

**THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**

**A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK  
FOR  
THE TURN OF THE CENTURY AND BEYOND**

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# A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE TURN OF THE CENTURY AND BEYOND

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this document is to guide the **positioning** and **development** of the University of Stellenbosch in terms of strategic considerations, and to do so with particular reference to the first decade of the new millennium. (The text that follows will also refer to the University of Stellenbosch as “the University” or “the US”, for short.)

The document is called “a strategic framework” for good reason. Firstly, the document assumes that the broad strategic directions sketched in it provide a framework within which further planning – detailed and operational planning – will be essential to any successful implementation. Secondly, in the spirit of a decentralizing approach to management, the document relies on the participation and entrepreneurship of the stakeholders within the University community. Only those stakeholders, through such participation and entrepreneurship, can develop the content of this strategic framework into initiatives and programmes capable of meeting the opportunities and challenges that are special to their respective environments.

The strategic framework being offered here **has resulted from an extensive planning process in which the University community participated over the course of a year**. This broadly based planning process was co-ordinated and integrated by a strategic planning committee (SPC), whose members included representatives appointed by interest groups from within their own ranks. The SPC carried out its activities under the leadership of an independent facilitator. ??(See APPENDIX 1.) This work coincided with an increase at the University both in planning activities and in opportunities for participation in broad deliberations. Two processes that coincided with the process of strategic planning were the establishment of the Institutional Forum and the drafting of an Institutional Plan (both processes prescribed by the central education authorities). The broad features of the strategic planning process appear in the diagram in APPENDIX 2 to this document. The particulars of the process, together with the SPC working documents, are contained in a separate document, “US Strategic Perspectives”.

**This strategic framework is neither final nor all-embracing. This document is an attempt to present the realities, potential and endeavours of the University in the light of such insight as the SPC was able to develop.**

Since its completion by the SPC, the draft text of the Framework has been amended by the Council of the University on the basis of inputs from Senate and from the Institutional Forum.

The contents of a framework such as this will need to be adapted and enriched in the light of the experience the University gains as it implements the framework and in the light of relevant new insights from elsewhere. A strategic framework will serve the University best when the academic community takes its contents as stimuli to **ongoing** strategic reflection and renewal. It is necessary, moreover, to develop a strategic plan based on the framework.

## **2. REALITIES OF A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

### **2.1 WORLDWIDE TRENDS**

Like other universities in South Africa and like universities worldwide, the US finds itself on a new and rapidly changing “playing field”. This emerges clearly from worldwide trends such as the following:

- 2.1.1 As the information and knowledge revolution continues to accelerate, information and the creation of knowledge figure ever more prominently at the centre of economic growth and development. This trend poses new demands, opportunities and risks to universities;
- 2.1.2 increasing internationalization is promoting the worldwide mobility of people, of knowledge and of ideas – with associated demands on and opportunities for universities;
- 2.1.3 technological progress, particularly where computer-supported, is increasingly loosening up the constraints which distance and scale previously used to impose on university operations;
- 2.1.4 in management, the principles of participatory management and “flat” organizational structures continue to gain ground;
- 2.1.5 communities, along with the demand for graduates and for research products, are posing essentially new challenges to universities’ supply. Obviously, these new challenges mean that universities are getting more opportunities to enhance their relevance. At the same time, however, these new challenges create a potential for conflict with universities’ institutional characters;
- 2.1.6 the insistence on the optimal utilization of resources is leading to new forms of cooperation, previously unthinkable. Joint undertakings with the private sector are also multiplying fast, with a concomitant intensification of competition;
- 2.1.7 educational bodies increasingly act on the need to share costly facilities, infrastructure and expertise – especially within the same region;
- 2.1.8 one of the various aspects of massification of post-secondary education systems is the change away from a form of elite system towards a form of mass system with greater participation, with more democratic governance and with a sense of quality focusing primarily on outcomes;
- 2.1.9 change in the nature of the student corps, one of the effects of this change being that students increasingly see themselves as clients who insist on education and training of a more applied nature. Important influences on student expectations and on enrolment patterns include the following factors:
  - 2.1.9.1 changes in the relationship between higher education, state and economy, affecting student sponsorship and graduate employment patterns;
  - 2.1.9.2 international mobility;
  - 2.1.9.3 changes in the nature of work; and
  - 2.1.9.4 the continuous need for new and applied knowledge;
- 2.1.10 central government is increasingly exercising strategic control of or influence upon higher education via earmarked or performance-based funding systems, reporting requirements and statutory and consultative bodies;
- 2.1.11 within institutions, there is an increasing diversity in courses, programmes and curricula, though at the same time higher education institutions are specializing increasingly; and

2.1.12 in their approach to diversity, higher education institutions internationally can be said to have in general positioned themselves in relation to two extremes – one extreme being defined in an exclusive mode, with reference to national, religious, ethnic and/or social identities; and the other extreme being defined inclusively, with diversity seen as an asset capable of adding value to the institution.

## **2.2 SOUTH AFRICAN REALITIES**

In South Africa, the trends noted above are accompanied by local realities such as the following:

- 2.2.1 The increase in the country's student population projected in 1996 by the National Commission on Higher Education has not taken place; in fact, student numbers in the public higher education system have fallen;
- 2.2.2 the share in the total number of student registrations at universities by people from historically disadvantaged communities was still relatively low a few years ago, but has grown fast over the past two years, in part because of the decline in student numbers of whites at universities;
- 2.2.3 there is the possibility of a consolidation of the country's relatively large number of higher education institutions;
- 2.2.4 more and more, market forces require graduates to have not only specialist training and/or a generally formative education, but also to be equipped with proven skills in general thinking and in communication;
- 2.2.5 central government, in its policy framework for Higher Education, gives priority (i) to the massification of the higher education system and its institutions, (ii) to rapid growth in the participation in higher education by people from currently and previously educationally disadvantaged communities, with the goal of bringing about a greater measure of racial and gender equity in participation in higher education, (iii) to enhanced efficiency in the higher education system and its institutions, (iv) to increased interinstitutional cooperation, notably at the regional level, (v) to the subsidization of universities in terms of identified national human resource needs and (vi) to the governance of the higher education system in partnership with the various institutions themselves. These objectives are pursued partly through a "structured conversation" of planning in response to national and institutional priorities;
- 2.2.6 universities are under mounting financial pressure as a result of a rearrangement of national expenditure priorities, not only for the various categories of higher education institutions, but also for individual universities.
- 2.2.7 the development and implementation of a new higher education funding system, involving the subsidization of student places via a funding grid and the provision of earmarked funding for specific purposes relevant to national policy priorities.
- 2.2.8 the emphasis on greater socio-economic responsibility and responsiveness, which in the higher education context relates to change away from an ivory-tower form of isolated higher education institution to a form in which the institution, although upholding a large measure of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, conducts its teaching and research and, generally speaking, carries on its work in a manner that is more relevant to the realities and needs of the regional, national, continental and global contexts.

- 2.2.9 the recognition of the need to foster a national and institutional culture conducive to tolerance and to respect for fundamental human rights.
- 2.2.10 the increasing difficulties that students, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, experience in paying for their studies.

### **2.3 THE NECESSITY OF SELF-RENEWAL**

Among South African universities, the University of Stellenbosch is at present relatively well positioned with regard to its share in higher education, growth and quality. Certain of the University's traditional strengths should, indeed, remain foundation stones for its future. The successes of the past, however, are no cause for unqualified satisfaction. From the self-scrutiny that the University undertook as part of its strategic planning it is clear that, if it wants to address the opportunities and challenges of the future as successfully as those of the past, it is imperative for the University to renew itself in important respects.

The University commits itself to an open, broad process of self-scrutiny and self-renewal. This process involves, not just the making of projections, but a serious and critical reassessment of the University's institutional character.

The subsequent paragraphs sketch – under the twelve heads listed below – what could currently be seen as the strategic indicators that the University should seek to adhere to in the process of self-renewal:

- 2.3.1 mission, vision, commitments and values (cf. sect. 3);
- 2.3.2 core processes: teaching, research and community service (cf. sect. 4);
- 2.3.3 focuses (cf. sect. 5);
- 2.3.4 growth (cf. sect. 6);
- 2.3.5 redress (cf. sect. 7);
- 2.3.6 human resources (cf. sect. 8);
- 2.3.7 student development (cf. sect. 9);
- 2.3.8 organization and management (cf. sect. 10);
- 2.3.9 accessibility (cf. sect. 11);
- 2.3.10 finance (cf. sect. 12);
- 2.3.11 infrastructural development (cf. sect. 13); and
- 2.3.12 assurance and improvement of quality and of performance (cf. sect. 14).

### 3. MISSION, VISION, COMMITMENTS AND VALUES

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The contents of this strategic framework are rooted in a particular view of the essential nature of the University of Stellenbosch. This view is expressed after 3.1.3 below in four (groups of) statements, each addressing a different topic:

3.1.1.1 A mission statement – a statement of the **raison d'être** of the University as a university (cf. sect 3.2);

3.1.1.2 a vision statement – a statement of certain **general goals** which the University as an institution wishes to achieve (cf. sect 3.3);

3.1.1.3 commitment statements – statements of certain **commitments** which the University has made (cf. sect 3.4); and

3.1.1.4 value statements – statements of the **values** which, the University believes, ought to underlie the conduct and interaction of individuals (cf. sect 3.5).

3.1.2 The four (groups of) statements are at the level of principles and concepts; so of necessity they are abstract and general, rather than concrete and specific. Ultimately therefore these statements will make an impact only insofar as the principles they enunciate, and the concepts they rely on, are embodied by the University in its systems and in its culture. To be able to embody them in this way at all, the University will have to interpret each of these principles and concepts in greater detail.

3.1.3 The mission statement emphasizes that **a concern with knowledge** is the US's essential and distinctive *raison d'être*, and that this concern with knowledge is understood to include a **responsibility to serve** the well-being of the community.



## **3.2 MISSION**

*The raison d'être of the University of Stellenbosch is---  
to create and sustain, in commitment to the universitarian ideal of excellent scholarly and scientific practice, an environment in which knowledge can be discovered; can be shared; and can be applied to the benefit of the community.*

## **3.3 VISION**

*In a spirit of academic freedom and of the universal quest for truth and knowledge, the University as an academic institution sets itself the aim, through critical and rational thought,---*

*3.3.1 of pursuing excellence and remaining at the forefront of its chosen focal areas;*

*3.3.2 of gaining national and international standing by means of---*

- its research outputs; and*
- its production of graduates who are sought-after for their well-roundedness and for their creative, critical thinking;*

*3.3.3 of being relevant to the needs of the community, taking into consideration the needs of South Africa in particular and of Africa and the world in general; and*

*3.3.4 of being enterprising, innovative and self-renewing.*

## **3.4 COMMITMENTS**

*The University acknowledges its historical ties with the people from whom and communities from which it arose.*

*3.4.1 With a view to the future, the University commits itself to apply its capacities, expertise and resources to the benefit of the broad South African community; and*

*3.4.2 therefore the University commits itself to be language-friendly, with Afrikaans as the point of departure.*

## 3.5 VALUES

- 3.5.1 Equity.** *Equity, in terms (inter alia) of the bringing about of a corps of excellent students and academic and administrative staff members that is demographically more representative of South African society, must be fundamental to all our actions, including our redress of the inequalities of the past and our repositioning of the University for the future.*
- 3.5.2 Participation.** *The people who are substantially affected by our decisions must have an effective say in the making of those decisions.*
- 3.5.3 Transparency.** *We must base our decisions on considerations that are clear and that are known.*
- 3.5.4 Readiness to Serve.** *In all we do, we must seek to serve the best interest of the broad communities of our immediate vicinity, of our region, of our country, of our continent, and of the world in general.*
- 3.4.5 Tolerance and Mutual Respect.** *We must respect the differences between personal beliefs, between points of view, and between cultural forms of expression. We must strive to foster an institutional culture that is conducive to tolerance and to respect for fundamental human rights and that creates an appropriate environment for teaching, learning and research.*
- 3.5.6 Dedication.** *We prize dedication to work, and the purposeful achievement of self-chosen goals.*
- 3.5.7 Scholarship.** *Our research, teaching, community service, and management must be characterized by the kind of objectivity and critical thinking that is intrinsic to excellent scholarly and scientific practice*
- 3.5.8 Responsibility.** *We seek to be responsible, both by seriously considering the implications of actions, and by being responsive to the needs of the broader community, of South Africa as a whole, of our continent, and of the world in general.*
- 3.4.9 Academic Freedom.** *As an accountable public higher education institution, (i) we acknowledge, at the institutional, faculty and departmental levels, our right to exercise our academic freedom in a responsible way, in teaching and learning, in research and in community service, and (ii) we reject unreasonable strictures of any kind on our endeavours.*

## 4. THE THREE CORE PROCESSES

### 4.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES, PRIORITIES AND INDICATORS

This section of the strategic framework outlines strategic indicators for the three core processes that the University is responsible for, namely—

- (i) research (cf. sect. 4.1);
- (ii) teaching (cf. sect. 4.2); and
- (iii) community service (cf. sect. 4.3).

All these indicators are grounded, first of all, in the University's mission, vision and value statements (as given in section 3). In the second place, however, these indicators are also meant to take due account of the realities that have emerged in an analysis of the University's South African setting (cf. 2.2 above).

4.1.1 The aim of these indicators is to enable optimal handling by the University of notably the following strategic issues:

4.1.1.1 The University's need to bring about a far better integration of its research, teaching and community service, and to exploit creatively the synergy potential that arises from such integration;

4.1.1.2 the University's aspiration to be a research-oriented university of world standing, and its willingness to accept the demands that arise from this aspiration for investment in human resources, in systems, in infrastructure and in partnerships;

4.1.1.3 the University's need for a University-wide reconfiguration of the teaching portfolio and related organizational structures in order to bring all of this into line with an orientation towards research (cf. 4.1.1.2), with the programme-based approach to teaching, and with the requirements of greater accessibility for students, and

4.1.1.4 the University's need to rethink its interaction with the broader community—

4.1.1.4.1 as a core process alongside research and teaching and

4.1.1.4.2 as a catalyst for redress, renewal and development; and

4.1.1.5 the University's need to support its three core processes by optimally exploiting the developments in information technology.

4.1.2 The strategic indicators outlined in 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 below for research, teaching and community service, respectively, are reducible to an overarching vision for the University's core processes:

- “The University sees its research, teaching and community service as the core processes of an institution that has to be and intends to be dynamic, relevant, accessible and comprehensive.”

4.1.3 In turn, this overarching vision for the University's three core processes derives support from the strategic priorities listed below:

4.1.3.1 Creative, critical and innovative interaction with knowledge;

4.1.3.2 fostering and continuously strengthening—

4.1.3.2.1 a scientific approach to problem solving,

4.1.3.2.2 a culture of research and

4.1.3.2.3 critical thought and independent judgement;

4.1.3.3 the implementation of an integrated approach to research, teaching and community service;

4.1.3.4 the safeguarding of a diversified academic offering;

- 4.1.3.5 the pursuit of international recognition;
- 4.1.3.6 responsiveness to region, country and continent;
- 4.1.3.7 resource utilization that is both effective and efficient;
- 4.1.3.8 credible quality assurance and quality promotion;
- 4.1.3.9 making access easier; and
- 4.1.3.10 the establishment of University-wide ownership – backed by opportunities for effective sharing in decision-making – of all actions through which the University attempts to renew the three core processes.

## **4.2 RESEARCH**

### **4.2.1 Vision of the future**

“A strongly research-oriented university, sought-after for the training of quality researchers, who are acknowledged as world leaders of research in selected niche areas.”

### **4.2.2 Strategic priorities**

- 4.2.2.1 Cultivating a stronger research ethos;
- 4.2.2.2 developing the financing, infrastructure and technology for research;
- 4.2.2.3 entering into strategically advantageous alliances and partnerships, both within the University and outside the University;
- 4.2.2.4 placing a premium, in staff appointments and promotions, on the scope and the quality of candidates’ research activities and research results;
- 4.2.2.5 the advancement of knowledge entrepreneurship; and
- 4.2.2.6 preserving a balance between basic research and applied research, whilst at the same time acknowledging the principle of academic freedom in research.

## **4.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **4.3.1 Vision of the future**

“A university characterized by quality teaching, by the constant renewal of teaching and learning programmes, and by the creation of effective opportunities for learning / study.”

### **4.3.2 Strategic priorities**

- 4.3.2.1 Restructuring the teaching portfolio into instructional programmes that are well-focused and coherent, such restructuring to concentrate on—
  - 4.3.2.1.1 catering for specific needs of South Africa,
  - 4.3.2.1.2 achieving international recognition,
  - 4.3.2.1.3 instruction in generic skills alongside discipline-specific skills and
  - 4.3.2.1.4 meeting the demands of the information and knowledge society;
- 4.3.2.2 fostering a student-centred learning ethos;
- 4.3.2.3 innovative facilitation of learning / study, inter alia by bringing into play appropriate modes of delivery and technology, including decentralised teaching and learning.
- 4.3.2.4 the establishment of University-wide ownership – backed by opportunities for effective sharing in decision-making – of all actions through which the University attempts to renew its teaching and learning processes;

- 4.3.2.5 adjusting the structures of organization so that they will best support the programme approach, among other things;
- 4.3.2.6 reinforcing the systems of decentralized management and safeguarding short decision-making processes, based on effective information systems, in support of better teaching and learning; and
- 4.3.2.7 bringing about a demographically more representative body of excellent students, teaching staff and administrative staff.
- 4.3.2.8 The University acknowledges, moreover, that access and accessibility are insufficient in themselves. It therefore commits itself to an ongoing appraisal of student throughput, yearly success and graduation, both generally and by population group and gender.

## **4.4 COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **4.4.1 Vision of the future**

“A university characterized by a vibrant interaction between institution and community to the advantage of both.”

This strategic framework advocates a new paradigm for community service. The vision stated above and the associated strategic priorities (cf. 4.4.2 below) assume a more inclusive concept of “community” than does the narrower, philanthropic, approach that is often favoured.

### **4.4.2 Strategic priorities**

- 4.4.2.1 “Community” should be broadened into a comprehensive concept, so that it covers all stakeholders – for example trade and industry, potential employers, and disadvantaged groups.
- 4.4.2.2 Community service should receive fitting acknowledgement at the University alongside teaching and research, and this acknowledgement should be obvious from factors such as management time, funding, effective co-ordination and effective feedback.
- 4.4.2.3 Community service should be seen as an important catalyst for renewal at the University.
- 4.4.2.4 Alliances and partnerships with organizations outside the University should be proactively sought out.
- 4.4.2.5 The University should expand relationships with community networks.
- 4.4.2.6 Community service should be equipped with a good description of an appropriate value system.
- 4.4.2.7 Special priority ought to be given to the creation of jobs for students.

## **5. STRATEGIC FOCUSES**

Crucially important for any institution in its strategic planning is its choice of strategic focuses. Two sets of strategic focuses are proposed here. The focuses listed in 5.3 below relate to the University’s re-positioning. Those listed in 5.2 relate to the University’s academic offering (in marketing jargon, they are “supply focuses”). All these proposals are time-bound, however, and will therefore need constant review.

### **5.1 CORE CRITERIA AND BROAD FOCUSES**

#### **5.1.1 The chosen starting-point: The need for a diversified portfolio**

It is a starting-point of this strategic framework that the University’s portfolio of teaching and research activities must be a suitably diversified one, with a broader coverage in undergraduate teaching and with more specific focuses both in postgraduate teaching and in research.

Accordingly, the academic focuses proposed below – in 5.1.3 and 5.2 – pinpoint areas in which the University should develop or further develop its teaching and research capacities (also called “focal areas”, for short). This by no means implies, however, that other elements of its academic focuses are necessarily unimportant.

### **5.1.2 Core criteria for the University**

Strategic decisions about academic focuses ought to be arrived at through the consistent application of relevant criteria. The following criteria are proposed as the core criteria for the University to adhere to in determining its focuses:

- 5.1.2.1 The extent to which the area under consideration is inherently strong at the University in terms of research and in terms of advanced expertise;
- 5.1.2.2 the question whether the area caters for international, national and specific regional needs;
- 5.1.2.3 international trends;
- 5.1.2.4 the demand on the part of students; and
- 5.1.2.5 financial feasibility and cost-effectiveness.

### **5.1.3 Broad academic focuses**

It is proposed that the University should take the following as its broad academic focuses:

- 5.1.3.1 The broad domain of the natural sciences, engineering, and technology;
- 5.1.3.2 within the broad domain of the economic and management sciences, the subdomain of those areas that deliver graduates who have (i) the ability to function as economic and managerial leaders, (ii) the ability to exploit market possibilities in innovative ways and (iii) the ability to create job opportunities; and,
- 5.1.3.3 within the broad domain of the social sciences and the humanities (insofar as this domain is not covered by 5.1.3.2), the subdomain of those areas that deliver graduates who (i) have a broadly based general education, (ii) follow a holistic approach, and (iii) have the ability to function as leaders, mediators and innovators in a new social and political dispensation.

## **5.2 PROPOSALS FOR SPECIFIC ACADEMIC FOCUSES**

Within the broad domain and subdomains noted above, the strategic framework next proposes a number of more-specific academic focuses (in other words, narrower focal areas for the University’s academic offering). It makes these proposals in keeping with the core criteria of 5.1.2 above; it leaves the possibility open, however, that these proposals may need to be further tested in quantitative and qualitative terms:

### **5.2.1 Within the broad domain of *the natural sciences, engineering, and technology*, as noted in 5.1.3.1 above:**

- 5.2.1.1 the biological sciences (which include areas taught in several faculties at the University),
- 5.2.1.2 the physical and mathematical sciences and the engineering sciences,
- 5.2.1.3 the health sciences (with a sharpened community emphasis) and
- 5.2.1.4 other areas that meet the set criteria (e.g. agricultural sciences [in particular, food science]).

### **5.2.2 Within the broad subdomain of *the economic and management sciences* identified in 5.1.3.2 above:**

- 5.2.2.1 professional areas (e.g. Accounting) and
- 5.2.2.2 management training at an advanced level (e.g. MBA, MPA).

### **5.2.3 Within the broad subdomain of *the humanities and the social sciences* identified in 5.1.3.3:**

- 5.2.3.1 Programmes delivering postgraduate students who have the ability to provide leadership and whose expertise is sought-after in terms of increasing human resource needs – particularly in an information-intensive society;
- 5.2.3.2 programmes delivering graduates who have the ability to facilitate processes of social change and the ability to deal adequately with the significance of values in people's lives;
- 5.2.3.3 focused professional programmes in law;
- 5.2.3.4 programmes delivering graduates who have the ability to contribute constructively to fulfilling the communication needs in society; and
- 5.2.3.5 programmes for the further development of underqualified teachers and for the training of teachers for mathematics and science.

At the same, faculties and departments are left the room to take up new opportunities that arise outside the focal areas proposed above.

### **5.3 FOCUSES FOR REPOSITIONING**

The actions / initiatives listed below are proposed as the more-specific strategic focuses by which the University can strengthen its positioning in the various contexts in which it operates:

- 5.3.1 a high-profile initiative to improve the support structures for science, engineering and technology in the school systems of educationally disadvantaged communities;
- 5.3.2 the delivery of graduates who have a suitable level of professional competence in market-related areas and who have the potential to function as business leaders;
- 5.3.3 proactively penetrating the entire Southern African student market, the logical starting-point being the Western Cape;
- 5.3.4 giving specific attention to academically unprepared students;
- 5.3.5 promoting constructive regional cooperation in the Western Cape;
- 5.3.6 deliberate efforts to turn the riches of the country's diversity to advantage as an asset – this means, specifically, efforts to advance interracial, inter-ethnic, multicultural and intercultural understanding, tolerance and cooperation;
- 5.3.7 developing a diversity of networks and alliances, both national and international, that can support the University in the pursuit of its academic focuses (its supply focuses, in other words);
- 5.3.8 suitable steps for the further internationalization of the University; and
- 5.3.9 the bringing about of a demographically more representative body of excellent students, teaching staff and administrative staff; and
- 5.3.10 expanding the University's service to the broad South African community and ensuring that this service receives better publicity.

### **5.4 THE FURTHER IDENTIFICATION OF STRATEGIC FOCUSES**

The process of identifying strategic focuses for the University should be carried forward by its faculties within the framework outlined above.

## **6. GROWTH**

Generally speaking, a university's growth potential and its growth rate are subject to two sets of factors that are strategically important: those over which it has little or no control ("exogenous" factors), and those over which it does have control ("endogenous" factors). At the University of Stellenbosch, the following are typical examples of exogenous factors on the one hand and endogenous factors on the other:

### **6.1 EXOGENOUS FACTORS OF GROWTH**

- 6.1.1 The national policy on university subsidization and in particular the discipline-linked allocation of student places;
- 6.1.2 the restrictions imposed by space, by the environment and by cost on further physical expansion of the University's main campus, with greater flexibility at the Bellville Park Campus;
- 6.1.3 the quality of the schooling system and the associated calibre of the students entering; and
- 6.1.4 trends in the professions-related demand for components of the University's academic offering.

### **6.2 ENDOGENOUS FACTORS OF GROWTH**

- 6.2.1 The more productive utilization of existing infrastructure, for example through better time management;
- 6.2.2 the imaginative utilization of capacity for further physical development;
- 6.2.3 increasing the use of new modes of delivery such as distance education; and
- 6.2.4 the University's approach to quality management.

### **6.3 SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

Against the background of the factors noted above, this framework chooses gradual, sustainable growth as a general strategic starting point – to be combined, however, with an emphasis on the academic focuses set out in section 5 and with continued concentration on quality results that are not only achievable in the short term but also sustainable in the long term. This general strategic starting point does not, however, rule out the potential of taking up opportunities for faster growth in particular, clearly delineated areas, provided that such initiatives include proper quality management.

## **7. REDRESS**

The University acknowledges its contribution to the injustices of the past, and therefore commits itself to appropriate redress and development initiatives.

- 7.1 Redress involves all aspects of the University; the University, however, sees its commitment to achieving equity (cf. sect. 3.5.1) and its commitment to a readiness to serve (cf. sect. 3.5.4) as major instruments in its efforts to redress its contribution to past injustices.
- 7.2 In commitment to equity, the University acknowledges the following:
  - 7.2.1 The academic backlogs – due to historical disadvantages – not only at the University itself, but also in the schooling system, require the extension of existing academic support programmes at the University;
  - 7.2.2 the need for demographic broadening of the University calls for a sustained critical appraisal of its accessibility. Redress requires a proactive approach in regard to both the student body and



the staff body. Equity considerations as well as the national policy framework make it essential to expedite redress as much as is feasible – through new appointments, for example, at the staff level; and

7.2.3 there is a need for active student recruitment at the schools of educationally disadvantaged communities.

7.3 In commitment to a readiness to serve, the University acknowledges the need for development and service in communities and areas previously and currently disadvantaged in the provision of services and infrastructure.

7.4 The University commits itself to carry through appropriate redress and development actions on a continuous basis.

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES**

To be successful in the pursuit of its chosen strategic directions for the future, the University needs a corps of people who are vision-driven, motivated and competent. In turn, meeting this important need will require the University to take seriously at least the following priorities:

8.1 The conscious pursuit of good governance, which entails consultation and co-operation, and the conscious application of the principles of accountable governance;

8.2 a human resource strategy that acknowledges the urgent need to diversify the demographic composition of both the permanent and the temporary staff corps in terms of—

8.2.1 the staff's demographic profile by category of staff: administrative, technical, academic, etc.;

8.2.2 recruitment;

8.2.3 promotions;

8.2.4 appointments to senior positions; and

8.2.5 the implementation of legislation such as the Employment Equity Act.

8.3 a human resources strategy that integrates individuals' interests and the organization's interests. Themes for such a strategy include—

8.3.1 career development that takes into consideration conjointly the aspirations of individuals and the needs of the organization;

8.3.2 the management and utilization of a broadening diversity;

8.3.3 the active development of student leadership;

8.3.4 a focused approach to managing and leading all staff, including part-time staff;

8.3.5 a system of performance management that is experienced as equitable and motivating; and

8.3.6 the development of effective communication and mutual trust, notably between the academic staff and the administrative staff;

8.4 the acceptance of the University as a community in which the staff members and the students are partners in the quest for knowledge; and

8.5 the promotion, in support of the University's academic task, of active participation by staff members and students in governance, community service, sport and recreation.

## **9. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

To serve the needs of the broader South African community, and to be successful in the pursuit of its chosen strategic directions for the future, the University must take seriously the following issues in student development:

- 9.1 Access – see chapter 11,
- 9.2 equity, including the bringing about of a demographically more representative body of excellent students;
- 9.3 financial support – see sect. 11.3, and
- 9.4 development of student leadership

## **10. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Any institution that chooses self-renewal as one of its characteristics is obliged to develop an appropriate organizational culture and structure and, likewise, an appropriate style of management and appropriate systems of management. This obligation encompasses the following:

- 10.1 The creation and maintenance of properly functioning governance structures and mechanisms (the conscious pursuit of good governance), including a firm commitment to principles of co-operative governance.
- 10.2 The commitment to an effective, participatory and transparent style of management. This requires managers at all levels of the University to operate in proactively transparent and proactively consultative ways, though without getting bogged down in processes that turn effective decision-making into an impossibility.
- 10.3 The further expansion of decentralized management. At least two considerations warrant this as a strategic priority: (i) decentralized management means more decision-making at the best-informed level, and (ii) decentralized management can draw on the motivational effect of ownership of results. The expansion of decentralized management requires, however, —
  - 10.3.1 an ever-closer alignment of managers' responsibilities with their powers to take decisions about means; and
  - 10.3.2 a strengthening of (academic managers' and other managers') managerial accountability. Clearly, any strengthening of this accountability would first require fresh thought about academic managers' managerial role and about the demands this role makes in terms of managerial skills and management infrastructure.
- 10.4 The reappraisal of every existing structure at the University, and its functioning – including those structures that have been institutionalized over long periods of time – in the light of the question whether the structure optimally supports the University in its pursuit of its chosen strategic directions.
- 10.5 Structural changes to support the University-wide introduction of programmes into the teaching portfolio. This could include considering a reduction in the current number of faculties and the merging of related disciplines into schools.
- 10.6 Removing unnecessary duplication, together with the further right-sizing both of academic structures and of support structures, in terms of criteria – quantitative and qualitative in nature – that

are well-thought-through and that are applied consistently. These criteria must take account of at least the following features of the supply or capacity under consideration: (i) the demand for it, (ii) its alignment or non-alignment with the University's strategic indicators for the future, (iii) its interrelationship with other elements of the University's supply, (iv), needless to say, its financial attractiveness and (v) the principle of academic freedom.

- 10.7 As well as requiring a shared vision for the future and sound management, success for the University on the road ahead requires it to develop an institutional culture that is strongly entrepreneurial. Two qualities that will be crucial to future success are a willingness to engage in self-criticism and self-renewal and a willingness to run calculated risks.

## **11. ACCESSIBILITY**

### **11.1 LANGUAGE**

The University positions itself as a language-friendly university, with a responsive and flexible approach to language of instruction, and with Afrikaans as its point of departure. In this regard, the following perspectives are worthy of note:

- 11.1.1 All universities' choices regarding their primary language of instruction naturally place restrictions on their accessibility to people not proficient in the language concerned. Such restrictions would be more severe in the current situation where the language of instruction chosen is Afrikaans (and more severe still, were it one of the other indigenous languages).
- 11.1.2 The University currently follows a flexible approach concerning the language of instruction. English is often used in postgraduate teaching. English is also used selectively at the undergraduate level.
- 11.1.3 Although the University understands and conducts itself as unquestionably a national institution, it remains aware at the same time of its obligation to the social needs and realities (and, particularly in this case, the language needs and language realities) of the area where its students come from and which it serves.
- 11.1.4 This positioning, which entails that Afrikaans is the primary language of instruction at the University, also implies the following:
- 11.1.4.1 any person who has the requisite intellectual capacity and intends to study or work at the University must, within reasonable limits, be enabled to do so;
- 11.1.4.2 a pragmatic, flexible approach to language of instruction must be followed at the University, taking into account (i) students' preferences, (ii) the numbers of students involved, (iii) the cost of alternatives, (iv) the logistic implications of alternatives, (v) market needs, (vi) the question of scarcity or uniqueness, in a regional or national context, of the instructional programmes concerned, and (vii) the University's vision, commitments and values;
- 11.1.4.3 the range of supplemental programmes at the University in Afrikaans and other (especially English and Xhosa) language proficiency must be expanded more swiftly; and
- 11.1.4.4 support services in other languages, especially Xhosa, should be developed.

### **11.2 PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY**

A critical appraisal of its physical accessibility indicates that it is of strategic importance to the University—

- 11.2.1 to improve the logistics of physical access to the University, including student transport and student accommodation; and
- 11.2.2 to continue to give attention to accessibility for people with physical disabilities.

### 11.3 STUDENT FINANCE

Many students from educationally disadvantaged environments have only limited financial means. It is therefore necessary to make access to the University be made easier for these people from the financial point of view by measures such as the use of award criteria that are attuned not only to intellectual potential but also to financial means, alternative ways of financing university study, and the provision of more funds for financial aid to needy students.

### 11.4 INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

The University acknowledges institutional culture as a factor in accessibility. Accordingly, it commits itself to an ongoing and critical appraisal of its institutional culture and of the implications of that culture for accessibility.

## 12. UNIVERSITY FINANCE

- 12.1 Financial sustainability forms an integral part of the University's vision for the future. This vision implies, firstly, that the finance available from government in terms of subsidies **must be used to the full**, within the emerging framework of the new funding grid and of the national higher-education priorities and policies. Secondly, the University will **increasingly have to diversify** its sources of income and financing. Priorities that will support diversification of this kind include—
  - 12.1.1 the stimulation of academic entrepreneurship and the development of the “third revenue stream”, that is to say, funding from sources other than student fees and government subsidies;
  - 12.1.2 the development and maintenance of an internationally sought-after university; and
  - 12.1.3 market development to turn to advantage the income opportunities arising from the philosophy of life-long learning.
- 12.2 In addition to its making the best possible use of income and financing opportunities, the following financial priorities are likewise of strategic importance to the University:
  - 12.2.1 Ensuring that management, staff, and student leadership are better equipped in terms of financial management – this refers both to expertise and to systems;
  - 12.2.2 the optimal utilization of technology to enhance efficiency and productivity; and
  - 12.2.3 the constant right-sizing of the University as an organization, within the context of co-operative governance and the commitment to academic excellence, in order (i) to maintain justifiable cost levels and (ii) to provide the capacity for turning opportunities to good advantage.

## **13. INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

In the development of the land that is its property and of its infrastructure, the University commits itself to the following principles:

- 13.1 Systematic planning and consultative decision-making;
- 13.2 taking account of (i) the needs of the broader communities both of the Town of Stellenbosch and of the City of Tygerberg, (ii) the academic offering of the University, and (iii) the co-curricular activities of the staff members and students of the University;
- 13.3 preservation of environmental heritage and cultural heritage;
- 13.4 sustainable development;
- 13.5 financial viability; and
- 13.6 consideration and, where appropriate, recognition of land restitution claims.

## **14. ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY AND OF PERFORMANCE**

- 14.1. The University considers the assurance and improvement of quality and of performance to be of extreme importance. Accordingly, it commits itself to develop and implement mechanisms aimed at ensuring that quality and performance will be maintained and improved. These commitments apply to the entire functioning of the University, including—
  - 14.1.1 efficient and cost-effective management and resource utilization;
  - 14.1.2 the institution and maintenance of suitable auditing methods; and
  - 14.1.3. the provision of suitable student teaching services and student support services.
- 14.2. The University is committed to a form of internal and external assessment that includes—
  - 14.2.1 student feedback;
  - 14.2.2 self-assessment by the individual department of its teaching, research and community service;
  - 14.2.3 the submission of self-assessment reports to a panel of external experts; and
  - 14.2.4 the development of the existing system into a more comprehensive system for quality assurance and quality promotion at the institutional level.

## **15. CONCLUSION**

### **15.1 SUMMARY**

With the concepts, principles and indicators contained in this strategic framework, the University should be able to reposition itself for change and growth as an academic institution by way of comprehensive self-scrutiny and self-renewal. This framework is intended to offer a systematic conceptual basis for—

- 15.1.1 a university that is vision-driven, that has committed itself to clear and acceptable values, and that lives up to these values in practice;
- 15.1.2 relevance as a university in the South Africa and in the world of the twenty-first century; and
- 15.1.3 the appropriate redesign of the University's core processes, structures, infrastructure and institutional culture.

### **15.2 THE ROAD AHEAD**

If the contents of this strategic framework turn out to enjoy broad support within the University community and are formally accepted, the following actions will be important:

- 15.2.1 translating this strategic framework into a Strategic Plan in accordance with the Higher Education White Paper and other relevant policy documents – such Strategic Plan to state management objectives, structures, programmes, responsibilities and time-scales;
- 15.2.2 the development of three-year rolling Institutional Plans, as required by central government, from the Strategic Plan and in conformity with the national policy priorities that are annually issued;
- 15.2.3 the development of one-year Business Plans from the Strategic Plan and from the three-year rolling Institutional Plans – each Business Plan to state detailed targets, goals, and methods for achieving and assessing those targets and goals, for a period of one university year;
- 15.2.4 specifying (i) strategic initiatives that are to be led from the centre and (ii) appropriate planning guidelines for those areas that are largely going to be left to decentralized initiative;
- 15.2.5 carrying through a process of sensitive change management that will accommodate the expectations and concerns of University role-players, but that will be able at the same time to cope with reactionary resistance to renewal; and
- 15.2.6 establishing a system of strategic management approaches and mechanisms that will help ensure the continuity of the work that was initiated and completed during the development of this strategic framework.

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