acquisition and human resources. Significant attention is provided to the development of minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses and local, state and federal certifications. Since the city of Buffalo is a refugee resettlement community, our centre also lends special attention to underrepresented members of our community, including newcomers to the Buffalo area. Our traditional community includes significant numbers of African American, Puerto Rican, Native American and those of European ancestry. Today, newcomers come to the city of Buffalo from around the world where extreme strife, war, genocide or crime have driven them from their homes or where they have been the targets of personal or familial attacks. We partnered with local resettlement agencies when Afghan refugees were relocated to our city, we assist in English acquisition for those coming with little or no English proficiency and we provide US citizenship preparation classes.

The campus participates in a consortium of Buffalo anchor institutions (Maurrasse, Chapter 17 this volume) to assure people that we are buying locally for services and products, with a special focus on businesses owned by women and those owned by traditionally underrepresented individuals. This consortium is essential in bringing attention to the need to support those within our region and to participate in supporting traditionally underutilised and overlooked businesses.

Our partnerships led by the Center for Community Engagement, in collaboration with our academic schools, connect with community agencies and community groups, which are well developed and (through service-learning courses, research projects, consultation and volunteerism) provide more than 500 000 volunteer hours a year to our community while participating in hundreds of community partnerships. From designing and implementing communication plans, exploring invasive species within the Great Lakes region or researching the history of important community programmes, faculty with their students connect significant community questions to course assignments to engage our students in tackling community questions or needs.

Our acclaimed Anne Frank Project (Buffalo State 2023b) reaches into our communities to help Black, Brown and all historically marginalised community members tell their story, be an architect of their current and future reality, and work together for the greater good. This project has deep connections around the world where other countries have also faced severe trauma and at times genocide, with a special connection to Rwanda. Our anchor mission supports the engagement of our campus within the world surrounding us and beyond.

The engagement within our community and the commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion is a distinguishing aspect of Buffalo State and one that values the land where we are located, the connection to the communities that surrounds us and the

lifting of all diverse voices. Our Center for Social Justice galvanises much of this work and is an active agent in study, promoting and teaching within this important sphere.

This was the frame and background of our campus as we started the 2022 calendar year. And then a singularly life-altering tragedy hit us.

Facing tragedies together

Buffalo is the second-largest city in the state of New York, and tragedies of various kinds hit the Buffalo community every year. As a medium-size and diverse city, we have not been immune to disasters. There are far too many examples of death due to shooting or another type of violence each year. According to Buffalo Police statistics archived and provided by the city (City of Buffalo 2023), there have been 40-60 deaths by homicide yearly between 2008 and 2021. These homicides have been widely discussed and are often seen as a central issue to tackle for the city.

The disproportionate rate of violence occurring within Black and Brown communities highlights the role of poverty and joblessness on crime rates. Buffalo is also not immune to police brutality or the impact of over-policing communities of colour. As these issues surface across US cities, we also see them in Buffalo. The racial awakening that was seen by many communities after the murder of George Floyd and the killing of many others while "living Black" is a continued backdrop for racial tensions and the need to scrutinise all deaths by violence.

The Buffalo State campus has not been spared tragedies. In March 2022, Buffalo State suffered the loss by gun violence of a 19-year-old student while he attended an off-campus party. The situation and loss of one of our own was heart-breaking and added to the unfortunate count seen in the city. He was a young man who appears to have been the victim of a heinous crime. The investigation of that tragedy continues, and we await a resolution and incarceration of the perpetrator.

Just days after the murder of our student, Buffalo State hosted a community discussion on campus, organised and convened by the then New York Lieutenant Governor, Brian Benjamin, to discuss gun violence. Community and campus leaders and family members of victims sat together to discuss what response citizens and officials should have to violent crimes. Individuals shared specific situations that led to tragedies and what could be done from an educational and a legal perspective. The stories of sons, daughters and family members who were lost to gun violence were shared with the group. The pain and frustration lay heavily on those in attendance. Community members shared how frequently violence occurs and how exhausted the community is that there is not a solution to get and keep instruments of violence off the streets. What was clear was the need for gun control and to prevent guns from illegally entering the state of New York by crossing the border from nearby and contiguous states with less strong gun control. There was absolute agreement in the room that semi-automatic guns should be outlawed across the country and yet many discussed the difficulty of such a federal law being enacted. This partisan controversy continues. As we sat in that room in late March 2022, no one could have imaged what would occur in the weeks to come.

The 14 May 2022 mass shooting

On 14 May 2022, Buffalo was the target of a racially motivated mass shooting. As people shopped in a local Tops grocery store on the East Side of Buffalo, a district which a large number of African Americans and other people of colour call home, no one could have imagined what was about to transpire. Buffalo is a city where one can find highly segregated areas and the East Side of Buffalo is such an area, with a considerable number of African American families. The city of Buffalo as a whole is 35% Black/African American (US Census Bureau 2021), with a high concentration within the East Side.

A man drove across the state of New York, having researched the location of an area where a significant portion of African Americans live, with the intention to hunt and kill Black people (McKinley and Thrush 2022). This self-proclaimed white supremacist was on a mission to murder. His research brought him to the East Side of Buffalo, and his reason, as noted in his manifesto, was racial hatred.

We now know he was successful in his aim. His mission was accomplished, and the aftermath of the event was widely covered. When the attacker was stopped, 10 Buffalo citizens lay dead, others wounded and the entire city was in shock, disbelief and horror at the event. As the investigation continued, it was perfectly clear that the murders were racially motivated, and that African Americans were the target (Meko and Higgins 2022).

The city felt the visceral shock of this reality. While shopping in Tops supermarket on Jefferson Avenue, those killed and injured were participating in an activity that is performed daily or at least weekly by all. The hatred and premediated nature of the event was shocking. Every corner of the city felt the horror of the reality of the murders. The East Side community that is often marginalised and has a long history of being underresourced, with high rates of joblessness, frequently only seeing low wages, living within a food desert and facing poor health and education outcomes, was targeted because of the colour of the skin of those living there (Taylor et al. 2021).

The news reaches campus

Buffalo State is approximately three miles away from the Buffalo Tops killing field. The news quickly hit campus as it filtered its way through every part of Buffalo and then beyond. Many of our students are from the city of Buffalo, and approximately 15% are graduates of Buffalo public schools. These students were connected directly to those murdered. They were family members, friends, neighbours and community members to some of our students. Many students frequently visited Tops supermarket, or their families did. So, there was the direct fear, pain and concern that it could have been them or a member of their family. Our campus is significantly diverse, with 60% of our students from underrepresented groups, mostly Black or Brown. The perpetrator acknowledged that he sought out this community to destroy, so what does that mean for a campus that has a majority of people who visibly meet the criteria of someone racially motivated to kill people of colour? The concerns for those killed or wounded, and the fears for themselves, were palpable.

Students began communicating with each other and sharing their concerns. They then contacted campus offices to understand what happened and what they should do, and to get advice on staying safe.

Parents quickly began to call with similar fears. Is it safe to have my student on campus? Is it safe to be in Buffalo? What is being done to create a safe environment on campus? Parents expressed sentiments that they had sent their child to Buffalo because it was a safe, smaller and gentler environment. They raised the unanswerable question of how this could happen here.

Staff and faculty who live on the East Side of Buffalo, have family in the area or have significant connections in that area were also fearful and concerned. And our deep concern for our city and the victims created a situation where we the campus community grieved and expressed shock and concern.

This tragedy unsettled the entire Buffalo community and beyond. As noted above, our partnerships across the city with community agencies, programmes and individuals run deep. Our community partners were as traumatised by the occurrences as those within the borders of our campus (Becker 2022).

Community responses

Buffalo is a city of good neighbours, and we quickly began to see people across the city come together to provide immediate support for the family of victims and those most directly impacted, and to look towards longer-term support. Our university, other higher education institutions, community agencies and individuals quickly began to lend a hand to address immediate issues.

Two concerns emerged requiring immediate attention. The Tops Marketplace is the only full-service grocery store in the East Side community. The need to close the grocery store, as a crime scene, placed an immediate and understandable burden on the families that relied on it for food and necessities. A widespread understanding of food insecurity began to spread throughout the city. Partners immediately came together to donate food, to develop ways to refrigerate items and to distribute necessary food to those in need. The response was widespread and the reality of the community being a food desert without this market became evident to neighbours and the western New York community. Our students and many others began to collect food supplies and work with agencies that were gathering and distributing the food.

The second immediate need for community members was counselling and psychological support. All programmes with counselling resources, including our campus counselling centre, were immediately called upon to assist in supporting the surviving victims, family members of those most immediately affected, and those who had been inside and outside the supermarket during the assault, including employees of the market. In particular need were counsellors of colour who could most closely identify with families from the East Side neighbourhood (Becker 2022).

As time progressed, the city quickly turned to long-term solutions and support for a community that has frequently been at the end of the list for support. Buffalo Mayor Brown and New York Governor Hochul began to hold discussions and forums to explore long-term investments within the community. Increased economic development within the area became a significant goal to be realised by the city and the state. Economic investments accelerated within the community to provide it with a more positive future. Also, financial donations began to develop to support the survivors

and their families. To date the Buffalo 5/14 Survivors Fund (National Compassion Fund 2022) totals 6.4 million dollars, to be distributed to the 169 individuals deemed most directly impacted by the tragedy.

What is education's role as we move forward?

As we settle into this new reality after the mass shooting, Buffalo is still a city of good neighbours, but it is a city scarred by the reality of the mass shooting. It is clear that no trauma is resolved quickly or evenly. Education can have a key role in the healing and in the next steps.

A role that an anchor institution can play is as a convenor for discussion, dialogue and consideration of action (Cantor et al. 2013). Higher education must continue to play this role for our city in conjunction with other institutions in the city. Say Yes Buffalo (2023) is a not-for-profit agency that serves to advance the success of youth by supporting K-12 students and helping to facilitate completion of a college degree. This umbrella organisation consists of partners within the Buffalo public school community, higher education institutions, philanthropic organisations, businesses and many agencies whose mission is to create a Buffalo that is thriving.

We have already begun holding group conversations to create a space to share, dialogue and discuss the ever-changing emotions related to this tragedy. At a recent forum at a local university, Villa Marie College, it was remarkable to hear students articulate their hope for a better society despite the tragedy that they and their families have faced. Gathering together to have these frank and open discussions can assist in the healing process and allow community members to experience a sense of hope for a better future. This balance is extremely important. This convening and conversation brought together students and staff directly impacted by the events and respondents representing leaders from the city, the state of New York and higher education institutions. It will be important to sustain these opportunities to check in with community members, to discuss what is needed to move forward and to ensure that all community members feel supported and receive necessary assistance to further economic advancement in the East Side community.

Higher education has the responsibility to research the seeds of such hateful acts and to develop programmes that can reduce such occurrences in the future. How did an 18-year-old man develop such deep racial hatred? What strategies should be in place to recognise and intervene in such situations? How can we improve the training of teachers, community members and family members to recognise the early indicators before the killing occurs? What further information is needed to advance gun control and gun access so that the means to kill are not in the hands of those who wish to act on the racism, sexism and prejudiced beliefs they hold?

When we as educators are able to give testimony, write fact-based articles or share valuable information with influencers on our local, state-wide or federal policies around violence, we must do it. We cannot sit safely behind our desks in our offices or in our classrooms and assume others will provide the important information we possess. We must have the courage to speak up and stand against the racism that we as a country still face. This cannot be seen as the responsibility of the activist solely, but we must engage in active research and lift our voices.

To the future

Higher education anchor institutions have the responsibility to educate in ways that ground our students and community members in principles that encourage the democratic process and that value diversity, equity and inclusion. We must develop and demonstrate the courage not only to study and teach about complex societal issues, but also to work to foster a culture within our communities that prevents events like the mass shooting in Buffalo. This may seem impossible in today's violence-filled world, but at Buffalo State we intend to work to make the impossible possible.

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Part VII

Conclusions

Chapter 22

Rethinking education in times of crisis: democracy, sustainability and social justice[6]

Enida Bezhani

Introduction

In its 2022 Democracy Report the V-Dem Institute sounded the alarm:

> The level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2021 is down to levels last registered in 1989. The last 30 years of democratic advances following the end of the Cold War have been eradicated. (V-Dem Institute 2022)

Dictatorships are on the rise and now hold sway over 70% of the world's population. Democratic decline is especially evident in the Asia-Pacific, eastern Europe and central Asia, as well as in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. In "a race against time to stop and reverse the democratic decline" (Gruden, Chapter 1 this volume), the 7th Global Forum on Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability and Social Justice convened at a propitious time of great challenges – amid "a clear and worrying degree of democratic backsliding" (Council of Europe 2021), Russia's war on Ukraine, rising populist sentiment, growing economic and social inequality – which were "laid bare" (Harkavy, Chapter 2 this volume) by the devastating global crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bringing together 120 participants from 40 countries, the 7th Global Forum (Global Forum 2022) was organised within the framework of the Council of Europe's project Democratic and Local Mission of Higher Education and hosted by Dublin City University. It was the joint initiative of the Council of Europe, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC 2023), the Organization of American States (OAS 2023) and the International Association of Universities (IAU 2023), under the umbrella of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. The co-operation that was started in 1999 by the Council of Europe and the IC was joined in April 2018 by the OAS and in October 2019 by the IAU; and in January 2021 the partnership was formally named the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. The Global Forum was designed to contribute to an international movement that reimagines how colleges and universities work with local and global partners to create more just, equitable, inclusive and sustainable democratic societies.

6. Based on the author's observations as General Rapporteur to the 7th Global Forum (Dublin, 16-17 June 2022).

Over the course of two days and five plenary sessions, the Global Forum adopted a holistic approach, acknowledging the interconnectedness of the mission of higher education and the goals of advancing democratic values, sustainability and social justice. It noted the overlapping of the global, the national and the local, as the levels where these aspirations and activities play out. Enriched by time for discussion in each plenary session and lively discussions in the parallel group sessions, the Global Forum also gave voice to a series of best practices and local initiatives, as well as concerns of future challenges, which shall be considered in the sections below.

The global level: education and democracy

If at the 5th Global Forum in Rome (Global Forum 2017) the concern for democracy centred around "narratives of post-truth and alternative facts" (Jibladze 2018), the mood by now has become significantly more sombre, given the fragility of democratic systems and the increasing erosion of participatory democracy, which have put the Council of Europe's values (Council of Europe 2023) "under stress", as maintained by Daire Keogh, President of the hosting Dublin City University in his welcome address. The unprovoked Russian war on Ukraine from February 2022 has added an additional sense of urgency and even malaise. In a swift response to that aggression, the Committee of Ministers decided on 16 March 2022, under Article 8 of the Organisation's Statute, that the Russian Federation would cease to be a member of the Council of Europe with immediate effect, ending the country's 26 years of membership, as an attestation of their strong conviction and commitment to do whatever it takes to defend the core values, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The global concern for democratic values emerged clearly from the richly diverse perspectives shared by the participants from across six continents, as well as the belief that higher education – its institutions, academic staff and students – has a (even *the*) leading role to play in advancing democracy. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," said Simon Harris, the Irish Minister for Further and Higher Education, quoting Nelson Mandela, in opening the Global Forum (Harris, Chapter 3 this volume). Education plays an essential role in defending and advancing genuine democracy for all. This aligns closely with one of the three pillars of the Irish six-month presidency of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (May to November 2022), to promote participatory democracy and youth engagement.

But how do we encourage that on a broader scale? For one thing, we can do so by rethinking the traditional means that universities have at their disposal: pedagogical frameworks should be rethought; courses and modules should teach students about democracy; theory should be combined with service learning, led by students to address real community needs; and curricula should be overhauled and built on interdisciplinary approaches, which will enlighten students. But this is no longer enough. Higher education should go beyond the top-down approach of "instilling" values in its students – democratic values can be truly appreciated and internalised only through active participation in collective activities characterised by mutual respect, where democracy (at least in its university environment) is lived

out and has visible meaning to its participants. "No democratic higher education, no democratic schooling, no democratic societies", maintained Ira Harkavy (Harkavy, Chapter 2 this volume).

But are universities up to the challenge? They were not without their critics at the forum. Ira Harkavy was clear that universities do not contribute enough to their own democratic mission and that increasing racism, xenophobia and attacks on knowledge and democracy are in part due to "the failure of universities to sufficiently do the primary things they are supposed to do: educate students to be ethical, empathetic, engaged, democratic citizens and advance knowledge for the continuous betterment of the human condition" (Harkavy, Chapter 2 this volume). Calls for universities to expand the understanding of their democratic mission in a more holistic way were matched with questions about just how democratic higher education institutions – large, well-established, well-endowed, top-down organisations – actually are, in spite of the obvious best of intentions. Honest conversations should take place about realities, such as the ones that occurred at this forum.

Challenges

The expectations for higher education institutions are high. They should be societies' "lighthouses" (European Commission 2022a), showing the way to social inclusion, racial justice, diversity and the strengthening of democratic culture and values. Is this too much to expect from what is basically a small number of really engaged professors and students (among whom one counts the participants in the Global Forum)? In a survey undertaken in Brazil in 2019, respondents were asked to name just one research institution in the country and only 9% could do so (Knobel and Lock, Chapter 15 this volume). When autocratic regimes (or leaders seemingly aspiring to such a status) blatantly attack the autonomy of universities and go against anything that is for the public good, the staff and students are often left on their own to fight back, "as [clearly] the wider society does not understand internal university processes and is somewhat disconnected from universities", in the words of Denise Roche from Scholars at Risk Europe at the Global Forum.

Can higher education institutions really bear the weight of the responsibility that is being placed on them to defend and build a nationwide democratic culture, often on their own? The university must not keep silent when society needs an active response from them. "I am saddened by the fact that the rectors of so many Russian universities signed a statement claiming that developing patriotism and serving the State are their highest calling", observed Sjur Bergan in his Convocation Ceremony speech for the honorary doctorate bestowed upon him by the DCU (Bergan, Chapter 27 this volume; for the statement, see Russian Rectors 2022). Matjaž Gruden also reminded the audience that, sadly, the Kremlin understood that "to wage a war built on lies, manipulations and falsifications, the Russian academic community had first to be silenced" (Gruden, Chapter 2 this volume).

In 2021, the global democracy average score fell from 5.37 to 5.28 out of 10, "setting another dismal record for the worst global score since the index was first produced in 2006" (Economist Intelligence Unit 2022). The only equivalent drop since 2006 was in 2010 after the global financial crisis. "A new low for global democracy", *The Economist*

(2022) called it. This current crisis of democracy has been "coupled", among others, with a "culture of ignorance" and a "crisis of enlightenment" (Prijić Samaržija, Chapter 12 this volume). As she paraphrases Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "there is nothing more frightening than ignorance in action". To counter this, education should mobilise knowledge (Prijić Samaržija, Chapter 12 this volume) in action, and the universities have a fundamental role to play in this as institutions that "nurture knowledge and critical thinking, [which] are the driving force of progressive change" as Matjaž Gruden said at the conference.

Recent studies (Harris 2018; *The Economist* 2015) have shown that the greatest indicator of serious divisions in democratic societies, at least in the United States and the United Kingdom – more significant even than economic status or perceptions of race or religious inclination – is higher education attainment (or lack thereof). Whether connected to views on Brexit, belief in conspiracy theories, views on the validity of election results or electoral support for populist politicians, the division between the university-educated population and the less educated is stark. As the latter segments of society view universities somewhat as bastions of elitist thought detached from the "real" people, universities need to rethink their role.

From whom can we learn what?

The concept of best – or (better) good – practice assumes, often accurately, that many innovative ideas are universal and transferable, based on "local initiatives" (for want of a better term). I also acknowledge that sometimes the specific local conditions of education-related problems mean that such initiatives will be best practice only for education institutions in similar circumstances and contexts. While democracy, social justice, inclusion and access are desired by most, worldwide the discussions are often conducted as if every solution – and every problem for that matter – were universal and applicable everywhere. In any case, the few examples outlined in this chapter give hope that any institution in (almost) any country can make significant changes strengthening democratic practice culture and engagement.

In the European context, at policy level, the European Strategy for Universities (European Commission 2022b) and its flagship European Universities Initiative (European Commission 2023), which are cross-border alliances of higher education institutions, place universities at the centre of efforts to promote and uphold common European values and strengthen European identity. In practical terms, the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe 2018a, 2018b, 2018c) provides education systems with a toolbox that helps educate learners with a set of values, skills, attitudes, knowledge and critical understanding. The Reference Framework empowers them to act as competent and effective democratic citizens, helping create a culture of proactive civic engagement. At a time when the question of returning to the teaching of "civics" in school is provoking controversy (at least in the United States), the Moldovan Government has started embedding value-teaching modules in curricula as early as kindergarten (Rusu, Chapter 16 this volume).

The University of Paris 8, an institution with a tradition of seeing education embedded within the community (its original name: Centre universitaire expérimentel),

offers dedicated courses to refugee and asylum-seeker students, who come from countries where they are prevented from exercising their rights and freedoms. The courses expose them to French culture and key democratic concepts and values, and prepare them for democratic citizenship, as outlined by Annick Allègre, President of the Paris 8 University, in her presentation (Allaigre, Chapter 14 this volume).

Following the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, universities worldwide are taking up the challenge and offering places of sanctuary in solidarity with Ukrainian scholars and students, who come with particular needs, language barriers and trauma. This is an opportunity to embrace differences and diversity in campuses, while teaching students to appreciate "why democracy and civic engagement should matter to them, no matter their country of origin or field of study", as Denise Roche from Scholars at Risk Europe emphasised in her intervention at the conference.

The national and the societal: education and sustainability

The United Nations Agenda 2030, which was adopted unanimously by its 193 member states, has engaged the shared strong commitment of governments and stakeholders to take actions to meet Sustainable Development Goals and save the planet through collective action (UN 2015). In paragraph 52, the agenda acknowledges the role that the "scientific and academic community", among others, can play in reaching the desired state of development. As education is a cross-cutting issue across all the SDGs, it is an important tool in achieving most of them. Universities are uniquely placed to lead the cross-sectoral implementation of SDGs and, in turn, to achieve truly sustainable development, via research, education and community engagement.

Challenges

While most participants may have expected that higher education would enable fundamental changes in its structure and mission, and that it would play a formative role in attaining truly sustainable development, others sensed that universities could also be a part of the problem and not just the solution. Calls for a complete "overhaul of academic offerings and academia itself" (Muthwa, Chapter 11 this volume) or "breaking with the tradition that brought about today's state of affairs", as one of the participants put it in one of the debates at the conference, imply that the current university structure and functioning is not in a good place to act as a vehicle for change. However, calls by student activists participating in the forum, for students to play a key role in curriculum development, engage in research with professors as team members and be an active part of the leading university structures, envisage a quicker way to break this logjam, if not to turn the university on its head. Considering the generational time frame required for most curricular changes and the enormous value that academia places on high-quality research (and the subsequent system of rewards that goes with it), to some these calls may seem more rhetorical than realistic.

Universities are still likely to see each other as competitors more than as potential social co-operation partners. The way academic rewards work, how "success" is defined and measured, what is meant by engaged institutions – all of this should be part of a fundamental discourse and eventual consensus. A real transformation in higher education – a systemic shift – is needed, but this takes time and patience.

From whom can we learn what?

Innovative programmes led by academic staff and students have been developed and are being implemented all over the world. The host institution itself, DCU, starts off the list of accomplishments by being highly acknowledged for its commitment to the UN SDG 10 for "Reduced Inequalities".

The University of the Western Cape (see www.uwc.ac.za/) has embraced – and acts on – its role as a change agent for achieving SDGs. It has developed academic programmes related to SDGs, such as sustainable agriculture, research and innovation with the establishment of cross-disciplinary research teams for food security, governance and democracy as well as community engagement. In these programmes, students implement sustainability programmes in the surrounding communities and get core credits for this work. In its efforts to lead by example, to create a greener campus, the University of the Western Cape has established its own micro water-purification system on campus, as a response to the water shortage of 2017, while it regularly involves academic staff and professional staff in a national green campus campaign, to raise awareness about what contributes to a green campus through wide discussions and debates.

In Portugal, a significant number of new bachelor's degrees of a transformative nature financed by the Resilience and Recovery Plans of the European Union were approved in June 2022 by the Certification Agency. This process will entail new infrastructure, new hirings and new curricula, and it will help ensure the work on SDGs is carried on beyond 2030.

The local: education and the most marginalised

The role and responsibility of higher education to advance social and racial justice for those most at risk at the local level gave rise to a very ambitious and yet rewarding discussion at the Global Forum. Traditionally, universities used to emphasise their exclusivity and show detachment from their surrounding communities. They were even designed and constructed to physically stand aloof from their surroundings – a city within the city. The Covid-19 pandemic brought out into the open just how socially and economically fragmented – often along ethnic and racial lines – many of the developed democratic societies are, especially in urban settings, where many of the world's universities are located. Equally, the pandemic also created opportunities to think more deeply about the link between universities and the local community: " 'neighbour' is more than a geographic concept", observed Nancy Cantor, quoting Rabbi Joachim Prinz from the 1963 March on Washington (Cantor and Englot, Chapter 5 this volume).

Challenges

While higher education institutions are expected to be engines of social mobility and even equality, the reality is that, by reinforcing social privilege, they also often perpetuate social exclusion and division. Universities continue to market themselves as elite organisations, which by definition sets them apart. By default, "co-operation" with the "non-university" community is not all that common an occurrence and, when it happens, is often not done on equal terms. Faculty advancement and the reward structure in academia, research and science production continue to be valued far beyond any involvement or engagement with the surrounding community or society at large for that matter. Thus, unless this established structure is somehow altered, it will continue to act as a break and a deep divide preventing any significant and meaningful interaction with the world beyond the campus walls.

Clearly, there is no "one size fits all": what works in some places may not work in others. While Fridays for Future for example, is an amazing youth-led grass-roots movement that started in August 2018, taking action on climate change, students in Latin America and other regions cannot easily afford to sacrifice valuable education hours for political activism. Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito, Founder and Executive Director of The Millennials Movement, maintained that education is a human right but also suggested that students in Latin America have no assurance of receiving quality education, or of being able to complete it if they do gain access to it. The so-called "Black tax" in South Africa, whereby one member of an extended family, having escaped poverty through education, financially supports any number of less fortunate family members indefinitely, while it demonstrates the "transformative power of education", also sheds light on what is at stake in some communities.

From whom can we learn what?

As institutions with enormous capital – intellectual, economic, physical – universities can effect a significant positive change on surrounding communities and contribute to improved access and inclusivity.

In March 2019, the State University of Campinas (www.unicamp.br/unicamp/) in Brazil launched an Executive Commission for Human Rights to foster the development of new strategies, procedures and practices of inclusion, equity and accessibility (Knobel and Lock, Chapter 15 this volume). To increase access opportunities to university for Indigenous students who traditionally cannot join it, the university has introduced a quota system as a form of social justice. The university conducts a special exam for talented students from Indigenous communities who live as far as 3 600 km away from the university, in the border area shared by Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. At the University of Monterrey in Mexico (www.udem.edu.mx/en), as part of the Form to Transform scholarship for "young agents of social change", students contribute 480 hours of social service to benefit the lives of their communities – as part of their graduation requirements.

Higher education's impact in society multiplies manyfold when higher education institutions join forces with other key players in their area to strengthen local communities through mutually beneficial democratic anchor partnerships. Queen's

University in Belfast is involved in leading the Belfast Region City Deal, which brings universities and local government together to create a plan for economic and social development and sustainability (Feeney, Chapter 18 this volume). Eight or nine years ago, when the city of Buffalo, New York, was suffering with the low graduation rate of students in the public schools, Buffalo State College came together collaboratively with a sustained commitment with other campuses, business leaders and philanthropists to develop an endowment. The money was used for students' scholarships to address this access and social justice issue. Katherine Conway-Turner in her remarks suggested that many students require additional support, such as advisors, mentors and mental health assistance.

Anchor institutions are perhaps the most promising example of successful university co-operation with local communities. As these are partnerships in which "an organisation rooted in its location can continually deepen its commitment to its locality in a mutually transformative manner". (Maurrasse, Chapter 17 this volume). In the Newark Anchor Collaborative, each of the participating institutions "committed to increasing our sourcing from local businesses, our hiring of local residents as employees and our capital investments in the city infrastructure, such as encouraging employees to live locally" (Cantor and Englot, Chapter 5 this volume).

Experience has shown that it is leaders who believe in engagement who lead most of the highly engaged institutions. Therefore, the Anchor Institution Task Force has created a Fellows' programme aimed at building future leaders by enabling them to interact with existing anchor leaders.

Where do we go from here?

So now that this edition of the Global Forum is behind us, where do we go from here?

Reflecting on the importance of the 7th Global Forum, Matjaž Gruden, indicated that this project is so important to the Council of Europe because it reflects the essential link and contribution of education to sustainable democracy. He suggested this project should and will therefore be part of the future Council of Europe Education Strategy (Gruden, Chapter 2 this volume). In alignment with all its member states, the Council of Europe is in the process of developing its Education Strategy, which aims to ensure that education contributes to a sustainable democracy, human rights and the rule of law, through developing and maintaining a culture of democracy.

The Council of Europe also aims to launch a platform of the local democratic mission of higher education (Innola, Chapter 24 this volume). The terms are significant. For the Council of Europe "local" is understood as referring to the institution's proximate geographic community, and emphasises that higher education institutions work with and for, not just in, their local communities. Next, "democratic" means that the Council of Europe is explicit about its commitment to the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and sees the local mission as part of the overall work on the broader democratic mission of higher education. The term "mission" establishes a clearer link to higher education's *raison d'être*. Since 2021, the Council of Europe has used the term "local democratic mission of higher education" instead of "community engagement".

Along with the more traditional university missions of learning and teaching and research, the university mission that focuses on local partnerships is of particular importance to the Council of Europe. The platform is a logical extension of the work of this forum.

The soul of a university (Brink 2018), evoked by many speakers, seemed to guide a fundamental discussion on "what the universities are good for", which is different from "what the universities are good at". As we rethink the role of higher education, Brian Murphy, President Emeritus of De Anza College in the debate suggested it would be useful to confront the dissonance between mission statements and reality in institutions. To reassess their mandates, the university and higher education systems globally should, however, conduct "an honest appraisal and reimagining of its role and function (both academic and operational) to ensure its future relevance and sustainability as a force for building socially just, collaborative, inclusive, equitable and de-racialised societies" (Muthwa, Chapter 11 this volume).

The impassioned plea Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito made in the debate to stop polarisation and politicising of development and human rights, social justice and climate change; we need to find common ground and speak a common language, is something many of us in higher education can agree on, and let us hope that this ideal gives an impetus to rethink the role of education and in turn make significant progress on furthering social justice and strengthening democratic values. We should never shy away from giving our contribution, no matter how small it may be. Because what might seem like small, even symbolic, steps can still lead to great change and build great partnerships. West Cork College in Baltimore, Ireland, has opened the physical premises of the college to the community, which might seem not too significant to some, but to those for whom the college was an unknown and off-limits space, the change could be transformative.

In the words of Daire Keogh in his welcome address: "Now, we should look into building a world not as it was, but as we want it to be and as it should be." We should not fear to be both ambitious and humble at the same time. Good practices are there. Maybe, it is about time that we "pick up" on some of them and ACT!

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Chapter 23

Higher education leadership for democracy, sustainability and social justice: a view from Latin America

Yadira Pinilla

Education in democratic values as a regional priority

For the Organization of American States, it was an honour and a privilege to have been a participant and a key organiser in the 7th Global Forum. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of continuing our efforts to develop a culture of democracy within the higher education system, pointing to a reimagining of the relationship between higher education and its surrounding communities. From citizen-centred education to equitable access to higher education, and from using creative altruism to changing the world we live in to developing a more holistic approach to how we teach and learn democratic values, the forum covered several important issues.

In just a day and a half, the forum identified countless challenges that remain for the higher education sector. These challenges not only provide opportunities to develop innovative solutions, but they serve as a call for greater co-operation and action to all the institutions represented at the Dublin Global Forum. From the OAS perspective, there is a strong opportunity for higher education to play a pivotal and transformative role in helping to achieve our development and democracy goals in Latin America and the Caribbean, regions that have dealt with issues of political instability, weak institutions and social violence that too often fractured the social fabric.

The OAS has distinguished itself for its ability to strengthen human and institutional capacity in the region to provide educational opportunities that are inclusive, equitable and of good quality throughout life for all citizens of the Americas. Guaranteeing access to new educational opportunities that will strengthen human development within OAS member states is paramount to the organisation and its Secretariat for Integral Development, of which I am a part. It is within this context that the OAS works with the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy; the Council of Europe; and the International Association of Universities to promote the role of higher education in the development of a democratic culture on campus, in their surrounding communities and within society (OAS 2022a).

In the 8th Summit of the Americas in Lima (OAS 2018a), the governments of the western hemisphere agreed to develop a culture of citizen participation and prevention of corruption with a view to strengthening democratic and civic values from early

childhood and throughout life by implementing programmes focusing on civic education at all levels. Additionally, in conjunction with the Inter-American Democratic Charter (OAS 2001), states recognised by the Lima Commitment that "special attention shall be given to the development of programs and activities for the education of children and youth as a means of ensuring the continuance of democratic values, including liberty and justice" (OAS 2018b). This has been furthered with the adoption of the Inter-American Education Agenda (OAS 2017), linking efforts with member states, universities and the private sector to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Based on the experiences of the organisation, including those as a member of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education, the forum's sponsor, we recognise five pillars to educate citizens in democratic values and practices, as well as to ensure their ability to interact with others in a critical, conscious and responsible way (OAS 2013). First, without solid civic education, a truly democratic society is not possible. Second, literacy is not only a right, but a precursor to lifelong learning, integral development and the exercise of democracy. Third, a democratic society requires that the institutions that sustain it (family, school, work, political organisations, associations, etc.) resolve their differences in an equitable and peaceful manner. Fourth, democratic civic education is not complete without the development of critical thinking. Fifth, the active exercise of citizenship requires specific understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes (OAS 2022b).

Furthering education in democratic values on the eve of crisis

Since April 2018, when the OAS committed itself to working with the partners who make up the Global Cooperation, we have worked and contributed to the Global Forum discussions from both development and democracy perspectives. This is illustrative of what Kim Osborne, Executive Secretary for the OAS Secretariat for Integral Development, said at the outset of the Dublin Global Forum: you cannot have democracy without sustainable development nor sustainable development without democracy.

During this phase of international collaboration, the OAS hopes to promote the intrinsic importance of comprehensive education systems that embrace the values of human rights and intercultural understanding and tolerance, which are more important than ever. As continually emphasised by the Council of Europe, among the purposes of higher education is the preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies (Council of Europe 2007). This includes participation, co-operation and a commitment to the service of others for the advancement of sustainable democratic societies. However, education is currently facing countless challenges that have only escalated because of the crises brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, changing climate and political instability.

Three principles are of particular importance. First, education is a right, and as such, an inescapable commitment of the state. The current context has made inequalities even more visible. Second, there are great challenges in ensuring a safe return to in-person classes, such as health concerns. Third, existing inequalities in terms of digital access have intensified, preventing access to inclusive, good-quality education for

people with disabilities. A multidimensional approach to guaranteeing educational continuity is necessary to fully exercise the right to education (OAS 2022c).

In turn, three responses must emerge to address these complex and cross-cutting challenges. First, there is a need for greater inter- and intra-national co-operation between all actors: state, civil society and the private sector. Second, the strengthening of family–school alliances and the relationship with the community are key to ensuring educational continuity for students, and are also important strategies to decrease school dropouts. Third, the paradigm of adaptive integration must be complemented by an approach of joint creation (co-creation) of knowledge and learning.

Within that paradigm, adaptive teaching means that teachers adapt their teaching to make it appropriate for all students in their classroom. This has quite recently replaced the term "differentiation", which implied that teachers should create distinct tasks for different groups of students within the classroom. The concept of adaptive learning refers to a type of learning where students are given customised resources and activities to address their unique learning needs. This is all part of a process of building educational systems that are adaptable, flexible and prepared to respond effectively and equitably to challenges, whether of health, climate change or pedagogical in origin.

Higher education institutions, perhaps uniquely, are expected to look both backwards and forwards, to understand history and forge innovation that fuels the future, creating and expanding a knowledge project to ensure the broadest social benefit. While each institution is a product of its national and local history, they also share a global context and democratic purpose. It is crucial that higher education institutions work together to develop a culture of democracy by promoting values necessary for democracy, such as tolerance, equity, diversity, inclusivity, open inquiry, human rights and the rule of law.

As part of this process of reimagining the relationship between higher education and its local communities, we must pause to reflect on four key tenets on which higher education is based: research, learning and teaching, campus culture and social contribution. More often than not, we prioritise two of them – research, and learning and teaching – in our understanding and administration of higher education. However, without campus culture and social contribution, the missions and purposes of higher education are incomplete.

It is only when these four pillars are fully realised that we can benefit from a citizen-centred education that seeks the betterment of society, democracy and social justice. Higher education institutions possess a public responsibility to teach and reach multiple communities, foster student leadership and engagement, treat students as members of the academic community rather than as clients, develop a knowledge project commensurate with the problems we face, and act with other institutions and communities to help solve those problems.

This Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education has been a pioneer in disseminating information and best practices towards the development of a democratic and civically active global citizenry that can put into practice the many

values embedded in our school systems. By joining forces, universities, as change agents, can combine ideas, insights and resources to address the multidimensional issues facing our world.

The OAS's active participation in this global co-operation led in February 2022 to our establishing a Learning Community of Higher Education Associations and Academic Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean (OAS and Netter Center 2022). Through this informal platform we hope to use the power of regional multilateralism to encourage dialogue and facilitate access to best practices on the value of service, community learning and the importance of strengthening the democratic mission of higher education. We were quite pleased that more than 100 academics, experts and policy makers participated in the launching of this community, with more than 10 higher education associations committed to working alongside the OAS in this initiative.

Difficult times call for greater collaboration between actors in civil society and governments, including the international community. We need to continue to forge ahead with innovative platforms, like this Global Forum, and actions that help countries mitigate the devastating effects of the crises we are currently living through, as well as help ensure the well-being of our regions, the sustainability of our economies and the stability of our societies. Our collective goal should be to come out of this period stronger, with a more fair and equitable approach to human development as the centre of our policy focus.

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Chapter 24

Increasing co-operation supports higher education institutions in their democratic mission

Maija Innola

Education is needed to build a culture of democracy

The declining state of democracy is a shared concern globally. Recent years have seen worrying signs of this decline, which is evident in recent democracy measurements such as the global democracy index. Less than 10% of the world's population enjoy real democracy. In addition, democracy has been weakened even in many countries where it had previously been well established. The "State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law" report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe describes the situation on the continent today and lists many indicators of a backsliding of democracy. These include the shrinking of civil society, decrease of trust in and satisfaction with public authorities, a diminished quality of democracy and a decline in freedom of expression, to mention just a few of the recent developments (Council of Europe 2021). In many countries, including some in Europe, higher education institutions face restrictions in the work of researchers and scientists because of tightening legislation, restricting academic freedom as well as the freedom of expression more broadly and limiting the latitude of civil society organisations.

Recently climate change, economic inequality and refugee crises have tested the ability of European societies to resolve issues democratically, equally and fairly. In addition, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has destabilised Europe in particular and the world more broadly. In addition to the ongoing war, and the latent threat of nuclear attack, Russia's war on Ukraine has brought energy and food crises as well as rising inflation.

A strong culture of democracy helps societies survive in times of crisis. Ensuring democratic values and citizens' trust in democracy as well as in science and knowledge are also paramount to the success of societies. Participatory democracy requires both well-developed competences for democratic culture and experts who have been trained using the best possible research-based knowledge. Democracy entails the right of the individual to participate in and influence the development of society and their living conditions. Continual development and renewal is the nature of democracy. It is based on the active participation of citizens as well as on their competences and commitment. Building a strong culture of democracy is

one the most important ways to defend it. Education has a key role, as it focuses on building the future and reflects the world we want to create for coming generations (Rautiainen et al. 2022).

The role of higher education is too often overlooked when considering the ways in which we can build a culture of democracy. Not only schools, but equally universities and other higher education institutions, should see preparing students for democratic citizenship as one of their central tasks. The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture is a conceptual model of competences that citizens need in order to help build and maintain a culture of democracy and to live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse, democratic societies. These competences are grouped into values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding. The framework contains descriptors for all of the competences in the model as well as guides for implementation, including a guide for those in higher education (Council of Europe 2018a, 2018b, 2018c). The RFCDC is intended as an adaptable tool for all sectors of education systems, and higher education is no exception. Users decide how to adapt and implement the framework in their own contexts for their own purposes.

The key question is how we can promote the democratic mission of higher education further. Sjur Bergan and Ira Harkavy emphasise that the democratic mission of higher education is developed within institutions as well as outside them, in society at large. The democratic mission of higher education is practised and developed through research, teaching and learning, and engagement as well as through institutional culture. Addressing challenges at local, national and global levels requires that higher education institutions be engaged with the societies of which they are a part. They must participate in public debate and contribute to solving societal and environmental problems through research, teaching and learning (Bergan and Harkavy 2020).

The 2022 Global Forum, "Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability and Social Justice", discussed how we can build policies and practice that support higher education institutions and their leadership in their commitment to democracy, sustainability and social justice. Based on the presentations and discussions during the 7th Global Forum in Dublin, this book highlights two key messages: the need for action and the need for further co-operation.

Examples of practices and co-operation in strengthening the democratic mission, sustainability and social justice

Fortunately, there are many inspiring examples globally of how the commitment of higher education to democracy, sustainability and social justice can be put into practice. In many higher education institutions these goals are part of the institutional strategy, and the leadership has a clear obligation to fulfil these objectives. The commitment comes across with various types of action in teaching and learning, research, institutional culture and engagement with society at large. The 7th Global Forum in June 2022 highlighted good practices from the United States, South America, Africa and Europe.

One important message is that there is a need for many and varied types of action: advocacy, curriculum development, identifying and sharing examples and conducting studies in order to empower higher education institutions to take a more prominent role in the future. Actions could even lead to system-level change. In order to succeed in this approach, practical solutions developed in individual higher education institutions are essential; also policy support for higher education is needed in fulfilling the mission of supporting and advancing democracy.

Often the engagement of higher education institutions with their local communities may start from small projects that pave the way for more action. For example, in my home city of Helsinki, the University of Arts has started a Fair Sculpture project that is an intergenerational and multidisciplinary artistic community project (Uniarts Helsinki 2023). The first phase of this project connected schoolchildren of eastern Helsinki with professional artists, professors and art students. In eastern Helsinki, the proportion of people with an immigrant background is significantly higher than in other parts of the city. The project enables pupils who do not normally have the opportunity to meet professional artists and experience different kinds of cultural events to do so. Artists and students have the opportunity to develop their creativity in a vivid learning environment. The overall aim is to empower pupils and youngsters from different backgrounds. Projects might lead to more systematic curriculum development and regular co-operation structures with local schools and communities.

An example of a university-level structure that promotes co-operation is the Territorial Pact of the University of San Marino. It is an advisory body with a basis in legislation. The representatives of this body come from a wide range of stakeholders such as local schools, local administration, employers, trade unions, and the sports and cultural sectors. University students and staff are also members of the Territorial Pact and the rector is its president. The Territorial Pact enables stakeholders to engage in the strategic development of the university and helps the university to understand and respond to the needs of society.

In Europe, policy development has in recent years given higher priority to the ability and the possibility of higher education to respond to societal challenges. For example, the ministers of the European Higher Education Area have committed to making higher education more socially inclusive. At their Conference in November 2020, ministers adopted the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA and committed to implementing them in the national systems and engaging in wide-ranging policy dialogue (EHEA 2020a). In addition, ministers decided that they would support higher education institutions integrating the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA into their institutional culture and core missions: learning and teaching, research and innovation, knowledge circulation and outreach, institutional governance and management (EHEA 2020b).

Another takeaway from the discussion at the Global Forum is that regional and global co-operation between higher education institutions and policy makers can promote and help higher education institutions fulfil their mission of supporting and advancing democracy. Co-operation structures help higher education connect

with similar institutions elsewhere, and mutual learning is facilitated. Co-operation structures can also make the democratic mission of higher education more visible for policy makers, other institutions and the wider public.

One prominent example of such a co-operation structure is the Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF) in the United States (Maurrasse, Chapter 17 in this volume). It has served its members for more than 10 years. The focus of the AITF is to advance the democratic engagement of higher education institutions (as well as other institutions) in their immediate neighbourhood. Individual members of the Task Force have benefited from learning from others, and through discussions and co-operation they have built an action-oriented learning community together.

Europe is currently lacking a similar kind of long-term co-operation structure, although many higher education institutions have a long tradition of engaging with their local community. In addition, there are many networks, initiatives and projects that aim to promote social inclusion and societal or local engagement. One example of this is the European Union-funded project Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education. The aim of this project was to develop policy tools at both university and European levels for supporting, assessing and monitoring the community engagement of universities. The toolbox was piloted by four universities with their partners. The aim was also to support a wider policy agenda furthering the social responsibility of higher education (Farnell and Ćulum Ilić 2021).

The work has continued in the follow-up project Steering Higher Education for Community Engagement, which is also funded from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The project supports action planning for community engagement at its partner universities and aims to develop policy recommendations for system-level support for engagement in higher education in five European Union member states involved in the project.

Despite these efforts by individual higher education institutions and several development projects, the democratic mission or community engagement of higher education is not very well known, at least in wider public debate. For example, discussion of the regional engagement of higher education institutions has previously been largely focused on and limited to its regional economic impact and co-operation with companies. Developing more stable co-operation structures at the European level might be a key to further promotion of the democratic mission of higher education at the European level.

Towards a pan-European platform for the local democratic mission under the Council of Europe?

The Council of Europe has been working to further the democratic mission of higher education over two decades. The work is carried out in co-operation with the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy and other higher education organisations around the world, now notably the International Association of Universities and the Organization of American States. This co-operation has led to a series of global forums that engage higher education

institution leaders and public authorities in discussion about the role of higher education in advancing democratic culture, human rights and diversity.

The global discussions have also led to reflections on whether the Council of Europe could provide a co-operation structure for a more permanent initiative and co-operation at the European level. The Council of Europe, as a pan-European organisation with a well-established education programme, has the potential to reach out and engage with the whole continent. The Council of Europe supports policy making in its member states through intergovernmental co-operation and capacity building. The focus of the work is rooted in the Council of Europe's basic mission: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Education Department of the Council of Europe develops policies and practice to help member states build a culture of democracy through education. It covers all areas and levels of education, including higher education. The member states are engaged in the activities through the Steering Committee for Education[7] that oversees and advises on the implementation of the Education programme.

In 2021, the Education Committee approved a proposal for a project on the local democratic mission of higher education. The intention is to establish a framework for a longer-term co-operation structure – a platform within the Council of Europe intergovernmental programme. The Education Committee supported the idea that many current concerns, like the effects of climate change, need to be faced also in a local context. Higher education institutions should be encouraged and empowered to work in and with their local communities. Issues of social inclusion, including access to higher education for students with diverse backgrounds and relations to civil societies need to be addressed in a local context too.

The platform is still in the planning phase, but the proposal approved by the Education Committee focuses on advocacy, policy development, identifying examples of good practice and conducting in-depth studies on specific issues. Advocacy and policy development could lead to policy recommendations or similar kinds of guidelines that would draw political attention to the local democratic mission of higher education. This kind of policy support should be valuable to the higher education institutions and their leaders as they develop the local democratic mission as part of their institutional strategies. Equally, it might inspire other institutions, organisations and public authorities to consider enhancement and promotion of the local democratic mission. Gathering examples of good practice would also make the work of the individual institutions more visible and pave the way for mutual learning and co-operation.

The Education Committee agreed that it is wise to start the work on a small scale. This means that, in the first phase, the platform will try to gather and work with organisations and networks with an interest in this field of action and experience. Such organisations could include those that represent higher education institutions, students and staff at a European level. For global outreach and co-operation it is also important to involve organisations beyond Europe as close partners.

7. The author chaired this committee from September 2021 until September 2023.

Building on the momentum

One of the key questions for the future is how we can build on the momentum in order to promote the role and commitment of higher education to the democratic mission, sustainability and social justice. Discussions during the Global Forum demonstrated that universities have not only a huge opportunity but also an obligation to lead the change in our societies. Systematic co-operation that makes the work of the higher education institutions visible and helps mutual learning and policy development is one key factor.

The Council of Europe is developing an Education Strategy. The aim is that the new Education Strategy 2030 will be launched by the education ministers of the states parties to the European Cultural Convention in autumn 2023. There are several reasons why such a strategy would be useful and is needed right now. First of all, the role of education in building a culture of democracy has become better recognised in recent years. This greater prominence given to education also creates greater expectations that education systems, schools and higher education institutions rise to the challenge. There is a need to spell out how education policy and practice will help our societies face some of their key challenges. Secondly, there is clearly a need for a longer-term strategic framework that can provide a coherent and shared vision of the role of education in democracy. The new strategy will hopefully also give a long-term direction to the work of the Council of Europe in the field of education and reaffirm the crucial role of education in promoting the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Education Strategy at best provides a basis for joint actions at the national and intergovernmental levels as well as a means to increase the visibility of education as an integral part of the Council of Europe's policy areas.

Although the preparation of the Education Strategy is still in progress at the time of writing this in November 2022, from the discussions in the Education Committee three essential themes have emerged. The Education Strategy will address the democratic and civic mission of education and the need to reinforce these in education in Europe. Democracy and democratic citizenship will have a place at the core of education systems and curricula, and the Education Strategy will hopefully help in making this a reality. One specific action could be more a systematic embedding of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in higher education curricula and learning outcomes. Higher education institutions have the responsibility to ensure that their graduates are equipped with the competences needed to participate in the democratic processes of today's world. Strengthening democratic governance within education institutions also needs attention. In addition, the strategy should make it clear that there is a need to enhance education's social responsibility and responsiveness. The objective should be to strengthen inclusion, equity and diversity in all education. The strategy will probably also highlight the development of a human-rights-based approach to the digital transformation of education.

These preliminary themes of the strategy resonate well with the discussions at the Global Forum, and thus the Council of Europe Education Strategy can be one of the building blocks that we use to reinforce the role and commitment of higher education to the democratic mission, sustainability and social justice.

The Council of Europe co-operates with a large number of other international governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions. The strategy also provides an opportunity and the momentum to strengthen the Council of Europe's co-operation around the democratic and local democratic mission of higher education with the International Association of Universities, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, and the Organization of American States. Strong global co-operation supports higher education institutions in their democratic mission and highlights different ways in which universities can develop and sustain democracy within institutions, in their local communities and in society at large.

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Part VIII

Afterwords

Chapter 25

Reflections on the global forums

Tony Gallagher

Higher education and civic engagement

A small group of higher education leaders in the United States met in 1985 to consider how they could better support student service to communities. After these initial conversations, the following year Campus Compact was formed to support civic education and community connections with higher education. Within a decade over 500 college and university presidents committed to the public purpose of higher education and 51 of them met in 1991 to write and issue the Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education (Campus Compact 1999). The declaration called on all colleges and universities to re-examine their public purpose and commitment to the democratic ideal.

Noting the disengagement of many Americans from communal life, the declaration expressed particular concern at the low level of democratic engagement of college students, in part because of a sense that democratic participation would not make any difference and a lack of trust in the political process. In response, the declaration called upon all those in higher education to embrace its civic mission and responsibilities and to seek reciprocal partnerships with community leaders. The Presidents' Declaration followed the Wingspread Declaration of 1998, which highlighted a similar priority of the civic mission of higher education and stated that the "challenge in a time of change is to transform knowledge into wisdom and to make democracy come alive, for ourselves and for those who follow after us" (Boyte and Hollander 1999: 14).

In a parallel development, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted the Budapest Declaration in 1999 (Council of Europe 1999). This declaration came a decade after the fall of the communist regimes in eastern and central Europe, a decade which had been underpinned by a sense of hope that a freer, more tolerant and just society based on human rights, the rule of law and democratic citizenship might develop across the whole of Europe. This hope was only partially realised, not least as a consequence of wars between and within the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, political instability within Russia and the wars which followed the collapse of Yugoslavia. The Budapest Declaration reaffirmed the Council of Europe as the pre-eminent political institution which could bring the countries of Europe together and consolidate the stability of the continent based on democratic institutions.

The declaration went on to assert the fundamental role of education in "promoting the active participation of all individuals in democratic life at all levels: local,

regional and national". It declared that education for democratic citizenship should be a "lifelong experience and participative process" which would equip all to play an active part in public life and "to shape in a responsible way their own destiny and that of their society". Education should aim to instil a culture of human rights, prepare people to live in multicultural societies and achieve this through a programme of education for democratic citizenship based on the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Universities as sites of citizenship

In response to the Budapest Declaration the Council of Europe Higher Education and Research Committee initiated a project on Universities as Sites of Citizenship and Civic Engagement. They were joined in this work by US colleagues who were actively involved in higher education organisations committed to advancing the democratic purposes of colleges and universities. In two phases the study examined the activities of a sample of higher education institutions in the United States and Europe, and in South Korea, Australia and South Africa. The studies looked at their work and capabilities in promoting democracy and engaging with local communities and wider societies. What emerged was a variable pattern across higher education institutions, with different levels of engagement with local communities and formal commitments to promoting democratic values linked to a number of different factors (Bergan 2004).

Local political contexts could make a difference and often acted as a constraint, particularly in newly independent or transition countries in Europe where there were examples of active discouragement of political engagement by students and the retention of hierarchical, and sometimes authoritarian, styles of governance. More generally, for many academic staff and administrators, education for democracy was a personal matter and somewhat of a distraction from what they saw as the primary purposes of higher education focused on teaching and research. There were some examples of institutions that had changed their structures to meet societal demands for human rights and democratisation, and where institutional leaders had included civic engagement as part of their missions. That said, while there were many examples of institutions that felt they should be agents of social transformation, their governance structures sometimes did not reflect democratic practice and there was some degree of scepticism among staff and students about the influence they had on institutional decision making (Plantan 2004). Colleges and universities in the US with service-learning programmes tended to have more connections with local communities, and there were examples in some countries of direct and indirect community engagement focused on economic priorities (Winter et al. 2005). A common feature across the institutions was the key role of institutional leaders in setting strategic priorities.

The International Consortium

These studies provided the foundational activities of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC 2023), which was formally established in 1999. Its purpose was to explain and advance higher education's

contributions to democracy on college and university campuses, in local communities and across society. Partners in the consortium included the American Association of Colleges and Universities, the American Association for Higher Education (now defunct), the American Council on Education, and Campus Compact. The formal co-operation between the International Consortium and the Council of Europe was based on the opportunity to develop similar frameworks by learning from the contrasting approaches to and experience of higher education's role in supporting democracy in their respective jurisdictions (Bergan and Harkavy 2013).

An important principle that guided their work was that democracy is not solely based on structures and procedures, because it could not exist without a set of attitudes and behaviours that enable institutions and laws to work effectively in practice. Thus, an important priority was to promote democratic culture and, in higher education institutions, the importance of practising democracy in governance and everyday life, and not just through teaching about democracy.

The findings of the studies were considered at a conference in 2005, held as part of the European Year of Citizenship through Education. The following year the Council of Europe and the International Consortium held their first Global Forum in Strasbourg. The forum adopted a declaration which affirmed the need to increase the commitment of higher education institutions to a democratic culture and sustainable societies, and called for action to promote the principles of democratic citizenship, human rights and civic responsibility in higher education. Further global forums were held in Strasbourg (2008), Oslo (2011), Belfast (2014), Rome (2017), Strasbourg (2019) and Dublin (2022). The key themes explored in each of the global forums were published in volumes of the Council of Europe Higher Education Series (Bergan et al. 2012; Bergan et al. 2016; Bergan et al. 2018; Bergan et al., present volume; Huber and Harkavy 2008).

I was fortunate to have participated in this evolving partnership and work. My home institution, Queen's University Belfast, was included as a case study in the Universities as Sites of Citizenship pilot study and, in one of those serendipitous moments which can play such an important part in our lives, I was given responsibility for collecting the data for Queen's and compiling our institutional report. I was unable to attend the 2008 forum, but Queen's University was represented at the meeting and contributed to the discussion, and I have attended all of the forums since then. For this chapter I was invited to offer some personal reflections on the work of the forums and the global movement which it has inspired and developed.

A widening network of participation

One of the gratifying developments we have seen over the years has been a widening interest and engagement in the issues that lie at the heart of the International Consortium's concerns. Each of the global forums was organised in collaboration with key partners, who included the European Wergeland Centre, the European Students' Union, the Talloires Network, the Magna Charta Observatory, the International Association of Universities, the University of Oslo, LUMSA University Rome, the Australian University in Rome and the Sant'Egidio Community, the Anchor Institutions Task Force, the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education and Dublin City

University. These partnerships were important in widening the range of experience and perspective that was available for discussion and consideration at the global forums, but more importantly they reflected a growing awareness of the key role of higher education in promoting democratic values and culture at a time when they were increasingly under attack.

For many of these organisations and networks their collaborative role in helping to frame the agenda for global forums developed into formal membership of the International Consortium. As the work has progressed, national higher education associations and organisations have joined the International Consortium from South Africa (2000), Australia (2003), the United Kingdom (2014), Ireland (2015), and the Magna Charta Observatory (2020). The US is now represented by a steering committee made up of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Council on Education, Anchor Institutions Task Force, Campus Compact, Democracy Commitment and NASPA – Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education. Later, the co-operation between the International Consortium and the Council of Europe was joined by transnational organisations, including the Organization of American States in 2018 and the International Association of Universities in 2019.

Despite the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the growing network demonstrated its vitality by broadcasting a series of webinars and podcasts, and by compiling and publishing a book on the response of higher education to the pandemic and the importance of framing this response in terms of the democratic mission (Bergan et al. 2021). In January 2021, the Council of Europe, the International Consortium, the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities formally named their partnership the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education.

A developing agenda

The International Consortium and the Council of Europe have always worked on the basis that the role of higher education in promoting democratic values and culture should be reflected in local, regional and national contexts. Not surprisingly, a common feature at each of the global forums has been a focus on the work of individual institutions from every corner of the world. These case studies of practice have provided exemplars of initiative, innovation and inspiration, and they all have created a rich tapestry of interventions which other higher education institutions have learned from and adapted for their own circumstances.

The sites we heard from included very different types, from research-intensive institutions to community colleges, from large-scale institutions to small liberal arts colleges. They included institutions from virtually every continent, and the initiatives they presented ranged over a plethora of issues including access and inclusion, community engagement, support for reconciliation and reconstruction in post-conflict societies, academic freedom and the distinctive role of faith-based institutions. In addition to institutional interventions and initiatives, we also heard about examples of collective initiatives addressing wider social issues such as public engagement and the impact of research, support for refugees and asylum seekers, the challenges

of promoting democratic practice in illiberal societies and the practical challenges of cross-sectoral collaboration and sustainability.

This latter aspect was important as it marked a significant step forward in our collective learning as the global forums developed from a focus on the tactics of institutional practice to one focused on systemic strategies for change. Individual initiatives provided, and continue to provide, extraordinarily important insights into the realms of the possible. We saw new ways in which the practice of teaching and learning, or the priorities of research, might open up new possibilities for students, faculty and the communities who were becoming increasing recognised as partners and co-creators of agendas for action and providers of knowledge and understanding. We were also able to follow how the work of individual institutions developed and grew over time. But if higher education institutions were to develop sustainable models of action for democracy, then it would require deeper systemic change in which higher education institutions would have to reorient their activities, priorities and modes of operation in significant ways. Looking back over how this developed across the global forums, I can think of three major influences that seem to me to have helped drive this process of change.

The involvement of the Anchor Institutions Task Force (Maurrasse, Chapter 17 this volume) has been important in this process. AITF was founded in 2009, having emerged from a national task force convened to advise the US Department of Housing and Urban Development on how it could increase its impact to improve the economic, social and civic health needs of communities. Its approach was to strategically lever anchor institutions, that is, large-scale institutions with a commitment to place and an enduring relationship with the communities within which they are located, with an initial focus on higher education and medical institutions. Quite often they were stable local assets located in fragile local economies, but their commitment as anchors is to work collaboratively with other like-minded institutions to address critical challenges in areas such as education, employment and health. When higher education institutions recognise their role as anchor institutions, it underpins their holistic strategic contribution, as opposed to organisations within which there are pockets of activity related to community engagement. The significance of collaborating and working with other civic actors also highlights the need for more long-term agendas and planning. In this regard the decision by the Council of Europe to develop work on the local democratic mission of higher education in Europe as a way of advancing the overall democratic mission of higher education seems to me to represent a significant and important initiative.

A second key process was the preparation and publication of the guidance for higher education in the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe 2022a). Through an evidence-based set of competences addressing values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding, the RFCDC provides a set of materials that can be used to equip young people with all of the competences that are needed to take action to defend and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law, to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and to live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies. It is intended for use by education policy makers and by education practitioners in all

sectors of education systems. It provides a systematic approach to designing the teaching, learning and assessment of competences for democratic culture, and introducing them into education systems in ways that are coherent, comprehensive and transparent. The first two volumes in the series (Council of Europe 2018a, 2018b) explained how the RFCDC model was developed and provided a detailed account of all the descriptors; the third volume (Council of Europe 2018c) provided guidance for teachers in primary and secondary schools, and for teacher educators. Additional volumes on higher education (Council of Europe 2020a), the role of language (Council of Europe 2020b) and a teacher reflection tool (Council of Europe 2022b) have also been published.

I was a member of the drafting group for the volume on higher education, which provides guidance on how higher education institutions might most effectively foster a culture of democracy through the transversal competences they develop in all their students, the way in which institutions are run, how members of an academic community interact and how higher education institutions see themselves and behave as actors in society at large. It provides a whole-institution approach that makes the promotion and fostering of democratic culture an institutional priority for policy as well as practice, and includes sections on teaching and learning, research, the civic role of higher education and the role of institutional governance. The significance of this guidance document is that it provides the basis for higher education institutions to move from a situation where they run important and impactful initiatives to one where their promotion of democratic culture becomes embedded in their DNA.

The third major development underpinning this process of change was the promotion of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (http//:sdgs.un.org/goals). These SDGs were developed as an urgent call for action by all countries in recognition of the intersectional nature of significant social challenges: action to end poverty, for example, had to go hand in hand with strategies focused on improving health and education, reducing inequality and supporting economic growth. They also highlight the importance of tackling climate change and protecting the physical environment. The European University Association (EUA) has argued that the three main connecting themes of the SDGs, on well-being, the environment and the economy, are all issues in which universities can play a key role. Universities, they argue, provide cutting-edge research, high-quality education and ground-breaking innovation; they promote local and global partnerships; and as key civic institutions they co-create knowledge with citizens and public sector bodies (EUA 2018). Not surprisingly then, the issues of sustainability and the role of the SDGs has become an important part of the global forums. Many higher education institutions are incorporating the SDGs into their institutional strategies, which is also contributing to a shift in focus in higher education towards civic goals.

Significant challenges

As the themes of the global forums widened and deepened so too did our understanding of the scale of the challenges that had to be addressed. Indeed, despite the cautious optimism that sometimes characterised our early conversations, it became increasingly clear that the challenges were growing. In the early years quite

a lot of our focus was on the ubiquity of the economic imperative. It is, of course self-evident that higher education institutions have an important economic role to play and this will be both direct and indirect. Our critique was when this economic imperative was elevated above all others, often as part of a package of neoliberal policies which seemed to promote the commercialisation or commodification of higher education (Harkavy 2020).

Part of this challenge was that higher education contributions to, for example, urban regeneration, often aligned easily and well with national and local government imperatives and were well funded and generally linked into medium- to long-term policy systems. By contrast, work on community engagement and the civic mission of higher education often relied on transient, short-term funding, only fitfully linked into government priorities, and sometimes it seemed to depend on high levels of volunteerism. Our response to this was the accumulation of examples of good practice alongside efforts to elevate the civic mission into a core strategic priority in higher education institutions, as outlined above.

But over the course of the global forums a much more significant challenge emerged. The Global State of Democracy Initiative's report (GSDI 2022) highlights a decline or stagnation of democracies in the face of a changing global context. The last decade has experienced a global financial crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic, exacerbated conflict leading to population movement of refugees and asylum seekers, and increasingly assertive authoritarian regimes. The report suggests that the challenge to democracy lies, in part, in a decline in public trust in the capacity of democratic institutions to address significant challenges such as poverty, violence, corruption and climate change. In some places this has led to the rise of "strong man" politics, in other places to the advocacy of "illiberal democracy" and in others to toxic, sometimes physical, attacks on the democratic process and democratic institutions. The need to defend democracy is becoming ever more urgent.

The issue of populism has exercised our attention at global forums. At one level, it led to periods of political instability, with new or resurgent movements on the extreme left or right offering simplistic solutions to complex social problems. But, perhaps the more significant challenge has come from political parties of the far right, even though where they have gained access to political power this has often been in co-operation with more traditional right-wing political parties. Many of these groups appear to adhere to some democratic norms while attacking some of the fundamental institutions that act as the bedrock of democratic societies, including the judiciary, the media, the electoral process and education. The attacks on higher education have taken on an oddly contradictory character with, on the one hand, attacks on an alleged "cancel culture" which seeks to prevent right-wing speakers from being heard on university campuses and, on the other hand, attacks on a "woke" culture which tries to "root out" a claimed left-wing bias in academia (Stoker 2022; Myklebust 2023). Perhaps the more insidious feature of this, and the one which has exercised our discussions, has been the assault on the very idea of truth.

It is a characteristic of populist politicians that they will say whatever they imagine their intended audience wants to hear and they evince no shame in appealing to simplistic

prejudices to further their political cause (Müller 2017). The growth of social media has aided this process: there has been an exponential growth in the sheer amount of information available, literally at the touch of a button, and it now spreads, also literally, at the speed of light. When we add to this the effect of algorithms which were designed to bring together "like-minded" people, originally for the purpose of advertising, we can see how pernicious ideas can spread and gain traction in the face of limited or any constraint. This has become, not just a problem of a lack of discernment in the users of social media, though that is a problem that all educators have to face, but to a significant extent it has morphed into an attack on the very idea of expertise and the importance of critical engagement with evidence and knowledge. This, in turn, has led to challenges to the idea of academic freedom (Bergan et al. 2020). The production and dissemination of knowledge lies at the heart of the academic enterprise, so how we address this challenge may be fundamental to our future.

Conclusions

This has been an extraordinary journey, from our earliest attempts to define and promote the value of civically engaged higher education institutions, committed to the values and practice of social justice in the role we played in society and the contribution we can make to promoting democratic societies characterised by a commitment to equity and justice. Thinking back over the years of development, we can see how our focus moved beyond the accumulation of evidence of good practice, in institutions that were already global leaders in civic engagement and the democratic mission, to a focus on embedding this practice into strategic priorities of higher education, institutionally and systemically.

Since we were seeking to broaden the purpose of higher education to encompass new priorities, some of our early challenges lay in addressing the narrowing of purpose that so often accompanied a focus on the economic imperative. The neoliberal commodification of higher education certainly had an impact on society, but on a very narrow terrain. A more significant challenge emerged during the decade of economic crises, political instability and a global pandemic. This has grown into more than a challenge to the democratic mission of higher education, to become an assault on the role of expertise and knowledge itself. But it is a challenge we must accept and address, not least because the idea of the democratic mission of higher education has been moved closer to the centre of our concerns than at any time in the past.

It has indeed been an extraordinary journey, which has created a wider and deeper coalition than we perhaps could ever have imagined. And it has been inspired and carried forward by the synergy of intellectual ideas, practical experience and organisational capacity.

It has been an extraordinary journey and some day it will end, but not yet.

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Chapter 26

Rethinking higher education: towards a new sense of purpose

Ronaldo Munck

The 2022 Global Forum met in Dublin at a time of great uncertainty. With the war in Ukraine as the immediate backdrop for all delegates, especially those from Europe, there was a particular sense of urgency and purpose to the gathering. Delegates from the US were reeling from the years of Trumpism and associated attacks on democracy. Delegates from Latin America and South Africa had an overarching concern with the pressing issues of development and underdevelopment. To the looming climate crisis, we could add an emerging global food crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and a cost of living explosion as energy and food prices begin to rise everywhere. All these issues have, of course, been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and unstable political orders in many regions.

Covid-19 had already exposed and deepened inequalities between and within countries. At the same time, the demands for basic human rights, social and racial justice, and economic equality had become even more insistent in many regions of the world. This new dramatic conjuncture places higher education institutions – along with all other institutions in society – at a crossroads. They can either continue with their old ways – which are delivering diminishing returns – or rise to the challenge and develop new ways of intervening on behalf of a more just and sustainable society.

In the light of the deliberations at the Global Forum it may be time to rethink the whole "knowledge project" that encompasses teaching, research, service, etc. but also time to rethink the broader question of public knowledge or, to put it simply: what is knowledge for? A progressive agenda for social transformation for higher education was the driving priority of the Global Forum and this chapter seeks to contribute to that conversation. It will, necessarily, be a quite general discussion at this stage and will need to be worked through collectively with the experience of all world regions reflected in that engagement, to provide new thinking and decisive action.

Knowledge project

We could say, in a general sense, that the overarching purpose of the university is a "knowledge project" in the sense of generating knowledge and understanding which is then put to social use. This, of course, encompasses research and learning but, equally importantly, the relevance of higher education to society and its relationship to democracy. In recent years this question was posed most starkly in South Africa where, between 2015 and 2017, there was a wave of student protests that were also part of the decolonial movement. Students were saying that the

universities should just close down, as they were not delivering on their promise, and the reality is that hardly any individuals or groups in society rose to their defence (see Bawa 2021). Their sense of purpose seemed lost, compared to the heady days of 1994-6 when a new non-racial democracy was being forged, with higher education playing a key role.

The urgent need for closer engagement with communities and society at large was now posed again with considerable urgency. Heidi van Rooyen of the Human Science Research Council expressed the challenge to the dominant knowledge project thus:

> Engaged scholarship is asking us to think differently about our practice; about those questions we shape; for whom, with whom? We need to rethink our outputs, our citations, our papers; we need to think of broader ways of disseminating and making accessible what we do … we must think about decolonising the entire knowledge system. (USAf 2021)

What would that mean in practice? Is it just a matter for the global south?

Once upon a time, the "knowledge project" of the Western university was quite clear, self-confident and recognised by everyone. In the medieval era, the university often worked in tandem with the church to articulate the universal aspects of what was known as Western culture as it provided courses and degrees for those areas of the labour market, such as theology and medicine, for which an academic education was considered necessary. While it was always universal in its ambition, the university was later, not least as part of the Reformation, to become firmly grounded in the emerging nation states and sought to develop a "national culture" of which it saw itself as the guardian. We can still see signs of that role today, at least in Europe. In North America, the university had a greater role in forging and building the very idea of a nation. In the global south, we found an explicitly colonial mission being articulated by what were essentially outposts of the metropolis (think Rhodes in South Africa). The educational function of the university was also very clear and explicit, namely the production of a national elite with shared values (think Oxbridge). In terms of purpose, the university saw itself as the cradle of humanistic and universal values.

The emergence of the modern era university has many diverse paths of emergence and, of course, the US model is very different from the various European ones, with distinct relationships to the state, employers and society at large. Nevertheless, if we abstract from this complex history and take the modern university as an ideal type, we can see how it was and is a powerful signifier, pointing towards a clear sense of purpose. For Bill Readings "the University's social mission is not to be understood in terms of either thought or action. The University is not just a site for contemplation that is open to be transformed into action" (Readings 1997: 69).

Rather, we can see the modern university as embodying thought as action, always striving for an ideal. Notions such as institutional autonomy and academic freedom still today derive from and encapsulate such a vision. This was a powerful vision but also a profoundly exclusionary one with regard to the subaltern classes, women and colonised peoples. Its much-vaunted universalism was essentially a very elitist project that excluded the broad mass of prospective students. We should not then be tempted to look back with a sense of nostalgia to this legacy of the modern

university as guarantor of national culture against the dissolving impact of cultural globalisation, as some conservative critics of the entrepreneurial university as well as many academics themselves tend to do.

The cracks and fissures in the dominant knowledge project began as the long post-Second World War boom began to wane. We had the global (not just North Atlantic) student revolts of 1968-9 and then the oil crisis of 1973 and subsequent economic crises. This period of transition led to a new economic, political, social, cultural model dubbed "globalisation" in the 1990s. The optimistic reading was that this new era would usher in a "flat world" (Friedman 2005) where national and social differences would fade away and prosperity would be generalised. The reality was more sombre, and, as ex-World Bank chief economist Branko Milanović (2016) and others have shown, while it did reduce the global number of those in absolute poverty (think China), globalisation actually accentuated inequalities between and within nations.

The complex processes of globalisation (which intensified and generalised previous waves of internationalisation) was to sunder the close link between the university and national culture. Today, the university is clearly part of a transnational structure and networks, with international university rankings being just the superficial, and somewhat perverse, manifestation of this process. This move towards a homogenisation of the university purpose has generated conflicts with local, ethnic or regionalist impulses (think Quebec and Catalonia). Cultural globalisation is a powerful force, but it has not, as yet, managed to create a world in its own image.

The business of excellence

With the dominance of the neoliberal economic model (deregulation, reducing the role of the state and removing all barriers to finance) in the 1980s the business-oriented university, the "university of enterprise", what some called "academic capitalism" (Slaughter and Leslie 1997), rapidly became the new "knowledge project". Essentially, knowledge was to serve the corporation, and the university was itself to become (or to be like) a corporation. The purpose of the university, if it was no longer to be the creation and reproduction of a national culture, would be based on a simple cost–benefit analysis. Since 1990, and the putative "end of history" proclaimed by Francis Fukuyama (1992), the market logic has prevailed almost totally over any social mission.

The pursuit of "excellence" (never clearly defined), as Bill Readings puts it, allows the university "to understand itself solely in terms of the structure of corporate administration" (Readings 1997: 56). We find the entirely reasonable assumption that the university should be accountable translated into a question of accounting that now dominates all aspects of working life. This has led to a devaluation of traditional research pursuits (diversely defined, of course) to focus on income-generating pursuits as, under the cover of "excellence" (academic and operational), a new bureaucratic enterprise has been created in place of the university of old.

Where does this leave us after the Dublin Global Forum? The traditional university model and the new business model of the university are equally neither viable nor

sustainable, we can now see. Gerard Delanty has argued that "the central task of the university in the twenty-first century is to become a key factor in the public sphere and thereby enhance the democratization of knowledge" (Delanty 2001: 9). That would certainly represent a new knowledge project if it moved beyond vague commitments to a sustained and reciprocal engagement with society. The university would thus become a key articulating institution between the new mode of knowledge generation and the broader process of social innovation. Central to this proposition, building on the work around civic engagement across the world in recent decades, would be the creation of sustainable partnerships with civil society, by which I mean community groups, social movements, cultural organisations and others.

Post-pandemic problematics

The Covid-19 pandemic presented the university in a new light, given its contribution and given a certain degree of revalorisation of its standing that took place. Higher education across the world played an important role in responding to the pandemic, in association with public health authorities and through an intensive research programme (see Bergan et al. 2021). Higher education showed a level of responsiveness, in terms of adapting to online teaching, that was quite remarkable, demonstrating a deep reservoir of commitment and creativity among academics and university staff more generally. Those universities where civic engagement was already part of their DNA were better able to engage with society, acting as a voice of reason and compassion. This newfound mood of co-operation was always going to be fragile, and many academics wondered how long it would take before we returned to the brutal "survival of the fittest" ethics that had dominated until recently.

Perhaps the most ambitious post-pandemic statement of purpose came from UNESCO in the shape of the global "Roadmap to 2030" (UNESCO 2022) launched just before the Dublin Global Forum (see also IAU 2022). The UNESCO report, or programme to be more precise, starts with the challenges brought to the fore by the pandemic. There has been a backsliding on democratic norms in many parts of the world (both north and south), and societies have become more tense and fragile. To those challenges, we can add those accruing within the higher education system itself which include a massive expansion, funding challenges and the ever-present issue of inequality. We can recall that connectivity issues were a major challenge for effective online teaching during the pandemic. For the UNESCO team and the conference that launched the new "Global Roadmap to 2030", higher education is, or should be, part of the solution to the problems that face society post-pandemic. Has this led to a new problematic?

The UNESCO roadmap has many refreshing new (or reviewed) principles and values. It calls for a radical transformation of the current system to make it more "reflective, cooperative [and] agile". There is a particular emphasis on the need to engage students, giving them the space to become co-creators of this transformation process. As to the other higher education programmes, it calls for greater inclusion, academic freedom balanced by public accountability, more critical thinking and creativity and a greater commitment to sustainability. For some global south participants, the programme for change was somewhat vague and its views around diversity were rather

limited. For my part, I wish to take up two issues that I see as particularly important: the call for co-operation for "excellence rather than competition" and its framing of the sustainability mission in terms of higher education taking up the challenge of the Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2015).

One of the most striking points made in the UNESCO programme is the call for "excellence through cooperation rather than competition" (UNESCO 2022: 11). Setting aside the somewhat jaded reference to "excellence" (discussed above) we have here a key point that may indicate a new post-pandemic problematic. In a higher education scenario dominated by the "rankings" once supported by UNESCO, despite their dubious methodology and even more questionable impact, it is quite striking to hear a declaration that "HEIs can perform their educational missions more effectively through cooperation and solidarity" (UNESCO 2022: 1). I think it would be possible to both underpin this proposal and broaden its significance by appealing to Karl Polanyi's reading of history as a constant tension between market expansion and societal protective measures taken against its impact (Polanyi 2000). So, is this a post-pandemic call for social co-operation against blind market mechanisms?

The UNESCO roadmap is also explicitly and centrally tied to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that is the 17 SDGs and their targets. Indeed, the UNESCO framework was explicitly developed under this umbrella. The SDGs have become increasingly important in framing the research agendas of northern universities. They have had less impact in the global south, where national and regional development policies hold sway rather than "globalisation with a human face", which is what the SDGs represent. It is quite striking that the northern higher education system seems unaware of the critique articulated for some time by southern development specialists of a quite superficial, unrealistic and non-enforceable set of aspirational goals (see Swain 2017; Telleria and García-Arias 2021). While recognising the good intentions of UNESCO and others, we must question the imbalance in power within the global education system where one side, belatedly, takes up global development issues on behalf of all.

The UNESCO bid to reinvent higher education does include among its principles the issue of "social responsibility" defined in terms of "paying attention to local needs, and undertaking specific activities armed at tackling societal problems" (UNESCO 2022: 21). However, this seems somewhat muted as a theme and not particularly grounded, either empirically or analytically. After all, even in the neoliberal heyday of the university of enterprise there was lip-service paid to (corporate) social responsibility. So, while wholeheartedly welcoming the principles of inclusion and equality, enquiry and critical thinking and, of course, integrity and ethics as articulated in this road map, I would argue that a transformation strategy for higher education needs to foreground public/civic/social engagement, and see this mission embedded across the whole university as a driver to recover a sense of relevance and a renewed sense of purpose in the post-pandemic period.

Democracy – in the sense of a culture of democracy and not just as a formal electoral mechanism – is not an event, it is a process, continually renovating itself. If it fails to do so it falls into non-democratic forms. Furthermore, democracy takes many different forms, and we must be wary of imposing a Western (or any other)

variant as the norm. Given how serious an impact educational inequality has on the prospects for democracy, higher education has an important role in constructing and sustaining democracy. Equally, the university needs to be fully compliant with democratic principles across all its procedures if it is to be consistent when it advocates a democratic mission.

Sustainable democracy

In this section, I seek to explain what "sustainable democracy" means in theory and in practice. I also advance a rounded conception of what citizenship might look like in a sustainable democracy, cognisant that the university seeks to promote citizenship among its values. Finally, I examine what the post-industrial, post-pandemic university might look at if it is to play a new role in society.

In the debates around the (re)democratisation of Latin America and central and eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s there was great concern that it should be consolidated and durable, hence the term "sustainable democracy" gained currency. For Adam Przeworski "democracy is sustainable when its institutional framework promotes normatively desirable and politically desired objectives … and when, in turn, these institutions are adept at handling crises that arise when such objectives are not being fulfilled" (Przeworski 1995: 107). Thus, universities should not only promote positive values such as freedom from arbitrary violence, material security, equality and justice but must also be in a position and able to react when these are threatened. I would also argue that, for higher education to play a role in creating sustainable democracy, it must itself be democratic in all its procedures and structures: what has been called the "new managerialism" (see Deem 2020) is insufficient or even inappropriate for this task, but also a return to the old elitist collegiality is not possible (or desirable, I would argue).

The current debate on democracy and the threats posed against it tends to focus on quite a narrow domain. We could, at this stage, usefully revisit T. H. Marshall's British post-war set of distinctions between "civil citizenship" (the rights of the individual as citizen), "political citizenship" (the right to participate in the exercise of political power) and what he called "social citizenship", which included "the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (Marshall 1973: 53). Whereas civil rights are based on individual entitlements, there is also a need for a broader social form of citizenship. Today, arguably, that needs to have a global dimension. There is an element of evolutionism in Marshall's schema, and it belongs firmly in the North Atlantic view of the world; thus colonialism did not feature. But, suitably updated, it could provide us with a useful perspective to rethink the role of the university in regard to citizenship.

A renewed democratic mission for the university would, I believe, help it find a new sense of purpose now that globalisation has eroded its earlier purpose in promoting a national culture. The university is no longer the flagship of national culture. The globalisation-driven "university of enterprise", with its somewhat empty commitment to "excellence", has been running out of steam. So, as Bill Readings puts it, "the University has to find a new language in which to make a claim for its role as

a locus of higher education – a role which nothing in history says is an inevitably necessary one" (Readings 1997: 125). It is that open-ended prospect that marks the present era, when we cannot go on as we are and we cannot return to a past that is only attractive through a nostalgic lens. There is no perfect answer and the time for subtle platitudes is over. Covid certainly put an end to this type of rhetoric. Instead, whether we are inside or outside the university – or in some liminal space betwixt and between – we need to empower the search for alternatives.

We must always be cognisant that when we refer to "the university" we cannot just think in terms of the older universities in the North Atlantic sphere, partly because of globalisation and partly due to alternative "knowledge projects" emerging: there is now a tension between "global knowledge" and local or Indigenous knowledges. Bryan Turner notes in this regard that the dominant narrative around the university:

> fails to notice the important movement for an "Islamization of Knowledge" and that the global arena within which the university is located is fragmented by political battles between Islamic and other political values which have politicized the problem of knowledge in the late twentieth century. (Turner 1998: 73)

This is but one dramatic illustration of the tension between global and local (or regional) knowledges; and in Latin America we have seen in recent decades a growing importance of the *buen vivir* ("living well") philosophy that takes up pre-conquest forms of knowledge and translates them into a contemporary idiom.

Finally, if we are to find a new sense of purpose for the post-industrial, post-pandemic university, where might we find inspiration? In the past the civic universities, the land-grant universities and the historically Black colleges and universities all struggled with this question. They came up with answers that fitted their purpose at that time. Today, a university in transformation might find inspiration in all those social movements seeking the democratisation of society. Nigel Thrift, Vice Chancellor of Warwick University, and Ash Amin refer in this regard to "democratic change, the force that wants a freedom that all people can enjoy – as a right to autonomy, self-fulfilment, meaningful and rewarding employment and the space and time to enjoy the flourishing of others both near and far" (Amin and Thrift 2013: 199). This may sound like a utopian vision, but so also did earlier projects of transformation that had equality at their core and a refusal of all forms of oppression.

Afterword

The Global Forum brought together participants from a number of leading universities, higher education associations and other organisations. It can potentially facilitate an enabling and unifying global platform to advance some of the issues discussed at the event around educational leadership, democracy and sustainability. We do, however, need to be conscious of the very different regional higher education systems and the role they play. The North Atlantic region has well-established links between the US and Europe going back some 25 years. The systems are different, but they share a common set of aspirations. The forum also saw a growing participation from South Africa and Latin America, which would have very different issues to contend with, not least the overarching question of development and underdevelopment,

which remains a global divide. That element of development and inequality also, of course, cuts across the great cities of Europe and the US, and in that sense, global inequality can act as a common frame of reference for the transformation of higher education at a global level.

In terms of building an organisational model that is both flexible and principled, I would make two comments. We can think in terms of social movement theory about what worked and what did not. A bureaucratic "talking shop" is not what the situation demands. One option is what the European Union refers to as "variable geometry". That would entail accepting that not all partners need to be working with everybody else on all issues and at the same speed. The north–south axis could be one where this model could be explored creatively. The other broad principle I would advocate is that, maybe, it is as important to recognise difference as it is to create consensus. Thus the future global forums might, alongside creating consensus around founding values and practical initiatives, explore how it could forge the condition for a "community of dissensus" where difference can become a productive force and energy to achieve democratic ends.

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Chapter 27

Higher education for a culture of democracy[8]

Sjur Bergan

It is doubly fitting that Dublin City University hosted the 2022 Global Forum for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education, co-organised with the Council of Europe; the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy; the Organization of American States; and the International Association of Universities.

The forum underlined that what started as a transatlantic co-operation more than a score of years ago has now gone global. What could be a more fitting venue for this transformation than Ireland, a country that has probably sent a higher proportion of its inhabitants to all four corners of the world than any other European country (Glynn 2012)?

I cannot resist mentioning that the leader of the independence movement of Chile, my wife's home country, was Bernardo – well, O'Higgins (1778–1842), son of an Irish officer in the Spanish Army (who later became Viceroy of Peru) and a mother from a prominent family in Chillán, birthplace of Bernardo – and my wife's hometown. He played a leading role in the *criollo* revolt that transformed Chile into an independent country.

Ireland has undergone a transformation of its own. Not only are Irish emigrants returning home, but Ireland is also attracting many people from all over the world. They do come for economic opportunity, but it is not just the economy – or, in the slogan of another DCU honorary graduate, Bill Clinton, "the economy, stupid". Ireland is attractive because its society, its culture, its languages – in the plural – and its democracy are attractive. The reader will note that I did not add the weather to the list, but Ireland is attractive anyway.

I feel great affinity for Ireland, maybe because my roots lie in Norway, another small country that also cannot claim to be at the centre of Europe, and because I have been living for more than 30 years in Alsace, a region which *is* at the heart of Europe but which is somewhat peripheral in France.

I am well aware that I am not the first Norseman to feel an affinity for Ireland, and I will try to behave better than the ones who came here a millennium ago. Whether we are Irish, Norwegian or from any other country, we should be grateful that Brian

8. Based on the author's remarks at Convocation on 16 June 2022 when, as part of the Global Forum, Dublin City University awarded him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy honoris causa.

Boru's army prevailed at Clontarf on 23 April 1014. He died in the battle, which has since acquired mythological status, but it marked the beginning of the end of Viking power in Ireland (Britannica 2023).

We should of course be careful about extrapolating our current norms and concerns back in time. Nevertheless, there was no more justification for invasion and pillage back then than there is today. It is a sign of how times are changing that the best measure of a society's greatness is no longer the size of its army but the strength of its civil society, as well as its contribution to the greater good of mankind through education, research, culture, democracy and social inclusion.

And yet we see that, with some people and in some places, old mindsets prevail. Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine, launched on 24 February 2022, may well be a sign of desperation. It is certainly not one of strength nor of superior education. It threatens not only Ukraine but all of Europe. It challenges the whole world. It denies the very values on which we build our societies and to which Russia committed in the Council of Europe and the European Higher Education Area.[9] I am saddened by the fact that the rectors of so many Russian universities signed a statement claiming that developing patriotism and serving the state are their highest calling (O'Malley 2022).

As academics and higher education policy makers, we cannot remain indifferent to this threat. The Romans said we do not learn for school, but for life.[10] Today we must affirm that we learn for humanity, not for political constructs and those who abuse them. Let us take to heart Pope Francis' exhortation that Europe should focus not on "recovering political hegemony or geographic centrality" but rather on "developing innovative solutions to economic and social problems" (Pope Francis 2020).

Our obligations as academics extend to assisting our colleagues elsewhere who labour under difficult, sometimes impossible, conditions. Today, especially for those of us in Europe, our immediate duty is to our colleagues and friends in Ukraine. For all of us, our duty is to help build the kind of society in which we would want our children and our grandchildren to live.

I am doubly grateful that this Global Forum is part of the Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (Irish Presidency 2022). I see the honorary doctorate that Dublin City University bestowed on me less as personal recognition than as recognition of what my colleagues and I have been trying to do to bring together the fair recognition of qualifications, the European Higher Education Area and the democratic mission of education.

Ideas and principles need structures to be efficient. Structures need ideas and principles to be meaningful. For me, this honour is an inspiration to continue to work for what we all deeply believe in – and to make retirement a nice theory with limited practical application.

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9. Russia was excluded from the Council of Europe on 16 March 2022. On 11 April, the Bologna Follow-Up Group suspended the participation of Russia and Belarus in the work and governing bodies of the European Higher Education Area. Both decisions were a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and Belarus' support for this war.
10. *Non scholæ sed vitæ discimus*. The phrase is generally attributed to Seneca.

We had the privilege of being in Dublin on Bloomsday.[11] Let me therefore seek inspiration from James Joyce – not from *Ulysses* but appropriately from *Dubliners* – in expressing the hope that democracy will be general all over Europe. It will rise from the Shannon waves to the mountains of the Urals, from Thingvellir – the site of the old Icelandic Parliament – to Cádiz, the site of early constitutional reform. It will fall on Bucha and Mariupol, where so many victims of aggression lie buried. It will one day permeate every corner of the Kremlin. It will not stop at Europe's borders. And it will be institutions, constitutions and elections backed up by deliberation and participation, by inclusion and justice – by a culture of democracy.[12]

As educators committed to democracy, we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep.[13]

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11. Bloomsday is celebrated each year on 16 June in memory of James Joyce: 16 June 1904 was the day when Leopold Bloom, the main protagonist of *Ulysses* (published in 1922) had his first sexual encounter with his future wife, Nora Barnacle. The celebration involves cultural events, pub crawls and retracing Bloom's fictional route in Dublin on that day.
12. James Joyce's original text, from the final paragraph of "The Dead", the final story of the Dubliners, first published in 1914, reads: "Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead".
13. From Robert Frost's poem "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening" (written in 1922, first published in 1923).

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Ryan is a graduate of Business and History from St Mary's University College, Queen's University Belfast, and holds an MA in History and Politics from Ulster University and an LLM in Law, Governance and Public Policy from Queen's University. He is currently undertaking a Doctorate of Governance at the Whitaker School, Institute of Public Administration, National University of Ireland.

Tony Gallagher is an elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Science and a Professor of Education at Queen's University Belfast. He has previously held a number of leadership roles at Queen's, including Head of the School of Education (2005-10), Pro Vice Chancellor (2010-15) and Faculty Dean of Research (2018-19). He is a member of the Advisory Group on Higher Education Policy of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Education Policy and practice (CDPPE); a Deputy Board Member of the European Wergeland Centre; a member of the Steering Group of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy; and a member of the Board of the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation. He has published extensively on the role of education in divided societies and on the civic and democratic role of higher education.

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Maija Innola holds an MA degree in History from the University of Helsinki. In addition, she has completed a study programme in Administration and Management of Higher Education.

Marcelo Knobel was the 12th Rector of the University of Campinas (Unicamp) in Brazil, where he is a Full Professor of Physics. He has held other leadership roles, including: Executive Director of the Unicamp Exploratory Science Museum, Vice-Rector for Undergraduate Programs, Vice-President of the Brazilian Physics Society and Executive Director of the Brazilian Nanotechnology National Laboratory (LNNano). Knobel has already published more than 300 scientific papers, in addition to numerous opinion pieces in both national and international newspapers and magazines. He is the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Magnetism and Magnetic Materials* (Elsevier). Knobel is an Eisenhower Fellow (2007), Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (2009) and Lemann Fellow (2015). He is a Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory.

David John Lock is Secretary General of the Magna Charta Observatory and has led on the development and delivery of the MCO's strategy, the globalisation of the Observatory's work and the development of the Living Values project, a self-evaluation instrument for university values. His varied career in international higher education and university leadership included eight years as Director of International Projects at the UK's Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

He was the founding Registrar and Acting Chief Executive of the British University in Dubai, where he structured, built and then led the university. David was Secretary to the University of Huddersfield, and Registrar and Secretary to the University of Hull in the UK for a total of 14 years. A teacher and chartered secretary by background, David has served on a number of international bodies and undertaken a range of consultancy assignments, including international development and UK HE governance projects.

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David J. Maurrasse PhD is the Founder and President of Marga Incorporated, a consulting firm founded in 2000 providing strategic advice and research to philanthropic initiatives and community partnerships. Marga co-ordinates the Anchor Institutions Task Force, an action-oriented learning community promoting the role of anchor institutions in mutually transformative community partnerships. Marga also co-ordinates the Race and Equity in Philanthropy Group, which is a network of foundations addressing policies and practices on racial equity and various aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion. Since 2000, Dr Maurrasse has been affiliated with Columbia University, where he currently serves as Adjunct Research Scholar at the Earth Institute and Adjunct Associate Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs. Maurrasse is the author of numerous books, most recently *Strategic community partnerships* (2021), and starting with *Beyond the campus: how colleges and universities form partnerships with their communities* (2001). Maurrasse has also held positions at Yale University and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Andrew Montague is a community development researcher and Chair of the Ballymun Drugs Task Force. He was Lord Mayor of Dublin, a councillor on Dublin City Council from 2004 to 2019 and a member of the Governing Authority of Dublin City University. He has a master's degree in Spatial Planning from the Dublin Institute of Technology.

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Before she became Vice-Chancellor and Principal in 2018, Sibongile Muthwa was Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support at Nelson Mandela University, and before that she served as Director General of the provincial public service of the Eastern Cape, an administration serving largely rural communities facing economic constraints.

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Snježana Prijić Samaržija PhD is a professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Rijeka. The main areas of her scientific interest are social philosophy, epistemology and applied ethics. She is the founder and first director of the University of Rijeka Foundation. She founded the Centre for Advanced Studies South East Europe, which she also directs. Before her two rector's mandates, she spent eight years as the vice-rector for students and studies. Throughout 15 years of active participation in university management, she has assumed the role of an expert in numerous national and international committees, advisory boards and expert groups in the domain of universities' policies and practices. She is President of the Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN), a member of the Steering Committee for Education (and Steering Committee for Education Bureau) at the Council of Europe, and a member of the European Alliance Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) Strategy Board.

Renée T. White is Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at the New School in New York City, where she is also a professor of sociology. Dr White is the co-editor of four books, including the acclaimed *Spoils of war: women of color, cultures, and revolutions* and *Fanon: a critical reader*, and the recently published *Afrofuturism in* Black Panther*: gender, identity and the re-making of Blackness*. She is also the author of *Putting risk in perspective: Black teenage lives in the era of AIDS*. Dr White is a member of the Editorial Review Board of the *Journal of Women and Gender in Higher Education*. She is on the Advisory Board for Seeds of Hope, serves as a Strategic Leader for VisionForward, a national coalition working to advance gender equity, and is on the National Advisory Committee for the Rachel Carson Council.

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This publication, *Higher education leadership for democracy, sustainability and social justice*, arises from the global forum that the Council of Europe, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, the Organization of American States and the International Association of Universities organised at Dublin City University in June 2022. It also arises from the challenges of Covid-19, which both highlighted and contributed to the fragility of democracy, with the increasing erosion of democratic participation, the deepening of extreme inequities, the strengthening of identity and nationalistic politics and the promotion of populist anti-intellectualism, involving attacks on science and knowledge itself.

In this book, authors from Europe, the United States and Latin America argue that democracy, sustainability and social justice are inextricably linked, and that we can impact none of them unless higher education plays an important role in identifying the issues and helping society devise a viable and robust response. The book argues that higher education must do more than develop and disseminate knowledge and understanding. Higher education must influence the way individuals and societies behave. Higher education must lead. The importance of this leadership is illustrated by the inclusion of the Dublin Global Forum in the programme of the Irish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and will be borne out by the positions and actions of the higher education community.

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