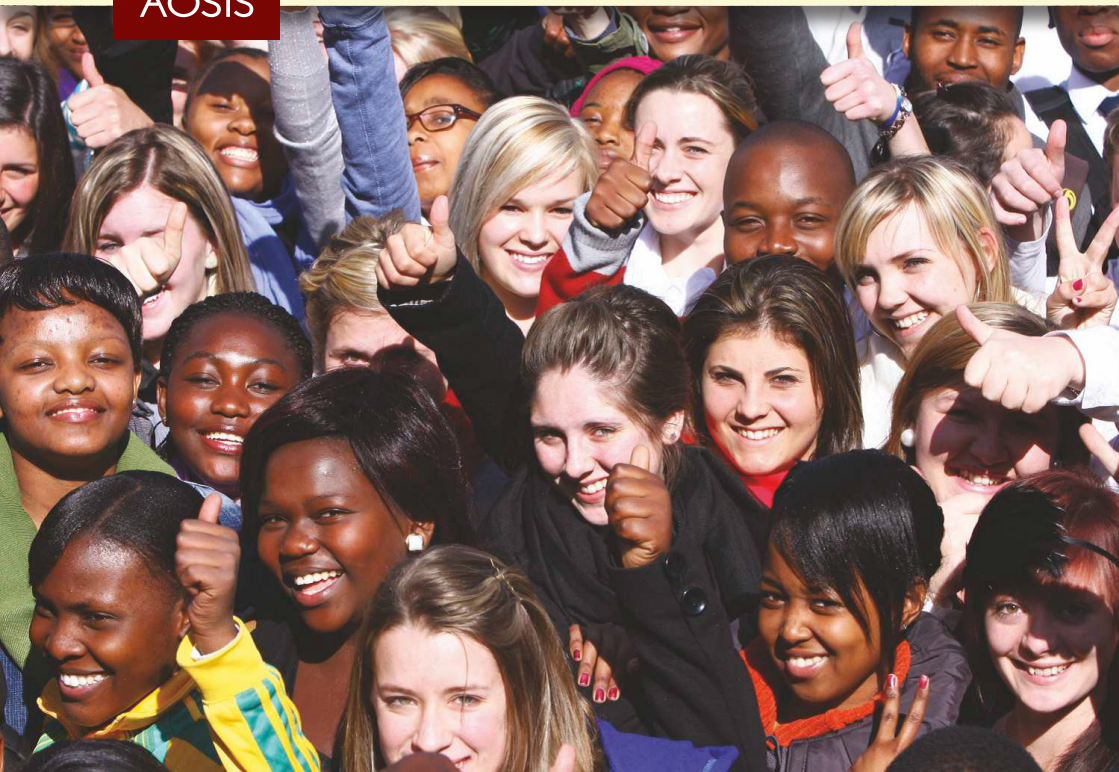




Edited by

**W.P. Wahl & René Pelsler**



# Leadership for Change

**Developing transformational student  
leaders through global learning spaces**

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# **Leadership for Change**

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## Research Justification

This edited volume reveals how the journey of transformation at the University of the Free State (UFS) became interwoven with student leadership development and global learning. The UFS initiated two intersecting co-curricular programmes, namely: the First-Year Leadership for Change (FIL4C) programme in 2010; and the triennial Global Leadership Summit (GLS) in 2012. Although these programmes changed over time, their core focus remained the development of transformational student leaders through the creation of global learning spaces. From its inception in 2010 to the last GLS in 2018, the UFS global learning project involved 780 students and 259 staff members from 109 institutions, across four continents.

The goal of this edited volume is to provide a deeper understanding of how the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development through global learning, especially in the context of higher education transformation.

Although a significant body of literature in the field of Higher Education Studies focuses on 'global learning' as a high-impact educational practice, several limitations make it challenging to derive accurate generalisations about its impact on student leadership development in the context of higher education transformation. Many studies are based on relatively small samples from the global North. It is questionable whether these data sets, which are mainly under-representative of the diverse higher education system in the world, can be used to summarise the extent to which global learning initiatives impact student leadership development in different higher education contexts. Furthermore, the framing of questions in the existing body of research mainly focuses on how global learning initiatives develop students' ability to explore and interact with cultures and worldviews different from their own. Although these research questions have value, very few scholars ask questions beyond the personal development of individual students. This edited volume aims to overcome these framing limitations by focusing on questions that are less prominent in the current body of literature. In this regard, the collective scholarly contributions of authors are aimed at one question, namely: In what ways did the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes enhance student leadership development, within higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces?

This work provides a deeper understanding and new conceptual insights that are unavailable in the existing body of literature. Firstly, the data set is relatively large in comparison with similar projects, both with regards to the number of individuals and the number of institutions that participated since 2010. Secondly, the data are enriched through the diverse experiences of students and staff from across the world. Lastly, the longitudinal nature of the data allows scholars to reflect on the historical development of the FIL4C and GLS programmes and the reciprocal effect over time on students, staff and institutions. We believe that this book will assist higher education scholars in making better generalisations about student leadership development, global learning initiatives and higher education transformation.

As editors, we declare that no-plagiarism was committed in the editing of the book and that it represents a scholarly discourse.

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# Abbreviations, Figures and Tables appearing in the Text and Notes

## List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALU	African Leadership University
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
ASEdCC	Associated Students of Edmonds Community College
AUC	Amsterdam University College
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Trust
COPE	Congress of the People
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPM	Centre for Popular Memory
CSU	Cleveland State University
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DSA	Division of Student Affairs
EdCC	Edmonds Community College
ESL	English as a Second Language
F1F	F1 Fellowship
F1L4C	First-Year Leadership for Change
GLS	Global Leadership Summit
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HERI	Higher Education Research Institute



Abbreviations, Figures and Tables appearing in the Text and Notes

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICC	Interchurch Council
IRSJ	Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice
ITP	Integrated Transformation Plan
L4SJ	Leadership for Social Justice
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer and Intersex
LID	Leadership Identity
LPI-S	Leadership Potential Inventory-Students
MLE	Mediated Learning Experience
MSU	Maharakham University
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
NSH	No Student Hungry
NWCCI	Northwest Community College Initiative
NYU	New York University
OIA	Office of International Affairs
OIAP	Office of International Academic Programmes
RASHAD Center	The Center for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora
SASCO	South African Students' Congress
SCM	Social Change Model
SLDC	Student Leadership Development Centre
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SRC	Student Representative Council
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFS	University of the Free State
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
UW	University of Washington

VC	Vice-Chancellor
VU	Vrije Universiteit
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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Her professional career in the Department of Education spanned the period from 1987 to 2009. She served as Senior Education Specialist in the division of Sport, Youth, Recreation, Arts and Culture, where she worked with educators and learners from schools throughout the Motheo district of the Free State, following her passion for youth leadership development and the discipline of Arts and Culture. She later joined the division of Physical Planning as First Education Specialist, after completion of her Master's Degree.

During 2010 she took up a position at the UFS as Chief Officer in the Office of the Dean of Students, where she was responsible for departmental coordination and the planning and implementation of specialised institutional projects, of which the First-Year Leadership for Change and the Global Leadership Summit programs were the most prominent. She was appointed as Programme Manager for Student Leadership Development in 2013 and has been serving as Assistant Director: Student Life since 2014. She continues to work with developmental and student governance training, as well as the design and management of specialised leadership programmes.

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W.P. Wahl has been involved in student affairs for almost 18 years and currently serves as Director: Student Life at the UFS; a position he has occupied since October 2016. He obtained a BA Honours (with distinction) in 2004, the degree MA (with distinction) in 2007 and an interdisciplinary PhD in Higher Education Studies and Theology in 2011. His current scholarly work in the field of Higher Education Studies focuses on how an environment can be created for higher education students which is conducive to their learning, development and success. In this

regard, he has published and presented both nationally and internationally. Dr Wahl forms part of the Higher Education Syndicate Research Team of the Faculty of Education at the UFS. He also supervises Masters and PhD students in the field of Higher Education Studies within this faculty. Dr Wahl serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa* and is the current Vice President: Africa for the International Association of Cognitive Education and Psychology. He is also a co-founder of the Institute for the Advancement of Cognitive Education; a non-profit organisation that aims to foster better thinking and learning strategies in developing countries. Additionally, he has co-directed, together with a global co-director, the annual South African Student Housing Training Institute for the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) from 2017 to 2019. He is married to Siobhane and is a father of three children; Judah, Joshua and Milcah.

### **Regennia N. Williams**

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Williams is a two-time recipient of Fulbright Awards. In 2019, she served as a Fulbright Specialist in the Department of History at South Africa's UFS (Qwaqwa campus), and she was a Visiting Fulbright Scholar at Nigeria's Obafemi Awolowo University in 2010. Other research and/or teaching-related travels have taken her to Canada, Austria, China and France.

Dr Williams has conceived, organised and directed numerous public programmes and academic conferences, including those related to the works of Langston Hughes, WEB Du Bois, Karla F.C. Holloway, Zora Neale Hurston and Duke Ellington. From 1993 to 2015, she served as a faculty member in the Department of History at Cleveland State University, where she earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and established the RASHAD Scholarship Endowment. She has also taught part-time at Montgomery College, Dyke College, Cuyahoga Community College and the University of the District of Columbia.

Her published works include books, book chapters and articles in scholarly journals, newspapers and magazines. Dr Williams is the founder and editor of *The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs* and the *Traditions & Beliefs* newsletter.



# Foreword

**Pura Mgolombane**

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I am delighted that the experiences, teachings and lessons learned by all of those involved in the First-Year Leadership for Change (F1L4C) Programme and the Global Leadership Summit (GLS) are being documented for the period starting in 2010. First-Year Leadership for Change is arguably one of the most courageous student development co-curricular programmes that South Africa has ever witnessed, and I am proud to have played a part in F1L4C 2011 and GLS 2012 as a mentor. Now, as a Student Affairs professional at the University of the Free State (UFS), I appreciate this opportunity to reflect back on my personal experiences, and to present the context in which I saw these programmes develop.

I had joined the UFS in August 2011 as Assistant Dean: Student Life & Leadership. Together with a team of diverse first-year students (Lara Brown, Eddie de Wet, Chloe Jansen, Bernhard Louw, Boaz Matuso, Magon Mouton, Mashudu Ndwammbi, Hermias Nortier, Gloria Rantsho, Nyakallo Scheepers, Martiné van der Merwe and Ladine van der Walt), I visited Texas A&M University in the United States of America (USA), where we were hosted by Professor Gary and Mrs Sandy Briers, Amanda Zuccarini Johnson and Stephanie Abbott Curs (howdy).

It is important that I illustrate the diversity within my team of 12 students. It included one Sesotho-speaking black woman and one Sesotho-speaking black man, two mixed race women, two

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Afrikaans-speaking white women and one English-speaking white woman, one Tshivenda-speaking black man, one Setswana-speaking black man and three Afrikaans-speaking men. Language was therefore a major challenge when it came to our team dynamics.

The women who could speak Afrikaans – even if it was their second language – felt comfortable speaking it to one another, and at times found themselves speaking it in the presence of the Sesotho woman who had to remind them that she could not understand the language. ‘English, please’, she would say. It was a dynamic that played out with the men, too, and, of course, within the entire group when we were all together.

The Sesotho and Setswana men could not speak Tshivenda and, because the Sesotho man was comfortable expressing himself in English, the black men spoke mainly in English, robbing them of the opportunity to speak their mother tongues, and adding to their frustrations.

I have gone into such details to paint a realistic picture of the language dynamics that our students had to embrace and resolve. This issue, and many others, became part of our daily debriefing sessions, making language a persistent challenge. When it first emerged, the Afrikaans-speaking students asked why their colleagues did not speak their own languages when they were together, just as they did. It was a question that arose out of ignorance. Of course, the response was that they did not possess the same mother tongue. For some of the Afrikaans-speaking students, that trip was the first experience of their lives in which they had to speak English most of the time, which, too, increased their frustration. This led to extremely high emotions during our debriefing sessions, with each party convinced that it was justified in what it was doing and/or requesting to be done.

In my role as mentor and facilitator, and together with team leader Eddie de Wet (one of the Afrikaans-speaking first-year students), we guided the team to reflect on notions of language

privilege. This included looking at how privileged some members of the team were in their ability to speak Afrikaans and in the power that their numbers provided them. We also revealed the frustrations attached to struggling to speak English for such a long period of time when it was not their first language. We would then apply those experiences to what happens back home on campus, where, in most instances, the lecturers would be Afrikaans- or English-speaking (of course, in line with the UFS language policy), which meant that those students who had a good command of Afrikaans or English (for some this was their mother tongue) had a better understanding of the lecture compared to those for whom such languages were a third, fourth or fifth language. This became a real-life opportunity for the Afrikaans-speaking students in our group to comprehend the struggle of being forced to think in your second and/or third language – something that is the lived experience of most black students on our campus.

Following such reflections, and having recognised their privilege and/or the frustrations of those who do not have the privilege, we asked those in the team who had the language privilege to consider what they could do upon returning to campus to change the situation to ensure that all UFS students could have equitable access to language. This question also extended to other privileges such as gender, race, disability, class, sexual orientation, religion, place of origin, etc.

This book therefore creates an opportunity to assess the impact of the project from both a human and academic perspective. The university administration during that time referred to the co-curricular as the Human Project, while the curricular was referred to as the Academic Project. The university invested many resources in the Human Project through F1L4C. The aim was to use the first-year students as drivers in the institutional culture change. The underlying assumption was that first-year students have the capacity to rise to a challenge when made to believe that they are able to make changes for the better.

With such notions in mind, in order to be considered for the programme, first-year students had to respond to application essay questions that related to similar obstacles, showing what contributions they would make to resolve those challenges and how they would facilitate reconciliation across areas of difference such as gender, race, disability, class, sexual orientation, place of origin, religion, etc.

Towards the end of this book, the authors pose some pertinent questions. These, in my view, highlight the contribution this book will make to the body of literature on student development and institutional transformation:

1. What has been the course of change at UFS [as a result of the F1L4C programme and GLS]?
2. How has the transformation been managed [i.e. has the UFS transformed whence?]?
3. Who have been the key stakeholders [in this process of transformation]?
4. How has student involvement changed before and after [the F1L4C programme and GLS]?
5. Did the leadership of UFS administration or educators influence the leadership of students [or did the university management stage the transformation (F1L4C) process to create an Institutional Change mirage by using student leaders?]?

It is my belief that, irrespective of the answers to these questions, the book will have an educative value for students, educators, administrators and Student Affairs professionals. Institutional change is a complex, ongoing project and this book will certainly highlight the sensitivities and complexities involved in institutional transformation.

Snowden and Boone (2007:69) identify the following characteristics inherent in a complex system:

- It involves large numbers of interacting elements.
- The interactions are nonlinear, and minor changes can disproportionately produce major consequences.

- The system is dynamic, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and solutions can't be imposed; rather, they arise from the circumstances. This is frequently referred to as emergence.
- The system has a history, and the past is integrated with the present; the elements evolve with one another and with the environment and evolution is irreversible.
- Though a complex system may, in retrospect, appear to be ordered and predictable, hindsight does not lead to foresight because the external conditions and systems constantly change.
- Unlike in ordered systems (where the system constrains the agents), or chaotic systems (where there are no constraints), in a complex system the agents and the system constrain one another, especially over time. This means that we cannot forecast or predict what will happen.

I feel strongly that students, educators, administrators and Student Affairs professionals at every level and stage of their careers can enrich and strengthen their understanding of institutional transformation based on the narratives presented in this book. It can also aid the higher education sector in South Africa, Africa and globally to develop a shared understanding of managing the transformation of a complex system.

In truth, F1L4C was a social transformative experiment. This book attempts to ascertain whether the experiment was a success, if it was worth all the resources invested in it and to determine the impact it holds.

Whatever the answers, it demonstrates that the UFS – through F1L4C – took the initiative and played an integral role (however late) towards the achievement of the aspirations of the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for Higher Education Transformation (Department of Education 1997).

The White Paper 3, under 'needs and challenges', states that (Department of Education 1997):

Assessing the current state of higher education in South Africa ... the Ministry finds reason for concern and an imperative for transformation. Despite acknowledged achievements and strengths,

the present system of higher education is limited in its ability to the moral, political, social and economic demands of the new South Africa. It is characterised by the following deficiencies:

There is an inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for students and staff along lines of race, gender, class and geography. There are gross discrepancies in the participation rates of students from different population groups, indefensible imbalances in the ratios of black and female staff compared to whites and males, and equally untenable disparities between historically black and historically white institutions in terms of facilities and capacities. (p. 4)

Pertaining to the principles of 'equity and redress', the White Paper 3 states that (Department of Education 1997):

The principle of equity requires fair opportunities both to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. Applying the principle of equity implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, and on the other a programme of transformation with a view to redress. Such transformation involves not only abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation, but also measures of empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals and institutions. (p. 7)

While reading this book, you will find complexities and contradictions, some frustrations and shortfalls, as well as many achievements, experiences and lessons, contentment and regrets, opportunities and individual stories of finding permanent friendships (both personal and professional). This book should serve as one of the most useful teaching materials for institutional transformation.

If there is one thing that both the protagonists and the critics of F1L4C and GLS will agree upon, it is the words of Albert Schweitzer (n.d.):

In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit. (n.p.)

The UFS, during this period, did indeed burst into flame by its many encounters around the globe.

# Preface

**W.P. Wahl**

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*Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.* – Nelson Mandela (1994:n.p.)

It is the transformative power of education, and the ability to be innovative in the context of challenging circumstances that helped to restore hope at the University of the Free State (UFS). On Monday, 25 February 2008 the course of the UFS – a higher education institution in central South Africa – changed dramatically. On this evening, a notoriously racist video, created by four white students from a campus residence hall, became publicly known. The content of this video shook the university community to the core and sent shockwaves of disbelief across the word. It was this moment of crisis that was the mark of a new era of transformation for the UFS.

This edited volume will reveal how the journey of transformation at the UFS became interwoven with student leadership development and global learning. To this effect, the UFS initiated two intersecting co-curricular programmes, namely: the First-Year Leadership for Change (F1L4C) programme in 2010; and the triennial Global Leadership Summit (GLS) in 2012. Although these programmes developed and changed over time, their core focus remained to be the development of transformational student leaders through the creation of global learning spaces. From its

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inception in 2010 to the last GLS in 2018, the UFS global learning project involved 780 students and 259 staff members from 109 institutions, across four continents. This background is important because it contextualises the primary goal of this volume.

The goal of this edited volume is to create a deeper understanding about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development through global learning, especially in the context of higher education transformation. The importance of this goal becomes clear in light of certain limitations in the existing body of literature.

Although a significant body of literature in the field of Higher Education Studies focuses on 'global learning' as a high-impact educational practice, several limitations make it challenging to derive accurate generalisations about its impact on student leadership development in the context of higher education transformation, especially for developing countries. Many studies are based on relatively small samples from the global North. It is questionable whether these data sets, that are mainly under-representative of the diverse higher education system in the world, can be used to summarise the extent to which global learning initiatives impact student leadership development in different higher education contexts. Furthermore, the framing of questions in the existing body of research mainly focuses on how global learning initiatives develop students' ability to explore and interact with cultures and worldviews different from their own. Although these research questions have value, very few scholars ask questions beyond the personal development of individual students. In this regard, this edited volume will aim to overcome these framing limitations by focusing on questions that are less prominent in the current body of literature, namely: In what ways can the personal transformation of students, especially student leaders, influence the transformation of higher education institutions (HEIs)? How can higher education transformation be used as a catalyst for societal transformation? In what ways can institutions take global learning initiatives to scale, both in terms

of the number of participating individuals and the number of partner universities? What is the reciprocal effect on HEIs that partner in collaborative global learning initiatives, especially if these institutions are from different continents in the world? How will the existing conceptualisation of global learning be influenced if a multi-national global learning project is initiated and coordinated from the global South? In the different chapters of this edited volume, scholars and practitioners from different academic disciplines and institutions across the world, will critically reflect on these questions. In this regard, their collective scholarly contributions will be aimed at one question, namely: in what ways did the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhance student leadership development, within higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces?

This edited volume will aim to answer this overarching research question in four parts. In the first part, the authors of the first two chapters construct a conceptual framework to contextualise this edited volume theoretically. In this regard, Wahl and Mason-Innes discuss the core aspects of the student development theory, different models of student leadership development and the theoretical underpinnings of global learning in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, Suransky further discusses the concept of 'global learning' specifically perceived through the lens of higher education transformation. The conceptual framework created in these first two chapters is important for this edited volume because it enables the principal editor to draw crucial comparisons in the last chapter.

In the second part, the authors of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 contextualise this volume historically. In Chapter 3, Jansen provides the rationale for the establishment of the F1L4C and GLS programmes at the UFS. As rector and Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the UFS during the period 2009–2016, Professor Jansen explains the institution's strategic imperatives behind the UFS global learning project. In Chapter 4, Pelser describes the architecture of the F1L4C and GLS programmes. This description



is valuable to create a deeper understanding of how these programmes were conceptualised, initiated, coordinated and monitored.

The third part of this edited volume encapsulates different perspectives from various authors. In Chapter 5, Giselle Baillie provides a critical analysis of the UFS global learning project. What is important is that she explains the systemic-holistic dynamics and pushback that impacted on the F1L4C and GLS programmes. In Chapter 6, Bell and Bell use social network analysis (SNA) to make a valuable contribution to the work. To this effect, they clarify how the social networks of participating students at the UFS expanded beyond previous segregation lines of race, gender and campus location. This is important because Bell and Bell report how individuals from marginal groups became more integrated, and how these enriched social networks positively impacted student leadership at the UFS. In Chapter 7, Frans Kamsteeg uses narrative analysis to identify seven different self-identity narratives from participating students at the UFS. What is crucial here is that Kamsteeg explains how these self-identity narratives explain different positionings of students in relation to institutional and societal transformation. In this regard, the dynamic interplay between self-identification and social-identification come to the fore. The authors of Addendum A and Chapter 8 have a strong phenomenological approach. In Addendum A Marisa DuBois makes a valuable contribution through providing a personal account of her experience of the F1L4C and GLS programmes. As a staff member at a partner university in the United States (US), DuBois explains what it means – in very practical terms – to have hosted UFS students as part of the F1L4C programme, and what it meant to have participated in the GLS as a visiting staff member at the UFS. What is crucial for this edited volume is that DuBois explains, in a very personal way, what it took from partner universities to be part of the UFS global learning programme. Regennia Williams continues, in Chapter 8, with this theme of the personal experiences of participating students and staff

from partner universities. What is important in her reflection is that she explains how the positive impact of the UFS global learning project in the lives of students and staff mobilised them to initiate transformational projects in their communities and academic disciplines. This is valuable because it illustrates the impact of the UFS global learning project beyond the scope of its formal programmes.

In the last part of this edited volume, the principal editor returns to the conceptual framework established in the first two chapters. In this regard, this final chapter compares the basic theoretical concepts of student development, the different models for student leadership development and the theoretical conceptualisation of global learning – especially in the context of higher education transformation – with the different perspectives raised by the authors in Chapters 3-8 and Addendum A. This comparison will enable the principal editor to identify important similarities and differences that are considered to be crucial to make generalisations about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enriched student leadership development, in the context of higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces.

The editors have aimed to uphold the academic freedom of scholars and practitioners who contributed to this edited volume. The scholarly perspectives of individual authors were honoured, irrespective of whether they align or diverge with those of the other authors. The reader will, therefore, be required to distinguish between the argumentative focus within each chapter and the coherent argument of the entire edited volume. Nevertheless, this is the nature of an edited volume. The editors trust that the way in which this edited volume has been put together will uphold both uniqueness and coherence.

It is believed that this work will provide a deeper understanding and new conceptual insights that are unavailable in the existing body of literature. Firstly, the data set is relatively large in comparison with similar projects, both with regards to the

number of individuals and the number of institutions that participated since 2010. Secondly, the data are enriched through the diverse experiences of students and staff from across the world. Lastly, the longitudinal nature of the data will allow scholars to reflect on the historical development of the F1L4C and GLS programmes and the reciprocal effect over time on students, staff and institutions. We believe that this book will assist higher education practitioners, scholars and administrators in making better generalisations about student leadership development, global learning initiatives and higher education transformation.

# Theoretical perspectives on student leadership development through global learning initiatives

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**Keywords:** Student development theory; Dissonance; Challenge and support; Developmental trajectory; Developmental context; Student leadership development; Servant Leadership Model; Transformational Leadership Model; Leadership Challenge Model; Social Change Model.

## ■ Introduction

The question central to this edited volume is: in what ways did the University of the Free State (UFS) First-Year Leadership for Change (FIL4C) and Global Leadership Summit (GLS) programmes enhance student leadership development, within higher education transformation, through global learning spaces?

In answering this research question, it is necessary to first contextualise this volume theoretically. Thus, the goal of this chapter is to position this edited volume within the field of student development theory. In the process, the authors aim to establish a conceptual framework that will provide some theoretical reference points and allow the reader to engage more effectively with the rest of the chapters. As a rule, theory assists in bringing clarity of perspective and creating a deeper and more nuanced understanding of that which is observed. We trust that the theoretical perspectives offered in this chapter will assist the reader in this regard throughout the entire edited volume.

The authors will introduce these different theoretical perspectives in particular ways. The first section discusses general theoretical perspectives on student development to provide conceptual building blocks for the rest of the chapter. Next, this chapter focuses on different theoretical perspectives on student leadership development. Lastly, some principles will be established concerning global learning as a way to further enrich the overarching conceptual framework. Chapter 2 focuses on the theme of global learning, primarily through the lens of higher education transformation. Thus, the conceptual

underpinnings of this chapter are meant to be read together with the deliberations of Chapter 2 to provide a complete conceptual framework for the entire edited volume.

## ■ Student development theory

All student development theories are concerned with the developmental growth and changes that occur in students during the span of their post-secondary study period. 'Student development theory' is defined as a set of concepts that present a systematic view of the development of students by specifying relations among certain variables. The dynamic of maturation and learning shapes a student's development in different domains. It is influenced by various experiences throughout the student experience, during which students have to make meaning, make choices and achieve meaningful goals – academically, personally and socially. In all of this, students' learning and development are influenced by the campus environment and developmental ecology they are exposed to.

These complexities associated with the development of students in all aspects demand multiple theoretical lenses. Jones and Abes (2017:143) make sense of these multiple perspectives by categorising student development theory according to five focus areas, namely:

- theories that are developmental and focus on the individual, including individuals' social identities
- those that examine students in the collegiate context such as student success, engagement and learning
- theories that explain the relationship of campus environments to student development and success
- those focused on organisations and institutions of higher education
- theories considered more holistic or integrative of multiple domains of development and context.

In the same vein, Evans et al. (2010) group student development theories into three overarching groups, namely, foundational theories, integrative theories and social identity development.

Although these different overarching categories are helpful to navigate more effectively through the vast array of student development theories, it is especially important to understand the basic principles underpinning all theories. What is at stake is the fact that readers might get overwhelmed by different theoretical perspectives without understanding clearly those core principles that are crucial to student development.

Thus, all student development theories are based on four principles, namely, (1) the dynamic movement between equilibrium and disequilibrium – also named dissonance; (2) challenge and support; (3) the developmental trajectory; and (4) the context of development (Jones & Abes 2011:154–155, 2017:144–147). Like an endoskeleton – providing a firm internal structure without restricting movement and growth – these four principles provide a framework for further discussion on student leadership development and global learning in the rest of this chapter.

## ■ Dissonance

The first principle of student development is that a dissonance must be created between learning experiences and students' existing ways of thinking, doing and being. Jones and Abes (2011:154) aptly state that the development of students is achieved through specific learning experiences that cause a dynamic movement between stadia of equilibrium and disequilibrium. This dynamic movement between equilibrium and disequilibrium in student development is underpinned by the Piagetian idea of adaptation (Piaget 1953).

Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1953) argued that an organism (i.e. developing person) grows and develops its existing schemata (i.e. organised patterns of behaviour and thought) through continuously interacting with and adapting to the environment.

He observed that as the developing person receives information through various experiences, some stimuli will challenge the organism's existing patterns of behaviour and thought. This will disrupt the equilibrium between the organism's existing schemata and stimuli in the environment to create a state of disequilibrium; accurately labelled by Knefelkamp, Widick and Parker (1978) as a moment of crisis. Piaget (1953) believed that to re-establish equilibrium, the organism would adapt his or her schemata in one of two ways. If strong similarities exist between the new information and existing schemata, the new information will be assimilated into existing schemata. This process is called 'assimilation'. However, if new information is vastly different from, and therefore incompatible with existing schemata, equilibrium will be re-established through creating new schemata that will be able to accommodate new information. This process is called 'accommodation'.

The dynamic movement between stadia of equilibrium and disequilibrium has necessary implications for understanding and using student development theories - especially concerning leadership development through global learning spaces. Student development is fundamentally experience-driven. No development will take place in an environment where students remain passive. This means that universities (and all other educational institutions) should create learning experiences that have the potential to develop students within a specific domain. Thus, an important question that could be asked is how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes created specific learning experiences through global learning spaces. Furthermore, moving beyond the practicalities of how these experiences are created, this work could also illuminate the extent to which these global learning experiences developed leadership attributes in students, and how these attributes contributed - or failed to contribute - to higher education transformation?

However, creating opportunities for participation in learning experiences will not, in itself, result in student development. The level of the challenge these experiences entail, and the kind of support provided during these experiences, are of equal importance.



## ■ Challenge and support

To use the Piagetian phrase, learning experiences have to be challenging enough to create moments of discomfort by exposing students to stimuli that are different from their existing patterns of behaviour and thought. This is important to create states of disequilibrium – as explained above. However, the level of discomfort is as crucial for development as the creation of moments of discomfort. Just as learning experiences that are not challenging enough could limit student development, learning experiences that are too challenging could also slow down or stop the development of students. In this regard, Vygotsky's (1978:86) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is helpful.

The ZPD determines that the level of optimal development is positioned between what an individual can do alone and what he or she can do with the assistance of a more knowledgeable or experienced other (Vygotsky 1978). In this regard, a critical question emerges about the UFS F1LFC and GLS programmes; namely, in which ways do these programmes ensure that learning experiences remain within the ZPD for participating students? Furthermore, how do the programmes create challenging experiences, and how do the programmes ensure that global learning experiences are not too challenging?

The notion of support during the learning process is undoubtedly implied in Vygotsky's (1978) definition of ZPD because the upper level of the ZPD is constituted by what a developing person can do with the help of someone else. This means that even if a learning experience is aptly positioned within the ZPD, if the needed support from a more knowledgeable other is insufficient, the developmental process will be influenced negatively.

Sanford (1966) also emphasises this notion of challenge and support and argues for an optimal balance between challenge and support to foster student development. Jones and Abes

(2011:153) similarly underline the variance of what constitutes challenge and support between different student groups.

What is important for this volume is to consider how the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes provided the right kind of support to students during their different learning experiences.

The principles of dissonance, and challenge and support pave the way for the third principle related to student development, namely the notion that development unfolds in consecutive stages within various developmental domains.

## ■ **Developmental trajectory**

Student development – in various domains – does not happen in an amorphous way. However, like a single seed that grows and develops into a unique tree, student development unfolds according to a specific ‘ground plan’. Jones and Abes (2011) accurately label this third principle underpinning student development theory as the ‘epigenetic principle’. What they mean by the epigenetic principle is that students, on the one hand, mainly develop – in different areas – according to a specific ‘blueprint’. On the other hand, how individual students ‘read’, interpret and respond to this general blueprint (on top of this general plan of development) is individualised and can be modified externally. Nevertheless, as a rule, student development unfolds through consecutive stages along a specific trajectory that becomes increasingly more complex. The organisation of this increased complexity forms an integral part of student development (Jones & Abes 2011:154, 2017:144–145). Thus, the different student development theories provide distinctive lenses for a clearer perspective and understanding of the developmental trajectory and associated stages about specific dimensions of students’ development. These lenses bring in focus, ‘the content of development ... the process of development ... and the interaction of content, process, and context’ (Jones & Abes 2017:144).

However, how can the interaction between content, process and context be integrated effectively? Wagner (2011) aptly illustrates this interplay and in the process, incorporates the principles of dissonance, challenge and support and the developmental trajectory. He explains that students experience and interpret the world based on the metaphorical lens at their current disposal. Similar to the Piagetian notion of adaptation, when the lens explains what they are experiencing, they are at equilibrium. Nevertheless, when the lens does not explain what is happening, students will either explain things so that they fit within their lens or change to a new lens. This 'change of the lens' is a period of transition and disequilibrium. The point where a student can accept the change in lens is referred to as 'readiness' (Wagner 2011:87). The state of readiness occurs when a student discovers the limits of their current lens in the face of challenges. The challenge is balanced with support formed by aspects of the environment, and this balance is critical to preventing the student from becoming overwhelmed and unable to adapt. Like Sanford (1966), Wagner (2011:87) asserts that the level of challenge a student can tolerate is directly influenced by the amount of support the environment can provide.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the role of the environment (i.e. the developmental context) cannot be limited to that of a supportive role. The formative impact of developmental contexts must also be considered to develop a conceptual framework for understanding student leadership development effectively.

## **■ Developmental context**

Recent theories on student development deviated from an intense focus on the epigenetic principle and its associated developmental trajectories. Jones and Abes (2017:145) rightfully indicate the shift that poststructural theorists brought by their questioning of the centrality of the epigenetic principle and the rigid use of developmental trajectories. For poststructural theorists, the fluidity of student development cannot be

accurately captured by the different stages outlined by developmental trajectories. Instead, these theories give much more prominence to the influence that contextual systems – especially structures of power and privilege – have on student development (Abes & Kasch 2007; Jones & Abes 2017:145). For example, if racism exists within a particular context, the mere existence of racism will have a direct impact on the development of those students who experience racism. In this instance, the development of these students could not be accurately explained or predicted by the exclusive use of the developmental stages as defined by a particular student development theory. Thus, for poststructural theorists, the role of the environment – and not so much the specific characteristics of the environment – becomes paramount in understanding the development of students.

But, in discussing the role of the environment, there is a potential pitfall to avoid; the developmental role of the environment cannot be reduced to a single angle of impact. The impact that different contextual systems have on one another and their interconnected role in the development of individual students are vital in understanding student development (Jones & Abes 2017:146-147). To put it differently, multiple aspects of different systems in the environment intersect to form a collective impact on an individual student's development. In this regard, Richard M. Lerner's construct of developmental contextualism is helpful to emphasise the reciprocal impact of multiple contexts on human development (Lerner 1991, 1995).

In light of the impact of developmental contextualism and the intersectionality it entails, it is recommended that the reader also focuses on the structure of social systems (as opposed to merely focusing on individual narratives of students). This could assist in gaining a more in-depth understanding of how the context of the F1L4C and GLS programmes influenced student development. Furthermore, it will be important to consider how power structures shaped the context and mediated development, what intersecting structures of inequality existed and how privilege and oppression patterned development.

To summarise: The four basic principles underpinning all student development theories (i.e. dissonance, challenge and support, developmental trajectory and developmental context) already highlighted several conceptual considerations about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development. However, to create a more nuanced understanding, the next section will focus on different theoretical perspectives, specifically about student leadership development.

## ■ Student leadership development

Theories on student leadership development are rooted in the theoretical perspectives of student development, as described above. This focus on student development has impacted and changed the way higher education institutions (HEIs) have viewed leadership over time (eds. Komives et al. 2011). To this effect, Wendy Wagner wrote extensively on the consideration of student development in leadership. Over the years, theories related to cognitive, identity, interpersonal, moral and ethical development have been found to explain how (Wagner 2011):

[S]tudents interpret leadership, how they practise it, their responsiveness to certain classroom structures or assignments, their ability to learn from co-curricular experiences, and even the way they view the role of the educator. (p. 85)

Furthermore, the student development theory may explain why and how some students respond to designed learning initiatives (e.g. the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes), while others do not. As Wagner (2011:85) states, 'it is not about finding the one great method', but understanding where each student is positioned developmentally.

Meeting students where they are in their personal development, and understanding the student development theory are two important factors that may prepare leadership educators for the ebb and flow of learning that occurs when exploring student leadership. In the ever-changing tides of learning, it is often

necessary for educators and student affairs practitioners to understand (and help students to understand) that the learning of leadership is a process. Leadership, in essence, entails a long-term developmental process during which each learning opportunity builds to develop leadership attributes. It is about gathering concepts over time and experiencing how different ways of leadership could be applied.

To understand more deeply this dynamic and ongoing process of student leadership development, higher education scholars and practitioners have developed several leadership models. This was needed because since the 1990s, universities have heeded the joint global societal call to meet the demand for a specific kind of leadership that could address complex societal problems (eds. Komives et al. 2011). The complexity of these problems has also required educators to adopt theoretical perspectives from multiple disciplines to help understand how people adopt ways of knowing, being and doing (Owen 2012). This increased focus on leadership studies in colleges and universities ultimately led to leadership becoming a desirable graduate attribute (Kuh 2008).

Thus, to help institutions develop student leadership programmes and to assess student leadership attributes, researchers have developed the following seven models: the servant leadership model (Greenleaf 1977); the transformational leadership model (Bass 1985; Burns 1978); the leadership challenge model (Kouzes & Posner 2002); the social change model (SCM) (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI] 1996); the relational leadership model (Komives, Lucas & McMahon 2007); the leadership identity (LID) model (Komives et al. 2006) and; the African Leadership University model (ALU) (2017). Although other models for the development of student leaders exist, the authors specifically selected these seven models because of their different approaches to student leadership development. It is considered that they appropriately represent various perspectives on leadership development amongst post-secondary students.

## ■ The servant leadership model

The servant leadership model defines the essence of leadership as serving and developing others. Robert K. Greenleaf's (1977) work on servant leadership looked at the success of leadership that is based on the ability of the servant or team to assist the leader's journey. 'Greenleaf identified seven critical practices of servant leaders: self-awareness; listening; changing the pyramid; developing colleagues; coaching, not controlling; unleashing the energy and intelligence of others; and foresight' (Greenleaf 1977:7-49, cited in Mason-Innes 2015:19). 'Unlike some other leadership approaches with a top-down hierarchical style, servant leadership emphasises collaboration, trust, empathy, and the ethical use of power' (Mason-Innes 2015:19). At the heart of this model is the view that the individual leader is, first of all, a servant. The individual makes a conscious decision to lead in order to serve others better, and not to increase his or her own power. The objective and focus are to enhance the growth of other individuals and to increase teamwork and personal involvement (Mason-Innes 2015:19).

It, therefore, comes as no surprise that the servant leadership model emphasises the potential of students to develop as leaders. In this regard, Greenleaf (1977) advocates for the potential that all students have to develop leadership skills when they are on campus. Some students (Greenleaf 1977:196-197, cited in Mason-Innes 2015):

[M]ay make a quantum leap in their growth as a responsible person while they are in college if someone on the faculty will take an interest in finding and coaching them. (p. 19)

What is important is that more than four decades ago Greenleaf questioned why institutions of higher education do not include student leadership development in their respective mandates. To this effect, he opened a way for the further development of

frameworks for student leadership development (Greenleaf 1977:199).

## ■ Transformational leadership model

The transformational leadership model is, in essence, about the transformation of individuals and social systems, while fostering mutual responsibility towards a shared vision within a group (Northouse 2019). This notion of mutuality, embedded in the transformational leadership model, was initially introduced by Burns in 1978.

Although the transformational leadership model has a wide variety of applicational spheres, Burns focused his initial research on political leadership. In his model, Burns placed transformational leadership in contrast with transactional leadership (Burns 1978). Burns further asserts that transactional leaders are not primarily interested in the transformation of individuals or the culture of the organisation. Instead, these leaders aim to benefit from the transactional exchange between their wants and needs and that of their followers (Judge & Piccolo 2004). In contrast with transactional leaders, transformational leaders create a sense of common purpose that transcends short-term goals. In transformational leadership, the reciprocity between leaders and followers are mutually beneficial and result in higher levels of 'motivation and morality', something which has the power to transform organisations (Burns 1978:20).

Bass (1985) further refined the transformational leadership model by focusing on its behavioural underpinnings; namely, those psychological processes needed to bring transformational leadership (and transactional leadership) to reality. Judge and Piccolo are correct in their observation that the model for transformational leadership evolved to eventually consist of four dimensions: charisma or idealised influence, inspirational



motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Judge & Picollo 2004:755).

Charisma, or idealised influence, refers to those actions from a leader that appeal to followers on an emotional level and that assist them in identifying with the leader. The dimension of inspirational motivation is about a leader's ability to communicate a vision that is appealing to followers. This entails a focus on high standards, confidence about the achievement of future goals and the communication of a deeper meaning in relation to activities. Intellectual stimulation is achieved through confronting assumptions, taking calculated risks, harnessing followers' ideas and encouraging their creativity. Lastly, the dimension individualised consideration refers to a leader's ability to attend to the needs of followers, to mentor followers and to listen to their needs, ideas and desires.

Strong similarities exist between these dimensions of the transformational leadership model and the practices associated with the leadership challenge model.

## ■ Leadership challenge model

The leadership challenge model regards the leader as a role model and a change agent who challenges, inspires, tests and encourages new ideas while inspiring others to engage in the same process. Kouzes and Posner's (2002) leadership challenge model originated from their research on organisational managers, during which they focused on those qualities and practices that enhanced optimal leadership performance (Mason-Innes 2015). Kouzes and Posner (2002:98) theorised that effective organisational leaders consistently engage in five leadership practices: modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart.

Recognising the gap for a valid instrument to measure leadership development for higher education students, Kouzes and Posner (2002) created a student-focused model.

Their subsequent study confirmed the fact that the most capable student leaders engaged more frequently in each of the five leadership practices compared to those students who were identified as being less effective as leaders by their followers (Mason-Innes 2015).

To elaborate, Kouzes and Posner (2002) collected data on student leaders in the United States (US), universities and colleges and then developed the Leadership Potential Inventory-Students (LPI-S) (Mason-Innes 2015). In developing the LPI-S, efficient student leaders, for example, capable fraternity and sorority presidents (Posner & Brodsky 1992, 1994), competent resident assistants (Posner & Brodsky 1993) and effective orientation leaders (Posner & Rosenberger 1997) were evaluated. 'Data from studying these student leaders formed the basis for the LPI-S as an assessment tool' (Mason-Innes 2015:24). Students who were not necessarily in a leadership position were also evaluated to gauge their leadership skills against those who have held student leadership positions (Mason-Innes 2015). The LPI-S is certainly a helpful self-assessment tool by which students can measure their leadership skills.

## ■ The social change model

In 1996, a group of leadership educators created a SCM to develop leadership amongst post-secondary students in the US (HERI 1996; Mason-Innes 2015:25). This leadership model values *inclusivity* and to this end aims to identify leadership attributes in all students; that is those in formal leadership positions and those outside formal leadership structures. 'The SCM model has two goals. Firstly, it aims to enhance student learning and the development of self-knowledge and leadership competence. Secondly, it strives towards positive institutional or community change' (Mason-Innes 2015:25).

These two goals are achieved through the development of leadership on three levels: the individual, the group and the community or society (HERI 1996; Mason-Innes 2015:25). The SCM is also known as the 7 C's-model, because it upholds seven

critical values, namely: consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility and citizenship (eds. Komives & Wagner 2009:xiii). These seven values help ‘individuals understand themselves and come together in collaborative ways to accomplish social change’ (eds. Komives & Wagner 2009:394). The SCM emphasises the importance of *action*, and Astin and Astin (2000:8) asserted that in this regard, leaders become change agents that ‘foster change’.

What is important to note, especially for this edited volume, is that the SCM maximises the use of peer groups to enhance leadership development in students (Mason-Innes 2015):

The strength of this model is that it can be applied to all students and groups [...] unlike Kouzes and Posner’s leadership change model, the SCM focuses on values rather than skills. (pp. 25-26)

Even though this model was specifically developed for post-secondary institutions, few institutions conducted empirical research on its application before 2006 (Dugan 2006). However, in 2006, a multi-institutional study of leadership was initiated (Dugan 2006). This marked an important step in the further development of the SCM. To apply the SCM of leadership more intently, Komives et al. (2007) began their work on a model that would initially put a relational view on leadership, and ultimately focus on the development of what has come to be known as LID (as explained further).

## ■ Relational leadership model

The relational leadership model defines ‘leadership’ as a mutual collaborative process that emphasises the fostering of strong intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. This relational view of leadership emerged in an effort by Komives et al. (2007) to apply the SCM of leadership more intently. In this regard, Komives et al. (2007) aimed to develop a model that would ultimately address LID (see the section below). The term ‘relational leadership’, therefore, refers ‘to the ability of the leader to create positive relationships within the organisation’ (Mason-Innes 2015:26).

From this perspective, relational leadership is only possible where there is a movement of an engaged citizenry, and leadership is understood as a mutual, collaborative process (Endress 2000; Komives et al. 2007; Matusak 1997). To this end, the relational leadership model emphasises the importance of self-knowledge to enable leaders to work efficiently with others in effecting change (Mason-Innes 2015:26). Thus, the developmental process of leadership follows the knowing-being-doing model (Komives et al. 2007:76).

This knowing-being-doing model of leadership includes five components (Komives et al. 2007:75). The model is firstly empowering – it encourages members to engage and get involved actively. Secondly, the model is purposeful because it facilitates commitment to a common goal or activity. Thirdly, it is process-oriented. To this effect, it raises awareness of the way a group interacts and the impact that leadership has on a particular group's work. Fourthly, the model is inclusive in that it fosters understanding, valuing and engaging all aspects of diversity. Lastly, the relational model is ethical because it is guided by a system of moral principles (Komives et al. 2007:75) (Mason-Innes 2015):

Numerous theories of leadership have attempted to describe who leaders are, what leadership is, and what kind of leadership should be used in different contexts. What was missing from student leadership development theory was the ability to understand more about the process of becoming a leader (p. 27)

In response, Komives et al. (2009) continued to develop the relational leadership theory to address questions of how a leader develops.

## ■ Leadership identity model

The LID model primarily deals with the ability of individual students to identify with being a leader. Thus, in this model, the most important question in leadership development revolves around identity – how students view themselves as being a leader. The point of departure in this model is that the way an individual identifies as a leader will impact on how they act as leaders.

Komives et al. (2005) developed the relational leadership model concurrently with the SCM (as described above), which eventually led to their work on the LID model (Komives et al. 2006). In 2005 and 2006, Komives et al. (2006) looked at how students develop a LID. Using grounded theory, they asked what processes an individual goes through to come to an awareness that they can work effectively with others to accomplish change, and what personal and environmental factors contribute to this development (Owen 2012). Six developmental stages emerged which describe the increasingly sophisticated ways an individual defines leadership and then identifies him or herself as a leader (Komives et al. 2006).

The first of these six stages is awareness; namely, the individual's ability to identify leaders in their own lives. The second stage, exploration or engagement, accentuates the importance that a leader joins a group and assumes specific responsibilities within that group. The third stage is leadership identified; namely, when leadership is narrowly defined as being positional. In this definition, those holding positional leadership roles are seen as true leaders, while other individuals are seen as mere followers or members. In the fourth stage (leadership differentiated), leadership is not viewed as being only positional, but it is rather seen as a process of individual participation. In the fifth stage (generativity), leadership becomes a stable identity and is attributed to any person who participates in the process of leadership. The last stage is defined as integration or synthesis. During this final stage, leadership is about participating in the process of leadership and is ultimately defined by action – what a leader does (Komives et al. 2006:404–412).

It is important to note that some of these stages can occur before attending university, some during university studies and some might even occur later in life. This research exposes how complex the development of a LID can be, and also highlights the factors that will impact this development.

## ■ African Leadership University model

The ALU model advocates for the development of leadership that is practically efficient and relevant in an African context, while prioritising the importance of professional networks to enable opportunities across the continent of Africa and beyond. This model also emphasises personal values and the clarification of an individualised life-mission.

The ALU model asserts that the following six strategies are crucial to the development of leadership. Firstly, the development of skills and attributes relevant to the future world of work is considered paramount. Secondly, leadership development is closely connected to purpose-driven learning. Students are encouraged to discover their life-mission and then to align it with their studies. This is important because, from an ALU perspective, it guides students on how to approach challenges and access opportunities in a particular way. Thirdly, the ALU model emphasises engagement as a particular approach to the learning process. This cycle of engagement entails personal reflection, self-directed learning, peer learning and facilitated group learning. The fourth strategy associated with the ALU model emphasises the development of entrepreneurship. Leaders should be able to ‘solve big problems with limited resources ... think innovatively ... form and lead teams, and ... dream big’ (ALU 2017). As the fifth strategy for developing student leaders, this model points out the importance of fostering Pan African and global networks. As the sixth strategy, the ALU model aims to facilitate a student-driven learning experience. In this regard, the development of student leaders entails the empowering of individuals to take ownership of their developmental trajectory inside and outside the classroom.

In essence, the ALU model for student leadership development revolves around the application of relevant knowledge and 21st-century skills to the real-life challenges and opportunities in the continent of Africa (and beyond), while simultaneously upholding entrepreneurship and a purposeful and value-driven orientation to life.

**TABLE 1.1:** Student leadership development models.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Servant leadership model</b>	<b>Transformational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership challenge model</b>	<b>Social change model</b>	<b>Relational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership identity model</b>	<b>African leadership university model</b>
Authors and scholars	Greenleaf (1977)	Bass (1985) and Burns (1978)	Kouzes and Posner (2002)	HERI (1996)	Komives et al. (2007)	Komives et al. (2005)	ALU (2017)
Definition of leadership	The ability of the servant to assist leaders' journey. The leader is first a servant and leads to serving others better.	The ability to transform individuals and social systems.	The ability to develop and function efficiently in the role of a leader.	The ability to understand the self that results in individuals coming together to cause social change.	The ability to create positive relationships in an organisation.	The ability to view the self as a leader. Identifies as a leader.	The ability to be practically efficient and relevant in an African context, while fostering professional networks and upholding personal values and an individualised life-mission.

(Table 1.1 continued on the next page)

**TABLE 1.1 (Continues...):** Student leadership development models.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Servant leadership model</b>	<b>Transformational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership challenge model</b>	<b>Social change model</b>	<b>Relational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership identity model</b>	<b>African leadership university model</b>
Key aspects of the model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-awareness.</li> <li>2. Listening.</li> <li>3. Changing the pyramid.</li> <li>4. Developing colleagues.</li> <li>5. Coaching (vs. control).</li> <li>6. Unleashing energy and intelligence of others.</li> <li>7. Foresight.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charisma, or idealised influence.</li> <li>2. Inspirational motivation.</li> <li>3. Intellectual stimulation.</li> <li>4. Individualised consideration.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Modelling the way.</li> <li>2. Inspiring a shared vision.</li> <li>3. Challenging the process.</li> <li>4. Enabling others to act.</li> <li>5. Encouraging the heart.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The consciousness of self.</li> <li>2. Congruence.</li> <li>3. Commitment.</li> <li>4. Collaboration.</li> <li>5. Common purpose.</li> <li>6. Controversy with civility.</li> <li>7. Citizenship.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Empowering: Encouraging members to engage actively and get involved.</li> <li>2. Purposeful: Committing to a common goal or activity.</li> <li>3. Process-oriented: Being aware of the way a group interacts and the impact it has on the group's work.</li> <li>4. Inclusive: Understanding, valuing, and engaging all aspects of diversity.</li> <li>5. Ethical: Being guided by a system of moral principles.</li> </ol>	<p>Six stages of development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness: Can identify leaders in their lives as external to them.</li> <li>2. Exploration and engagement: Joins and assumes more responsibilities for groups.</li> <li>3. Leadership Identified: Viewing leadership as positional. Those holding positional leadership roles identify as leaders and others are followers or members.</li> <li>4. Leadership Differentiated: Viewing leadership as nonpositional and as a process.</li> <li>5. Generativity: Leadership is a stable identity and is any person who participates in the process of leadership.</li> <li>6. Integration or synthesis: Leadership is about participating in the process of leadership, and it is leadership, and it is what one does.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Graduate attributes are relevant to the 21st century.</li> <li>2. Purpose-driven learning.</li> <li>3. Real-world application.</li> <li>4. Entrepreneurship.</li> <li>5. Pan African and global networks.</li> <li>6. Engagement.</li> </ol>

(Table 1.1 continued on the next page)



**TABLE 1.1 (Continues...):** Student leadership development models.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Servant leadership model</b>	<b>Transformational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership challenge model</b>	<b>Social change model</b>	<b>Relational leadership model</b>	<b>Leadership identity model</b>	<b>African leadership university model</b>
Emphasises	Growth of others. Teamwork. Personal involvement.	Leadership defined as mutually beneficial leadership with ethical ends (transformational) vs. process where group members give power while leaders take responsibility (transactional).  There is mutual responsibility for shared leadership among group members.	Measuring and developing their leadership potential.	Leadership is inclusive.  The development of leadership qualities of all informal and non-formal contexts.  The goal is a positive change.	Engaged citizenry: Leadership is a mutual collaborative process.  It is a sequence of knowing-being-doing.	Process of developing an identity as a leader. Become aware of collaborating with others to effect social change. Environmental factors contributing to development.	Development of skills relevant to the 21st century. Application of academic knowledge to be practically relevant in an African context. Professional networks Purposeful life Entrepreneurship

## ■ Summary of models

The six models provide different perspectives on how HEIs could understand and apply student development theory to specifically develop student leaders. What is important for this edited volume is that these different perspectives (summed up in Table 1.1) provide a more nuanced conceptual framework for evaluating the ways that the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development, within higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces. The next section focuses on global learning to further refine the conceptual framework that this chapter aims to establish.

## ■ Global learning

‘Global learning’ is currently defined as a high-impact educational practice (Kuh 2008:10). This definition is important because Kuh states that student engagement in high-impact educational practices effectively facilitates the development of graduate attributes. To this effect, global learning activities allow students to explore worldviews different from their own and are often focused on challenging issues that affect humanity. These programmes are generally based on experiential learning in the community or coupled with study abroad programmes (Kuh 2008:10).

The term ‘global learning’ originated from the founding of the United Nations (UN) University’s Global Learning Division in 1982 and coinciding with Kuh’s (2008) explanation is in essence directed towards addressing transnational challenges on a global scale (Doscher & Landorf 2018). Soedjatmoko and Newland (1987) further defined global learning by highlighting the following two aspects of this term. On the one hand, this term refers to a way of thinking; that is, to think about the world as a closed interconnected system (Doscher & Landorf 2018). To put it differently, as defined by Nair and Henning (2017:10), students

should be globally-minded. On the other hand, global learning refers to the process of learning; namely, that it is globally positioned and incorporates all levels of society (Doscher & Landorf 2018).

The thinking paradigm and learning process both point to the notion of local and global identities (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Nair & Henning 2017). What is essential to global learning is that students understand that their respective local identities, as well as their global identity, are interconnected. The purpose of global learning is to align these interconnected identities for the common good, both within students' communities as well as for other communities worldwide (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Nair & Henning 2017). In this regard, institutions of higher learning have a particular obligation to nurture these intersecting identities and prepare students to act in ways that will enhance the common good of society (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Nair & Henning 2017).

However, in defining the role of higher education concerning global learning, it is important to note that global learning is distinctly different from the internationalisation of higher education. Internationalisation can be achieved through the mere increase of student mobility, study abroad programmes, recruitment of international students and the enhancement of access through institutional changes in the language of instruction and academic programmes (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Nair & Henning 2017). Although institutions may have well-articulated reasons for internationalisation (as explained in more detail in ch. 2), these actions, in themselves, will not result in global learning. Thus, it is important to take note of the shift that occurred in recent years in relation to the meaning of 'global'. Initially, global referred to study abroad programmes and the concept of diversity, namely internationalisation (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Nair & Henning 2017). However, to assist students better in solving global issues, a shift towards the establishment of global commons brought about different patterns and emphases.

In this regard, global learning was repositioned to become much more a part of the general education of institutions, often through different institution-wide programmes (Nair & Henning 2017:8). Thus, global learning became explicitly concerned about the process of interactive learning amongst a diverse group of students, and the advantages it might hold for individual participants and the broader community, both locally and globally (Doscher & Landorf 2018).

This process of interactive learning is essentially focused on multifaceted challenges, as well as the causes and effects of which often transcend national borders. The complexity of these challenges, therefore, cannot be understood or resolved in a disparate and isolated way but demands collaboration and interconnectedness from diverse perspectives (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Kuh 2008).

Thus, it comes as no surprise that perspective consciousness forms an integral part of global learning. To this effect, students are prompted to reflect on their assumptions and how their respective viewpoints might relate to different viewpoints (Doscher & Landorf 2018). Global learning encourages students to take into account multiple perspectives on the possible causes, consequences and solutions for societal issues (Doscher & Landorf 2018).

Diversity, therefore, is considered to be a crucial component of global learning (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Kuh 2008). In this regard, institutions of higher learning have a particular obligation to foster the thinking paradigm and learning processes associated with global learning, especially now that campuses worldwide are becoming increasingly more diverse. Institutions might be tempted to assume that the mere presence of a diverse student population will bring about interactive learning and collaboration amongst students with multiple life experiences. However, Doscher and Landorf (2018) make a valid point about how

institutions that intentionally conceptualise, cultivate and respond to matters of diversity will eventually impact the campus environment and students' learning and development. At stake is the fact that the learning processes and outcomes of global learning will not be accessible to all students but only to some elite who have privileged access to the internationalisation endeavours of the institution. It is, therefore, crucial that institutions of higher learning make global learning accessible to all (Doscher & Landorf 2018; Kuh 2008).

The universal accessibility of global learning is made practical by Nair and Henning's research on the global learning programmes of 24 institutions of higher learning. This research study outlines critical factors that institutions should consider to make global learning accessible to most students. Nair and Henning categorised these critical factors into the following categories: attributes of the institution and the student body, resources, and where global learning resides within the institution (Nair & Henning 2017:11-15).

To begin with, the attributes of the respective institution and student body are critical factors in making global learning universally accessible. This category includes aspects like the dedication of academic personnel; whether the majority of students are residential or commuter students; a well-established and articulated institutional mission; institutional leadership and collaboration. From amongst all these aspects Nair and Henning particularly emphasise the importance of (Nair & Henning 2017):

[H]aving a shared conception of global learning ... having a vocabulary, a shared language, to talk about global learning. Most of these [24] institutions had global learning in some form in their strategic plans ... So leadership with a well-articulated mission, that then translates to a shared understanding, is central. (p. 12)

In this regard, they underlined the important role of a 'single, passionate advocate' - supported by 'strong faculty-leader

advocates' to build a sustainable institutional structure for global learning (Nair & Henning 2017:12).

Next, Nair and Henning (2017:12-14) pay particular attention to the development of academic personnel as an interdisciplinary resource. Apart from important factors like budget allocation, administrative support and building external relations, they argue that 'collaborative learning and teaching by faculty from different disciplines could be the single most valuable resource' (Nair & Henning 2017:13). The development and collaborative involvement of academic personnel in the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes, therefore, becomes an important consideration for this edited volume.

Lastly, universities and colleges must critically reflect on where global learning resides within the institution. In this regard, Nair and Henning suggest that institutions strategically consider the following: presenting courses with a global theme; focusing on 'big questions' about global commons, arranging faculty-led or study-away programmes, including community-based learning (locally, nationally, and globally) and addressing the question of how to create synergy and coherence across courses and programmes (Nair & Henning 2017:11, 14). These are important factors to foster a global mindset, create sustainable global learning experiences and establish supportive relationships within and amongst institutions of higher learning (Nair & Henning 2017:14).

To sum up, global learning – as a high-impact educational practice that is distinctly different from internationalisation – aims to foster global mindedness through a process of interactive learning. The nurturing of intersecting identities, on both local and global levels, is paramount to enable perspective consciousness and interactive learning amongst students with different backgrounds and worldviews. All this is needed to promote a collaborative understanding and multifaceted

responses to worldwide challenges. In this regard, institutions of higher learning have an obligation to make global learning universally accessible to their increasingly diverse student populations.

## ■ Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to contextualise this volume within the field of student development theory. Thus, the first section of this chapter highlighted certain fundamental principles applicable to all student development theories. These basic developmental principles are considered as important building blocks in formulating a conceptual framework for this edited volume. Furthermore, this chapter focused on different models of student leadership development. It is believed that these models will provide different lenses that the reader can use to engage more effectively with the rest of this volume's chapters. The chapter concluded by focusing on the notion of global learning. This last section aimed to clearly define global learning within the context of higher education. The reader might find strong similarities between the section on global learning and the next chapter on higher education transformation. It is believed that the three overarching sections of this chapter will provide a solid conceptual framework for the rest of this edited volume.

# Higher education in a globalising world: The challenge of glocal education and the call to decolonise universities

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## ■ Introduction: From global ranking to (g)local relevance

Globalisation and the changes that come with it, present many new opportunities and challenges for HEIs across a broad spectrum of policy and practice levels. This chapter explores what critically integrating global and local perspectives could mean for universities and contemporary student leadership in our current era of globalisation. Recognising the entanglement of the global and the local, the chapter proposes to ‘glocalise’ higher education and explores how decolonisation could lend a meaningful focus to the development of glocal pedagogies and higher education curriculum in particular.

In the past decades, the international higher education sector stressed the significance of global financial flows, global rankings and boosting their intake of international students. Van der Wende (2017:1) noticed an ‘enhanced competition for reputation, talent and resources [...] driven by the paradigm of the global knowledge economy and fueled by global rankings, dynamic research funding and international mobility’. In such a competitive mode, universities are geared to boost their own status, even at the cost of other (read: competing) universities, if deemed necessary for their survival. What made this especially difficult was that it happened in times when most countries ‘imposed serious budget cuts in their public funding of higher education’ (Tilak 2015:1). These cuts were often justified as economic reform policies, and a concomitant rationale for a reduced role of the state in favour of an increased role of the markets.

In their attempts to boost their revenue, many universities, particularly those in the ‘Global North’, worked hard at attracting foreign students under the flag of internationalisation. Such students generally pay far higher tuition fees compared to local students, and are therefore seen as more ‘profitable’ when compared to local students. Research by Bista (ed. 2018) showed

that in 2018 globally, more than 5 million higher education students studied abroad. The trend to recruit foreign students became so prevalent that Bista (ed. 2018) concluded that student mobility even introduced:

[A] new paradigm shift in the global market place. It is a prime source to boost the revenue of the institution of higher education, and is one of the indicators of campus diversity, internationalization, etc. (p. xxii)

Based on the work of Tilak (2015), we may conclude that in a globalising world, 'universities are fast becoming entrepreneurial institutions both domestically and internationally' (Tilak 2015:3). Van der Wende (2017:7) analysed the global flows of foreign students and researchers to the highly ranked 'world-class universities' and concluded that there are 'growing and shifting imbalances and inequalities therein'. It has become clear that globalisation has played its own part in creating 'global economic imbalances'. Furthermore, universities have to address the growing criticism of a disparity between their pursuit of global competitiveness and their local commitment.

The critique that followed the universities' disproportional focus on attaining global success, includes the allegation that universities jeopardise their 'national mission and relevancy in the societies that give them life and purpose' (Douglas 2016, quoted in Van der Wende 2017:14). Hence, there is reason to believe that globalisation has augmented the perception that universities are places that serve the global and local elite, that they are places of exclusion, rather than institutions that deliver on the meritocratic role that they were traditionally supposed to play.

Given this complex situation in which universities seek to reconsider their focus on the global and the local, the UN has identified three important challenges for higher education (see UNESDOC Digital Library 2017). These include the needs to (Grau et al. 2017:40):

1. Find a balance in the context of a renewed social contract between HEIs and their respective societies, taking into account the dual nature of local and global engagement.
2. Establish a renewed and revitalised strategic framework to address diversity within the context of the global public good as defined by the UN, while taking into account the fact that the university is a space of multiple and sometimes conflicting demands.
3. Find ways to counter a potential conflict between their contribution to the competitiveness strategy of nations or regions and their objective to achieve a positive impact on global issues.

Alongside growing resentment about the imbalance between their commitment to the global and the local, universities across the world have also been confronted with another – and I think related – challenge, namely the call to decolonise their institutions and their curriculum. Strikingly, both challenges, namely to re-balance the global and the local, and the call to decolonise universities, require a need to rethink the importance of positionality in a globalising world. On the one hand, there is the critique about neglecting local commitment and excluding local (student) interests in favour of global competitiveness. On the other hand, the decolonisation movements criticise universities for excluding local knowledges and local histories, in favour of dominant global North agendas in knowledge production. In fact, one of the ‘key challenges of the decolonising approach is an insistence on positionality and plurality and, importantly, the impact that taking “difference” seriously would make to standard understandings’ (eds. Bhabra, Gebrial & Nişancioğlu 2018:2).

In what follows in this chapter, we will explore what critically integrating global and local perspectives could mean for universities and contemporary student leadership. I will examine what has been termed ‘glocalising’ higher education and discuss the relevance of higher education curriculum and glocal pedagogies in conjunction with the call to decolonise universities. To this end, I will briefly refer to the history of education for global citizenship, and how the debate can shift in favour of education for glocal citizenship. I then discuss what glocal citizenship education could mean for teaching

and learning. Next, I will connect ideas on glocal citizenship education with the call to decolonise universities. The chapter ends with a summary and reflections on what glocal and decolonial education could mean for developing student leadership.

## ■ Higher education and globalisation

Mannion (2015:24) traces the genesis of the term ‘global’ within education to the 1960s. The awareness of ‘educational concerns for the Earth’ rose considerably after the publication of an iconic photo of planet Earth hanging in space. This photo, which is known as ‘Earthrise’, raised awareness about the fragility of life on Earth. Considering the Earth from a new viewpoint made it visibly clear that we have one shared planet, one globe to live on. A new global perspective entered human consciousness. Around the 1980s, the term ‘global education’ was introduced into mainstream education, which emphasised on cultural inclusion, religious difference and environmental concerns (Mannion 2015:24). Further reshaping brought responses to what was seen as ‘pressing issues related to processes of globalization’ (Mannion 2015:24), and the deliberate development of global citizens.

However, before we delve into how globalisation affects higher education, it is useful to understand that globalisation itself is a complex, multi-layered and contested concept. There are multiple opinions and manifestations of globalisation. Torres (2017:2) argues that we should therefore ‘really talk about globalization processes in the plural’. Torres discusses eight different manifestations of globalisation. I will take a brief look at three of those which I consider to be particularly relevant for the discussion in this chapter.

The first is marked as ‘*globalization from above*’. This form is framed (Torres 2017):

[B]y an ideology of neoliberalism and calls for an opening of borders, the creation of multiple regional markets, the proliferation of fast-paced economic and financial exchanges, and the presence of governing systems other than nation-states [...]. (p. 2)

With its increased focus on market performance, this manifestation of globalisation has had a profound effect on higher education, as was discussed in the introductory paragraph.

Torres says the second form ‘represents the antithesis of the first’. He defines this form as ‘*globalisation from below or anti-globalisation*’. This kind of globalisation (Torres 2017):

[M]anifests itself in individuals, institutions, and social movements that are actively opposed to what is perceived as corporate globalization. For these individuals and groups, their motto is ‘no globalization without representation’. (p. 2)

It is this form of globalisation which I think mobilises many of those who advocate the decolonisation of education. In their call for change, they would stress the importance of plural representation, plural positionalities and ‘taking difference seriously’ (eds. Bhambra et al. 2018:2).

In an age of globalisation, a new factor of production emerged, namely: knowledge. Universities, as sites of knowledge production and knowledge sharing, play a major role in determining what counts as valid and influential universal knowledge in the world. This knowledge is distinct from ‘peripheral’ and ‘particular’ knowledge. This manifestation of globalisation is very relevant in a discussion on re-balancing the global and the local, and the call to decolonise universities. It would require critically examining knowledge production and its social relevance in the context of the global and the local. The third manifestation of globalisation in Torres’ overview is closely linked to this point. It pertains to the emergence of the ‘network society’, an influential notion, originally conceptualised by Manuel Castells in 1996. Torres (2017) remarks that:

[N]ever before have social networks been as widely discussed as they are in the 21st century [...]. The presence of these networks alter some traditional dimensions of human life. Questions about academic authority and moral character become central elements in discussing the credibility of messages, methods, research, data, analyses, and narratives that pullulate in the Internet. (p. 3)

This manifestation too is relevant because universities clearly are participants in (social) networks, particularly with regard to their role in creating and sustaining 'academic authority'. Therefore, this appearance of globalisation also plays a substantial role when we consider the global-local nexus in relationship to the advocacy of the decolonisation of universities. Here, relevant questions include: how do universities exert their authoritative role in knowledge production? How do they position themselves when they fund, produce and teach (new) knowledge?

Universities need to make important decisions, not only about *what* is taught (and not taught!), but also about *why* and *how* this is taught. These questions are not only about academic value, but are always also inherently political. Questions that revolve around pedagogy and curriculum are important because the curriculum 'carries symbolic value that far outweighs its instrumental functions. It involves the choice of subject content, teaching method and the acquisition of learning', according to Jansen (2017:155). Quoting curriculum theorist Michael Apple, Jansen (2017) explains that curriculum:

[R]epresents a set of commitments and ideals, and in its very constitution offers the most tangible evidence of [...] selective tradition. Put simply, those in power consciously select what is worth teaching and knowing, and in the process, assign value to what goes in and what is left out of the curriculum. That choice is a political act. (p. 155)

Asking critical curriculum questions about what and why things are taught are not new questions. On the contrary, they have been relevant in the higher education realm in every previous era. However, in the contemporary circumstances of globalisation, these questions may be answered differently because of new opportunities and new challenges that have arisen. It becomes relevant how universities view globalisation and the education of 'global citizens', and how they see their role with regard to its diverse manifestations, such as those which have been identified by Torres.

So far, education for global citizenship has been characterised by its emphasis on the global rather than the local. To illustrate this, Mannion gives a helpful example in the form of a Scottish policy document that was published in 2011 under the title 'Developing Global Citizens within Curriculum for Excellence'. In this document, the (Mannion 2015):

[G]lobal is foregrounded with the idea that the curriculum should be dedicated to learning content, purposes and setting: 'learning about a globalized world', 'learning for life and work in a global society', and 'learning through global contexts'. (p. 25)

The problem with policies of education for global citizenship, argues Mannion, is that we 'risk overemphasising the global at the expense of the local, which is clearly a necessary ingredient' (2015:25). He warns us that it is problematic to view globalisation as an abstract force that can be captured in add-on knowledge in curricula anywhere in the world. Rather, globalisation should be considered to be intertwined with local lived realities. Cognizant of this potential disconnect between global and local perspectives and interests, Mannion (2015) identifies six risks that are associated with education for global citizenship, namely:

1. *Failure to understand how local and global domains are connected*, when 'the global' remains abstract and 'at a distance', disconnected from local life.
2. *The lack of political analysis and response*, when curriculum is founded on an analysis that fails to recognise the importance of political aspects.
3. *The lack of ecological analysis and response*, when we see globalisation only as a social process and fail to address the material and ecological ways in which the Earth is changing.
4. *Ethnocentrism and neocolonialism*, when the 'West' positions itself as the [*best*] vantage point from which things can be seen globally as a new form of colonial perspective taking.
5. *A transmissive approach*, when students learn 'about' globalisation rather than collaborating with others to invent new responses and practices.

6. *The individualisation of competencies*, seeing learning as an individual process and neglect the situated and collective contexts for creative response making to shared challenges. (p. 28; [*author's added emphasis*])

When considering these risks, universities are also expected to take note of the UN's recognition that, although they find that globalisation has overall led to positive developments in the world, it is also true that it 'remains a challenge to ensure that all countries and all people benefit from globalisation' (UN 2017:5). Globalisation has 'created opportunities for some but negative consequences for others' (UN 2017:5). Moreover, the UN also observes that in some countries 'support for globalization and multilateralism has recently been undermined by popular discontent [which is being driven by] a rise in inequality' (UN 2017:5). Studies have indeed (UN 2017):

[H]ighlighted several links between globalization and inequality [...]. While such discontent is not new, its political implications have grown as many people have questioned their countries' commitment to globalization and its institutions. The negative impacts associated with globalization have fueled policies that seek to roll back the institutional and normative system. (p. 5)

In the context of this chapter, it is interesting to ask how higher education overall, but also within different institutional settings in different countries, can deal with such popular discontent in the context of globalisation. How do institutions of higher education analyse and respond to or even resonate to such discontent? What are their political curriculum decisions about what is taught and how this is done? Given the disparities between, as well as within, countries and depending on their positionality, one may well expect different responses.

## ■ Towards glocalising higher education

Popular discontent with the effects of globalisation has indeed been widespread and has been associated with various local political responses. Contemporary examples are manifold: from



the rise of ‘Trumpism’ in the USA, to Bolsonaro’s politics in Brazil, Modi’s Hindutva politics in India as well as the rise of many popular movements and political parties across Europe. What these movements seem to have in common, is that they often portray themselves as advocates for the local disenfranchised who are up against the uncaring global(ised) elites. Mouffe (2018) interprets this development as signals of a crisis of neoliberal hegemony and argues that populism has been a response to:

[N]eoliberal globalization [... *that was* ...] seen as a fate that we had to accept and political questions were reduced to mere technical issues to be dealt with by experts. No space was left for the citizens to have a real choice between different political projects and their role was limited to approving the ‘rational’ policies elaborated by those experts. (p. 4)

In this climate, meaningful popular debate became increasingly limited. Right-wing populist movements cleverly captured new political spaces, often by constituting the ‘people’ whom they sought to engage by appealing to their mistreated local identity, interests and commitments through nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric. In this context, and instead of fighting right-wing populism with established political interventions, Mouffe proposes to construct a new counter-hegemonic ‘left wing populism’ which engages people by appealing to their desire for a politics of social justice in the ‘name of democratic and ecological values’ (Mouffe 2018:62). The existence of such a populist counter movement would enable a ‘return to the political’ within democratic dispensations. A further analysis of Mouffe’s views on the role of populism in re-energising democracy falls outside the scope of this chapter, but for now I will explore four interconnected dimensions of how universities could reposition themselves in this changing political landscape, in which the power of populism is spreading, by creating a glocal focus in their teaching and learning.

*Firstly*, and as mentioned before, one significant expression of polarisation is the notion of the disenfranchised local versus the privileged globalised elite. In order to understand and address

this assumed polarity, glocally oriented universities would do well to critically integrate global and local knowledges and interests when they make decisions about their preferred pedagogies and substantive academic bases for teaching and learning. They would need to act on the understanding that the perspective of ‘the global’ must always be understood to be coming from some position (Mannion 2015:27). Thus, universities would need to teach about different positionalities within the global-local nexus and their concomitant political foundations and dynamics, while simultaneously critically analysing their own positionality, and encouraging dialogues on different positionalities and their roots. This kind of integration of the global and the local has become known as a ‘glocal’ perspective. Globalisation as a term ‘helps us capture the idea that the local is always with, through, and in the global’ (Mannion 2015:23). Given their role in generating, analysing and sharing knowledge, HEIs should be well placed to actively and critically link the global and the local. They can thus play a creative role in both imagining and analysing interdependent global-local dynamics, and how these interactions may generate diverse meanings in different ‘glocalities’. In glocalised higher education, global concerns would be addressed through the local. This would mean that universities provide education for *g/oca/* citizenship, which recognises how the expressions of ‘the global’ within local culture give meaning to extra-local and transnational influences (Oomen 2015:16). One of the key questions for universities which strive to provide education for glocal citizenship would be (Oomen 2015):

[H]ow can universities educate young people who are rooted in a given locality, have an eye for global challenges, and see the local opportunities to address them? (p. 11)

*Secondly*, through glocalised higher education, universities, which are institutions that co-create public spheres, can play a unique and important role in polarised environments in an era of globalisation. In times where different communities seem to rely on different sources of knowledge, and claim different truths,

universities are especially challenged to create dialogical spaces where these sources of knowledge and truth claims are critically explored and discussed.

*Thirdly*, in glocalised higher education, students would need to develop knowledge, values and skills that would enable them to creatively recognise the fact that all local issues have global dimensions, while being able to make the local a central focus. For instance, when the issue of migration is addressed, one would explore how this global phenomenon is locally manifested in the city, region and country in which the university is situated, while simultaneously exploring how local conditions are connected to the global dynamics. This would mean that a university in Texas, in the US, for instance, would consider different local circumstances and responses to migration compared to a university in Kampala in Uganda. In both localities there are manifestations of migration which can be linked to global developments and global politics which students should study. However, and at the same time, there are very local issues which are interpreted based on various (competing) analyses about the causes and appropriate local responses and actions. The ability to conceive of local action is an important feature in glocal education. While (Patel & Lynch 2013:223, quoted in Oomen 2015):

[A]dopting the central concerns of global citizenship education – the need to equip students with the values, knowledge and skills related to global challenges – education for glocal citizenship draws attention to the need to couple these global concerns with local action [...]. Glocalised learning and teaching refers to the curricular consideration in relation to social responsibility, justice and sustainability. (p. 13)

Thus, a key feature of education for glocal citizenship is that it emphasises action which is well-grounded in knowledge and values and that ‘such action can well be taken locally’ (Oomen 2015:13). In glocal education, students would however also need to learn how to look beyond their immediate locality, and develop an ability to transfer those critical skills to help them analyse the situation in other localities. Students would not only need to learn how to assess the actual local situation on the ground, but should

also be able to involve multiple theories about the root causes of migration. This would enable them to compare different situations, interpretations and positionalities so that they are able to form their own opinions, and decide which actions would be appropriate in a given locality.

*Fourthly*, glocalised education does not mean education for a homogenous and/or exclusively local student population, taught by a homogeneous academic staff. On the contrary, as we saw in the introductory paragraph, international student (and staff) mobility is on the rise in an era of globalisation. Universities want to attract foreign students and staff. Active participation of foreign students and local students with migrancy backgrounds in the glocal classroom, will help to understand how global and local dynamics are intertwined differently in different locations, ideologies and histories. A glocal classroom would be well-enriched through participation by staff and students of many diverse backgrounds. Intersectional theory, which asserts that people are systemically disadvantaged, or advantaged, by various sources of oppression or privilege, based on their gender, race, class, religion or other identity markers, offers an excellent conceptual framework to analyse the complexities that exist within the glocal. Intersectional theory would take students away from interpreting the world through easy binary propositions or single-axis perspectives, such as local versus foreigner or Christian versus Muslim.

## ■ Decoloniality and the ‘glocal’

There are many perspectives and angles one can take when imagining what glocalisation could mean for higher education in *real* localities, in *real* universities. To concretise my attempt to imagine what glocalised higher education could entail in real spaces, I choose to link the call to glocalise universities to the call to decolonise them. I believe that a decoloniality lens can lend focus to what glocal education could mean in practice. Mannion (2015) argues that, in:

[G]locally-oriented pedagogies, education takes as a starting point the ecological, political, social and cultural dimensions of real places as a nexus of global and local flows and concerns. The importance of place comes from the view that a given locale is always connected to many other places beyond the immediate experienced context. (p. 29)

From Mannion's statement, we may infer that both positionality, the particularity of *this* locality as well as connectivity, the entangled connection with elsewhere, are meaningful components of glocal education. The same holds true for the call to decolonise universities, a call which has grown substantially worldwide in the last years (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018; Mignolo & Walsh 2018; Omarjee 2018; ed. Ssentongo 2018; eds. Wane & Todd 2018). Here too, locality and connectivity play a major role. The 'Rhodes Must Fall' protest that started at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in South Africa, is often marked as the first campaign that set a wave of other comparable protests in motion. The campaign was originally directed against the statue of Cecil Rhodes, prominently present on campus, which was deemed to be symbolic of the continuing influence of racism, colonialism and apartheid on the university structures and its curriculum. On its Facebook page, the Rhodes Must Fall movement (UCT: Rhodes Must Fall n.d.) describes itself as:

[A] student, staff and worker movement mobilising against institutional white supremacist capitalist patriarchy for the complete decolonization of UCT. A collective movement of students and staff members mobilising for direct action against the reality of institutional racism at the University of Cape Town. The chief focus of this movement is to create avenues for REAL transformation that students and staff alike have been calling for. Calls that the institution have thus far ignored or silenced. While this movement may have been sparked around the issue of the Rhodes Statue: the existence of the statue is only one aspect of the social injustice of UCT. The fall of 'Rhodes' is symbolic for the inevitable fall of white supremacy and privilege at our campus. (n.p.)

The campaign received global attention and soon protest movements at universities across not only South Africa, but also in many other countries demanded change. Notably, we saw the

rise of the ‘Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford’ movement at Oxford University and at the London School of Economics in the United Kingdom. Here, students were asking, ‘Why is my Curriculum White?’. This movement aimed to (RMF Oxford n.d.):

[D]ecolonise the institutional structures and physical space in Oxford and beyond, [and] challenge the structures of knowledge production that continue to mould a colonial mindset that dominates our present. (n.p.)

In India too, students and staff have consistently demanded attention for the continuing influence of colonial legacies. In India, in 2017, students at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi demanded the inclusion of black and minority ethnic writers in their Cambridge University’s English curriculum. Professor Priyamvada Gopal, teaching at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom, supported them with an op Ed piece in *The Guardian*. She wrote (Gopal 2017):

To decolonise and not just diversify curriculums is to recognise that knowledge is inevitably marked by power relations. In a society still shaped by a long colonial history in which straight white upper-class men are at the top of the social order, most disciplines give disproportionate prominence to the experiences, concerns and achievements of this one group. In my native India, upper-caste Hindu men have long held sway over learning, and efforts are being made, in the face of predictable resistance, to dislodge that supremacy. (n.p.)

Another example is the emergence of the University of Colour in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. This movement too demanded the decolonisation of their curriculum. They stated that they believed that (Omarjee 2018):

[A]utonomy and democratization are meaningless without decolonizing and addressing the exclusionary mechanism within the institution towards women, people of colour, LGBTQIA+, economically disenfranchised, undocumented and differently abled people. (p. 23)

These examples make clear the fact that the local particularities, their historic contexts and political realities, are different for universities in Cape Town, London, Delhi or Amsterdam, but that these local realities are all connected to histories of colonialism,

and these shared global colonial legacies continue to exert their influence in contemporary societies and their institutions of higher education. Across the world, and intertwined, both the local and the global appear prominently in the academy, in the present age of globalisation. This makes the call to decolonise universities and to decolonise its curriculum a glocal concern.

Let us go back to the earlier example about teaching and learning about migration as a glocal concern. When considering pressing issues in the *real*/locality of a university in Texas, teaching and learning in the glocal classroom would likely include a focus on contemporary migration of Mexicans and other migrants from Central and South America into the USA. There are many disciplinary and political perspectives to study this phenomenon. A sociological gaze would yield different knowledge compared to a philosophical gaze or an economic focus. Additionally, it would greatly matter to which schools of thought and academic perspectives the university would turn to as their selected primary knowledge bases. The university leadership and its academic staff would need to make curriculum decisions about what to teach and how to teach it from both disciplinary and – interdisciplinary perspectives. They would also have to decide how they would connect the local situation in Texas to global patterns of migration.

On the other side of the world, the university in the *real*/locality of Kampala, Uganda, would likely include a local focus on migrants who fled from war-torn South Sudan into their country. Here too, the university would need to make important curriculum decisions about (inter)disciplinary angles and diverse, possibly competing conceptual frameworks that may help to interpret the local situation on the ground. In the Kampala curriculum, there are relevant links to globalisation, to global flows of migration, and should ideally be studied. It becomes clear that a glocal gaze, and its connection to curriculum choices that could be made are possible both in Texas and in Uganda.

When making such inherently political curriculum choices, multiple frames of decoloniality and the call to ‘decolonise universities’ can offer interesting ways to frame the local gaze, and to invoke critical analyses of the global-local nexus. In doing so, we need to understand that – just like globalisation – decoloniality and its derived verb ‘to decolonise’, are complex notions. Like globalisation they involve a ‘multitude of definitions, interpretations, aims and strategies’ (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018:2). Like globalisation, decolonisation is also a ‘contested term, consisting of a heterogeneity of viewpoints, approaches, political projects and normative concerns’ (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018:2). This should not surprise us, ‘given the various historical and political sites of decolonisation that span the globe and 500 years of history’ (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018:2). Yet, in situating its ‘political and methodological coordinates’, Bhabra et al. (eds. 2018) identified two shared key referents in their understanding of decolonisation.

Firstly, it is (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018):

[A] way of thinking about the world which takes colonialism, empire and racism as its empirical and discursive objects of study; it re-situates these phenomena as key shaping forces of the contemporary world, in a context where their role has been systematically effaced from view (p. 2)

Secondly, it (eds. Bhabra et al. 2018):

[P]urports to offer alternative ways of thinking about the world and alternative forms of political praxis. (p. 2)

In order to recognise conceptualisations of decoloniality and decolonisation’s connection to glocality, let us take a brief look at one example from the ‘multitude of definitions, interpretations, aims and strategies’ referred to by Bhabra et al. (eds. 2018).

According to Walsh (in Mignolo & Walsh 2018), decoloniality:

[F]ollows, derives from, and responds to coloniality and the ongoing colonial process and condition. It is a form of struggle and survival,



an epistemic and existence-based response and practice – most especially by colonized and racialized subjects – against the colonial matrix of power in all of its dimensions, and for the possibilities of an otherwise. (p. 17)

In other words, decoloniality is not only critiquing coloniality as a historic phenomenon, but is a contemporary ‘way of thinking, knowing, being and doing that began with, but also precede, the colonial enterprise and invasion’ which seeks to ‘make visible, open up, and advance radically distinct perspectives and positionalities that displace Western rationality as the only framework and possibility of existence, analysis and thought’ (Walsh, in Mignolo & Walsh 2018:17). Decoloniality thus involves a critical re-imagination of existence, analysis and thought across boundaries of difference and inequality. For Walsh, and many other decolonial scholars, decoloniality is a form of praxis, which builds on a Freirean understanding of praxis as ‘an act of knowing that involves a dialogical movement that goes from action to reflection and from reflection upon action to a new action’ (Freire, quoted in Mignolo & Walsh 2018:50). This form of decolonial ‘knowing-doing’ resonates well with the aspiration of glocal education to cultivate students’ ability to conceive of and carry out local action.

Again, I would like to return to the migrancy example in the two different localities which I discussed above, and see them through a lens of decoloniality while taking into consideration the two characteristics of decoloniality referred to by Catherine Walsh. The first one is her insistence on opening up radically distinct perspectives and positionalities. The second one is the idea of praxis, of actively linking thinking and doing, of reflexivity and action. What would these two characteristics mean in my examples of universities in Texas and Uganda? In choosing a decoloniality lens, in the glocal classroom in Texas we could work for instance with Gloria Anzaldúa’s statement which is quoted by Mignolo (cited in Mignolo & Walsh 2018):

[T]he U.S-Mexican border es una herd abierta where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms

it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country – a border culture. (pp. 111-112)

Interpreting with his decoloniality lens, Mignolo (in Mignolo & Walsh 2018) continues:

Borders are everywhere and they are not only geographic; they are racial and sexual, epistemic and ontological, religious and aesthetic, linguistic and national. Borders are interior routes of modernity/coloniality and the consequences of international law and global linear thinking. (p. 112)

Such an analysis would be an important reference point when staff and students would take action and collaboratively work with actual migrants who have to deal with the consequences of borders of all sorts in their lives.

In the Ugandan glocal classroom, one could, for instance, study the long-lasting transnational relations between Uganda and what became South Sudan. One could analyse this through a decoloniality lens, such as the one developed by Ssentongo (ed. 2018) who states that:

[O]ver time, it is becoming more and more vivid that the administrative independence gained from the colonial masters has given birth to a more sophisticated dependence network [*in the context of globalization*]. (p. 2)

Inspired by such ideas, one could study the colonial history of the region and notice that what are now Uganda and South Sudan, have shared a long border, traversing the home areas of several ethnic groups. Here, the (Rolandsen, Sagmo & Nicholaisen 2015):

[M]anagement of those people in the borderlands required coordination between the colonial governments. From the 1940s, the South Sudanese people attended schools in Uganda, and many fled across the border and sought sanctuary in 1955 following mutinies – and subsequent government repression – in Equatoria. This marked the beginning of two trends still evident today: South Sudanese searching for education in Uganda, and people in each country seeking refuge in the other. (n.p.)

Against the background of this (colonial) history, students could study contemporary local problems such as (Rolandsen et al. 2015):

In the past, Ugandan cities hosted relatively affluent South Sudanese living on remittances from relatives. Now, with their reduced opportunities and increased harassment in South Sudan, Ugandans are more likely to consider refugees to be a burden than a resource. Sentiment among refugees is also shifting – from gratitude to frustration. In urban areas, local prejudices keep them unemployed – they want to be treated as equals, but instead are charged more than locals for rent or at shops. Begrudged, they recall opportunities Ugandans have enjoyed in South Sudan. (n.p.)

With insights gained from such a study, and understanding the deep roots of care and interdependence in African villages (ed. Ssentongo 2018), staff and students could engage in local action to address the shifting mood of local Ugandans and their outlook on Sudanese migrants.

The multitude of interpretations of what ‘decolonising’ means in real places, does not present a hindrance, but rather makes it a very suitable topic to connect with the complex multitudes of glocal interconnections. After all, decolonising universities entails both critical reflection on the global, for example when considering the influence of global colonial history and its contemporary forms of neocolonialism, as well as a critical gaze at the positionality of the specific local. This dual focus demands reflexivity that departs from the idea that all representation and knowledge of the world we live in is historically and geopolitically situated.

To conclude this section, I will briefly explore why glocalising and decolonising universities can be meaningfully connected by invoking two of the six (by way of example) risks of education for global citizenship which were identified by Mannion, in favour of a glocalising approach.

The *first* of these risks is the ‘failure to understand how local and global domains are connected’ (Mannion 2015:28). Mannion argues that when we fail to understand this, the ‘global’ remains an abstract notion, it stays ‘at a distance’ and is disconnected from local life. This point resonates well with Mignolo’s (2018) response to the question ‘what does it mean to decolonize?’ He answers that this question cannot be addressed

as an ‘abstract universal’, but always needs to be considered by questions around ‘who is doing it, where, why and how?’ (Mignolo, in Mignolo & Walsh 2018:108). The examples in this chapter about the calls to decolonialise universities in South Africa and the United Kingdom, and of studying migration in Texas or in Uganda, clearly show that a glocal approach would entail the study of globalisation and the role of colonialism and its continuing influence, as well as studying the specifics of the local colonial legacies. Analyses based on considering both the global and the local would form a basis for action in a praxis-oriented curriculum.

The *second* example is the risk connected to ‘ethnocentrism and neocolonialism’, where the ‘West’ positions itself as the ‘[best] vantage point from which things can be seen globally as a new form of colonial perspective taking’ (Mannion 2015:28). Here too, the link between glocalising and decolonising universities is obvious. One could think of Ssentongo (2018) who wonders what is meant with the notion of the global village and suggests that:

[/]f it is a village, then at least it is not so in the African sense of village as a community of recognition of each other and genuinely caring about each other [...] it is a capitalistic village where the fittest survive and the weak either submit to the whims and wishes of the former, or perish. (pp. 7–8)

When applied to universities as knowledge-generating and knowledge-sharing institutions, one would consider Mahmood Mamdani’s (2018) thoughts on the ‘African university’ when he asserts that by exporting theory from the Western academy, colonialism brought with it the assumption that theory is the product of Western tradition and that the aim of academies outside the West is to apply it. If the elaboration of theory was a creative act in the West, its application in the colonies became the reverse, a ‘readymade, turnkey project that simply put itself at the disposal of academics and students’ (Mamdani 2018:29–32, in Phatshwane & Faimau 2019). This history has given us insight into what is ‘wrong with the notion of the student as technician, whose learning begins and ends with the application of a theory

produced elsewhere’ (Mamdani 2018:29–32, in Phatshwane & Faimau 2019). The alternative, suggests Mamdani (2018) is:

[7]o theorise our own reality, and to strike the right balance between the local and the global as we do so. The local production of knowledge unfolds in relation to a complex of social forces, and takes account of a society’s needs and demands, its capacities and aspirations. The global conversation is an evolving debate between scholars, within and across disciplines, in which the play of geopolitical forces has less and less relevance. The local conversation gives rise to the committed intellectual, embroiled in public discourse, often highly sensitive to political boundaries in the society at large; the global conversation calls for a scholar who takes no account of boundaries. (n.p.)

Whereas Mamdani here seems to suggest that the impetus for engaged praxis lies with the local in opposition to the global, I suggest that a glocal approach in the praxis of decoloniality brings together two intrinsically connected perspectives.

## ■ **Summary and reflections on enhancing student leadership in glocal and decolonial education**

In an era of globalisation, neoliberal policies and their strong focus on market performance have powerfully affected higher education across the world. So much so that universities are ‘fast becoming entrepreneurial institutions, both domestically and internationally’ (Tilak 2015:n.p.). Globally, flows of people and funding show imbalances, with ‘world-class universities’, located in the ‘global North’ benefitting unevenly, while China is up and coming. Universities are criticised for favouring the pursuit of global competitiveness at the cost of their commitment to local people and interests. This development causes resentment in local contexts in which universities are perceived to serve the global and local elites instead of engaging themselves with local concerns and the public good. This public resentment increasingly materialises in political contexts in which right-wing populism is growing. Through populist movements, ‘the local’ is often framed

in nationalist or xenophobic rhetoric, thus augmenting the global–local divide.

In this context, the UN signalled that institutions of higher education need to re-balance their focus on the global and the local. Similarly, the trend in the higher education sector, its general frameworks and actual programs for ‘Education for Global Citizenship’, have also been characterised by their emphasis on the global at the cost of the local.

Cognizant of the disconnect between the global and the local, an alternative scenario emerges in which the ‘glocal’ can become a central lens in higher education teaching and learning. Mannion explains that glocalisation captures the idea that ‘the local is always with, through and in the global’ (Mannion 2015:23). Universities that aim to provide education for glocal citizenship would need to teach how expressions of ‘the global’ are articulated in ‘the local’. In this context, it is important to recognise that there are plural – including conflicting – expressions both within the global and within the local, as well as the ways in which the global and the local are (dis)connected. As institutions which co-create public spheres, universities are challenged to create dialogical spaces where multiple sources of knowledge and truth claims can be critically explored. For this to work well, universities can enhance their education potential by actively engaging an international and diverse student population in teaching and learning.

Glocal education emphasises the importance of teaching and learning in *real* localities. However, given the increasing (global) mobility of people and ideas, universities which aim to cultivate education for glocal citizenship cannot only focus on local issues and their connections to the global. Students also need to develop skills which will help them to transfer their critical attitude and analytic abilities to ‘read’ and engage the complexities within the local, in other localities.

There are many perspectives and angles one can take to imagine what glocal education could mean in *real* localities, in *real* universities. This chapter focused on how the global call to

‘decolonise’ universities, can lend focus to what glocal education could actually mean. From what has been discussed in this chapter, we can infer that positionality and connectivity are foundational dimensions of both glocal education and decolonial praxis. In terms of decolonial praxis, students would study theories and histories of coloniality (as the flip side of modernity), and its worldwide continuities in present day societies. They would study theories and practices of decoloniality. Those knowledge frames would need to include local knowledges and, depending on the locality, indigenous knowledges. During their courses, students would be required to go into local communities and find out more about the plurality of ideas and points of view which are there. Inspired by Freirean pedagogy, learning in decolonial praxis, places reflexivity at the core. Students and teachers would engage in cycles of critical reflection and action, starting from real and concrete situations and in dialogue and collaboration with local community members. Praxis learning involves interaction and collaboration.

Praxis learning calls upon students to actively give meaning to what they encounter and evoke. Besides understanding this, they will need to be aware of their own positionality, privileges and situatedness along lines of race, gender, sexual preference, class etc. All of these frame their meaning-making processes. Students would need to learn from and collaborate with students who have different backgrounds to themselves, who have gone through different life experiences.

In the final part of this chapter I would like to offer some of my reflections of what glocal and decolonial education, or education for glocal citizenship in a decolonising world, could mean for developing student leadership. What would student leaders need to learn in curricula for glocal and decolonial citizenship?

First of all, I think that we would educate people who are able to rethink interconnected glocal contemporary social problems that speak to the human condition in the 21st century. They would need to develop their ability to (re)think critically, innovatively

and with a sensitivity to contemporary complexities. These include ethical dilemmas in diverse glocal contexts, a consciousness of colonial legacies, endemic racism and sexism and other forms of discrimination. They would need to learn how to communicate with diverse others, articulate their own ideas, and compare different ethical decisions. They would need to learn to creatively imagine and articulate possibilities for (social) change. In glocal decolonial education, students would be encouraged to critically link theories and practices (doing-thinking) with an action-oriented focus. They need to be able to work in international and in culturally diverse settings, and be able to connect to people in networks and in dialogue sessions. Students would need to learn how to navigate diverse academic disciplines, interdisciplinary approaches and social-political-cultural contexts.

All in all, such glocal and decolonial education would go a long way to link global concerns with local knowledges and local histories, while critically questioning the dominance of global North agendas in knowledge production. It would actively engage with positionality and recognise plurality as a precious value in educational environments.





# Breaking into a free state of mind: Rationale and evidence for ‘study abroad’ out of rural South Africa

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## ■ Introduction

When I was first appointed as Rector of the UFS (2009), I spent much of the first three months trying to understand this

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century-old institution which was founded exclusively for white, Afrikaners in central South Africa. Having studied and worked only in universities inside large metropolises, one of the first things I noticed was how isolated the institution was. Bloemfontein is a city that also serves as the judicial capital of the country but within minutes of leaving the central areas, large farmlands came into view on all sides of the City of Roses. This was certainly true for all the smaller cities of the Free State from Kroonstad and Parys in the north, to Bethlehem and Harrismith in the east.

The next thing that struck me was how conservative the area was when it came to race relations. In fact, the University was in the middle of a major emotional, psychological and political turmoil following the racial abuse of five black workers by four white students, an event that was video-recorded and circulated via social media. I have no doubt that regardless of my *curriculum vitae*, I was appointed as the first black Rector of the UFS because of this crisis. Segregation was near absolute in the student body; in fact, it was the university's attempt to create interracial residences that led to the racist video as a form of protest against integration (Buys 2018; Jansen 2016; Van der Merwe & Van Reenen 2016).

South Africa was horrified by the racist video and the question that was asked in many different ways was: how could young white men who were little children around the time of Nelson Mandela's release carry within them such bitterness and hatred towards black people? Were they not the so-called born free generation who had escaped the lived experiences of apartheid as masters of the white race? Of course, the advent of a non-racial political democracy did not coincide perfectly with the advent of non-racial thinking in the general population. Young white South Africans are burdened with what I called 'knowledge in the blood' which is the very deep understandings they hold dear about themselves and others (Jansen 2009).

For these young people growing up in a black country under a black government, the past was glorious, the present calamitous and the future dark. Such knowledge was learnt through conservative institutions of white socialisation including homes, churches, schools, cultural organisations, sporting bodies and more. White youth might have been born after apartheid but many of them harboured profoundly negative views of black people and felt increasingly hopeless about their social and economic futures in a country where, for the first time in centuries, they no longer held political power.

What finally caught my attention in addition to the rural character of the province and the conservative race relations of its people, was the traditional structure of the economy. A largely agricultural province, the Free State was known as the breadbasket of South Africa. What this meant was that farmers and labourers constituted a vital and intimate part of the rural landscape. Every white man seemed to own a farm somewhere in the province. What this meant was that traditional roles of master and servant were played out daily on the farms. The white farmers were relatively wealthy, educated and propertied while the black labourers were poor, often illiterate and landless. It was the white students from these farms who would come to study at the university where their parents and grandparents once studied *with their friends and families*. Those students would for the first time encounter black students as equals, if only in the sense of sharing registered student status, and for them the adjustment from a natural position of *baasskap* [being a master] was difficult especially for young white men.

The encounter of white and black students on this rural, conservative campus was flammable. It was also the context within which one of the critical interventions to address such dilemmas was born – the study abroad intervention known for a long time as the F1 programme.

## ■ Why study abroad?

There were three reasons why I decided to propose a study abroad intervention – personal, intellectual and political. On personal grounds, I was a beneficiary of overseas studies. I know first-hand how my conservative, evangelical Christian outlook was transformed into a more generous faith simply by living and learning among students from all continents. I was able, for the first time in my life, to meet white men and women who fought against apartheid from campuses and communities beyond the borders of South Africa. For the first time, I developed a strong Pan African solidarity when I met African scholars of distinction from Ghana to The Gambia who mentored me in a foreign country. I learnt to be suspicious of my own certainties and to value ambiguity in life and in learning. Study abroad changed me.

On intellectual grounds, the research literature pointed consistently to the positive value of study abroad (Movassaghi, Unsal & Göçer 2014; Petzold & Moog 2018; Tarrant, Rubin & Stoner 2014; Xu et al. 2013). Those positive benefits include intercultural understanding, personal growth, academic completion, global mindedness, tolerance and interpersonal skills. There was therefore strong evidence, beyond my personal experiences of study abroad, that such a financial investment would generate strong gains for a university with limited resources but great potential for overcoming the troubling legacy of its racial past.

On political grounds, I knew that what we needed to do was break students out of their settled patterns of living, learning and loving. To students, black and white, even if they were raised after apartheid, segregated lives seemed completely normal. When the decision was made to racially integrate the residences there was resistance from both sides. White students did not want it because of their learnt racism; they did not want their living arrangements invaded by black students. Black students, on the other hand, came to resent what some called ‘forced integration’ because they were simply tired of the racial harassment they had to endure at the hands of white students.

What is worth noting is that unlike the white English universities, bonds of loyalty to a university ran deep within the white Afrikaans campuses. Often a student would choose not only a residence but a particular room in which a grandparent or parent once stayed.

What was true for living together was also evident from the arrangements for learning together. Most white and black students attended racially segregated schools; a minority of black students attended former white schools in the Free State province and the adjoining Eastern Cape province. For the latter, those schools were still emphatically white in terms of dominant learner enrolments, teaching staff and of course school culture. On campus things were not much different given that the historically Afrikaans universities accommodated black students in English classes and white students in Afrikaans classes; there were small numbers of Afrikaans-speaking black students who attended the Afrikaans classes and some white English-speaking students who attended the mainly black English classes. But for the most part, living and learning was initially a segregated experience for most of the UFS students.

As in any segregated spaces, there are always those who challenged the settled arrangements. A few student couples decided to love and some also married across the colour line as documented in my book, *Making love in a war zone: Interracial loving and learning after apartheid* (Jansen 2018). In the segregated residences there were some determined white students who decided to stay in black residences as well as a few courageous black students who placed themselves in white residences. But those switching decisions came at a cost to these pioneers of a new campus and country. Still, the brave example of the few simply amplified the obvious for the many: that the segregated university residences were no different from what apartheid had enforced as normal. Put differently, even if the university was now desegregated, the classrooms and dormitories were by no means integrated.

It was therefore a matter of political strategy to launch the Study Abroad programme as a way of giving students access to what was possible by placing them in unfamiliar contexts. But this had to be planned meticulously because our research has shown that physical proximity between black and white students on the presumption of formal equality can be explosive without careful deliberation on how to bring historical enemies together in peacetime (Jansen 2018).

Our first decision was to organise the Study Abroad students into small, manageable groups. These small groups were each led by a facilitator from the university who had been thoroughly prepared for the task. Then, of course, each group had to be racially diverse so that they travelled together, shared dormitories in other countries and conducted assignments as a group. The students too were prepared over several months for participation in the Study Abroad programme.

There was one critically important element of the design thinking that was crucial to the transformation of the university in the wake of the racial atrocity of 2008. These students, once exposed to this broader world, would return to become part of the core student leadership that would lead the change process at the university.

This, at least, was the assumption that future student leaders would emerge from this programme and because the first-year students were targets, they would still have two or more additional years (depending on degree) on campus, and longer if they pursued postgraduate studies. After all, these undergraduate students were selected for their leadership potential on and beyond their campus lives.

## ■ The placement

The reality of Study Abroad from the perspective of a poor country and a campus with strained finances is that your placement decisions tend to favour universities in countries that can provide co-funding for your students. Our students were therefore placed mainly in the USA with a few in the Netherlands, Thailand and Japan.

The USA was an ideal setting because of comparable experiences with race, slavery and segregation as described so vividly in George Fredrickson's (1981) classic work, *White Supremacy: A comparative study in American and South African history*.

The Free State students were further placed in universities in which UFS staff had prior experiences (such as Cornell) or where inter-university partnerships already existed (such as Minnesota). Placement destinations included the large research universities such as Cornell, Minnesota, New York University (NYU) and the University of Vermont but also smaller liberal arts colleges and universities such as Clark, Appalachian State and Edmonds Community College (EdCC). Many of these institutions offered some degree of financial support from student accommodation to free lectures which made the programme affordable for the UFS. In each of these two-week study programmes issues of race, diversity, social change and leadership were consistent themes in seminars, discussions and guest speaker inputs. Throughout, students were engaged with American students, also from diverse backgrounds, to deliberate on these difficult topics.

The Study Abroad experience was designed to be reciprocal in nature so that every two to three years, students and staff from the placement countries would in turn come to the Free State for a global conference where they would in turn learn about these challenging topics on South African soil. The 2012 GLS, for example, had as its theme 'Transcending boundaries in global change leadership' where familiar topics of race, reconciliation and social justice enjoyed prominence.

## ■ The outcomes of the Study Abroad experience

There are various research reports available on the Study Abroad programme which give particular attention to the student outcomes (Kamsteeg 2016; Walker 2016; Walker & Loots 2016). These largely qualitative studies are generally positive and helpfully



nuanced in their accounts of the student experience. A white male student reports of the programme that (Kamsteeg 2016):

It made me think differently, cognitively and emotionally. I now think and act differently, because I feel that I need to be more informed ... I have changed and learned to put myself in uncomfortable positions, I take myself more out of my comfort zone. (p. 5)

A white female student shared a room with a black student on an overseas F1 placement and recalls that (Walker 2016):

[7]he biggest thing for me is that one night we went to the gym together and then we decided to borrow clothes from each other and only afterwards I had her clothes on and I noticed I have a person of a different ethnic group's clothes on ... Coming from a farming community ... a child born out of that and making a total 360 turn, that was a big experience for me (p. 16)

A black student observed 'a change in some of the people from before we went and after we came back' (Walker & Loots 2016:59). To be sure, there were the necessary and inevitable struggles to find each other during the first days of the international leg of the programme involving decisions such as which language to speak from a menu that included English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, isiZulu and other languages represented among the travelling students. There were also reports about the switching of rooms despite the arrangements for diversity in room allocations abroad.

What I wish to reflect on, however, are more subjective leadership observations during my tenure at the UFS as Vice-Chancellor (VC) responsible for the Study Abroad programme.

The first observation is that the programme had a visible effect on our students. Most of them had never travelled outside the country and some never left the province. One memorable event was travelling to the rural, largely black campus of the UFS in the eastern Free State where I asked returning students about their experiences. 'Well, I returned and ran home from the taxi rank', said one student. 'I woke up my mother and told her that I had

something very important to say'. The mother greeted her excited son who promptly announced that based on his overseas experience, 'Not all white people are bad'.

For many of the more conservative students, the immersion came as a shock. One such placement experience would be shared often among students and staff. At NYU, there was a particularly energetic lecturer who immediately engaged students around Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/ Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) issues. Some had no idea what the acronym stood for. Others had regarded the subject as beyond the pale; race was difficult enough. For a minority of the South African students who were gay or transsexual it was as if a world opened up in which they could at last be recognised. Every year, the students placed at NYU were invited into deliberations on race, class, gender and sexuality in ways that broadened their minds to possibilities beyond the normative commitments to stable identities from their colonial and apartheid pasts.

It would be naïve to think that immersing black and white first-year students in a Study Abroad programme would easily bridge the distances or dissolve the barriers created by 18-20 years of segregated lives. A guest lecture that I had to deliver at Cornell University happily coincided with a placement visit by UFS students to this beautiful campus in Upstate New York. At breakfast I noticed something quite disturbing at the time. Two white first-year women students sat tightly together in one corner of the room as if something ominous was about to happen to them. This was the exact opposite of what we had intended, that students would begin to reach out to each other in non-threatening environments far from the social judgements and personal awkwardness that come with crossing borders back home. And yet, as already suggested, it was unreasonable to expect interracial communion so early in their studies. What we could hope for, more realistically, was that over time these immersion experiences would at the very least lead to a change of mind on the part of these young South Africans.

Our best ‘teachers’ for subsequent years of the Study Abroad programme were the alumni, those students who had first-hand experience of living and learning outside the country. They were knowledgeable, enthusiastic and confident student leaders who could respond to student queries in ways the staff could not. Their testimonies offered powerful vindication of the programme but more importantly prepared new candidates for what they could expect when away from home. It was these students who became leaders in their residences, leaders of campus programmes and also leaders in the structures of the student representative council (SRC) (Walker & Loots 2016:62).

One of the positive outcomes of this programme is that a few students returned to our partner universities either on short visits or for further studies. Some of them received financial assistance from the receiving institution while others worked to raise the funds to return. This was a crucial element in the programme because it helped cement the relationship between institutions. Similarly, individual students from abroad also came to South Africa on return visits. However, these numbers of returning students were very small largely because of affordability concerns.

One added benefit of the programme was that UFS staff were also exposed to broader learning than what most of them had been accustomed to. Many of the staff who accompanied the students were themselves from the rural Free State and even though they were generally more open-minded than others, the programme had real educational benefits for them as well. Even as they led students and facilitated their sessions at home and abroad, staff too were exposed to new and challenging ideas from the programme’s core curriculum. Students graduated, staff stayed on and therefore they became critical assets in the institutional memory of the programme and also in the transformation drive of the university.

## ■ A critical assessment of the Study Abroad (F1) programme

As indicated, the various research and evaluation reports confirm the overall positive effects of the Study Abroad programme. From a leadership perspective there were however concerns which the programme sought to address in various ways but remain worthy of reflection.

To begin with, a study abroad period of two to three weeks was admittedly too limited an immersion period for students; evidence suggests that the duration of such programmes matters (Dwyer 2004). Put bluntly, this was all we could afford given the foreign exchange rate that favoured the USA and Europe by a factor greater than 10. To compensate for this limited time away, the programme design included intensive pre- and post-visit educational activities. Before leaving, the students were prepared intellectually, socially and emotionally for what an immersion programme would entail. On their return, students engaged in debriefing and development activities that prepared them for the task of leadership in the university.

The limited number of students was also a concern because the intake seldom exceeded more than 70 or 80 students per annum. On the one hand, this made the programme highly selective and only the best students were chosen for their leadership potential. But for a university with more than 25 000 students spread across two main campuses, the number was limited. One way of compensating for the size of the programme was to involve more campus students and student leaders in the UFS-based activities.

A serious limitation of the programme was the placement destinations. The university destinations were, as indicated, typically in the USA and Europe with two Asian universities involved. It would have made a significant difference to include

universities in Rwanda where the experience of traumatic memory and the model of reconciliation offer powerful insights for post-apartheid South Africa (Mawhinney 2015) or Brazil where politics of race still loom large in the consciousness of citizens (Telles 2006). The difficulty was costs because any placement in African countries would have escalated the financial demands of the programme given the limited capacity of the hosts to accommodate South African students who are generally regarded as better-off, in relative terms, to the neighbours north of the Limpopo. In addition, the logistical demands would simply have been much more intense given the problems of communication and infrastructure for large travelling groups of students.

An important criticism from inside the university was the financial implications. Could such funding not have been spent on other areas of greater priorities given that the university had in earlier years been forced to lay off staff to balance the budget? This concern could not be taken lightly. The response from our leadership team was that this was a critical investment that was required in order to deal with the trauma of the 2008 racial tragedy and the ongoing racial friction on the campus. Dealing with institutional racism would require several strategies such as the required integration of the separate black and white residences and the transformation of the institutional culture of the university through the introductions of new symbolisms (Jansen 2020). As part of a package of transformation initiatives, the preparation of student leaders through the Study Abroad initiative was in fact critical to the future stability of the university.

A concern raised by some departments was the intrusion into the normal academic programme. This would require fine-tuned scheduling with overseas universities and special arrangements for the travelling students within the UFS. Fortunately, most of the academic heads in the various departments accommodated the students with assignments and examinations. Nonetheless, a programme of such ambition could clearly not be launched without consideration of the implications for curriculum management.

In this regard, there was a critical balance to be maintained between the programme's design integrity (unbroken duration as well as pre- and post-trip education) and the accommodation of programme pressures (finances, mainstream curriculum). We were not unaware of the fact that the integrity of the programme was critical to the quality of its outcomes (Hudson & Morgan 2019).

At the same time, the university leadership made the case for academics to think of education much more broadly than simply meeting the requirements of Physics I or Introductory Sociology. That set of arguments would become part of the next set of transformation demands on the academic community at the UFS, the compulsory core curriculum for all incoming first-year students.



# Architecture and evolvment of the First-Year Leadership for Change and Global Leadership Summit programmes: 2010 to 2018

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## ■ Introduction

This chapter outlines the architecture and building blocks of the F1L4C and the GLS programmes as they developed, expanded and changed from 2010 to 2018. The author shares insights regarding the design, structure and content development of the respective components and phases as they were shaped and refined by adding new dimensions and implementing amendments based on participant feedback and programme evaluations throughout.

Mention is made of the milestones, lessons learnt and major institutional changes observed every year for the F1L4C and triennially for the GLS (the latter having emerged from the F1 programme) as these programmes evolved over time. Although extensive pre-planning, intense strategic thinking and countless hours and enormous efforts went into the conceptualisation, design and establishment of the F1L4C programme, there was an essential and dynamic development component of ‘building the airplane while in flight’ that cannot be denied, but which also ensured relevancy and enabled the institution to keep a finger on the pulse, so to speak, as we embarked on the journey of leadership for change.

The sources for this chapter mainly consist of the UFS institutional documentation, proposals and reports (mostly unpublished) regarding the two programmes, as drafted and developed by respective staff members and programme stakeholders at the time.

## ■ Programme rationale

### ■ Born from the need for new institutional direction

During 2009–2010, the UFS found itself in a unique position to prepare new leadership for a country and campus still ridden with the trauma of apartheid and its aftermath. The comprehensive response of the UFS to a damaging racial trauma in 2008 included

a broad range of initiatives that profoundly affected both academic life and institutional culture. The crisis was a blessing in disguise as the institution's leaders took on the charge of transformation as a serious commitment (Stroebe 2011:2).

Like all South African universities, the UFS faced challenges of racism, prejudice and exclusion. The institution responded by developing new strategies for integration. One such strategy was the flagship intervention, the Leadership for Change programme that commenced in 2010, with the aim to prepare a new calibre of student leadership that would not only transform the university into a non- and anti-racist environment, but also one that would teach students to lead during and beyond the student years.

Positioned as one of the UFS's strategic institutional change projects for the period 2010–2015, the F1L4C programme focus areas were closely aligned with the VC's vision to advance the 'Human Project' and the 'Academic Project'. Under the Human Project, it focused on explicating the vision of the UFS, being an institution promoting and developing intellectual and operational modalities towards diversity and human reconciliation within the South African democracy project and within the global human project. Under the Academic Project, the F1L4C programme focused on breaking the university out of its academic and educational isolation and identifying and supporting new areas of curriculum, pedagogy and research, aligned not only to the challenges of diversity and transformation being experienced at the UFS, but also to the global challenges in these areas (Baillie & Pelser 2018a:2).

## ■ Programme objectives

The international first-year study abroad programme attempted to respond directly to the strategic commitment of the UFS to serve as an excellent, equitable and innovative university and promote scholarship, critical reflection and whole student development. It would afford first-year students exposure to top universities in the world and to positive international models of

integration across boundaries. It aspired to assist the UFS in building a new campus culture of student relations across lines of culture, colour and language. It also intended to design interventions to address racialised thinking and life experiences inherited from the past by exposing and mentoring students to lead thinking, teams and change in the student life environment.

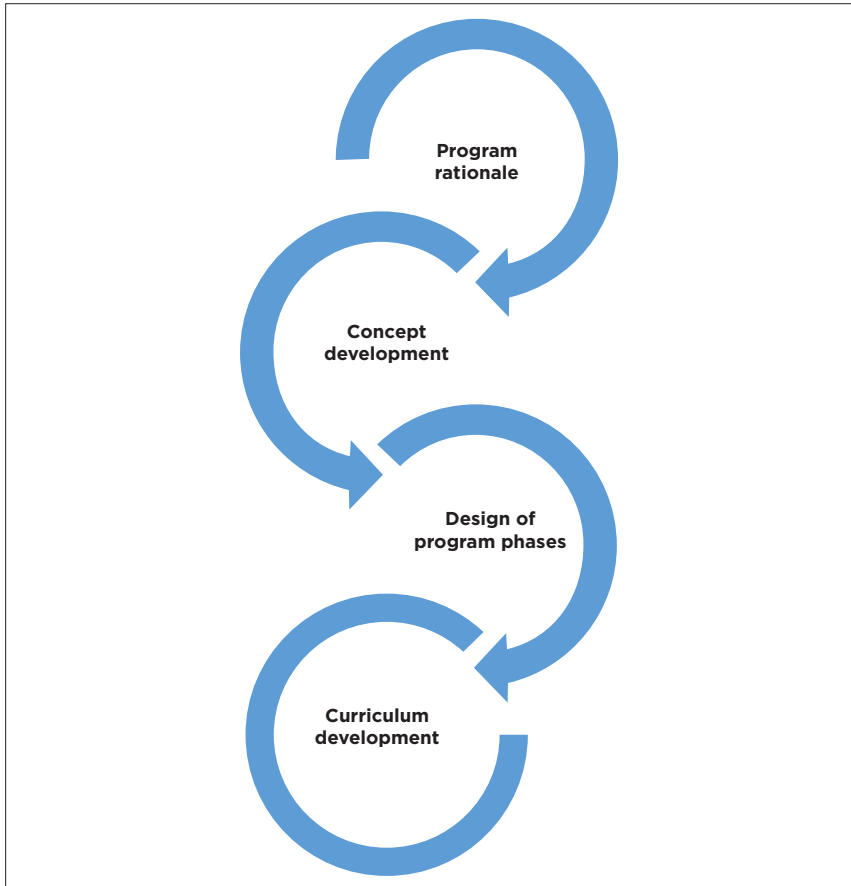
The programme particularly endorsed the UFS's core value of developing and nurturing emergent leadership. More specifically, it seeks to identify and select talented students who demonstrated leadership potential to participate in directed leadership initiatives, to develop and nurture transformed leaders within the UFS community and ultimately the greater South African society (Buys 2011a:1).

The three key objectives for the F1L4C programme over 2010–2015 were identified as (1) to catalyse and support racial integration and diversity development [in the residences] at the UFS, (2) to strategically assist in developing student-led social change programmes at the UFS and (3) to break the academic isolation of the UFS and forge new globally relevant higher education frameworks and partnerships (Baillie & Pelsler 2018a:10).

## ■ Programme conceptualisation

The process of conceptualising the F1L4C programme followed the normal stages of progression; namely, defining the rationale and aim of the programme, developing the programme concept, designing of the programme phases and developing a curriculum. The flow diagram in Figure 4.1 illustrates this process.

The F1L4C programme was designed as a year-long engagement and leadership development support where each selected student would spend a short period abroad with intense exposure to the academic, social, cultural and residential lives of students in another country.



**FIGURE 4.1:** Process flow - First-Year Leadership for Change programme conceptualisation and design.

## ■ Programme development

The programme development included the recruitment of applicants, the rollout of a three-phase preparatory, learning abroad and learning integration programme and finally channelling F1-team members to further leadership development opportunities and into student governance structures. The development of the programme was an organic process and

ended up following six phases of implementation, over a year. These would include:

- Phase 1: Awareness and advocacy around the programme amongst students at the UFS.
- Phase 2: UFS first-year selection process.
- Phase 3: UFS F1L4C student preparatory programme.
- Phase 4: Study abroad phase.
- Phase 5: Return-learning phase.
- Phase 6: Impact phase.

The programme was planned to run on a three-year cycle. In the first and second years of the cycle, first-year students would travel abroad, and return to implement their projects of change, under the guidance of the mentors and with input and guidance from the internal research team. In the third year, the UFS would host a GLS, which would draw in all of these students plus the host universities to consolidate the thinking and working around issues of diversity, leadership and global education.

Returning students were also to review the F1 programme to guide its implementation for the following year of student intake. These returning students were to mentor the new F1 students and to move into positions of leadership in the residences and student organisations. This includes, for example, being residence peer mentors, primes and SRC<sup>1</sup> members. Further, they were to participate in the Gateway orientation programme and form relationships with institutions internationally for further networking and programme development purposes.

Since the inception of the programme, a wide network of national and international researchers have been collaborating on quantifying and assessing the impact of the programme on students and the institution at large. Through these measures, the three key objectives of the F1L4C programme were supposed to be achieved, measured and analysed.

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1. Student Representative Council.

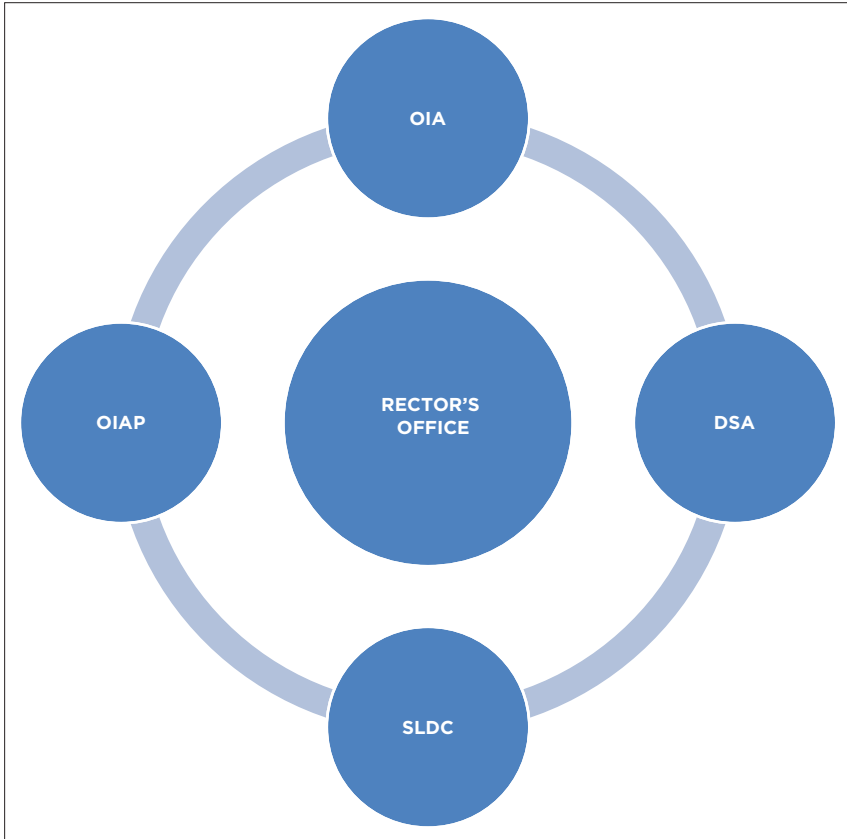
## ■ Programme outcomes

The programme intended to deliver the following tangible outcomes (Stroebe 2011:9):

1. An annual cohort of 75 exceptional undergraduate students who participate in the year-long leadership development programme focused on building layers of new thinking and engagement amongst students from diverse backgrounds.
2. Annual progress reports tracking programme status and evaluation of the implementation and achievement of objectives.
3. An increased level of internationalisation of our undergraduate cohort of young developing leaders through structured opportunities.

## ■ Institutional programme support

The key personnel resources and governance model (Figure 4.2) illustrates how the F1L4C programme was managed, sustained, supported, administered and implemented by the core stakeholders of this unique UFS leadership venture. At the institutional level, the former VC and rector of the UFS, Professor Jonathan Jansen, was the champion and formal driver of this leadership initiative. The dean of Student Affairs in turn would manage the operational budget for the F1L4C programme, as well as the impact analysis, which would focus around a research project with both internal and international partners. A Student Leadership Development Centre (SLDC) would be established, which would oversee the day-to-day management of the Student Development and Learning programme, with an operational budget for this being sourced from the central F1L4C budget. The Office of International Academic Programmes (OIAP) in the VC's office would provide support in terms of the international academic learning experience, as well as in sourcing potential sponsors. The Office of International Affairs (OIA) would manage the international networking, travel arrangements, accommodation and placements.



DSA, Division of Student Affairs; OIA, Office of International Affairs; OIAP, Office of International Academic Programmes; SLDC, Student Leadership Development Centre.

**FIGURE 4.2:** Key personnel resources and governance model.

## ■ Designing of programme phases

### ■ Awareness and advocacy

The 2010 first-year cohort was the first privileged group who received the exciting news about the new UFS leadership programme, challenging them to take up the opportunity to become change agents at the institution. The university used

all media channels and employed all other possible means of advocacy to create awareness and to recruit suitable candidates.

## ■ Selection process

Stringent selection procedures ensured that the substantial investment the UFS made in its students was likely to yield an excellent return on investment in both the short and long term. The target group comprised first-year students who demonstrated leadership potential and who had displayed a record of academic success during their first year. The programme intended to particularly include black and female leaders, as well as students from the Qwaqwa campus to address issues of race and gender imbalance.

The selection committee for the F1L4C comprised several panels consisting of four to five members representative of staff mentors, project staff, academic staff and Student Affairs staff. Students were selected to participate in the programme based on their excellent academic record, leadership capabilities and the level of understanding of leadership in the context of diversity and citizenship demonstrated during the interview process.

Candidates had to complete extensive application forms designed to gather information on their extracurricular activities, a personality assessment, as well as an essay on leadership, citizenship and change. International compatibility was also a determining factor, as successful candidates had to be willing to travel internationally and engage with diverse others for the duration of the year-long programme. Candidates also had to undertake to continue with an intensive programme post-return to complete the structured programme and demonstrate their contribution to peer engagement. Selected participants were those outstanding candidates who fulfilled all these requirements and performed strongly in the panel interview, displaying their ability to think critically.



## ■ Preparatory phase

The preparation of selected student cohorts entailed introductory training sessions, discussions and seminars on leadership, diversity and citizenship to prepare them to engage in conversations with their counterparts abroad. Readings and planning sessions focused on assignments to be completed by participants during the trip. Info sessions on international travel and protocols further prepared them for the trip itself. Group or mentor dialogues around the programme themes encouraged critical thinking, while pre-travel interaction with host institutions assisted them to make the most of the global experience.

Substantial investments were made in the development of leaders at UFS through the high-quality interactions students encountered with experts, peers and diverse others, as well as through the structured nature of the initiatives.

## ■ Study abroad phase

The study abroad programme consisted of learning events in collaboration with the hosting institutions, including social, cultural, academic and leadership training events and conversations.

Pre- and de-briefing meetings of the F1 team based at the host institution provided space to complete individual and group assignments and time was allocated to F1 members for self-assessment and reflection.

The hope was that this international induction programme would introduce students to positive models of racial integration and student life, while building cross-racial unity and international networking with students, staff and programmes globally. The programme would enable students to experience diversity, global citizenship and social integration as part of personal leadership development. This would assist to break down experiences of isolation and racial stereotyping, as they create a cohort of change.

## ■ Return-learning phase

The return-learning phase comprised three sub-phases, namely the post-programme debriefing and evaluation phase, the post-programme planning phase and the impact phase.

The post-programme debriefing and evaluation phase consisted of F1 team members debriefing and discussing their feelings and realisations on the abroad experience, as for their re-entry into the UFS and their respective community environments. Self-reflection would become key in determining whether the programme had yielded the desired outcomes and how it had changed their perspectives. This would find substance in the post-travel individual and group assignments that were due a month after their return.

By participating in programme evaluations, such as host partner surveys and focus groups, cohorts would be empowered to assist in shaping and co-creating the programme for the following year. Photo-op competitions and cohort videos in retrospect of their learnings were shared amongst cohorts to learn from one another and to collectively establish what the impact of the programme had been on them and what in turn was implied regarding their responsibility to the UFS student community as agents of change.

The post-programme planning phase focused on cohorts brainstorming on ideas for impactful cohort projects. They were commissioned to establish learning communities to report to the student body at large on achievements and learning experiences through dialogue programmes. Projects included improved student services on-campus, as experienced at host universities, awareness programmes, social justice programmes (advocacy of social justice, diversity, transformational leadership and global citizenship in their learning and home communities) and community engagement. Project planning entailed the submission of cohorts' project plans, envisaged budget requirements and programme outcomes. Feedback sessions on their progress and

support from Student Affairs would assist the cohorts to keep the momentum and to ensure that projects were executed.

## ■ Impact phase

The impact phase would become the most important phase, as students would have the opportunity to fulfil their mission of bringing about change in the UFS environment. Implementation of the projects would bring the programme to full fruition. The submission of project reports would be crucial in measuring the impact on the student community.

After the year-long period has ended, students would graduate from the programme, join existing student leadership mentoring programmes and avail themselves to run for student governance positions in residences, faculties and associations. Ideally, they would encourage new first-years to apply for the F1 programme, and also mentor and assist them.

## ■ Curriculum development and learning content

### ■ Learning theory and approach

The educational framework for the F1L4C programme engaged 'experiential learning' as a key approach and incorporated theories of learning including cognitive, behaviourist and situational approaches to learning. The curriculum and learning content development was to be structured according to critical pedagogy, grounded theory and the resilience theory (Buys 2011a:1).

### ■ Development plan

Because of the programme emphasis on interaction with real-time student life, the learning theory was to be combined with structured reflection through a participant assessment and development plan.

The F1L4C programme aimed to expedite students' growth in thinking and capacity to lead in contexts of diversity and change. The programme was structured to fulfil a developmental role in each of its phases. The application, selection and preparation phases assisted them to gain the basic knowledge and skills to reflect, dialogue and engage in the programme abroad. Students' engagement and assessment during their visit abroad aimed to assist them in growth in knowledge and skills to lead in diversity and change, enable them to compare what they learn abroad with the situation at their own university and to initiate their role as change agents when they return.

During the integration and continuation phase, after they have returned, they would be mentored to lead change and critical thinking in their student life environments through programmes aligned with service learning indicators (Buys 2011a:1).

## ■ Learning toolbox

A study guide, developed by the dean of students at the time, Mr Rudi Buys, set a framework to mediate students' reflection during their tenure at their host institutions. It provided a brief description of the approach and methodology followed in the learning engagement and the logistics of assessment.

The assessment schedule and research project of the F1 programme provided the vehicle to measure their development, as well as the impact of the programme. The various reflection tools and assignments contained in this manual were designed to guide and assist participants to find meaning in and holistically learn from the experience.

Participants were advised to focus on real-time peer conversations and shared experiences as primary learning activities and were required to complete assignments in a 'learning toolbox' as a secondary learning activity. The toolbox to reflect on the experience included private journals, blogs, participation in learning partner groups of three students, essays

and assignments, group debriefings, group projects and presentations and a photo-op competition. It also contained a schedule that guided the dates for activities and submission of assignments.

The toolbox functioned as part of the research project of the F1 programme so that reports on the various activities could be considered as research data. Apart from monitoring holistically the quality of the programme, the research project aimed to determine the success of the programme in terms of the personal development of participants and the change impact in the student life environment (Buys 2011a:2).

## ■ 2010 Pilot programme implementation

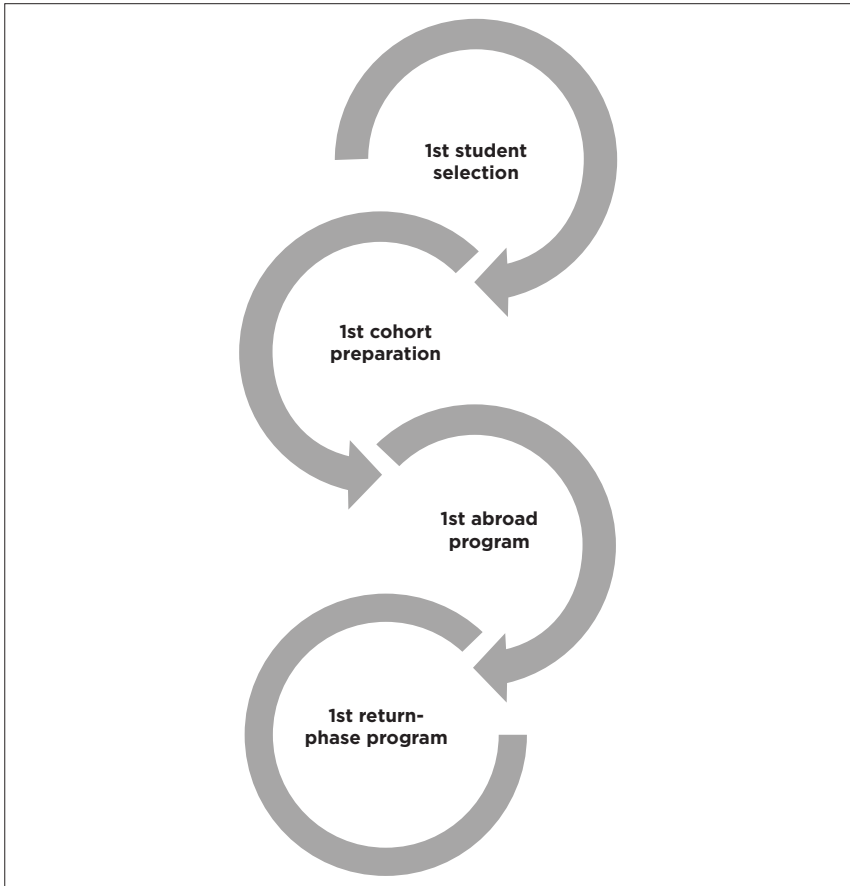
The F1L4C pilot programme was launched in 2010, embarking on the maiden voyage of the selection, cohort preparation, study abroad and return-learning phases, as mentioned earlier in the ‘Designing of programme phases’ section and illustrated by the pilot programme implementation (Figure 4.3).

The first group of 71 students participated in the programme in collaboration with a range of strategic university partners in the USA. Cohorts of students ranging from 6 to 10 per group were hosted by nine universities for a two-and-a-half-week programme.<sup>2</sup>

Six staff mentors accompanied students in their travels and rotated between universities to support and guide them throughout the learning experience. The participation statistics for 2010 reflected a healthy balance in terms of diversity indicators of race and gender, whereas faculty representation, although spread across all seven faculties, displayed the highest rate for students from the Faculty of Economic and Management

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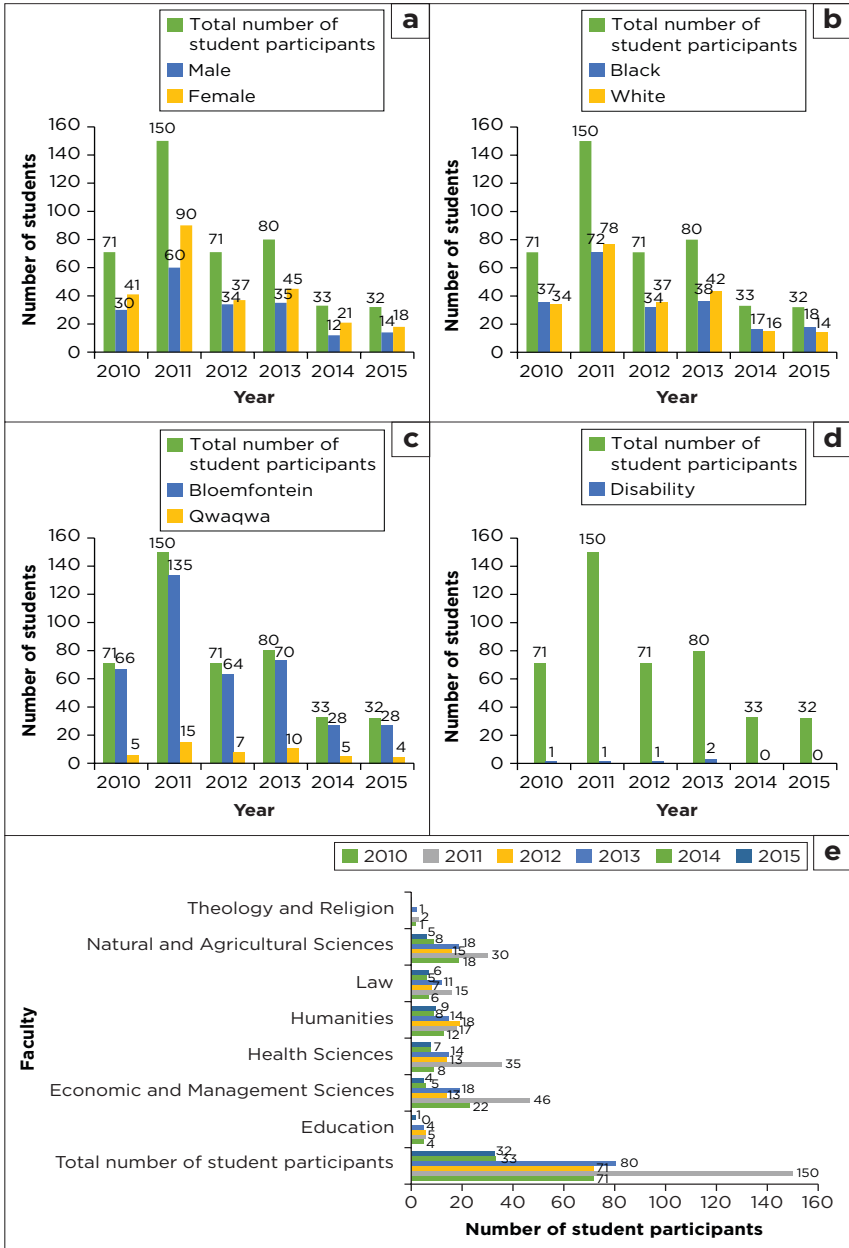
2. These universities were Appalachian State, Binghamton, Cornell, Cleveland State, College of the Holy Cross, Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York.



**FIGURE 4.3:** 2010 Pilot programme implementation.

Sciences, followed by those from Natural and Agricultural Sciences. Of the participants of the Class of 2010, 7% were from the Qwaqwa campus, and 1% were students who were differently-abled (Figure 4.4).

The graphs showing the F1L4C UFS student representation statistics (Figure 4.4) display the UFS student representation across diverse considerations of gender, race, universal access, faculty and campus over the period from 2010 to 2015.



**FIGURE 4.4:** First-Year Leadership for Change University of the Free State student representation statistics by (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) campus, (d) disability and (e) faculty.

The successful candidates were allocated to diverse cohorts, considering the above-mentioned factors, as well as the different personality types according to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Test. These measures assisted the UFS to counter intersectionality, enhance compatibility, foster individual growth and advance group cohesion amongst cohort members.

## ■ Milestones

The most prominent milestones reached included:

1. The first cohort of F1 students successfully completed the abroad phase of the programme.
2. Students reported that travel and accommodation logistics were satisfactory.
3. Host institution programmes were relevant and provided a unique opportunity for them in terms of international exposure, personal development and broadened perspectives on the diversity and democracy themes.
4. Students identified the platform created by the programme as the greatest benefit, as they could explore these issues, have bold discussions and form their own opinions.

## ■ Lessons learnt

Students reported as follows:

1. The study guide and toolbox for the abroad experience contained too many assignments and essays, which they could not manage to complete. This caused anxiety and prevented them from spending enough quality time engaging with host students.
2. The actual tipping point in considering different views and gaining new insights happened abroad and supports Zora Neale Hurston's notion that 'you have to go there to know there', implying that no-one, not even your parents can explore life on your behalf, you have to do it yourself (Hurston 2013:9).



3. The seed had been planted and needed water and nurturing upon their return. This would be achieved by engaging in more dialogues, taking up leadership roles, sharing the experience with peers and the implementation of projects. The full-grown trees would now bear fruit.
4. In-depth preparation was of the essence to ensure that students are ready for the international experience.

## ■ Institutional transformation or shift

The baseline study on student views and experiences of diversity before and following the study abroad visit found, amongst others, that:

1. 87% strongly agreed to have gained new knowledge and 76% new skills while abroad.
2. 98% formed new opinions, with 80% indicating these views as different to views held previously.
3. 89% confirmed their confidence on how to behave differently, with 91% confident to share their new views with authority figures (parents or teachers or pastors).
4. 100% confirmed their confidence to share their new views and skills with fellow students and their confidence to encourage other students to also behave differently.

The findings of the baseline study were confirmed in the individual and group evaluation assessments. In the assessments, participants conducted brief structured interviews with each other as self-assessment of the change impact of the programme, which also resulted in 91% of participants indicating positive change, 96% indicating change in their views on issues of diversity and 91% indicating that they behave differently regarding issues of race and diversity following the study abroad visit (Buys 2011b:1–2).

## ■ First-Year Leadership for Change: Development over time, 2010–2015

Table 4.1 displays the involvement in and participation of F1L4C host partner institutions between 2010 and 2015 and the representation of their respective countries and continents around the globe.

**TABLE 4.1:** First-Year Leadership for Change: Host partner universities (2010–2015).

Year	United States of America	Asia	Europe
2010	Appalachian State University	-	-
	Binghamton University	-	-
	Cleveland State University	-	-
	College of the Holy Cross	-	-
	Cornell University	-	-
	Mount Holyoke College	-	-
	New York University	-	-
	University of Massachusetts	-	-
	University of Minnesota	-	-
2011	Appalachian State University	International Christian University	Amsterdam University College
	Binghamton University	-	Antwerp University
	Cleveland State University	-	Ghent University
	College of the Holy Cross	-	University of Humanistic Studies
	Cornell University	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam
	James Madison University	-	-
	Mount Holyoke College	-	-
	New York University	-	-
	Texas A & M University	-	-
	University of Massachusetts	-	-
	University of Minnesota	-	-
Washington State University	-	-	

*(Table 4.1 continued on the next page)*

**TABLE 4.1 (Continues...):** First-Year Leadership for Change: Host partner universities (2010–2015).

<b>Year</b>	<b>United States of America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Europe</b>
2013	Appalachian State University	International Christian University	Amsterdam University College
	Binghamton University	Maharakham University	Antwerp University
	Clark University	-	Ghent University
	Cleveland State University	-	University of Humanistic Studies
	Edmonds Community College	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam
	James Madison University	-	-
	New York University	-	-
	Texas A & M University	-	-
	University of Massachusetts	-	-
	University of Minnesota	-	-
2014	University of Minnesota	International Christian University	Amsterdam University College
	University of Vermont	Maharakham University	Antwerp University
	-	-	Ghent University
	-	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam
2015	Edmonds Community College	Maharakham University	Amsterdam University College
	New York University	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam
	Rutgers University	-	-
	Washington State University	-	-

Table 4.2 further explains the course of programme evolution over the period and highlights the most prominent milestones, the programme review, lessons learnt and consequent adjustments or improvements and the institutional transformation or shift observed for each year.

**TABLE 4.2:** First-Year Leadership for Change: Comparison over time (2010–2015).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Adjustments, improvements or expansion</b>	<b>Institutional transformation or shift</b>
2010	Meaningful global partnerships established by the UFS; first 71 students participated – nine US universities; considerable marketing and media presence; satisfactory travel and accommodation; host institution programmes relevant; opportunity for personal development and international exposure; a platform created to dialogue and form opinions	Study guide or toolbox for abroad experience contained too many assignments and essays; not enough time to engage with host students; tipping point happened abroad; further engagement and action upon return needed to complete the process; in-depth preparation crucial to ensure first-years' readiness for international experience	-	Students, in general, gained new skills and knowledge; formed new opinions, different from views held previously; confidence to behave differently and share views with authoritative figures and other students
2011	First-year information drive: general or college info sessions; alumni motivation and assistance to apply, mentoring during Gateway orientation; developmental opportunities for mentors; F1 return programme commenced; meaningful projects launched by each cohort; programme achieved significant footprint and status, positioning UFS as a globally relevant thought leader in higher education and institutional transformation	Large numbers make administration and logistics difficult; returning group energised and ready to initiate change – it somehow vanished as group members dissolved back into university norm; UFS perception of an 'elitist group' created about F1s	Online applications introduced successfully – more entries; participant numbers expanded to 151; improved administration; more host partners added – USA: 12, Asia: 1, Europe: 5; staff mentors allocated to each cohort, facilitated learning experience and continued post-travel mentoring; formal Fellow F1 Student Mentor programme established; intensified preparatory phase	Accelerated institutional change impact upon return; large group influence – strong leaders emerged; impactful projects; F1 students enter into leadership positions or student governance; Racial integration: student governance structures became more diverse; Social change: students became active participants in change

Source: Adapted from Baillie and Pelsler (2018a:10–12).

FIL4C, First-Year Leadership for Change; GLS, Global Leadership Summit; MSU, Maharakham University; UFS, University of the Free State; USA, United States of America.

(Table 4.2 continued on the next page)

**TABLE 4.2 (Continues...):** First-Year Leadership for Change: Comparison over time (2010–2015).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Adjustments, improvements or expansion</b>	<b>Institutional transformation or shift</b>
2013	F1 Fellowship (F1F) Alumni Association established; first-year group actively involved in F1F – commit, attend or assist with at least two association projects	First-years not ready for travel by September; 2012 First-years selected, prepared for GLS, travelled with 2013 F1 group; not ideal to have first and second-year students in mixed groups abroad <sup>3</sup>	Nineteen host institutions with MSU Thailand, added – 80 students; select and prepare students in first year – travel / int. component in the second year; intensified training – pre-travel group dialogues; toolbox adjusted, fewer essays, added group videos, regular Twitter feeds while abroad	Social change: co-curricular programmes broadened and became more inclusive; Racial integration: student governance became more racially diverse; social relationships displayed improved racial integration
2014	Combined group projects with greater effect; performance level of students very high – evident from essays, contributions; small groups better prepared for global experience	Students more committed; better or fewer projects; more manageable; maximised group energy; students enthusiastic to implement what worked abroad and test it in South Africa	Selection target – small group of 30–35 students; 33 participants hosted at six global universities	Diversity development: institutional change takes place in residences and on campus

Source: Adapted from Baillie and Pelser (2018a:10–12). F1L4C, First-Year Leadership for Change; GLS, Global Leadership Summit; MSU, Maharakham University; UFS, University of the Free State; USA, United States of America.

(Table 4.2 continued on the next page)

.....

3. The broad programme cycle followed for the F1L4C was: 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015; and for the GLS: 2012, 2015, 2018. The GLS 2012 selected UFS students travelled abroad together with the F1 2013 cohort during 2013.

**TABLE 4.2 (Continues...):** First-Year Leadership for Change: Comparison over time (2010–2015).

Year	Milestones	Lessons learnt	Adjustments, improvements or expansion	Institutional transformation or shift
2015	A definite sense of comfort and acceptance within the F1 group, close relationships established between cohort members; utmost respect displayed	Students extremely enthusiastic to effect change upon return	32 students attended seven universities – a new programme partner in the USA added	This was the final cohort of F1L4C students selected, as the exchange programme would come to an end with the last cohorts travelling abroad during January 2016. <sup>4</sup> The impact, therefore, was not noticeable, also since the institutional direction had changed.

Source: Adapted from Baillie and Pelsler (2018a:10–12).

F1L4C, First-Year Leadership for Change; GLS, Global Leadership Summit; MSU, Maharakham University; UFS, University of the Free State; USA, United States of America.

## ■ Financial considerations versus programme continuation

Regretfully, the F1L4C cycle discontinued towards the end of 2016, mainly because of the high financial cost of the travelling component of the programme, despite the drastic reduction of cohort numbers from 2014 onwards. The fact that a proportionally small number of UFS students benefitted from the programme and subsequent institutional funding did not sit well with UFS management at the time. It was no longer sustainable, nor justifiable in light of the countrywide #FeesMustFall protests that commenced during September 2015. Since the programme goals had mainly been achieved (or were being fulfilled by other, less

4. Due to host institution circumstances and preferences, respective cohorts' visiting periods of the same year group varied between September and October of that year and January of the following year. This was the case with the F1 Class of 2015, having a number of cohorts that only travelled during January 2016.

costly institutional projects), the UFS no longer regarded the programme as a priority transformational project.

The cost per individual student for the study abroad phase amounted to approximately R50 000.00. It included visas, local travel costs for visa appointments and again to travel to and from Johannesburg for departure and return trips, international return flights, transportation abroad to and from host institution destinations, as well as necessary daily expenses. Financial concessions from local bus lines and international airlines in terms of special bulk price packages did though go a long way to assist the UFS to finance the study abroad experience.

The UFS agreement with global partner universities, on the other hand, included the financial contribution of hosting institutions towards the accommodation, meals, local transport, class or session materials and the cost of educational tours undertaken with UFS students during their stay. Reciprocally, when partner universities were to visit the UFS for the GLS, they would take care of their international travel expenses, while the UFS in turn, would be responsible for summit accommodation, catering, local transport and excursion costs.

At several intervals since 2013, the programme administrators submitted funding proposals to seek external support from the corporate sector, as well as national and international foundations and organisations that have a keen interest in transformational leadership and global impact programmes within higher education. Although many opportunities do exist, they come with clear objectives, stipulations and expectations. The team did not succeed in obtaining external funding, which might be partially because of very few foundations being willing to contribute to a cause that is not financially co-supported by its own institution, as was the indication of the UFS going forward.

Sourcing funding is no small task, and since the programme administrators did not have the staff capacity to continue with these attempts over and above the normal responsibilities of their offices and principal divisional programmes, it could not be maintained. Although the guidance and internal collaboration

from Institutional Advancement at the UFS was valuable, the F1L4C team was mostly discouraged from approaching sought after potential and prominent funders. Contributions towards academic advances (whether applied for teaching, research or student scholarships) would generally take preference over student leadership and study abroad programmes at the UFS and most other South African universities.

## ■ **Global Leadership Summit programme evolution**

### ■ **Programme rationale and background**

The GLS developed as a reciprocal programme that emerged from the F1L4C programme and was hosted triennially by the UFS, Bloemfontein since 2012. It provided a unique opportunity for partner universities' staff and students to visit the UFS to participate in an interactive summit of engagements and discussions around shared global objectives for leadership and social justice in higher education. The GLS is a collaborative project between the UFS Division of Student Affairs (DSA), the former Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice (IRSJ) and the Office for International Affairs.

The GLS iterations in both 2012 and 2015 focused on bringing together all 27 international host universities, as well as other interested educational stakeholders to the UFS to share their findings and experiences on how the F1L4C programme contributed to understanding and working with student leadership, social change and diversity through multicultural and experiential global education programmes. What became the unique selling point of the GLS for the international community was that it, unlike most other interventions on leadership, provided a focus on the development of both students and staff around issues of critical global concern (Baillie & Pelser 2018a:1).

Although the F1L4C programme came to an end in 2016, the value of the international partnerships formed throughout the programme, was duly recognised. The UFS committed to continue with and host the GLS again during the July holidays



of 2018. The aim was to strengthen the shared objectives amongst all in working towards social justice and to build new partnerships with universities from the African Continent and bring them on board. The basic GLS concept and programme was retained, but for practical considerations and mainly to reduce cost, the duration was shortened by one week, and the numbers of visiting staff and student participants were reduced to five per institution.

## ■ Programme objectives

The main programme objectives included the following (Baillie & Pelsler 2018a:1):

- To exchange ideas and international experiences.
- To address issues of racial inclusion and reconciliation in higher education.
- To strengthen and expand relationships with international academic partners.
- To explore new possibilities for participation in international research partnerships.
- To enhance the international exposure of UFS staff and students.
- To experience intercultural interaction and exchange on campus.

## ■ Programme structure and themes

The GLS constituted a joint campus-based programme (faculty and departmental) for UFS and international staff and student representatives over 10 working days, divided into 2 parts of 5 days. It included amongst other components two top keynote speakers per part and ran from 09:00 to 18:00 every day, divided into formal sessions (mornings) and informal sessions (afternoons). These sessions consisted of documentaries, networking, panel discussions, dialogue sessions, activities, films, arts and drama and selected attendance of the Free State Arts

Festival productions. A visit to the Qwaqwa campus and a varied elective programme of cultural and adventure tourism excursions completed the programme (Baillie & Pelsers 2018a:2).

The programme focus was on exploring social justice topics through change-inducing themes such as transformational leadership, equality, dignity and difference, diversity, citizenship, complex societies, globalisation, glocal identities, education, race, gender, reconciliation and sustainable development, to name but a few. The GLS 2012 combined theoretical and developmental goals in a grid to achieve the desired outcomes and mediate integrated learning on key questions in global change leadership.

The developmental goals or leadership capabilities displayed in the GLS 2012 theme intersect grid (Figure 4.5) included critical thinking, resilient courage, purpose clarity, emphatic relationships, crossing boundaries, change initiative, restorative intent, inspiring imagination and ethically rooted (Buys 2012:1-2).

The 2018 programme aimed to enhance the UFS's graduate attributes, with the understanding that Africa's strength lies in human value development. This became a key branding and development lever for the UFS, providing a unique selling point in terms of graduate attribute development, both in South Africa and internationally. The thematic content of the GLS suggested a platform for the development of various strategic coordinated research areas and projects between the UFS and its partners (Baillie & Pelsers 2017:1).

The following overview of the 2018 GLS provides insight into the different focus areas of the summit (Baillie & Pelsers 2018b):

Utilising the broader framework of the social change leadership development model, seven thematic areas, related to the broader summit theme of 'Comparative Global Leadership: Social Inclusion, Social Justice' were explored. These include human value, gender, intersectionality and diversity, critical leadership, engaged scholarship, reconciliation and transformation, decoloniality and arts and social justice. (p. 2)

The programme met and aligned with several objectives at the institutional level, in particular, objectives from the *UFS Strategic*

	Transformational leadership	Citizen-ship	Education	Race	Globalisation	Gender	Change agents	Social justice	Reconciliation
<b>Resilient courage</b>									
<b>Purpose clarity</b>	Intersect to study leadership and reflect on clarity of purpose					Intersect to study gender and reflect on clarity of purpose			Intersect to study reconciliation and reflect on clarity of purpose
<b>Empathic relationships</b>									
<b>Crossing boundaries</b>									
<b>Change initiative</b>	Intersect to study leadership and reflect on change initiative					Intersect to study gender and reflect on change initiative			Intersect to study reconciliation and reflect on change initiative
<b>Restorative intent</b>									
<b>Inspiring imagination</b>	Intersect to study leadership and reflect on inspiring imagining					Intersect to study gender and reflect on inspiring imagining			Intersect to study reconciliation and reflect on inspiring imagining
<b>Critically thinking</b>									
<b>Ethically rooted</b>									

Source: Adapted from Buys (2012:1-2).

**FIGURE 4.5:** Global Leadership Summit 2012: Theme intersect grid.

*Plan, 2015 to 2020* (UFS 2015) and the *Integrated Transformation Plan* (ITP) (UFS 2017a); and at the divisional level, in particular, objectives in UFS DSA Student Affairs Strategic Plan 2017–2022 (UFS 2017b) and the Institute Audit Report, 2016. The programme also met with objectives at the national level, namely, objectives taken from the *National Development Plan: 2013* (National Planning Commission 2017), the Policy Framework for the Realisation of Social Inclusion in the Post-school Education and Training System (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] 2016) and the *National Social Cohesion Mandate* (Department of Arts and Culture 2012).

## ■ Programme benefits to the University of the Free State

The most prominent benefits for the institution were:

1. International recognition for its focus on facilitating collaborative work with faculty and students across global institutions of higher education on issues of social justice concern.
2. Recognition for providing critical discourse around issues of social justice within higher education.
3. Attraction of continental and international partnerships, projects and students to the UFS.
4. Critical exposure of UFS staff and students to global realities and discourses in higher education and social transformation.

## ■ Global Leadership Summit: Development over time, 2012–2018

Table 4.3 shows the involvement in and participation of F1L4C/GLS partner institutions in the three iterations of the GLS programme in 2012, 2015 and 2018, representative of their respective countries and continents around the globe.

**TABLE 4.3:** Global Leadership Summit: Partner universities (2012–2018).

<b>Year</b>	<b>United States of America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Europe</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
2012	Appalachian State University	International Christian University	Antwerp University	-
	Binghamton University	-	Ghent University	-
	Clark University	-	University of Humanistic Studies	-
	Cleveland State University	-	-	-
	College of the Holy Cross	-	-	-
	Cornell University	-	-	-
	Edmonds Community College	-	-	-
	James Madison University	-	-	-
	Mount Holyoke College	-	-	-
	New York University	-	-	-
	Texas A & M University	-	-	-
	University of Massachusetts	-	-	-
	University of Minnesota	-	-	-
	University of Vermont	-	-	-
Washington State University	-	-	-	
2015	Appalachian State University	International Christian University	Amsterdam University College Antwerp University	-
	Clark University	Mahasarakham University	Ghent University	-
	Edmonds Community College	-	University of Humanistic Studies	-
	James Madison University	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam	-

*(Table 4.3 continued on the next page)*

**TABLE 4.3 (Continues...):** Global Leadership Summit: Partner universities (2012–2018).

Year	United States of America	Asia	Europe	South Africa
2015	Mount Holyoke College	-	-	-
	New York University	-	-	-
	Rutgers University			
	University of Vermont	-	-	-
	Washington State University	-	-	-
2018	Edmonds Community College	International Christian University	Amsterdam University College Antwerp University	Central University of Technology
	Mount Holyoke College	Maharakham University	University of Humanistic Studies	Sol Plaatjie University Stellenbosch University
	New York University	-	Vrije University of Amsterdam	University of Venda

Table 4.4 further explains the course of programme evolution from 2012 to 2018 and highlights the most prominent milestones, lessons learnt, consequent adjustments or improvements and the institutional transformation or shift observed for each year.

## ■ Leadership development at the University of the Free State after discontinuation of the First-Year Leadership for Change programme

Many outstanding programmes all over the world are evaluated and adjusted as their contexts change. In this regard, significant changes took place within the South African higher education environment between 2015 and 2016. It therefore became crucial for the UFS to consider the financial and moral implications of the programme weighed against the outcry for ‘Student fees to fall’ at the time, the perceived limited reach of the programme

**TABLE 4.4:** Global Leadership Summit: Comparison over time (2012–2018).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Adjustments, improvements or expansion</b>	<b>Institutional transformation or shift</b>
2012	First GLS – reciprocal phase; first international experience at UFS addressing salient issues around change leadership, diversity and racial reconciliation in higher education; 21 universities and 9 teaching institutions attended – 250 attendees (180 international); F1 Alumni Association established; meaningful global partnerships established by the UFS	University of the Free State first-years not ready for GLS experience – visitors were seniors; GLS programme too fully packed, no time for reflection; too many assignments and engagements; too academic, not student-centred	University of the Free State established working relations with global partners	Increased level of internationalisation of undergraduate students – evident through this initiative; UFS global footprint and status was further consolidated and cemented; UFS academic and educational isolation broken; meaningful global partnerships established; racial integration: residences became more racially diverse; diversity development: residence student attitudes, values and behaviours changed
2015	University of the Free State presents second GLS – international experience at home, 17 universities attended with 200 participants	The more interactive programme, containing fewer formal sessions and more dialogues, was well received by both staff and student participants. The ratio of staff to students displayed more balance, since the programme was actually intended for students	University of the Free State second and third-year students selected for GLS – separate group from FIL4C participants (first-year group)	University of the Free State academic and educational isolation broken; shared curriculum around diversity, leadership and global education established and developed; global partnerships became long term and produced results needed by all

Source: Adapted from Baillie and Pelsler (2018b:10–12).

FIL4C, First-Year Leadership for Change; GLS, Global Leadership Summit; UFS, University of the Free State.

(Table 4.4 continued on the next page)

**TABLE 4.4 (Continues...):** Global Leadership Summit: Comparison over time (2012–2018).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Adjustments, improvements or expansion</b>	<b>Institutional transformation or shift</b>
2018	Third and improved iteration of GLS; 12 global universities with 216 attendees/participants; student-centred programme; very high ratings on the accessibility, level and diversity of programme content	Arts and social justice approach: productions on relevant programme themes were appreciated and highly rated; panel discussion should not involve too many panellists; more questions and responses from students to be allowed and should be a controlled process	African universities included; a shorter programme with fewer participants per institution; less costly and more focused; more student engagement, discussions, presentations; Fewer activities and evenings free; more engagement and depth of experience; cohort debriefings essential and valuable; two cohort mentors per group (one international and one from the UFS) – highly effective	The buy-in from UFS faculties and relevant support divisions (especially the Directorate for Research Development) was noteworthy and contributed greatly to the success of the summit

Source: Adapted from Baillie and Pelsler (2018b:10–12).

FIL4C, First-Year Leadership for Change; GLS, Global Leadership Summit; UFS, University of the Free State.

and the indication that the initial institutional programme goals have been reached or were being fulfilled by other significant programmes at the time. It emphasised the importance of evaluating and adjusting the F1L4C after six years.

Several leadership programmes have been influenced and redirected by the F1L4C programme since its inception in 2010, for example, the Activator First-Year Camp and the FutureLEAD Challenge Leadership Development programmes at UFS. This is by virtue of the recognised value of the F1L4C programme with specific reference to the introduction of difficult dialogues, critical and reflective thinking, as well as the encouragement of students to explore the unfamiliar and to step out of their comfort zones.



## ■ The Leadership for Social Justice programme

### ■ Overview of the programme

In recognition of the invaluable deliverables and exceptional impact of the F1L4C programme, senior leadership of the UFS expressed its support towards the end of 2016 for a review process that would explore ideas emerging from the current programme.

The objectives were to design a programme that would utilise the positive components of the F1L4C programme in a reconfigured format and address the former shortcomings. These adjustments suggest the desired broadening of the first-year base of exposure; strengthening collaboration with academic faculties and embedding components of the new programme in the formal curriculum; intersecting with other broader student development programmes and to shift the focus from integration to broader collaborative learning outcomes.

The DSA, in collaboration with the IRSJ and the Office for International Affairs, proposed the establishment of the Leadership for Social Justice (L4SJ) programme during 2017. Extensive exploration of the potential, scope and feasibility of such a programme followed towards 2018, leading up to the third GLS hosted in the same year. The task team envisaged the L4SJ programme as a key cross-curricular programme, assisting the UFS in meeting its graduate branding, and in equipping students to deal positively with the change in the university space and beyond. This included that students be cognisant, supportive and engaged with the UFS ITP. Like the ITP, the L4SJ would seek to build on existing structures, systems, processes, programmes and projects that are in line with the aspirations of the institutional change project.

The GLS would also provide an ideal opportunity and highly productive space for the UFS (and its current and future partners) to reflect on how to reposition the past partnership model and

discuss a future collaborative programme that will consolidate partnerships across teaching, innovation, research, business and engaged scholarship.

The programme was proposed to run over a three-year period, meeting a student in their first year, and concluding at the end of their third year and which would transfer knowledge and impart values. It was designed to provide UFS students with the conceptual and operational tools, as well as the support and networks to become successful change agents both within the UFS community and its academic space as well as beyond the UFS, in society.

Working in a partnership framework across the DSA, the IRSJ, the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Office for International Affairs, the Office for Research Development, the Office for Community Engagement and national, continental and international partners, the programme would be designed to explore and build the capacity of students to work meaningfully and productively with theories and practices of transformation, social justice, social inclusion and social cohesion (Baillie 2017:2).

## ■ Programme design

In the first year of the programme, all UFS students would be exposed to concepts with regards to transformation and social inclusion through an alignment of the programme into the UFS101 programme. Framed against the DHET Policy Framework for the Realisation of Social Inclusion in the Post-school Education and Training System, students will be conscientised into thinking critically about transformation and social inclusion concepts, which include race, class, age, language, disability, gender, sexual orientation, geography, history, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) and citizenship in its broadest sense.

In the second and third year of the programme, the focus would be on exposing and developing second and third-year students, respectively, to the conceptual and operational modalities needed to meet the UFS graduate branding position,

to contribute towards the UFS ITP and to understand that in addressing issues of inclusion, one fulfils a fundamental process of social justice, as embedded in South Africa's Constitution, and as globally recognised. Further, this work streamlines the overall national project of social cohesion.

## ■ Programme outcomes

The expectation was that the proposed L4SJ programme would dovetail with the GLS and that the synergies created would enhance the support, relevance, success and sustainability of the programme and the UFS's international partnerships.

The programme outcomes included the following:

1. The thematic content of the GLS programme would function as the platform for the development of various strategic, coordinated research areas between the UFS (in close collaboration with the Department of Research Development) and the various partners.
2. Collaborative work, internally and with external partners, to design a three-year cross-curricular L4SJ programme as a credit-bearing elective.
3. The piloting of the aforementioned programme in 2018, to be included in the first year as specifically designed leadership and social justice modules, in collaboration with the UFS Centre for Teaching and Learning and supplemented by programme engagements and online assessments.
4. Further development of this programme in the second year into progressive levels of interactive sessions, seminars, local and community engagement, assignments and finally, the continental and international exchange of 15–20 top qualifying students (in research-related and discipline-related fields with co-curricular social justice components) in their third and fourth years.
5. The development of a collaborative virtual exchange program that would serve as an interactive educational platform where students and staff from all institutions

could learn from each other about issues of social justice, and social inclusion – one of the focus points would be to develop competencies related to global intercultural development (Baillie 2017:2).

## ■ Current prospects going forward

The UFS is in a process of reviewing the GLS and the L4SJ prospects at the institutional level, for repositioning these programmes within the global higher education space. One of the possibilities being discussed is to establish an international forum, drawing on the programme partners over the past 10 years to collaboratively formulate a contingency plan with the option of partner universities from different continents hosting the summit triennially on a rotation basis. The establishment of the virtual exchange programme will also be prioritised to augment the GLS programme and to function as a platform and ‘sharing space’ between institutions where students and staff can interact before and after the summit.

Policies and institutional goals may change over time, but the personal value to each student who participates in global leadership and exchange programmes like the F1L4C and the GLS will no doubt remain unchanged. This is evident from testimonies by alumni UFS students from the respective year groups, as indicated hereafter.

The chapter is concluded with the voices of alumni students, respectively representing their year groups from 2010 to 2015, testifying to the impact that these programmes have had on their personal growth, careers and lives in general. The current Dean of Students then responds to that by providing the final comment which confirms that the institutional goal of creating transformational student leaders had indeed been fulfilled.

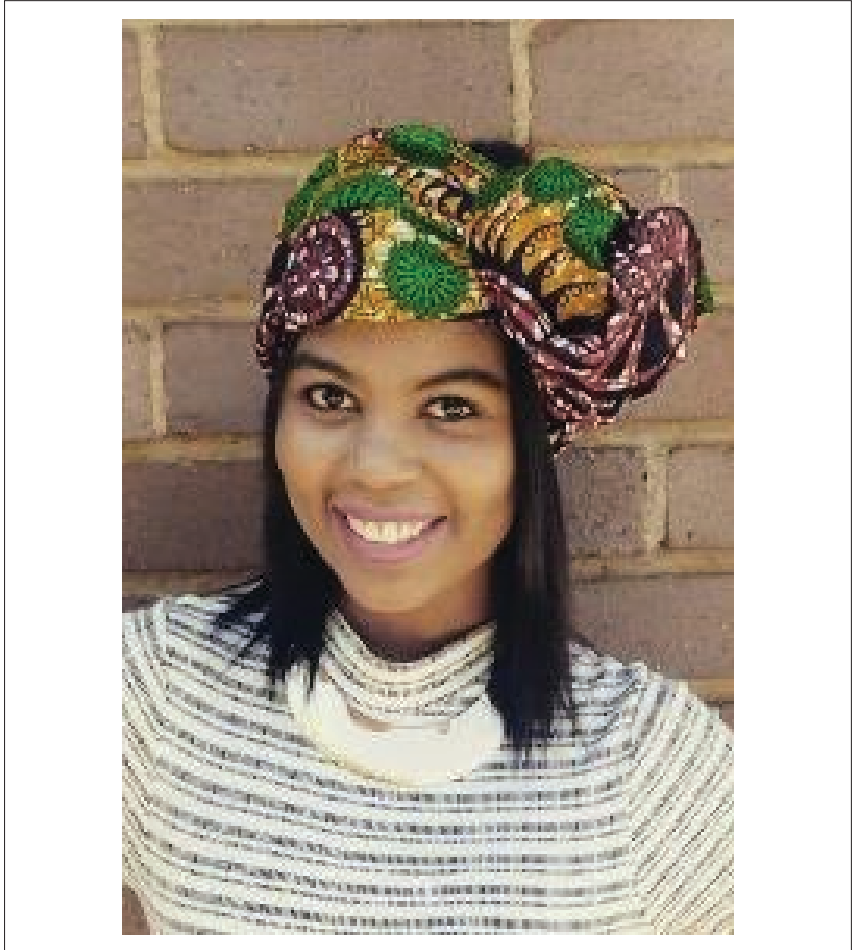
In keeping with the required ethical considerations, the consent for the placement of the names, photographs and actual words of everyone in this chapter has been obtained.



Source: Photograph taken by Emma Booysen, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Emma Booysen and consent from Lehlohonolo Mofokeng.

**FIGURE 4.6:** Lehlohonolo Mofokeng, University of the Free State and FIL4C programme alumnus, Class of 2010, who was hosted at Cornell University.

‘I am now convinced that the best way of teaching someone new ways of doing and saying things isn’t by telling them what they should and shouldn’t do or say, but by exposing them to another culture that will challenge their thinking and approach to life’. (Lehlohonolo Mofokeng, student, 2010)



Source: Photograph taken by Edward de Wet, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Edward de Wet and consent from Emme-Lancia Faro.

**FIGURE 4.7:** Emme-Lancia Faro, University of the Free State and F1L4C programme alumna, Class of 2011, who was hosted at Antwerp University, Belgium.

‘This was an opportunity to explore, embrace, live and learn. I was encouraged to take on the experience with an open mind, to allow for discomfort and to be present in the moment’. (Emme-Lancia Faro, student, 2011)



Source: Photograph taken by Johan Roux, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Johan Roux and consent from Waldo Staude.

**FIGURE 4.8:** Waldo Staude, University of the Free State and FIL4C programme alumnus, Class of 2012 participant in the GLS and hosted at Mahasarakham University, Thailand in 2013.

‘Overall, the F1 programme was a greatly enriching experience which I believe played a crucial role towards the transformation of the UFS as well as a major formative experience in my own life... Through the open and many times emotional dialogues and discussions of the GLS, I managed to get an insight and further my understanding of the lives of my fellow South African peers, as well as for those from other nationalities that I did not necessarily have before’.  
(Waldo Staude, student, 2013)

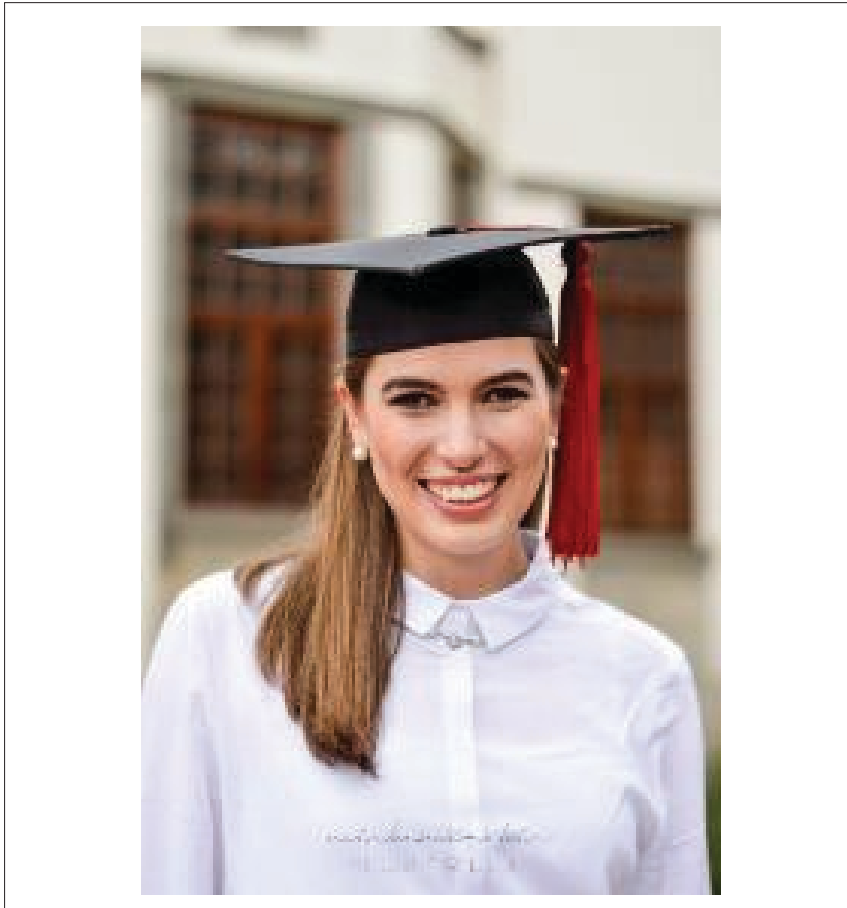


Source: Photograph taken by Gordon Harris, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Gordon Harris and consent from Priscilla Brandt.

**FIGURE 4.9:** Priscilla Brandt, University of the Free State and F1L4C programme alumna, Class of 2013, who was hosted at International Christian University, Japan.

‘The biggest teaching I received during the duration of the F1L4C programme was the realisation that with any scale of social transformation, the generated ideas needed a critical mass of actors who would translate these into pragmatic solutions that would contribute towards building a more inclusive and integrated institution’. (Priscilla Brandt, student, 2013)





Source: Photograph taken by Mieke van der Westhuizen, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Mieke van der Westhuizen and consent from Jani Swart.

**FIGURE 4.10:** Jani Swart, University of the Free State and FIL4C programme alumna, Class of 2014, who was hosted at University of Vermont and participated in the GLS 2015.

‘F1 and GLS developed me as a leader (even if just for making me aware of the bigger picture, being sensitive to difference and intersectionality), instilled in me a sense of public responsibility to work towards reconciliation, nation-building and equality, and prepared me for a globalised world through cross-cultural communication and conduct’. (Jani Swart, student, 2015)



Source: Photograph taken by Nkateko Manganye, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Nkateko Manganye and consent from Karabelo Moloi.

**FIGURE 4.11:** Karabelo Moloi, University of the Free State and FIL4C programme alumnus, Class of 2014, who was hosted at University of Vermont, and participated in the GLS 2015.

‘It is hard to capture the profound impact of the F1 programme on my life and future career in its entirety, simply because my story is still being written. However, I can say that the F1 programme took an ordinary young man and transformed him into a rebellious mind and independent spirit determined to provide maverick solutions to a world plagued by old challenges’. (Karabelo Moloi, student, 2015)



Source: Photograph taken by René Pelsler, 2016, UFS Bloemfontein campus, published with permission from René Pelsler and consent from Tammy Fray, Liesl Theiss and Christine Carstens.

**FIGURE 4.12:** #TooTaboo Project demonstrators, and University of the Free State and First-Year Leadership for Change programme alumni. Tammy Fray is in the middle, with fellow Class of 2015 F1 participants Liesl Theiss (left) and Christine Carstens (right). Tammy Fray was hosted at Vrije University, Amsterdam.

Tammy, together with other students from the Class of 2015, spearheaded the return-project that the cohort planned and executed in 2016/2017.

This is an extract from the introduction to their project proposal:

‘Shattering the silence around issues such as mental and sexual wellbeing, patriarchy, gender non-conformity, ableism, sexism, etc. is what #TooTaboo is aimed at. We don’t want for students to feel stifled by the embarrassment and controversy that society places on these topics’. (Tammy, student, 2016)



Source: Photograph taken by René Pelsler, 2016, UFS Bloemfontein campus, published with permission from René Pelsler and consent from Pura Mgolombane.

**FIGURE 4.13:** Dean: Student Affairs, Pura Mgolombane, supporting the #TooTaboo project.

Dean of Students, Mr Pura Mgolombane responded to the project proposal as follows:

'It is very pleasing indeed seeing students saying, "enough is enough". I commend them. This is proof of the programme producing top class students who are a living and breathing example of what the Human Project is'. (Pura Mgolombane, Dean: Student Affairs, 2016).



# Transformation in times of largeness: The challenges of conflation

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**Keywords:** Institutional transformation; Systemic resistance; Higher education governance; Higher education leadership; Higher education management; Stakeholderisation; Cooperative governance.

## ■ Introduction

As will be evidenced in other chapters of this book, the F1L4C Programme was successful in effecting forms of personal transformation on the UFS students who participated in

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the programme. As most High Impact Educational Practice and Global Education Programmes find and articulate, amongst others, these kinds of programmes form a cognitive disruption for its participants, creating new ways of seeing and understanding challenges or opportunities and inspiring new modalities towards them. Although having undergone personal transformation, the FIL4C programme participants however were not able to influence the transformation of the UFS space to the degree the programme envisaged or desired. This limitation was in no measure related to a lack of ability on the part of the students or on the content and approach of the programme. Rather, it speaks about the transformation and institutional culture challenges present in the higher education system. This chapter seeks to simply provide some insight towards one of the book's questions regarding whether the personal transformation of students could influence the transformation of the UFS, and it also seeks to clear the underbrush of misconceptions around this programme in order that the critical insights and lessons it has to offer are re-aligned into higher education transformation discourse.

## ■ **Problematizing student leadership programmes in higher education transformation processes**

A curious reaction takes place when mention is made of the FIL4C programme, either to students of the UFS or alternately to its management or staff. While most students who were not part of the programme almost immediately respond by providing a variety of negative opinions, narratives and myths in relation to the programme; management and staff (again, many of whom did not participate in the programme) tend to be more cautious and instead proffer non-verbal signs or expressions and gestures of frustration and criticism. If pressed for deeper understanding, some management and staff would refer to issues of 'high programme cost' or 'programme failure'. Further explanation on the perceived failure however is seldom, if ever, forthcoming.

If read from within an educational frame, the F1L4C (hereafter referred to as F1) programme was a forerunner and significant marker of exploration for the UFS into the international practices of Global Education and High Impact Educational Practices. By nature of the encompassing needs and demands of global education programmes, they are costly; hence, the judgement of the F1 on this basis alone seems irrational. In its implementation of high-impact educational practices, the F1 programme can also be historically placed as having pioneered the opening and creation of the architecture and space for the testing of this type of educational pedagogy and practice at the UFS. The potential criticism relating to these angles of programme interpretation is perhaps to be found in the seeming inability to fund and manage the size of student groups who participated in the F1 programme each year, given that the smallest group of students participating in one of the annual iterations may have been around 36 and the largest 150 (UFS F1L4C 2010–2016). However, this argument in itself neutralises the objectives of the programme which was focused on the development of sizable cohorts of students able to have a visible impact on UFS campuses which amounted to 31 000 students in 2010, and increasing to around 37 000 students in 2016 (UFS 2010–2017). The argument of cost being the basis for criticism therefore needs rethinking.

Investigation into ‘programme failure’ might on the other hand provide a more productive frame for an understanding of the prevailing perceptions, amongst both students and staff. Over the past few years, attempts have been made by the author to understand why a majority of students and staff have negative opinions about the F1 programme and what ‘programme failure’ means for these constituencies. Particular tropes of meaning were to emerge, with these seldom being disrupted or able to be disrupted. Key sentiments expressed by various student communities included the understanding that the F1 programme created ‘false or illegitimate student leaders’, that the F1 was simply a ‘free holiday overseas’, that it created an ‘anti-African culture of individualism on campus’ and that it ‘had done nothing



in terms of transformation'. Key sentiments expressed by various staff communities would include the fact that the programme 'should not have focused on first-year students but rather on post-graduate students', or that 'the very expensive programme effected no change at the university'.

In late 2016, at an event to officially close the F1 programme, and upon hearing of the partnerships established and also of the various testimonies of students who had participated in the programme over its six years of existence, a member of the leadership of the university instead proposed the reshaping of the programme. As they promoted, the programme should be reconfigured given its value in terms of personal and institutional transformation. In a subsequent meeting in early 2017 and which included other members from leadership and also management from key research and development units of the UFS, this proposal was however met with considerable negativity. Although not articulating it, the sentiment of the F1 programme having failed was again intangibly promoted. However, despite this reaction, the uptake of the initial motivation for the programme to be reconfigured and resourced externally was continued given the interest shown by the global partners. As identified, the first step in this would be to prove the impact of the programme given that no comprehensive longitudinal report on the programme had seemingly been undertaken.

Impact evaluations rely on the following: firstly, that a clear directive in terms of what is being measured is provided; and secondly, that the necessary qualitative and quantitative data for measurement are available or can be developed.

The directive for the study, under the Department of Student Affairs, was developed as (UFS F1L4C 2010–2016):

The aim is to understand, measure and document the impact the programme had on participating staff and students, their learning communities and the overall transformation process at the institution over the identified period of time. The evidence of the programme value in terms of embracing diversity and promoting social cohesion at the University of the Free State (UFS) needs to be captured.

This will enable us to motivate for further programmes dealing with issues of diversity, social cohesion and transformation as part of student life/leadership at the UFS. (n.p.)

As was to come to light, in the case of the F1 programme – data documenting the various years of the programme in terms of initial programme fundraising and marketing materials, student profiles, documentation and evaluations of the learning processes pre-and post-travels and also tracking of these students into university governed or statutory leadership positions were largely available (UFS F1L4C 2010–2016). Aligned to this was documentation with regard to the GLS and which included the themes and topics from the GLS iterations in 2012 and 2015, learning programmes, evaluations and so forth. Further identification and sourcing of the various studies conducted on or around the F1 and the GLS by the UFS and also by global partners was also undertaken. To align the study longitudinally, further qualitative data were also collected from the various groups of students who had participated in the programme over the period 2010 to 2015–2016.

From the above data, it was possible to provide evidence that the F1 programme and its later version, the GLS, had fostered and created significant partnerships and interest from various international HEIs and research bodies across three continents (Asia, Europe and the USA), and as such, the programme could be said to have contributed towards the higher education transformation marker of ‘internationalisation’. Further, that this internationalisation had resulted in knowledge development both from a pedagogical perspective and which included Global Education as well as High Impact Educational Practices and also from a societal transformation perspective in terms of social justice, citizenship, diversity, democracy and leadership. Again, the programme could be said to have contributed towards the higher education transformation marker of curriculum development in the frame of ‘Democratic Knowledge Development’. The data research also provided evidence that it had personally transformed the students who had participated in the programme

and had created a particular set of Graduate Attribute Outcomes which met with what the UFS had at that time of the programme projected in terms of student transformation, and which also aligned into the post-2017 'new-era' of UFS transformation objectives for 'Graduate Attribute Development' (UFS 2018). Data were also able to provide evidence that a diverse range of students who had participated in the F1 programme had entered student governance positions in the university, whether in the form of residence committee members or as members of the SRC or in student associations and that as a result, student governance had become more diverse. This was another of the transformation markers which could be proven as successful.

While a book (Bryson 2014) and possibly some media articles written on the programme attempted to provide an understanding of the programme in terms of the 'embrace of diversity', 'racial integration', 'transformation' and/or 'social cohesion'; other academic articles and even Jansen's book (2016) showed how challenging it was to design, measure, implement and sustain these elements in complex and highly plural environments. Rather, what these two types of findings highlighted was the constant contradictory frame in which the F1 programme in particular exists in the imaginary of the UFS and its publics. Few or none of the other 'successes' the F1 impact study was able to bring forward and which were based on the programme data, could provide acceptable grounds from which to buffer the negative perceptions that students, management and staff had of the programme. This ongoing negativity around the F1 programme in particular continued to worry the author, who was also involved in the research for the impact study. Even when the transformation successes of the programme were mentioned to the various constituencies, the negative thinking and perceptions about the programme at the UFS were not disrupted. Something far deeper remained at play.

Continued reflection into the programme eventually provided the following insight: The data provided for the proposed

F1 Impact Evaluation had been collected by the Office for Student Leadership Development – the Student Affairs office under which the programme had been located and managed from around 2012 onwards. This office however had not been the intended office or the intended sole driver for the programme when it had been conceptualised. The F1 programme had rather been conceptualised as an integrated project, and which would involve a number of different offices collaborating and driving the programme forward at different levels (UFS F1L4C 2010–2016 and Review of Existing Co-Curricular Programmes at the UFS 2012). This included the VC’s Office (project conceptualisation and project champion), the Office for Internationalisation (international relationship building and student travel management), the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs (programme coordination), Marketing and also Strategic Marketing (branding and strategic communications, specifically to address the negative branding of the UFS post the Reitz incident). As the programme concept took shape, additional UFS partners were also brought on board and included the IRSJ (Research, Scholarly Development and Institutional Support in terms of integrating F1 students into the Institute for further development), the Centre for Trauma, Forgiveness and Reconciliation Studies (Research and Scholarly Development) and the Centre for Higher Education and Capabilities Research (Research, Scholar Development and Academic Programme Development).

Owing to what seemed to be the breakdown of the various working relationships aligned to the programme, the subsequent and eventual sole driving of the project from the Office for Student Leadership Development and the consequent marketing of the F1 programme from around 2014 (UFS 2015) as a ‘student leadership development programme’ (as in, student governance); the first instance of the programme’s conflation, both for the student communities and also for the staff and management constituencies became clearer to the author. The F1 programme, an intended institutional culture change programme within the

framework of Higher Education Transformation, had somewhere around 2012–2013, become dislocated from its original objectives with a range of consequences to shape its recognition and misrecognitions within the UFS space moving forward.

The programme was initially conceptualised as part of the UFS transformation process of the period post the Reitz incident, and with emphasis being placed on the development of UFS students as future leaders who were able to embrace and lead transformation and democratisation ideas both at the institution and in society (UFS 2009). At the student political level, however, the F1 programme objectives were to become conflated into the programme having been established to compete against or replace student governance leadership, with the resultant battles around power, legitimacy and control over transformation further entering this discourse. As research would show, this kind of discourse was not restricted to the UFS. Much of this kind of conflation was and continues to be interwoven into ‘stakeholderisation’, a phenomenon as had been on the rise as part of the government’s emphasis on ‘Co-operative Governance’ since the 2000s (Council for Higher Education [CHE] 2016:128–129).

At the management and institutional level, and given what seems to have been either a lack of knowledge or confusion about the programme in terms of Institutional Culture and Higher Education Transformation, or alternately the need to control the programme and its knowledge for performance measurement purposes, or alternately, the need to not directly communicate the programme in a framework of transformation given a fractured and highly volatile institutional-level system still reeling post the Reitz video rejection of transformation (Van der Merwe & Van Reenen 2016), the programme ended up having little contextual meaning or shared objectives for implementation. At the leadership level, the programme was either promoted and reported on as a key strategic intervention of the UFS in terms of the Academic and Human Projects (the UFS terminology for a transformation ‘strategy’ for the period 2012–2016) or alternately, rejected based on perceptions of programme failure when

evaluated against a different understanding of the needs and demands of higher education transformation.

Continued analysis of these conflated and often contradictory issues highlighted their resonance against the governance, leadership and management interpretive framework of higher education transformation, as more recently succinctly articulated by Lange and Luescher-Mamashela (2016). In this framework, these three interconnected issues play a critical role in supporting and driving transformation, or in blocking, reshaping and diverting transformation. This interpretive framework is therefore adopted as the most productive lens for the analysis of the F1 programme for this chapter, as part of this particular book project. As I hope to show in the space limitations of this chapter, the perceived ‘failure’ of the F1 programme rests in and across a complex matrix of transformation and institutional culture touch points, with many of these still evident today at the UFS and as a result, possibly also informing the negativity against other transformation programmes developed and implemented over the same period of 2010 to 2016. Equally worrying is the possibility that these touch points are also able to negatively influence new transformation and institutional culture programmes moving forward.

## ■ **Concept definitions: Governance, leadership and management in university transformation**

Lange et al.’s analysis of higher education transformation forms part of the CHE review of higher education in South Africa, over the period of 1994 to 2014 (Lange et al. in CHE 2016). Against the review’s broader objectives of evaluating and analysing higher education policy and its implementations and challenges over these two decades, the authors put all focus on the relationship between policy and governance, and how this has played itself out at the system and the institutional level. Through this focus, the identification and meaning of concepts including governance,

leadership and management are problematised and identified as interconnected and as influential in terms of transformation and institutional culture.

For Lange et al. (2016:105) policy cannot be disconnected from governance, as it is through the implementation of policy by governance that the transformation of higher education was to be effected. Governance in turn is defined as ‘the formal and informal ways of regulating higher education involving interactions between various role-players at system and institutional levels of higher education’ (2016:108). Further, as articulated by Lange et al. (2016):

[G]overnance is conceptually distinct from leadership and from management. Leadership is concerned with establishing and promoting the direction of the system or individual institutions of higher education and the formulation of priorities, policy and strategy in relation to established rules. Management, on the other hand, refers to the implementation of these policies and related goals and objectives. (p. 108)

System-level governance is described as including the key role-players involved in higher education governance, and includes government, the Ministry and the DHET and other ministries involved in aspects of higher education; sector-specific intermediary bodies such as the CHE and its Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), public and private institutions, certain non-governmental organisations including research centres and think tanks and representative stakeholder bodies such as Higher Education South Africa (representing VCs from all universities); national student formations such as the South African Students’ Congress (SASCO); and trade unions of non-academic staff (Lange et al. 2016:109).

Institutional-level governance is described as comprising an institution’s council, senate, SRC and the office of the VC or principal. However, as Lange et al. (2016:111) caution, institutional-level governance is also shaped and affected by the institution’s history, traditions and culture and to what extent the government-led regional and local development ‘plays a role in enabling, or otherwise, institutional development and governance issues’.

As argued, transformation policy is driven from the government and is framed by the principles and objectives of the Constitution. The other role-players within system-level governance form part of the state and contribute towards the development of the state and as such the democratisation and transformation of society. A clear distinction is made by Lange et al. (2016:108–109) that government must not be conflated with an understanding of it ‘being the state’; rather, the government and all role-players form the state.

Three distinct periods of higher education transformation policy are also identified. The first period ranges from 1994 until 2000 and has previously been articulated as a ‘symbolic’ period (CHE 2004). Lange et al. (2016:115) affirm this description, defining it as the period of ‘political consensus and democratisation’. As policy implementation in HEIs however was read by the ministry as not being implemented or responded to sufficiently by institutions of higher education, so two subsequent periods of higher education transformation policy and action seem to have taken shape. From the period following the publishing of the National Plan for higher education in 2001 and up until the 2008 UFS Reitz Video incident, this period is referred to as the ‘the rise of the evaluative state and managerialism’ (CHE 2004:117). In this period, the government placed emphasis on evaluating how institutions were implementing transformation policy, which included the complexities of various institutional mergers. Further, where larger crises were taking place within institutions as a result of merger challenges or alternately, as a result of older historical inefficiencies or challenges around governance, finances and so forth – the ministry, through new policy, installed administrators over and above institutional-level governance. The resultant discourses around institutional autonomy, academic freedom and so forth, subsequently also formed part of this period.

The more recent period described by Lange et al. refers to the period from 2009 to 2014, which was shaped by an increased focus of government evaluation and also on conceptualisations of what higher education’s mandate to society was through the introduction of additional policies. These include, for example the ‘Policy



Framework for the Realisation of Social Inclusion in the Post-School Education and Training System’ (DHET 2015). This period kicked off with the recommendations from the Ministerial Commission set up to investigate racism and discrimination post the UFS Reitz Video of 2008. In this video, four white Afrikaans-speaking male students visualise their rejection of the university’s policy on racial integration in residences by humiliating black workers, and as such, their rejection of the university’s and society’s broader transformation processes. Although never intended for a viewing audience beyond that of the residence for which it was made, once this video was leaked it went on to cause significant uproar in the public domain, both in South Africa, and internationally, creating a period of intense public scrutiny as well as critical internal reflection for the UFS.

Through their analysis of how institutional-level governance implemented transformation policy over the three periods, Lange et al. propose that higher education transformation is shaped and driven at system-level governance and at institutional-level governance; however, that each level has its own dynamics and characteristics in terms of transformation implementation, as reflected in Table 5.1, which is drawn from Lange et al. (2016:112). This finding is corroborated by previous research and which would include that of the 2007 CHE Review of the higher education system in South Africa, amongst others. The value in this analytical frame is that, as higher education transformation scholars such as Lange et al. (2016) and Jansen et al. (2007) had promoted, transformation

**TABLE 5.1:** Periodisation of governance, leadership and management.

<b>Periodisation</b>	<b>System level characteristics</b>	<b>Institution level characteristics</b>
1994-2000	Political consensus, implementation vacuum and the setting up of government	Democratisation and the unfolding of institutional governance
2001-2009	Policy contestation, state steering and the rise of the ‘evaluative state’	Assimilating steering mechanisms: Merger governance, the rise of managerialism and post-managerialism
2009-2014	State managerialism and the question of democratic accountability	Managing identity and institutional crises: Towards knowledge-based management?

Source: Adapted from Lange et al. (2016).

needed to be understood not in broad brushstrokes of the sector but also in relation to how different institutions responded to, interpreted and implemented transformation based on amongst others, their context, their governance, their institutional culture and so forth.

## ■ The failure of transformation

The ‘crisis of transformation’ which the 2008 Reitz video incident represented was not limited to the undemocratic-racist thinking and action of the four students only but comprised a range of governance levels and constituencies, all of whom could be argued as having failed to adopt, integrate and implement the broader transformation project of South Africa and of higher education. This understanding is seldom reflected in public discourse, however. Rather, as the media and the public (after Habermas) usually framed the event and reactions to it, the initial heinous event should only be viewed in terms of racism and could only be attributed to the four perpetrators.

As the parliamentary oversight committee was to identify on their site visit to the UFS from 16 to 17 March 2008, barely a month after the Reitz video was first leaked to the public, the university was racially deeply divided at and across structural and systemic levels. Black and white students attended different classes based on language and also lived in separate residences. Racial divisions between students were also being unduly influenced by student organisations, which were extensions of external political parties; the system-level governance as well as institutional-level governance was also racially divided, but as the parliamentary report inadvertently shows, stakeholders within these governance levels shouldered no responsibility, instead blamed the leadership and management of the UFS for the ‘failed UFS transformation project’. Criticisms laid against the university’s management of the transformation process stated that the transformation planning and implementation process was slow and ineffectual, that it was driven by untransformed [inferring white] leadership and governance structures and that racism

featured as the major underlying system error. System-level governance input into the oversight committee visit included submissions from the unions, Universiteit van die Vrystaat Personeelunie and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union. Institutional-level governing input included submissions made by leadership (members of Rectorate), the SRC and student associations, who in turn represented the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) and the Freedom Front Plus (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2008).

In the immediate period post the leaking of the Reitz video into the public domain, the UFS council and leadership, under severe system-level pressure and strain as a result of the public uproar the video had created both in South Africa and internationally, attempted to implement procedures aimed at damage control and also at transformation management. Amongst these were the closing of the Reitz Residence, the appointment of different external consultants (some to assist the university in repairing its damaged reputation and others to assist the university in designing programmes for racial integration in the transformation framework [UFS 2008]). By October 2008, the national commission which had been set up by then incumbent Minister of Education in response to the Reitz video and, whose mandate was to review the lack of transformation in universities in terms of racism and discrimination, was to publish its report. Titled, 'Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions', or what would come to be colloquially referred to as the 'Soudien Report',<sup>5</sup> the report provided evidence from submissions and consultations across South Africa that racism and discrimination were prevalent across the entire South African higher education sector, and not just at the UFS. Transformation was again problematised with institutional culture. Further, it provided for what would come to be termed as government-led managerial interventions into how

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5. Named after Professor Crain Soudien, who served as the Chair on this project.

these issues should be addressed in institutions of higher education. These recommendations were to be taken up from 2010 following the appointment of the new Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, and would include the setting up of the Transformation Oversight Committee, a structure which would report directly to the minister on whether and how institutions were implementing transformation and where there were deficiencies calling for government intervention.

## ■ Leadership in transformation

In September 2008, the then VC and Rector of the UFS, Professor Frederik Fourie resigned, citing his inability to deal with the stress brought on by years of managing the transformation process at the university. The first sign of the breakdown at institutional-level governance in the post-Reitz crisis was evident when in his published statement, the following was stated (UFS 2008):

The challenges and complexities of continuous change management at a higher education institution, and specifically the demands of further dynamic development and transformation at the UFS, demand enormous amounts of emotional energy and drive. For me the stress due to, especially, the political divisions and tensions in the UFS Council and the broader university community during the past year has been extremely draining. The broader institution and its people also show signs of trauma. (n.p.)

On 01 July 2009, Professor Jonathan Jansen, a renowned South African educationist was appointed as the new VC of the university. At this time, the outcry over the Reitz video and the issues of racism at the UFS and in the broader South African society were still ongoing in the public domain, although at differing levels of intensity compared to that of 2008. Indicating that he would first spend time 'listening' to the situation at the UFS before laying out his vision and plans, on 16 October 2009, the newly appointed VC and Rector of the UFS presented his Inaugural Lecture in Bloemfontein (UFS 2009). In this lecture, Jansen presented what in retrospect could be termed a highly

complex take on how the UFS would tackle transformation and institutional culture. However, at that time and given the related controversial decisions seemingly taken unilaterally by Jansen on the 'Reitz Four', it could not be read outside of the Reitz video and the 'Racism' frame of meaning and reference by the various publics, stakeholders and role-players.

Employing the concepts of 'Reconciliation' and 'Shared Complicities', what Jansen was promoting, when read through the higher education transformation lens, can essentially be articulated as the university's role in societal change and development and, the responsibility of all citizens in taking ownership of this process. In relation to the UFS, this would infer the need to utilise the Reitz incident to address the unjust past of the institution and of South Africa, to find ways of re-humanising all South Africans and societies with similar histories, and to understand that it was as a result of the failure of all governance levels, all stakeholders and all role-players at the UFS, in the education system and in society – that an event such as that recorded in the Reitz video could have taken place. These signifying concepts of 'Reconciliation' and 'Shared Complicity' were in turn drawing from the first symbolic phase of higher education transformation and through which 'transformation' as a concept would continue to take shape. At the Higher Education Summit hosted by the DHET in 2015, the conceptual roots of 'Transformation', as linked to the Constitution, were still evident (USAf, cited in DHET 2015):

Higher Education Transformation takes place within and in line with the transformation of the entire education and training system and especially the post-school system. It also takes place within the larger project to transform South Africa as articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP) and other policy documents of the South African government. These documents are taken into account in the White Paper. The term 'transformation', refers to a profound and radical change. In South Africa as a whole it refers to such change from the apartheid system to the type of democratic and equitable society that is envisaged in the Constitution. Transformation in South Africa refers to radical changes in all aspects of life, including the

political system, the law, the economy, housing, internal relations, healthcare, education, and so on. In higher education, principles that guide transformation are largely contained in the 1997 White Paper, A Programme for Higher Education Transformation (also known as White Paper 3) and the 2013 White Paper on Post-School Education and Training. These principles include the building [of] a non-racial, non-sexist higher education system with redress for previously disadvantaged groups; expanding access to higher education; community engagement; adherence to the inter-linked concepts of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability; and responsiveness to the needs of society, the economy and of individual students; linking education and work. (p. 3)

Having been previously called on, together with other scholars, to provide input into the various 'Think Tank' initiatives established by the UFS in the wake of the Reitz video (UFS 2008), Jansen would have had significant access to, as well as insight into, both the system-level as well as institutional-level governance challenges the UFS had faced and would still face in terms of transformation. Since South Africa's move into the transformation space in the 1990s, Jansen had come to occupy a respected voice within the research and critiquing of higher education transformation, often providing sharp and independent analyses into challenging issues being faced by the sector, and often, on the challenges which were being created through the increasingly evaluative and managerial systems-level of governance. Education as a force for social change, and as a force that was respectful but autonomous from government control, seemed to inform much of his position on the sector. As South Africa's political and government reality however underwent significant re-alignment post the 2007 African National Congress (ANC) Polokwane Conference, this position would also create many of his vulnerabilities.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, it may perhaps have been the insight he already had into the UFS transformation challenges across both levels of governance as well as across leadership, management and surrounding communities. Alternately, it may have been the reactions which erupted

following his October 2009 inaugural lecture and which again highlighted the deep pain which South Africa's past had resulted in and which seemed irreconcilable. Whichever it was, the new phase which was to be ushered in under his leadership was never referred to as 'Transformation' per se. Rather, as would be published only in May 2012, the UFS would operate under a 'Strategic Plan' for the period 2012 to 2016 (UFS 2012). This plan would continue to bring about initiatives of change (UFS 2012:12) while also promoting and developing the university's uncompromisingly high academic standards 'with the openness to confront and tackle deep social issues' (UFS 2012:3). Through, and/or, in alignment with this framework, the university would address issues of transformation identified as relating to equity and access (in terms of race, gender and disability); prejudice (homophobia, xenophobia and ethnicism); representations in institutional governance would be made more reflective of the institution's demographics; symbols of the university would be transformed; the campus would be democratised and de-racialised and a deep culture of intellectual diversity would be established (UFS 2012:16-18).

This strategic plan emerged close on three years into his appointment, reflecting not only what was still to come, but largely, what had also been put in place and tested over the first few years of tenure. As articulated in the plan (UFS 2012):

The change of the last two years has been undertaken without a formal strategic plan. Strategic plans often lag real change and for good reason. The process of change generates many initiatives, some more successful and some less. In a dynamic environment, the balance between creativity and formal planning, and between providing a direction and freezing in a path, must be chosen carefully. (p. 4)

Confirming the UFS as a dynamic space in which difficult social issues would be confronted, studied and tested without 'shame' should they be put under the 'academic microscope', the key driving areas underpinning the Strategic Plan for the 2012-2016 period were identified as the Academic and Human Projects (UFS 2012:3). Five core values were identified to steer the

aforementioned projects. These included ‘Superior Scholarship’, ‘Human Embrace’, ‘Institutional Distinctiveness’, ‘Emergent Leadership’ and ‘Public Service’ (UFS 2012:11-12).

Through the ‘Academic Project’, areas of higher education transformation which relate to the first and second period (as in CHE 2004; Lange et al. 2016; National Commission on Higher Education 1996 and referring to equity, access, responsiveness amongst others) were identified for continuation. These would include student performance (graduate throughput, tuition quality and improved teaching practices); improved academic performance (academic development, tenure, research and publishing) and; academic distinction (scholarly and intellectual development; research chairs). Under the sub-title of ‘Campus Academic Culture’, focus was placed on the development of an academic environment of thinking and debate through which future leaders would be produced. Under this, initiatives such as the IRSJ, the F1 programme and what would become termed UFS101<sup>6</sup> were identified in terms of the role they would play academically (UFS 2012:19-31). Aligned to this, an intellectual culture was further outlined for development, with focus being placed on past and current initiatives working towards (UFS 2012):

[7]he creation of a space which addresses important issues percolating in the broader society and in this way builds cultures of tolerance, debate, and the value of rational and deliberate thought across the student body and within the community of staff. (p. 31)

The Human Project on the other hand would as the strategic plan identified, focus on four clusters and would include: confronting prejudice (building new residences and building cultures of social integration in residences; student anti-prejudice and leadership programmes including how this would for example be implemented through the programme termed, ‘Gateway College’; integration initiatives including activities like visiting scholars, debates, the eradication of initiation and discriminatory practices;

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6. A core curriculum set of modules which all UFS students have to pass in order to achieve their qualifications from the UFS.



international exchange programmes as well as student governance leadership programmes and the establishment of the IRSJ). The second cluster of the Human Project related to the ‘culture of inclusion’ (UFS101 as the core curriculum for all UFS students; developing multilingualism and the F1 programme or study abroad programme). The third cluster referred to ‘equity, openness and access’ (staff diversity, democratisation of access to leaders; raising Qwaqwa campus’s equity profile as against that of the Bloemfontein campuses while also revitalising its infrastructure). The last cluster referred to ‘community service and engagement’ (the university–school partnership project and the ‘No Student Hungry’ [NSH] programme) (UFS 2012:32–41).

For scholars and practitioners of higher education transformation, members of governance and the public skilled in deciphering plans like these, the UFS Strategic Plan could be identified as a highly complex yet innovative and do-able approach to institutional culture change as well as higher education transformation. Instead of a plan seeking to ‘tick-box’ measurement areas as stand-alone indices of transformation, what this strategic plan offered was a human-centred, knowledge-seeking-knowledge-generating, integrated and sensitive approach to not only addressing the needs of the UFS and its constituencies, but also those of its immediate communities of the Free State Province, as well as broader society. Unfortunately, by the time of the publishing of this strategic plan, certain negative events, perceptions and blockages in relation to the successful implementation of related programmes like the F1 were already embedded and continued to find traction within the fabric of the UFS.

## ■ **‘Stakeholderisation’ in the governance of transformation processes**

In reviewing the second and third periods of higher education transformation, Lange et al. (2016:123–125) raise the question of how the phenomenon of ‘Stakeholderisation’ within the higher

education space finds growth in the second period, as various consultation breakdowns at institutional-level governance levels take place. Parallel to these consultative breakdowns between institutions and role-players, is an increase in consultations from the ministry and presidency with the same role-players, and in particular unions and students. As evidenced through the analysis of the CHE's HEQC as well as ministerial-appointed assessors reports from 2010 or the third period show, governance at institutional-level from the second period already shows increasing challenges including that of councils failing to fulfil their fiduciary duties, factionalism at the council level and academic corruption through to weak or dysfunctional senates. However, as raised by Lange et al. (2016:127), the most prevalent concern was 'the undue influence of student politics in governance structures'. As these authors further point out, 'Unions, students, and in some institutions convocations, sitting in council seem to be unable to understand that their role is not that of stakeholder representatives' (Lange et al. 2016:129).

The most prolific voices of outrage against the Reitz video and later against Jansen's fateful decisions had been those of the ANC, the ANCYL, the aligned SASCO and unions. The outrage expressed by the public, by political parties and by unions against the Reitz video was justified and did reflect an important turning point in terms of publicly raising consciousness around the racism that many black students, staff and management had previously spoken of as taking place at the UFS.

The reactions to some of the transformation context and events taking place from 2009 onwards, however, also need to be read from the 'stakeholderisation' lens. One of the earlier instances showing the influence that government-led regional and local development would cast in challenging the institutional change and transformation process at the UFS (Lange et al. 2016:111), was in January 2009, as the interview and selection processes with regards to the new VC for the UFS were underway. In a document titled, 'ANC Free State's position statement', the ANC names the short-listed candidates, alleging that the UFS

had not done enough to attract ‘progressive candidates’ (*News24 Archives 2009a*). In statements provided by the Free State ANC spokesperson, Teboho Sikisi on the document and on the ‘failed commitment’ of the university to transformation (*News24 Archives 2009a*):

[7]he university, with the backing of its racist council, used some treacherous and apartheid style delaying tactics to derail the process of transformation’; ‘... the university was still seen to continue nurturing and propagating aspects of anti-transformation’; ‘... the push for a black rector was not about tokenism ... [*but the university needed*] a candidate who would be brave and courageous enough to deal with the demon of racism’; ‘He (the new rector) will help save this country and will contribute immensely towards the production of an army of progressive intelligentsia’. (n.p.)

On 02 June 2009, again reflecting the ongoing political churn following the ANC Polokwane Conference of 2007, SASCO called for the suspension of the Unisa VC, Professor Barney Pityana for his ‘failing to give “strategic” leadership and to transform the university’ and ‘not because he is a COPE member’.<sup>7</sup> This followed a meeting between Pityana and SASCO two weeks previously, where Pityana refused to step down. Unisa went on to refute SASCO’s allegations that the council had agreed with SASCO that Pityana was not performing. SASCO further called on the new minister, Dr Blade Nzimande to take action against ‘racist’ universities like the UFS, Rhodes University, University of Pretoria and UCT while calls were issued for President Jacob Zuma to deliver on the ANC’s commitment of free education (Modisha 2009). The full scope of this national stakeholderisation was yet to come, coalescing from 2014 onwards.

On 02 July 2009, another newspaper article under the headline ‘Jansen: Free State University “not ANC property”’ appeared. This article was in response to a statement made by an ANC

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7. COPE, or Congress of the People, was a political party established by ex-ANC members who had left the ANC following the 2007 Polokwane Conference.

member of parliament to the Free State Legislature in July 2009 and which inferred that if transformation at the UFS did not 'proceed according to its [ANC] wishes', then the ANC would intervene. The statement further read, '[t]he UFS is a national asset and not the exclusive property of a group of South Africans who are unwilling to transform and adapt to a democratic South Africa'. Jansen's response indicated that he regarded all political parties as being in the group of stakeholders, but that he would not be ' beholden to them' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009a).

Shortly after the leaking of the Reitz video into the public domain in 2008, the ANC, SASCO and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) had issued various statements and threats against the UFS. Over the month of March 2008, these would inter alia include: that the ANC would intervene at a political level in UFS management to ensure that protest marches which the UFS had obtained interdicts against could go ahead<sup>8</sup> (*News24 Archives* 2008a); SASCO rejected the university's public apology for the racist incident (a full page apology printed in the *Sunday Times* in March 2008) and instead called for the resignation of the Minister of Education at the time, Naledi Pandor (*News24 Archives* 2008b); COSATU called for the dismissal of the UFS management, as well as that of the Rector, given their alleged support of racism (*News24 Archives* 2008d) and SASCO also called for the dismissal of the UFS council as well as the dean of student services, citing that they blocked transformation (*News24 Archives* 2008c). Evidence of the conceptual link between racism and transformation being intrinsically tied into each other at the UFS and in political discourse, and therefore requiring a particular form of denouncement from 'stakeholders' across both levels of governance, was clear. What remained unclear was what transformation and governance entailed, at the system-level and at the institutional level.

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8. The UFS leadership had sought interdicts against all protests given that the campus had been turned into a war zone following the leaking of the Reitz Video.

## ■ Power and control over reconciliation and transformation

Jansen's personal decision to 'forgive the Reitz Four' on behalf of the workers and the university in October 2009 would set 'stakeholderisation' off again, this time providing the framework through which the challenges around what transformation and governance meant, at societal and at institution-levels, would be foregrounded. On 03 September 2009, approximately six weeks before the inaugural lecture of Jansen as the new VC, a newspaper article appeared with the headline, 'Time to move UFS out of racial shadow, says Jansen' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009b). In this article, Jansen states his belief that South Africans needed to move away from accusing each other, with reference to the Reitz incident, and rather seek to move forward and 'get together'. He further went on to state that the UFS would (*Mail & Guardian* 2009b):

[S]oon be the place that would show South Africa and the world how to reconcile ... We're planning to re-brand the university so that South Africa and the rest of the world do not look at us through the vents of race but through vents of reconciliation and forgiveness. (n.p.)

From 2004 onwards, a series of articles had been published by James L. Gibson, a distinguished visiting research scholar at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, focusing on whether the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) had achieved its objectives and on whether the concepts of 'Truth' and 'Reconciliation' had been utilised or accepted or rejected by South Africans, post the TRC. Underpinning the various articles, which would run from 2004 until approximately 2009, would be an intensive empirical project with data collected from a representative sample of the South African population, and which had started in 2001 following the publication of the TRC findings. Key findings articulated across the various articles were that the truth-finding process of the TRC had contributed to some forms of reconciliation amongst some groups only. As pointed out by Gibson (2004), and using racial group descriptors employed at

that time by international scholars, 'Africans – not very reconciled; whites – somewhat reconciled; coloured South Africans – somewhat reconciled; and South Africans of Asian origin – somewhat reconciled'. This 2004 article goes on to say (Gibson 2004):

[U]sing a means score summarising all four sub-dimensions of reconciliation, coloured South Africans are most reconciled, followed by whites, then South Africans of Asian origin, and finally Africans. After categorising that mean, I find the following percentages of each group are at least somewhat reconciled: 33 percent for Africans, 56 percent for whites, 59 percent for coloured people, and 48 percent for those of Asian origin ... thus, whites, coloured people, and those of Asian origin hold similar, moderately reconciled views, but Africans are significantly less reconciled. In terms of the various ethnic/linguistic groups, the most reconciled are English-speaking coloured people (75 percent), followed by English-speaking whites (64 percent). The least reconciled South Africans are North Sotho speaking blacks (17 percent). Thus, enormous variability exists in levels of reconciliation across the various groups. (p. 138)

Although Jansen's intention more than likely was – through an understanding of the role of a university in society – to create the space for all at the university and in society to accept complicity in having enabled the conditions underpinning the Reitz video and thus develop from this, the use of the term 'Reconciliation', and a subsequent interpretation and conflation of reconciliation into his 'forgiveness' decision, destroyed this educational modality. As immediate as the public's reaction was to the Reitz video after its leaking in 2008, so too was the reaction to the inaugural speech and to the concepts promoted therein. First off the block in public response was the ANC, who rejected Jansen's decision to drop the disciplinary charges against the Reitz Four students indicating that this decision would 'harden racial attitudes not only in the university but in the country broadly' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009c). When asked for comments on Jansen's decision, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) indicated that it would not affect the criminal case against the accused (*Mail & Guardian* 2009c).

As was to be expected, the NPA statement would be downplayed and instead the media would seek comment from Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, given the employment of the terms, 'Reconciliation' and 'Forgiveness' in the lecture and hence by association, the TRC. Tutu no doubt supported Jansen's decision (*Mail & Guardian* 2009d); however, the conflation of the TRC and the university space had begun.<sup>9</sup> On 19 and 20 October 2009, two articles from respected journalists and editors at the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper were also to appear. In the first of the articles on 19 October 2009, while calling out the language that the UFS had started employing in their re-branding and which ultimately, as the journalist argued, linked into the limited notions of racism and reconciliation that South Africans had, it also called out many of the race and reconciliation-linked comments made on the lecture by the ANC and unions. Critical insight into what Jansen had possibly been attempting from an educational pedagogy however did find some articulation in the article (Pillay 2009). This insight however was to be disrupted when another article in the same newspaper appeared the following day and which, rather than contextualising the lecture into an educational perspective, strengthened its misinterpretation within a TRC perspective (Roper 2009).

On 20 October 2009, another article in the same newspaper was also published, this time providing Jansen's clarification of the decision. As explained (*Mail & Guardian* 2009g):

There are three processes under way, and they must not be confused ... the criminal charges by the Directorate of Special Prosecutions in the province, and the human rights charges by the Human Rights Commission were still under way. The university simply withdrew its own complaint against the students, insofar as university processes are concerned ... . (n.p.)

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9. This conflation was also to find further resonance in the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall moments from 2015 onwards. See also Centre for Higher Education Trust (CHET) (2016) - The Third Force in South African higher Education Activism.

In explaining the university decision further, Jansen (*Mail & Guardian* 2009f) stated that the decision was based on two 'things':

The institution's own accountability for what happened, and creating the conditions under which racism and racist attacks were even possible on the campus ... the institution's desire to create the conditions for racial reconciliation on a deeply divided campus, and in doing so to accelerate the chances of transformation at the UFS. (n.p.)

On 21 October 2009, an article that had previously appeared in another newspaper on 20 October 2009, re-appears in the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper, this time based on the alleged unhappiness of one of the Reitz video workers on Jansen's decision (*Mail & Guardian* 2009h). On the same day, another article in the *Mail & Guardian* appears this time focusing on a statement by the ministry for higher education and in which it says Jansen must suspend his decision pending further consultation in the institution and nationally and, that the minister should be advised on what actions would then be taken given that (*Mail & Guardian* 2009i):

Contrary to public assertions by Professor Jansen, neither the minister nor any member of his staff was consulted nor informed of the decision prior to the announcement last Friday. (n.p.)

Jansen responds on 22 October 2009 indicating that the Reitz Four had sent him a letter expressing their remorse for the incident and that he had appealed to them to approach the workers directly as well. The article further quotes Jansen as having said to a group of Bloemfontein businesspeople that it was important to show 'compassion' when people took responsibility for their actions (*Mail & Guardian* 2009k). On the same day, another article appears in the same newspaper, this time indicating that the government Cabinet was not pleased with Jansen's decision (*Mail & Guardian* 2009l):

The process that led to the dropping of the charges was flawed in that it did not follow the established norm of getting the perpetrators



to admit guilt, to apologise to the victims before any charges could be dropped and to initiate a reconciliation process ... the manner in which this matter was handled suggests that the rights of the perpetrators have been given preference over the dignity and rights of the victims. (n.p.)

A week later reports emerge that the Democratic Alliance had laid charges against the Free State leader of the ANCYL after he had reportedly stated that Jansen should be 'shot and killed because he is a racist' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009o). The next day another report emerges of Julius Malema, the ANCYL National Leader, who after having met with Jansen in Bloemfontein was reported as saying, 'Jansen is one of our own ... we cannot feed Jansen to the enemy'. Critically, Malema is also reported as saying, '... the ANCYL agreed with Jansen that a Truth and Reconciliation-like process should be instituted at the university' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009p).

Consultations into the matter of the Reitz decision had by that time already started at the Bloemfontein campus, with the UFS council chairperson now expressing the council's full support of Jansen's efforts to 'bring about reconciliation and transformation' (*Mail & Guardian* 2009n). This sentiment is supported by the university's alumni body on 29 October 2009 (*News24* Archives 2009b). Into this heady mix, the opinions of students of the Bloemfontein campus are also brought in.

In an article titled, 'Free State joins the new SA', a journalist engages students on the Bloemfontein campus on their take on the responses to Jansen's decision and so forth. While the incumbent SRC president of that time, who happened to be the first black president voted in at the UFS Bloemfontein campus is reported as stating that Jansen conceded that he should have involved the SRC in his decision, other black students seem more sage, indicating that while they knew of the invitation for consultation, 'We didn't think it would make a difference - this is the University of the Free State' (Macfarlane 2009). On 30 October 2009, an article is printed by *News24* with the headline, 'UFS "not safe" for Reitz 4'. Reporting on the opinion of students

that the lives of the Reitz video perpetrators may be in danger should they return to the campus, the article captures the following (*News24* 2009):

I really don't think it will be safe for them on campus ... people have become so carried away by the Reitz saga that they could possibly be hurt if they came back ... many people were willing to forgive the Reitz Four and to try and forget the whole business. But there were just as many people who wouldn't rest before the four were punished for the Reitz video ... we are already so polarised on campus and things can only get worse ... people had just started to forget the whole Reitz drama, now it is again a huge mess. (n.p.)

Without going further into the various polarising or polarised, conflated or contradictory discourses of the time, it suffices to say that by 11 November 2009, the ANC and its alliance partners (South African Communist Party and COSATU) had demanded that the minister of higher education immediately disband the then council and reconstitute it to reflect a 'transformed and democratic institution'. Further that the ministry also implements scrutiny of staff equity and that the 'ghosts of apartheid' be wiped out through a process which would be linked to a 'Racism Truth and Reconciliation' process under the leadership of the Human Rights Commission. (*News24* Archives 2009d). COSATU would follow this demand up by organising a march to the DHET offices in Bloemfontein on 19 November 2009, also calling for Jansen to go as 'he will never help us to transform that university' (*News24* Archives 2009e). On 23 November 2009, SASCO was reported as also demanding the 'complete overhaul of the University of the Free State council' (Monama 2009). Ownership and control of the transformation discourse was without a doubt critical to governance power and legitimacy.

## ■ 'First-Year Leadership for Change' programme

The F1 programme was launched in July 2010, amidst the deeply troubled context and surrounding discourses (Van der Merwe &

Van Reenen 2016) and within an environment in which racial integration in residences was still struggling, and which remained a deep transformation concern for leadership. In the months preceding its launch, media headlines such as 'A Campus at War', 'It's not a Black vs. White War' (Cloete 2008) and so forth, kept the interest of the public focused on the issue of racial confrontation and the implied audacity of employing the concept of reconciliation in addressing the racism challenges of the campus and in society. Little connection, beyond the article on 20 October 2009, to the possibility of reconciliation being utilised as a concept for scholarly and society exploration and development within the educational frame, was however forthcoming. To address this, part of the testing strategy of the F1 pilot programme was to focus on cognitively disrupting what a selected group of UFS first-year students knew about social integration by 'displacing' them into foreign environments in international universities in order that they could return with different visions on how to address the integration challenges at the university and in society as they progressed through their studies.<sup>10</sup> A further part of the strategy was to involve the media in this journey in order that their reporting would not only reflect alternate lenses into the UFS situation but possibly that they too would also come to experience the concept of a university's role in societal transformation differently.

The first group of students to travel under the F1 programme in September 2010 generated interest and media coverage, not only in South Africa, but internationally, at the various institutions the students visited and also at the highly respected and linked associate institutions (UFS 2010). In many ways, the initial phase of the programme was able to start shifting the previously

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10. First year students were identified as the focus for the F1 programme for a purpose. As the various institutional audits had shown since the early 2000s, the older generation of students were fixed in their ways, affording little opportunity for new thinking and practices. Up until the time of the Reitz Video, the 'culture' on the Bloemfontein campus was also largely centred on alcohol abuse, intimidation and violence, features which the older students in particular had the 'privilege' of enacting out on younger students. See also UFS 2009.

limited race and reconciliation frame of reference towards new discourse. Under an article published in December 2010 by the *Mail & Guardian* and titled, 'We too have a dream, say UFS students', the article, while referencing Martin Luther King's famous statement, also reports on how the travel programme had changed the students at personal cognitive levels, and how as they moved into their second year of studies, they would be involved in the mentoring of the next group of F1 students, the development of leadership programmes for these students and the running of volunteer programmes in residences and elsewhere on campus (Seekoei 2010). Much of this understanding however seemed to be based on official programme documents, which is understandable, given the programme's newness at that time.

This honeymoon phase of reporting from the *Mail & Guardian* however was not to last. In August 2010 and following the newly elected SRC's disruption of an inter-varsity sporting event between the UFS and the North-West University, Jansen disbanded the SRC and banned student political parties on campus, instead setting up a 'broad student transformation forum' (*IOL* 2011). This was to set off the ire of various political parties on and off campus, with the focus soon to turn to accusations that the F1 students were being groomed specifically as Jansen's '*impimpis*'<sup>11</sup> and they would not only take over student governance positions but also implement the rejected reconciliation project. It was at this point that the official discourse of rejection of the F1 programme amongst student constituencies of the UFS started, with rumours becoming fact over the following several years as the university leadership remained steadfast in its position on transformation. These perceptions of the programme as a result remain in student discourse to this day as 'fact'.

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11. A derogatory term used in South African politics initially to brand an individual as a 'sell-out'.

## ■ F1 programme management amidst conflation of transformation

Media reports on the F1 programme from the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper (who had been invited to participate in the 2010 and 2011 travel abroad phases) started veering back into a criticism disconnected from the reality of campus politics from 2011. In an article, published in the *Mail & Guardian* on 21 October 2011, the journalist writing the article raises her observation that despite the euphoria expressed by a large majority of the students to her in terms of their personal change and their commitment to change on campus, that many other students were afraid to express their doubts and vulnerabilities in terms of what was expected of them now that they were back on campus. Common to these doubting students were discourses of not being to 'conform to what the university expected of them' and questions about the types of leaders the programme was developing. This led to the journalist starting to question whether the programme was 'over-regulated' (John 2011). Important to clarify at this point is the fact that Jansen did not travel with the students, nor did he lead what were termed the 'pre-and-post-travel learning phases'. His role rather was that of programme champion, the raising of funds, partnership building and reporting of the programme to governance. The coordination of the programme was spread across various offices, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. Key to the day-to-day management of the programme with the students over the 2010 to 2012 period was the office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

In documentation provided by the Office for Student Leadership Development for the purposes of the proposed 'F1 Impact Evaluation' were various individual documents in relation to the projects students were meant to design and implement post their return, in addition to reports of student cohort mentors and so forth. From these documents, it becomes clear that there was a particular vision that had been set out for the programme and for the students in terms of 'student life' development, and

that when this vision was not being met, ideas were being rejected. In some mentor reports on the programme, fears of intimidation are mentioned should the mentor express their true thinking when asked to comment about aspects of the programme which they would recommend being changed. In documentation concerning the ideas students were putting forward in terms of projects for implementation on both the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses, internal office reports show a clear definition of what would be accepted and what would be rejected. In most instances of rejection, it was argued that the ideas did not fit into the objectives of the programme according to its thematic areas. Little evidence is however available of how these thematic areas were explained to the students in relation to project ideas. While it can be argued that the themes came out in the pre-travel learning programme dialogues, how the students would have interpreted these themes based on their experiences in another environment and hence gather inspiration, would be a different matter. More than anything, this gap shows the breakdown of the role of the staff mentors as well as institutional and partnership support at the UFS. This was possibly informed and shaped by the intense pressure that the Department of Student Affairs and the VC may have experienced in showing programme delivery against the negative discourses which were in existence at the UFS, and possibly as a result of differing ideological visions with regard to transformation, politics and pedagogies within the institution. Considerable dissatisfaction and frustration on the part of the student cohorts however also started to emerge as a result. In some ways, this also enabled these students to break out of the confines of F1 projects, into establishing their own initiatives, many of which became highly successful and impactful on the campus.

An area which would have no positive outcome however was the ever-present discourse of programme contestation and rejection from student political parties, to the extent that for many of the less committed students, applying for and getting accepted into the programme was more about boasting

of having achieved a ‘free holiday’ at the ‘expense of the university’ than anything else. From lengthy time spent in reviewing the programme documentation and in engaging with various students who had been on the programme, the author raises the possibility that this discourse may also have been a safety mechanism for those students who genuinely wanted to develop as leaders, not only on this programme but politically as well, but who were highly sensitive to the criticism that would follow. While many of the F1 students did run for governance positions, many others however seemed to fear the consequences of openly showing support for or participation in the programme.

Studies into the F1 programme over the period 2010–2014, some of which are articulated in this book, started highlighting the discourses of frustration or limitation experienced by the students and mentors on the programme (Toupin laForge 2013). Alternately, they highlighted how the programme was able to develop capabilities in cognitive and conceptual areas (Walker & Loots 2016) but not in terms of transformation implementation on campus, or alternately; how social relations were strengthened between students of different races prior to the travels, but how these broke down considerably post-travel (Bell 2010–2015). None of these studies could or would identify the underlying challenges of implementation taking place at the UFS itself however. Gradually as the programme lost its central axis as a strategic transformation project within the management level of the university, so it became unintentionally more closely aligned with a programme aimed at developing leaders for student governance positions than with institutional change. The programme however did not lose its position as a strategic project in transformation reporting undertaken by leadership, possibly showing a reporting disconnect or alternately, a continued belief in the value of the programme in terms of student development and transformation. That the programme remained valued and respected by global partners and scholars is a possible testament to this belief.

## ■ Conclusion

Most aspects of this programme are 'large'. Large in the sense of its vision within the context of higher education transformation as well as that of societal transformation; large in the sense of its conflation and rejection based on system-level and institutional-level governance politics; large in the sense of its management conflations and challenges in terms of transformation; large in the sense of the cognitive change and personal development which did take place for most participants on the programme and; large in the sense of the knowledge it holds for current and future programmes of transformation and institutional culture.

As identified by Lange et al. (2016:131) in their conclusion, the current phase of transformation requires knowledge to decide and to act along with a different way of governing, managing and leading. The UFS entered its more recent 'Integrated Transformation Plan' phase from 2017 (UFS 2017), focused on, as the name suggests, integrating various areas into consolidated 'streams' for implementation and development purposes. The F1 programme represents a previous UFS approach to integrated transformation and when measured against certain transformation markers such as internationalisation, research, curriculum development, student development, graduate attribute development and so forth; its strategic integration can be proven to have been very successful. However, as became evident through the period of institutional history from 2008 to 2016 (UFS 2014), and as was evidenced particularly through a programme like that of the F1, integrated transformation processes and related programmes require clarity of higher education transformation purpose across all institutional levels and also support from institutional-level governance. The UFS today is at a much different point than it was a decade ago; however, many of the underlying rejections and contestations present at that time of system and institutional-level governance have not changed and as a result, have the power to continue to shape and form many of the responses to both old and new programme ideas today. Managing this through knowledge is key.





# Networks of leadership and social change

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## ■ Introduction

The ultimate goal of the F1L4C programme was to effect positive change in students regarding issues of race relations, diversity and student life engagement. The programme was designed such that its change impact in total would depend on the personal change experiences of participants both individually and in groups. Whereas the preparatory and study abroad phases focused on personal change, the re-integration and continuation phases focused on group planning and initiatives for change leadership in student life.

## ■ Framing the University of the Free State research project

The F1L4C programme and the GLS programme evolved to include a number of separate and complementary research projects and agendas. These programmes were undertaken by researchers at the UFS and partner institutions abroad, each focusing on different aspects and dimensions of the programmes and their impacts. The central intent of these varied projects was to develop a mosaic of understandings of the immediate and longer term impacts of the programmes on the F1 students, and ultimately and collectively on the broader UFS institution. They were guided by the overarching research question (UFS n.d.a):

In what ways does the 'F1' programme advance student learning and development to lead change and social and educational integration in highly diversified societies? (n.p.)

## ■ Programme evaluation of the impact on perceptions about social change and leadership

Programme evaluation and research were essential components of the F1L4C programme from the outset and the initial programme coordinators and administrators (report), as well as David Bell and Beverley Bell (CIES 2013 conference presentation), conducted initial baseline programme-impact surveys in 2011 with the 2010 and 2011 cohorts. These were followed by individual and group evaluation assessments of F1 students that included brief structured interviews and self-assessments of the perceived change impacts of the programme.

The results indicated that the initial impacts that the F1 programme had on students who returned from their study abroad experiences were immediate and transformative. The following three themes emerged as prominent indicators of initial change impacts.

### □ Campus change initiatives

Upon returning from abroad, the initial F1 cohorts designed and launched a *series of change initiatives* in campus student life at both the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses. These included establishing new campus student associations and rolling out projects according to the seven themes adopted by the cohort, namely: Going Green, Dialoguing and Debate, Artistic Expression, Student Communication, Branding Pride, Student Participation and Campus Unity. Further flagship projects of the early cohorts included launching debating associations at all campuses, establishing a student-driven cooperative for university branded apparel to build pride and unity across the student body, and hosting the first series of events by a LGBTI people support programme on campus.

## □ Student life leadership roles

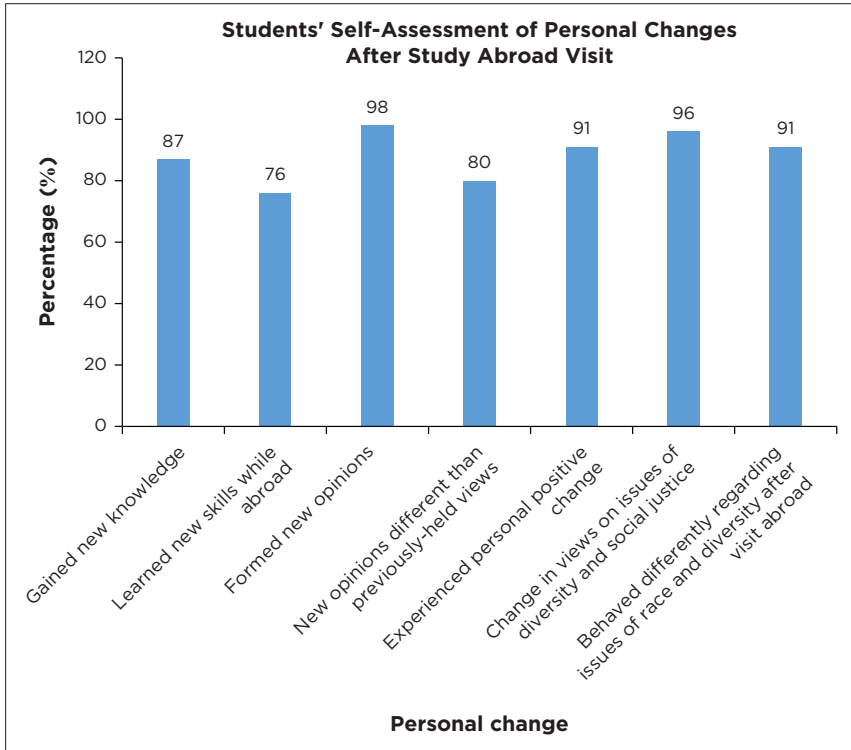
F1 participants assumed leadership roles in the broader university community, both as individuals and as groups. The initial F1 group served as the peer mentoring crew for the Gateway First-Year Welcoming and Orientation Programme in 2011, and smaller groups within the F1 cohort served as mentors in the well-being and academic peer advising programmes (UFS n.d.a.). Additionally, F1 students assumed leading roles in campus community service programmes initiating dialogues and developing leadership development programmes in campus residences and more generally in student life programmes. Additionally, F1 participants were elected as members of executive committees of student associations and student management committees in residences, ran for and served in student governance positions throughout 2011 and 2012 including the SRC and the Campus Residences and Commuter Student Council and served as executive committee members of the SRC and its sub-councils (UFS n.d.b.). Students also assumed additional leadership roles in student residences and in several student associations, including the flagship Student Community Service Organisation and the Reach Out And Give Community Service.

## □ Personal changes

F1 participants felt that they gained new knowledge, learned valuable new skills, formed new opinions, experienced personal change and change in their views and also experienced significant changes in their confidence in tackling social justice issues amongst their peers; and others in power behaved differently regarding issues of race and diversity (see Figure 6.1).

F1 participants also experienced significant changes in their confidence in tackling social justice issues and sharing their views with their peers and authority figures (see Figure 6.2).

In follow-up focus group discussions, F1 students also evaluated the extent to which the study abroad component of



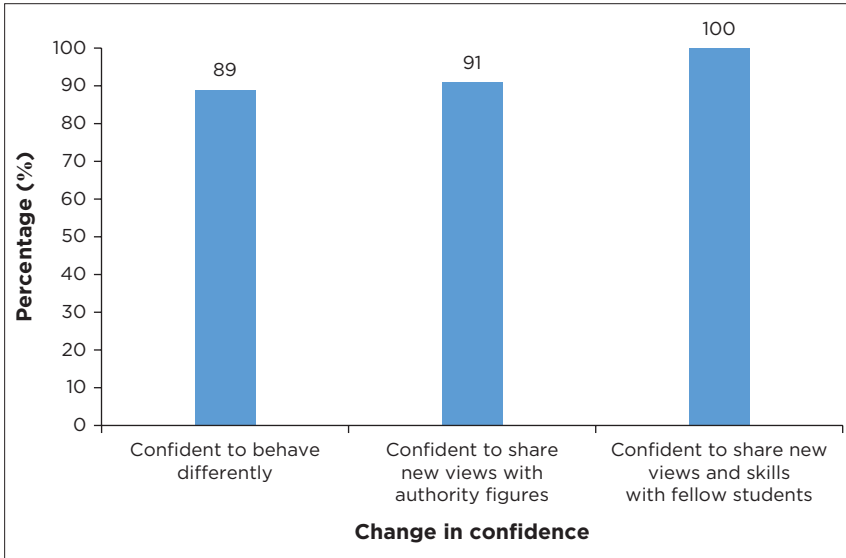
**FIGURE 6.1:** Students' self-assessment of their personal change after study abroad visit.

the programme met their expectations for 'change impact' (see Figure 6.3).

## ■ About the study

In response to these initial findings and trends, this chapter is based on research conducted by Beverley Bell, David Bell and Marianne Sarkis and highlights some of the findings that reflect the programme's transformative impacts, as they manifested in the formation of social capital and the emergence of leadership.

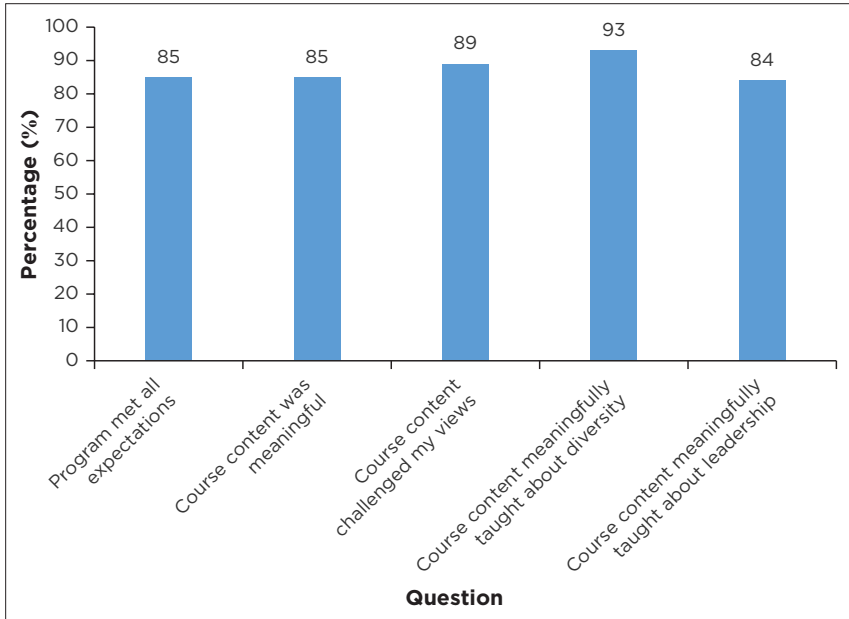
We used social network analysis (SNA) (Scott 2011) to examine these processes of social capital formation (Portes 1998) and leadership development (Hoppe & Reinelt 2010) as outcomes of



**FIGURE 6.2:** Students' self-assessment of their confidence after study abroad visit.

the F1 programme's structure and opportunities for leadership, prior to and following the study abroad visits. By using an SNA approach, we were able to understand how students' social networks evolved and changed, how their levels of integration in previously inaccessible networks evolved and how this impacted their emergence as leaders within these newly formed networks.

We collected data from F1 students across four cohorts between 2010 and 2015 ( $N = 260$ ) before travelling to, and after returning from, their study abroad experience. Data were collected using an online survey (with three cohorts) followed by focus group discussions and self-assessment surveys (Marsden 2011; Wasserman & Faust 1994). Each cohort was asked similar questions regarding their prior and emergent social networks and the results were aggregated to understand the broader dynamics of social capital formation and leadership in individual and group networks.



**FIGURE 6.3:** Students who responded with 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' on questions related to the F1 programme and course content.

This chapter presents a synopsis of some of the more interesting and germane findings of the research and reflects upon social network trends and associated modes of leadership that emerged amongst and between F1 students.

## ■ Limitations of the study

The study had several limitations. Firstly, although we surveyed each cohort prior to their departure on the international visit, we were unable to collect post-visit responses from all the students in each cohort. This limited our ability to conduct a comprehensive comparison of each individual student's pre- and post-experiences and relate them to the social networks. Secondly, while we intended to use a mixed-methods approach that linked survey



data with qualitative data (and with ongoing leadership roles that F1 students assumed), we were unable to develop more in-depth understandings of their lived experiences, the challenges that they faced during their transformations or their reflections on their roles as leaders. Because of these limitations, we will only present some highlights of our findings from the network research, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The chapter also does not present all the research findings but rather highlights a selection of examples that are representative of the emergent social network trends and associated leadership trends across both the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses.

## ■ About social network analysis

Social network analysis is a systematic methodology that focuses on the 'specific set of linkages between a defined set of social actors' (Mitchell & University of Zambia, Institute for Social Research 1969). Actors in a network (nodes) can be individuals, organisations, politicians, animals, websites or authors. They are typically represented by a clustering or circle encoded with colours and sizes to represent characteristics such as gender, race and language, amongst others. The links between actors (ties) refer to the relationships that they may have such as collaboration, partnership, trust or information exchange. Social network analysis has been used in varied disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, mathematics, computer science, public health and medicine (Borgatti & Lopez-Kidwell 2011; Freeman 2004). A powerful contribution of network science is the focus on the system as a whole (whole networks) rather than individual actors (ego networks), to show how a system functions through indicators of cohesion, fragmentation, clustering, cliques or positions of power and influence. These measures can have a direct implication on the flow of information or resources depending on the density. For example, a person who is embedded in a dense network is more likely to gain social support or access to resources (i.e. social capital) but is also more likely to experience pressure to conform to the group norms.

Regardless of the size and extent of the network, SNA can yield precise, actionable information about network members (nodes) and about the connections between them (ties). Because of their ability to make implicit relationships explicit through visual representation, network researchers can identify targets and methods for intervention that could be overlooked with conventional analytical techniques, thereby accelerating the process of identifying leaders in networks, and seeing, *in vivo*, the ways people build social capital and begin to emerge as recognised leaders by others.

In SNA, individuals are thought to be embedded in webs or relationships from which they can access resources and support. Within the SNA literature, leadership and social capital are often intertwined. Leaders (i.e. those who are central to or important in a network) occupy a strategic location that allows them to access resources that would not be possible to someone who was more peripheral in the network (Bourdieu 1986). Leaders, therefore, can use their social capital either to bond with others who are similar to them (within-group linking), or to bridge the gaps between two dissimilar or unconnected groups within the network (between-group linking). Further, their position in the network, or whether or not they are connected to 'important people', can be an indication of their popularity, influence or impact, and social capital, and can reciprocally be indicative of their relative positions of trust and leadership within the group.

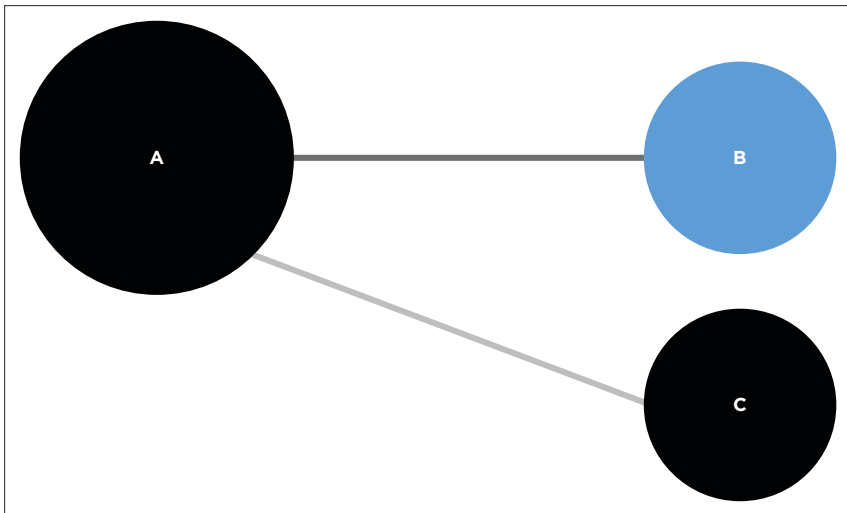
Social network research that is informed by qualitative methods and evidence can provide guidance on how to assess the socio-cultural values that help individuals from disempowered environments build social capital and emerge as leaders and opinion drivers.

## ■ How to read a network map

Network maps can present substantive information about the dynamics and structures of the relationships amongst individuals.

The *circles* (nodes) represent individuals and are linked together by *lines* representing a relationship such as trust, friendship, amongst others. The *relative size* of the circles represents the number of individuals who nominated that circle as a friend. Each circle is *colour-coded* according to the individual's race. The total number of links connected to an individual is called their *degree* and indicates how many connections they have, which is a measure of their popularity. The sum of all the existing lines divided by all the potential links is called *density* and represents how close or far everyone in the network is.

In the Figure 6.4, person A, who is black, nominated person B as a friend. Person C, also black, nominated person A as a friend, but not person B. Person A, therefore, has two nodes connected to it, while person B only has one. Person A has a *degree* of 2, while person B and person C have a degree of 1. The *density* of the network is  $2 \div 3 = 0.67$ , which indicates that the network is 67% connected.



**FIGURE 6.4:** A basic network map, where the colours indicate race, the lines represent a relationship and the size of the circle represents the number of relationships.

## ■ Methodology

Data for this research project were collected using online network surveys and interviews and focus group discussions conducted with F1 students over the five-year period. Social capital formation, personal, interpersonal and group social capital were further explored as a determinant of student leadership development, and as an impetus for student agency and activism more generally.

We used the global and individual approaches to examine leadership role formation and the ways in which the F1 programme helped create an environment that facilitated the emergence of new leaders. We used common indicators of leadership from the SNA literature to measure popularity and the importance that individuals had in their immediate and global network (i.e. the entire F1 cohort). Each cohort's data were cleaned and analysed in NodeXL pro, a specialised software for SNA. Students subsequently received network scores depending on the number of connections they had, whether these connections were to people similar to them racially, and a ranking of the importance of the position they had in the overall network in order to assess their leadership role.

For this analysis, we defined a leader as someone who has impactful relationships with people who differ from them along demographic variables (race, gender and campus), who is not part of any tight-knit groups, who is not 'central' to any group, who serves as a bridge between two disconnected groups in a network and who is recognised as a leader by others.

We used the nomination method of SNA (as described in Figure 6.4) to elicit responses about individuals' networks, and their perceptions of connections and relationships within each F1 cohort group. The first cohort was asked to nominate any 10 individuals whom they considered to be part of their network and to indicate whether those nominees were part of the F1 programme. Students were then asked to indicate where they met frequently with their nominee, how often they met and how

much they trusted them. The next cohorts were provided with a roster of current peers' names from their cohort and similarly asked about their affinities and relationships, and asked if they considered them as leaders, if they trusted them, how much they trusted them, and whether or not they would consider them to be friends or leaders.

The network analysis explored the social capital formation and leadership networks from two perspectives: firstly, from a macro-network level (institutional level relationships or 'whole networks'), and secondly, from a micro-network level (interpersonal and inter-group relationships and networks). The meso-level social networks (student organisations and associations) are suggested to be representative of the various positions of leadership and agency in which F1 individuals and groups have engaged. The main SNA indicators used to measure leadership included 'popularity' (the number of people that identify themselves and others as 'leaders'), 'between-ness' (individual students' ability to connect to disparate individuals and subgroups within and between the networks) and 'eigenvectors' (the strategic association with important people in and between their networks, and the associated central tendencies within groups).

By exploring whole networks (popularity), we examined how individuals were connected to others (F1 programme participants) within and between their affinity and identity groups. We also explored whether these connections were patterned along with race, sex, campus and/or other group dynamics. This network analysis also explored whether there were noticeable structures in the networks such as a clustering or grouping of individuals in the centre or at the margins of networks (between-ness or core-periphery structuring). We further explored the number of existing connections in the networks (network density before and after F1 travel programmes), and whether there were any emergent sub-groupings such as 'travel cohort affinity groups' or 'cliques' (special subgroups where everyone knew or had some form of relationship with others in the group). Finally, we explored

these social network evolutions and transformations in relation to leadership positions that F1 students assumed following their first year in the programme.

## ■ Results

### ■ Social network data and leadership

This section presents some of the interesting findings from the data. As noted earlier, these results are suggestive of the types of analysis that could be conducted to assess the relationships between social capital formation and leadership emergence in social networks.

In using SNA, we examined how initially racially segregated networks become more integrated as a result of intentionally creating cross-racial interactive experiences including the study abroad experiences and post-travel institutional programming.

As demonstrated further, the F1 programme transformed the perceptions or/and relationships with students who had limited prior interactions with others and were perceived to be different from them, especially amongst groups who had been historically marginalised or excluded from full social integration. This interaction encouraged individuals to become more invested in building and maintaining relationships with others whom they would not otherwise have trusted. As is shown, these changes only took place when:

- Previously marginalised individuals were welcomed into environments (networks) from which they were formerly excluded.
- Clusters or cliques in networks were minimised in favour of more open and inclusive group structures where new ties were established and individuals integrated within the group.
- Individuals became leaders as a result of their emergent influence, social capital and recognition by others as trustworthy leaders, rather than only through their popularity.

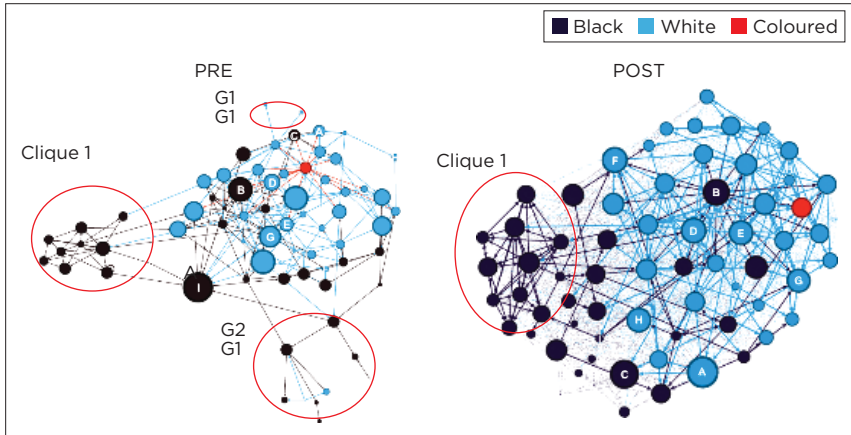
In the next sections, the series of network images provide a ‘pre’ (left network map) and ‘post’ (right network map) comparison of the social networks that emerged amongst F1 students prior to and after the study abroad component of the programme. These images provide some interesting and illustrative examples of where networks can be observed changing their clique structure and becoming more inclusive as an outcome of F1 activities. Also shown are some examples of black students who were initially on the periphery of the network, but later became more central to multiple networks, after their study abroad experience, and which served as the catalytic moment of transformation for most students.

## ■ Changes in network structure between pre- and post-study abroad

Social network analysis can make visible some of the hidden relationships and changes that take place in networks that otherwise would not have been observed.

Figure 6.5 shows an example from the 2012 cohort that demonstrates how SNA can make explicit the relationships in networks pre and post the study abroad. In the pre-image, the network has a visible structure marked by two distinct peripheral groups (G1 and G2) and the presence of peripheral cliques (Clique 1) which happened to be the Qwaqwa campus (and discussed in the ‘Changes in individual roles between pre- and post-study abroad’ section). The post-image shows the changes in the overall structure of the network marked by the absence of the peripheral groups, a pulling of the disparate groups to form a coherent whole, and while the Qwaqwa group remained ‘cliquish’, the entire group was pulled closer to the core group, indicating a greater integration.

Table 6.1 shows the changes in density (the overall connections in the network) pre- and post-study abroad. The table shows that almost all the groups experienced a significant increase in the number of relationships between pre- and post-study abroad.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.  
**FIGURE 6.5:** Changes in network relationships pre- and post-study abroad of the 2012 cohort. The circles surrounding the nodes indicate peripheral members.

**TABLE 6.1:** Percentage change in density between pre- and post-study abroad in the network as a whole and the different subgroups.

Network type	Pre-abroad density	Post-abroad density	% Change
Whole network	0.11	0.25	127
Black only	0.12	0.21	75
White only	0.16	0.40	150
Campus - Bloemfontein	0.11	0.27	155
Campus - Qwaqwa	0.80	0.52	-35
Gender - Female	0.12	0.26	117
Gender - Male	0.13	0.26	100

This speaks of the ways in which the F1 programme encouraged integration amongst different groups. As will be discussed in the ‘Changes in individual roles between pre- and post-study abroad’ section, only the Qwaqwa campus experienced a decrease in its network as a result of a broader integration with the overall cohort.

In addition to the changes in the density of the network as a whole or its various subgroups, some striking changes also



occurred in the bridging positions of some of the individuals, as shown in Table 6.2. For example, individual I, who is black, initially occupied a strategic and pivotal location within and between Group 2 (G2), the Bloemfontein campus network and the Qwaqwa campus (Clique 1). However, in the post-image, it can clearly be seen that individual I lost his centrality and became more integrated with and equal to others in the network. Individual I's importance decreased as individuals from unconnected groups established direct relationships amongst themselves and became less reliant on individual I to connect.

In contrast, individual B, who is black, and was popular in a small group of not as popular black and white members in the pre-network, took on a much more central leadership role in the post-network. Individual B became part of a more organised group of popular and influential individuals. Similarly, individual C, who is black, became much more integrated in the network as a whole and became much more central to popular individuals in the broader network. Table 6.2 presents a selection of some students, represented in Figure 6.5 as indicators of the substantial and significant pre- and post-changes to network strengthening and the within-group and between-group network implications.

## ■ Results by campus

In the maps presented below (Figure 6.6), the Bloemfontein campus cohort (network) is represented by the larger clustering of nodes in the centre and lower right quadrants of the maps. The Qwaqwa campus cohort is represented by the smaller cluster in the top left of each map.

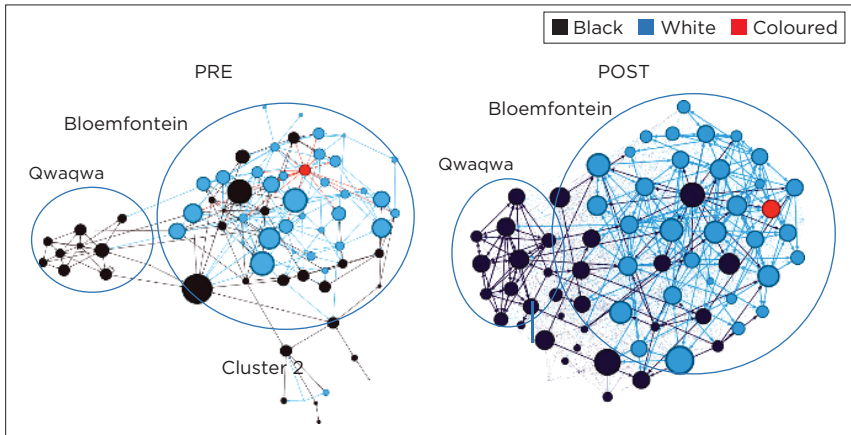
### □ Bloemfontein campus

Prior to the study abroad component of the F1 programme, the Bloemfontein campus cohort had two main groupings of students (Cluster 1 and Cluster 2) with many students on the periphery (the dots around the periphery of the map). These main groupings

**TABLE 6.2:** A selection of some students, represented in Figure 6.5 as indicators of the substantial and significant pre- and post-changes to network strengthening and the within-group and between-group network implications.

ID	Race	Campus	Gender	Pre-degree	Post-degree	Pre-between-ness	Post-between-ness	Pre-eigenvector	Post-eigenvector
A	White	BFN	Male	5.0	67.0	2.9	138.8	0.3	1.0
B	Black	BFN	Female	10.0	49.0	3.0	46.5	0.6	1.0
C	Black	BFN	Male	12.0	29.0	196.0	0.0	0.3	1.0
D	White	BFN	Female	6.0	60.0	0.0	66.4	0.4	0.9
E	White	BFN	Male	13.0	25.0	592.4	0.0	0.3	0.9
F	White	BFN	Female	5.0	54.0	25.6	69.0	0.1	0.9
G	White	BFN	Male	10.0	46.0	28.6	36.5	0.8	0.9
H	White	BFN	Male	2.0	89.0	0.0	173.2	0.1	0.9
I	Black	BFN	Male	15.0	37.0	107.1	1.3	1.0	0.3

BFN, Bloemfontein.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.6:** Network map of the Bloemfontein F1 programme pre- (left) and post- (right) study abroad.

were indicative of the students' prior relationships and friend networks from residences, sports teams, classes and church. It is also interesting to note the clustering of many white students within the smaller groups, with many of the black students

connected by only one or two lines and less cohesive to the network as a whole.

Upon return from the study abroad (map top right), there were a few noteworthy trends:

1. Some of the black students who were initially less connected and on the periphery became main connecting points with the other black students (networks), both on the Qwaqwa campus, and more significantly, on the Bloemfontein campus.
2. These same students also became connecting points for the Bloemfontein campus cohort to the Qwaqwa campus cohort.
3. Most outlying students also had many more connections with both black and white students, and across both campuses.

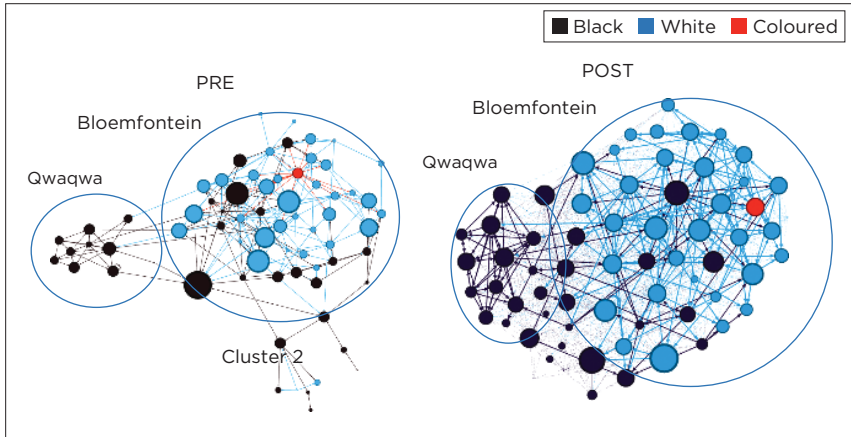
This is all an indicator of the general strengthening of the social networks, between and across campuses, and is indicative of the resulting initial whole group social capital formation, and an outcome of the study abroad component of the program.

## □ **Qwaqwa campus**

Prior to participating in the study abroad component of the F1 programme, the Qwaqwa campus cohort network (Figure 6.7) indicates that there were two 'linchpin' students who connected their entire group (strong leaders who were chosen for the F1 programme based on their prior popularity and leadership). There were another four students who provided most of the connection to the larger group from the Bloemfontein campus, and who were more notable as a result of their prior involvement in student activities and sporting networks. The Qwaqwa campus cohort was inherently cohesive as would be expected of a small rural campus with residences, central dining and predominantly single race and language groupings.

However, once the group returned from their respective study abroad experiences, there were two interesting trends:

1. The Qwaqwa campus group indicated less initial (pre) and post-study abroad cohesion.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.7:** Network map of the Qwaqwa F1 programme pre- (left) and post- (right) study abroad.

2. They had many more connections with the larger group from the Bloemfontein campus.

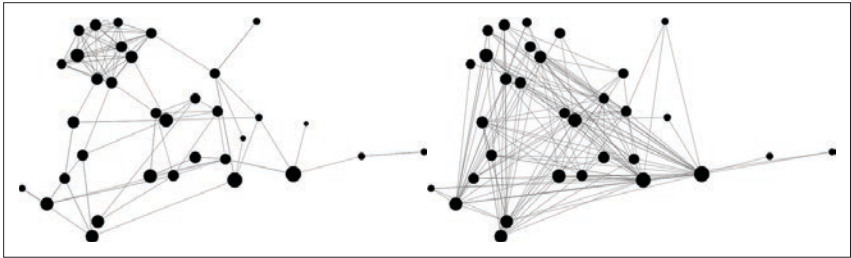
In post-interviews, the participants indicated this was because of them finding ‘friends’ from the other campus (from within their travel cohort groups that had been abroad together and across the broader Bloemfontein campus) who had similar interests, played the same sport, studied similar coursework and had a number of other reasons to bond with socially. For many of the Qwaqwa participants, this was the first time they had met and mixed with white UFS students, and also formed friendships with students from different ethnicities and language groups (since the Qwaqwa campus is predominantly black and ethnically relatively homogeneous).

There was also clear and substantial strengthening (tightening) of the larger cohort (network) and between each campus cohort. This tightening, or density, changed from 0.80 to 0.52 between pre- and post-study abroad. In the Qwaqwa campus cohort – prior to the study abroad component of the programme – shows a relatively close (tight) initial campus network. In the post-analysis, the network becomes significantly more integrated and

connected to the larger F1 cohort, while strengthening overall. Also of significance is the degree to which a significant number – more than 70% – of the students revealed both a broadening (more interconnecting relationships indicated by larger numbers of lines connecting participants) and a tightening of the network (shorter and more intimate relationship indicated by the shortening of the lines between participants). These are clear indicators of the within-group and between-group, bridging and bonding social capital formation (Bourdieu 1986; Patulny & Svendsen 2007). Further, while in the pre-phase only, some of the individuals in the Qwaqwa clustering indicated that they were connected to their cohort on the other campus, all of them established connections to the broader cohort upon return. Even individual, such as person A on the periphery, experienced a similar trend that included greater integration with the overall cohort. Similarly, Cluster 3's connections became much less reliant on the bridging of one or two nodes to the broader network. Instead, each of the nodes in the cluster established direct relationships with members of the core group. Again, this is clear evidence of the powerful network strengthening and social capital formation, and a direct impact of the F1 program.

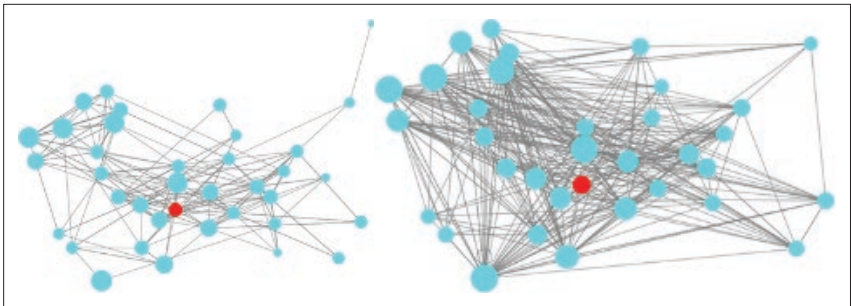
## □ **Social networks amongst black and white participant networks**

The two maps in Figure 6.8 and Figure 6.9, separating 'black' student networks and 'white' student networks, as a point of analytical comparison, show similar and parallel trends to those of the whole network. Pre-study abroad social networks were largely campus-specific and indicated some level of 'network isolation' of black students (see below) per campus, and which changed and strengthened significantly in the post-study abroad analysis, with a substantial strengthening of networks across both campuses, but leaving the post-analysis overall network shaping relatively intact – indicating evidence of bridging (across campuses) social capital formation – but less evidence of bonding social capital, or within-group social network strengthening.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.8:** Black student networks.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.9:** White student networks.

The relative ‘isolation’ of the Qwaqwa campus (top left cluster) and the relatively sparsely networked student network on the Bloemfontein campus (rest of network map) is clearly evident. The post-network reveals a substantial integration of both networks, within each campus and across both campuses as is evident in the larger number of connecting relationships (lines) between participants.

Similarly, the white student networks (Figure 6.9) indicated an overall strengthening of the network and a trend towards within-group bonding. However, as measured against the overall network strengthening (as represented in the first whole group graphics and discussion above), the whole group network showed stronger strengthening across all F1 participants, both black and white. This trend was the same for each of the F1 cohorts indicating that

the project, as a whole, had both a stronger impact on the whole group networks and on smaller campus and race or identity networks.

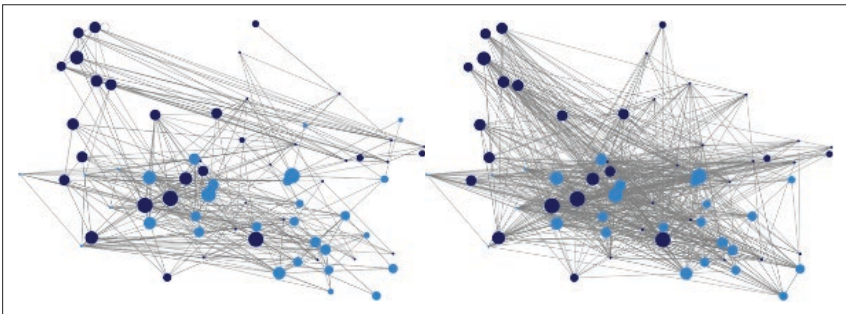
## □ Gender networks

### □ *Female network*

The analysis also sought to understand gender as an analytical perspective. It is evident from the gender-specific network data that, similar to the overall network strengthening, the female network and female subgroups formed substantially stronger within-group social networks, amongst white (light blue) and black (darker blue) participants (see Figure 6.10). More significantly, the data revealed an overall stronger network formation (and social capital formation) between white and black participants than was apparent amongst male networks. Again, this trend was consistent across all F1 cohorts. Congruent with the social networks presented above or earlier, the Qwaqwa campus and Bloemfontein campus are located on top left quadrant (clustering) and the rest of the network map, respectively.

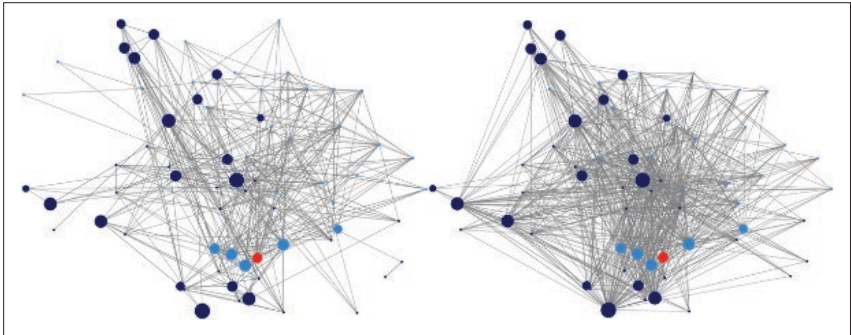
### □ *Male network*

Regarding the male group analysis (see Figure 6.11), overall the networks strengthened substantially but the within-group and



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.10:** Female group networks.



Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.

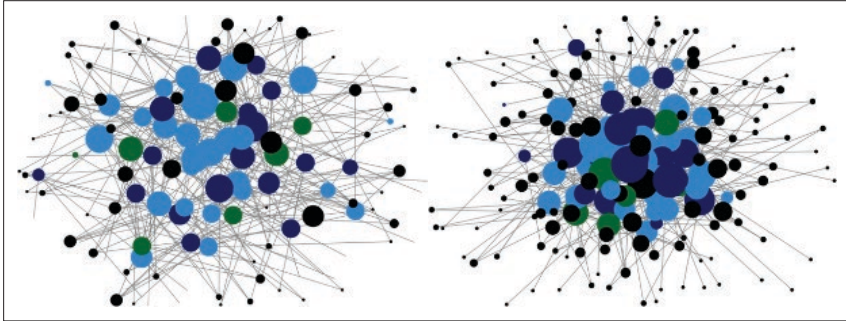
**FIGURE 6.11:** Male group analysis.

the between-group strengthening of networks, although significant, were not as strong as those in the female groups.

The final network map (see Figure 6.12) represents the pre- and post-networks for the combined 2012 and 2013 cohorts. Once again, these data reflect a substantive strengthening of the overall network, show less significantly, less pre- and post-evidence of separate campus network dynamics (as evident from the relative integration of the dots) or alternatively, the lack of clustering of the Qwaqwa participants. This is interpreted as a positive legacy or carry-over effect that the initial 2010 and 2011 F1 cohort networks had on the F1 participants selected for the 2012 and 2013 cohorts. This is also represented by an overall tighter initial network, as compared with the post-network. Not presented as data here, but also evident in the 2014 and 2015 whole group social networks, was an initial (pre-study abroad) relatively stronger individual campus and whole group network as compared with the post-networks. This is interpreted as an overall cumulative strengthening of networks and relationships between and across both campuses over the five years of social networks that this research focused upon.

It is clearly evident here that there were significantly more connections amongst students in the post-network, with less marginal subgroups in the pre-group, and an overall strengthening





Note: Size indicates the number of connections; colour indicates race; lines between dots indicates links.

**FIGURE 6.12:** Pre- and post-networks for the combined 2012 and 2013 cohorts.

and clustering of the group overall. Some black students who were at the margins of the networks prior to the study abroad became much more integrated with students from other races, genders, languages and campuses in the post-network; however, a substantial number of (predominately black) students also remained on the periphery with some evidence of weakening social network ties. What is clear, however, is that the overall integration along racial lines was the result of F1 study abroad programmes rather than a natural social network strengthening trend. Finally, individuals who were identified as leaders in the pre-study abroad social network occupied more central roles in the post-study abroad social network, and gained more social capital and influence. However, while black student leaders emerged from the white communities (networks), no white leaders emerged from the black networks.

## □ Leadership trends

Over the five-year period (2010–2015), F1 participants stood for and were elected to leadership positions within the first year of participating in the programme (at the end of their first year and during their second year at the university). Conventionally, student leaders emerge from within the student body in their third and final years at university. F1 students tended to assume

**TABLE 6.3:** Number of students who assumed elected positions of leadership.

<b>Leadership bodies</b>	<b>Elected positions</b>	<b>No.</b>
Student representative council (highest student leadership body on campus)	Student Representative Council Chairperson	3
	Student Representative Council Vice Chairperson	3
	Student Representative Council Executive Committee	13
	Student Representative Council Members	31
Residences leadership positions	Primarius - Head of Residence	26
	Vice Prime of Residence	9
	Residence Committee Members	71
	Residence Peer Mentors	46
Associations on campus	Chairperson	13
	Executive Committee Members	30

positions of leadership earlier, for longer durations, and at more senior levels of leadership (SRC and SRC president), and at proportionally higher rates than their peers (non-F1 participants). Table 6.3 captures the number of F1 students who assumed elected positions of leadership during or immediately following their involvement in the F1 programme.

Although impressive and significant, the table does not capture or reflect the complete incremental and cumulative nature of student leadership roles that F1 students undertook during their F1 year and in subsequent years.

Table 6.3 also only presents official leadership positions. F1 students engaged in (assumed) 'non-formal' and unofficial positions of leadership across the range of student campus life experiences in proportionally significantly higher numbers. These include leadership in campus-level student associations, leadership of self-initiated individual and group development and leadership of programmes and activities related to the goals of the F1 programme, namely, that the programme aims to stimulate the establishment of a new campus culture of student relations across boundaries – to develop leadership and establish layers of new thinking and engagement amongst students from diverse

backgrounds – and, to enable participants to personally experience models of integration across lines of culture, colour and language and integrate these into their lives as UFS students by (UFS n.d.a):

- breaking down experiences of isolation and racial stereotyping, and introducing positive models of racial integration and student life
- building cross-racial unity and international networking with students, staff and programmes globally
- experiencing diversity, global citizenship and social integration as part of personal leadership development
- creating a ‘cohort of change’.

The research also explored student leadership of social change through interviews and focus group discussions conducted with a wide range of F1 students over the period from 2010 to 2015. The aim of this qualitative exploration was to understand individual and group level perceptions of programme impact as it relates to leadership and social change.

What follows is a selection of statements by F1 students which highlights some of the most common themes and trends that were evident across all F1 cohorts:

‘I am much more open minded and I try to meet new people and introduce myself to people I didn’t used to talk to. I see a lot of integration amongst the F1 students especially amongst races and cultures that we didn’t see before and I hope this spreads across campus too’. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

‘All of us in the F1 are strong leaders and so suddenly we found something in common and now we are friends – blacks and whites. I mean some of us are supposed to be enemies right – but we can’t now because we are friends. Some of my old friends don’t understand – it’s difficult to explain it to them’. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

‘Personally, I have never been in a situation where I am part of a group of white people. I grew up in a black township and went to a black school and at Qwaqwa campus it’s only black students. Now suddenly when I go to Bloemfontein I have so many white people that I know and that I hang out with. My close friends are not really

big fans of my new friends – sometimes they feel threatened – and I think it's because my view changed. Coming back from the USA I feel that I have bigger ideas now'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'You know we have Sotho guys and black guys sitting together and Afrikaner white guys sitting together and res. guys sitting together – these are the types of things that I now see that I didn't see before. Now I notice these things and I want to change that. It's a change in myself I am seeing – I feel more engaged in university life instead of just sitting back'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'I used to have black friends at school – we played sport together. But now I feel like it is different I have a personal friend – I feel like I KNOW her. What I have also seen in the F1 group is that everyone expects something of themselves now. They want to make a difference and that is new – no matter how small it is. We have this burning desire to make a difference and it's not just about race or diversity – it is about their personal ways – their overall humanity'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'My friendship circle has changed. I mean before I went my close friends were always white – mostly from my res and my classes. Now it is more natural on campus to mix and people don't question it'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'I am actually quite shy – but this programme has pushed me to go and make friends and to talk to others and communicate. For me I feel that I won't really change until I do something different. It can be huge but it can also be something really small and even if it goes unnoticed, I know that I am changing – that I have changed on a personal level'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'I am still going to surround myself with the same friends, but I am going to start changing their mind-sets, they're going to start changing'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'My close group of friends got bigger, it increased majorly – and what I would call the "high five" group grew like crazy – when I walked onto campus this morning it was crazy – so many "How are you? How were your holidays?". It felt so good to walk to class. This was especially thanks to the programme but also the classes we had together'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

‘You get different types of leaders. You get the leader who likes to take the lead and says, “let’s do this, let’s do that”, and you get the leader who likes to serve. In the F1 we were all leaders – but we should all be able to lead the way that is our natural style. Every type of leader has good qualities – and we need to accommodate each person and respect the way they want to lead. I don’t think I would be a good person to delegate and tell other people what to do – but I think I will be good at serving and getting to know others well and work with a leader’. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

An analysis of the trends revealed three modes or conceptualisations of leadership. The first and most common was a form of ‘transformational leadership’ where leadership was viewed primarily in terms of conventional and ‘strong charismatic leadership’ or ‘leading from the front’. However, the goal or intent of this mode of leadership was to transform the social (and political) and interpersonal relationships and relations of power, in order to effect social change, and in contrast with more conventional ‘transactional’ modes of leadership, focused on ‘getting things done’. The majority of students who expressed this mode of leadership tended to assume official and elected positions of leadership (SRC, Residence Hall and Association leadership positions) which is shown in Table 6.3. These data tended to track strongly with bridging modes of social capital as reflected in the social network data.

The second mode of leadership that emerged is termed ‘servant leadership’, where F1 students shared that their involvement in positions of leadership and engagement and social change activities was primarily driven by their desire to serve the greater good, in this case, framed by the goals of the F1L4C programme. This leadership mode was attributed predominantly to leadership of small self-developed programmes and initiatives and to social and community level initiatives (sports teams and cultural and social groups) where the predominant leadership intent was to build cohesion within and between smaller affinity groups, and which tracked with bonding modes of social network data.

The third and most interesting or noteworthy trend of leadership that emerged is roughly termed ‘social justice leadership’, and most, if not all, F1 students claimed and shared various modes of this leadership. This mode embraces the logic that most student life interaction is ‘social and political’ (in the sense of interpersonal and identity politics, and broader power relations politics) and that all F1 students were committed to embracing it, as a precondition of their participation in and commitment to the F1 programme. This was reflected in various assumed formal leadership roles, but more significantly, in the range of less formal activities and actions in which students engaged, and which are better framed as agency and activism leadership, on an interpersonal level and at the level of inter-group and broader campus politics.

## ■ Discussion and conclusions

The social network and leadership data presented above are indicative of the range of powerful impacts of the F1 program. More connections formed between pre-study abroad social networks and post-study abroad social networks with less marginal subgroups. Post-study abroad students were much more likely to be connected to others with whom they did not have any connections prior to the programme, regardless of race, gender or campus. Figure 6.4 shows that in pre-study abroad cohorts, students established connections with others who were in their immediate social networks and those connections were based on shared race, language or campus. Upon return from the study abroad, the networks became much more inclusive, and more connections were established amongst individuals from different races, leaving very little original clustering from the pre-study abroad networks.

Black students who were at the margins of the networks became much more integrated with students from other races in post-study abroad cohorts. Figure 6.5 demonstrates how the

race-based networks changed between and with less visible grouping along racial lines, and more integration in the centre of the network. In other words, black students who were at the margins of the networks because of their race or campus became much more integrated in the entire network, and moved from the periphery to the core. Less marginal grouping along racial lines was also noticed in post-study abroad networks indicating more racial closeness or diverse connections amongst students from different races. This pattern was consistent for all races, genders and campuses (Figure 6.6 and Figure 6.7). In addition, while in pre-study abroad groups, race-based cliques were observed (a tightly knit group where everyone is connected to everyone else), those largely disappeared in post-study abroad networks.

The integration along racial lines was largely the result of F1 sponsored programmes rather than naturalistic. When students were asked to list the locations where they met with other students in the programme, more than 60% named F1 programme activities as compared to the 29% mentioned in post-study abroad groups. This finding is encouraging because it demonstrates that racial integrations amongst students could be altered if programmes were intentional about establishing opportunities.

Individuals who were identified as leaders in pre-study abroad networks occupied more central roles in the network in post-study abroad networks, thereby gaining more social capital and influence. One of the main goals of the F1 programme was to support the emergence of black leaders in mixed-race networks. We saw clear evidence of this when we noticed that black students emerged as leaders between pre- and post-study abroad in which they gained social capital, occupied strategic positions between two disparate subnetworks and played an important role in the network as a whole rather than in their immediate neighbourhood only. Of note, however, is that while black leaders emerged from white-only communities, no white leaders emerged from black-only communities.

## ■ Conclusion

The F1 program, as evident across all year cohorts, has had clear and unequivocal impacts on shaping and changing relationships between and amongst UFS students, across race, gender and campus affinities, and in developing and supporting opportunities for leadership, amongst all participants. This research produced additional and more detailed findings that both supports the larger finding of impact, and deepens understanding of the complex and nuanced networks and relationships that evolved and which support the broader goal of the F1L4C program, namely, developing transformational student leaders through global learning spaces.





# Student narratives on identity, leadership and transformation in a post-apartheid South African university

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## ■ Introduction

Worldwide, higher education is ever more diversifying, which is generally considered an enrichment of the academic community (Paradeise & Thoenig 2013). Yet in many cases, diversity is far from unproblematic, as the concept, and even more so the practice of diversity is often a bone of contention, a source of exclusion and even a challenge of cohesiveness (Brink 2010; Cross 2004). South Africa's post-apartheid struggles to reform its higher education sector are perhaps one of the places where this challenge of diversity has shown itself most visibly. How can this be better understood than by studying the experiences of the universities' main actors, the students? This chapter, based on a substantial reworking of Kamsteeg (2016), aims to demonstrate that the study of (student) narratives is particularly helpful to comprehend the multifaceted, ambiguous and always contested character of diversity-related change processes (Brown 2006; Brown, Gabriel & Gherardi 2009:324; Thomas & Hardy 2011; Thomas, Sargent & Hardy 2011), and South Africa's university transformation processes in particular (Case et al. 2018; Jansen 2016, 2017; Nkomo & Vandeyar 2009; Vandeyar 2011; Walker 2005a, 2005b).

Students have always been critical followers of their institutional leaders' behaviour, but the restructuring of higher education in South Africa since 1994 has renewed their concern – manifestly during the campus protests in 2015 and 2016 – for the vital role (higher) education plays in the country's transformation. The reasons for the protests were multiple but generally pointed to the lack of 'real' diversity and transformation. Despite important major restructurings by the government – the most noticeable being the 2004 merger operation – a range of studies shows that university culture has proved to be a major impediment of change (Balintulo 2003; Chetty & Merrett 2014; Cloete 2014; Cross 2004; Jansen 2009, 2016, 2017; Higgins 2013; Kamsteeg 2011; Keet & Nel 2016; Soudien 2008; Tabensky & Matthews 2015; Verwey & Quayle 2012; Walker 2005a, 2005b; Walker & Loots 2016).

This chapter is an updated version of an article I published in *Transformation in Higher Education* (Kamsteeg 2016) representing the self-identity narratives of students from the South African UFS. The article was published shortly after the so-called Shimla Park Protests at this previously all-white and Afrikaans-medium university. These incidents around a confrontation between white students attacking protesting black students and workers during a rugby game of the local team (the Shimlas) demonstrated the critical transition phase (Keet & Nel 2016) the university was going through. Students (predominantly black, but white students as well) questioned the university's route and pace towards transformation and diversity, which ironically was believed to have accelerated under the leadership of rector Jonathan Jansen who was appointed after the overtly racist Reitz incidents in 2008. This chapter will not try to shed light on these incidents, yet focus on a project, started by the same rector Jansen, that was to prepare young students for taking responsibility for the diversity-based transformation South Africa needed. This initiative was called the F-1 Leadership for Change study abroad programme, which was accompanied by an initially elective and later mandatory 101 engagement course for first-year students and a triennial GLS with the international partners in the F1 project. In the present chapter, I will build on my 2016 (Kamsteeg 2016) article in the sense that I will present the narratives of students who participated in a university-wide change project, but for the purpose of the book, I have added a separate section on the GLS, two of which I participated in as a representative of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) and the Amsterdam University College (AUC). At these summits, UFS students were grouped together with students from the various international academic partners in the F1 project. This allows me to also write a brief section on how students of the international academic partner universities became committed through the encounter. Other authors have written on the F1 experience, particularly Walker and Loots (2016), Keet and Nel (2016), Bryson (2014) and finally the initiator of the project himself (Jansen 2016). My modest aim in this chapter is to show that the project did manage to bring about change in the lives of individual

students. Given the limited number of students participating in it, no major institutional changes could be expected, but in the meetings between South African students and fellow students, the concepts of transformation and diversity became part of a lived – which is not to say always shared and uncontested – experience.

My retelling of the students' stories and experiences is preceded by a section on South Africa's universities' recent history, and that of the UFS in particular.

## ■ **Post-apartheid higher education transformation in South Africa and the Free State**

South African higher education became officially racially segregated in 1959 with the extension of the *University Education Act* that prohibited the registration of non-white students at established universities. Subsequently, separate universities were created for black, mixed race and Indian students. Since then racial segregation has dominated the complete education system, from primary to higher education. So when Mandela came to power in 1994, higher education in South Africa was highly racially segregated, and in the South African public opinion, the former Afrikaner universities, such as Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, University of Pretoria, Stellenbosch University and the UFS became icons of a past that had to be overcome sooner rather than later.

When in 1994 apartheid officially came to an end, education was one of the main areas for which a range of far-reaching policies and approaches was developed in order to redress the injustices and inequalities of the past. Applying equity legislation and requirements to the institutions of higher education became an important part of South African transformation as a whole (cf. Tamminga 2004). Since 1994, the government and its successive Ministers of Education have viewed (higher) education as one of the main vehicles for effecting societal transformation.

The National Commission on Higher Education, instituted by the government in 1996, initiated a programme of policy change which in 1997 culminated in a White Paper on higher education (1997; see also CHE 2007; Jansen 2003; Jansen et al. 2002). This White Paper defined the 'size and shape' of the new system, emphasising programme-based planning and the need for institutional collaboration. When in 1999 Kader Asmal was appointed as Minister of Education, the idea of linking institutional restructuring of the system and social redress became prominent. In 2002, the Department of Education's *The Restructuring of the Higher Education System in South Africa* proposed a far-reaching programme of mergers as an appropriate mechanism to bring about transformation, equity, sustainability and productivity (Balintulo 2003:457). The same document also provided concrete merger goals and a list of institutions that had to be merged. Subsequent policy documents developed the idea of institutional mergers as the principal means to reach the desired goals of reorganisation: social development, equity and quality, including the building of new institutional cultures and identities (Higgins 2007; Jansen 2003:9). Practically, the complete sector protested against the ministry's top-down approach but, in 2004, the government-mandated merger programme had effectively reduced 36 institutions of higher education to 23, of which 11 are traditional universities (offering theory-oriented degrees), 6 universities of technology (offering vocational diplomas and degrees) and 6 comprehensive universities (offering a combination of both qualifications).

The merger project introduced a number of major policy measures intended to reduce inequality and foster internationalisation in one single operation. Yet the government underestimated the cultural shadow of the past and the vested interests of particular groups and institutions. Government-induced segregation was exchanged for a new policy of transformation towards integration. The newly-merged but formerly Afrikaner institutions particularly took up the changed mission with hesitation, amongst other things because they met

with severe internal and external resistance. The UFS was one of them (Kamsteeg 2008, 2011).

The UFS is one of the older universities in the country, serving as a practically all-white student and staff institution before and during the apartheid era. Yet, when in 1993, the university introduced a parallel-medium language policy, the introduction of English already meant that a significant number of black students enrolled, but without really integrating. Traditionally, Afrikaner students take their classes in Afrikaans, whereas black students prefer the English version of lectures. Campus life has also remained divided with black and white residences. Still, in 2005, the then rector acknowledged that the main campus actually consisted of two spaces, with a student population divided along racial lines.

By 2007, the student population had grown to 27 000, reaching around 40 000 today, divided over three campuses. In 2003, the university merged with the Qwaqwa campus – a former ‘homeland’ university situated in the eastern Free State – and in 2004, the South Campus was opened in Bloemfontein. With these two campuses added to the main city campus, UFS complied with the South African government’s higher education policy. By now it became a middle-range university with over 4000 faculty and support staff, divided over seven faculties and more than a 100 departments.

Key to understanding the symbolic role the UFS fulfils in the overall university transformation process in South Africa is the racist incident that took place in 2008. The so-called ‘Reitz incident’ took place during the initiation period in one of the traditional student residences on the main campus. Three black workers were humiliated in what the four white male student perpetrators considered a practical joke. The case became a national scandal when the video the students made of their acts was shared publicly on the Internet. The incident showed that 14 years after the end of apartheid, racial differences in South Africa’s universities were still very much alive. As far back as

2004, the UFS's VC and rector at the time of the 2009 Reitz incident had observed that universities had taken some steps towards racial desegregation but had not been very successful in achieving an integrated and including institutional culture acknowledging racial diversity and differences (Jansen 2004:122). In order to tackle the deeper problems that he considered Reitz represented, Jansen established the interdisciplinary Institute of Reconciliation and Social Justice, to coordinate research and public debate on the issue of institutional transformation and human rights, with the explicit goal of attaining 'excellence in academic achievement and in human reconciliation' (UFS 2016), and in contributing to the transformation of the UFS into a non-racial environment. Although after the much-publicised Reitz incident, black students now make up the majority of university's student population, the UFS, like most other universities, faces a persistently high dropout rate and underperformance amongst, predominantly black, first-year students, who, moreover, still experience a diversity-hostile institutional culture, caused, amongst others, by the structure of the curricula and the dominance of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in many places.

A more silent initiative Jansen took in 2010 was the F1 (first-years) Leadership for Change programme, a 'study abroad programme of short duration available to students of all ethnicities, enabling them to personally experience models of integration across lines of culture, colour and language' (UFS 2014:n.p.). The programme, originally targeted at 75 first-year students per year, and selected students for an intense internal training programme culminating in a two-week study abroad experience in one of UFS overseas university partners in the USA, and after 2010 also in Europe, Japan and Thailand. The programme aimed to produce a tangible contribution in equipping students with the skills and attitudes to take up leadership roles in the new South Africa. In 2016, the last year of the programme, a huge billboard at one of the campus entrances in Bloemfontein still explicitly referred to this vision (see Figure 7.1). During the





Source: Photograph taken by Frans Kamsteeg, published with permission from Frans Kamsteeg.

**FIGURE 7.1:** Billboard at University of the Free State Campus Visitors Centre gate: ‘Die leiers wat ons saai, gaan die wêreld omdraai’ [‘The leaders we sow will change the world’].

span of 7 years (i.e. between 2010 and 2016), 5 year-groups – consisting of cohorts of 6 to 12 diverse students (gender, race and academic discipline) – took part in the programme. Vrije Universiteit and the AUC from the Netherlands became active partners in 2013; the author of this chapter becoming the representative for Amsterdam in the partnership.

## ■ Making sense of transformation through identity narratives

Essentially, the identity concept helps to understand how individuals make sense of themselves and how they relate to others, addressing similarities and differences. Addressing both ‘self’ and ‘sociality’, identity can be considered as a bridging concept that may help to apprehend our being-in-the-world (Brown 2006; Webb 2006; Ybema et al. 2009). Identity formation, then, is a permanent interplay, of positioning between social and self-definition, which involves, for example, cultural codes for

appropriate, that is 'normal' behaviour of individuals and collectives. Identity formation, according to Ybema et al. (2009), is thus a:

[D]ynamic interplay between internal strivings and external prescriptions, between self-presentation and labelling by others, between achievement and ascription, and between regulation and resistance. (p. 301)

This positioning between self and others becomes clearly visual when examining 'institutional dynamics'. The analysis of institutional dynamics highlights how such social settings and wider contexts script, categorise and shape people's identity constructions.

Organisations are socially constructed entities that are constantly changed by meaning-giving actors (Bate 1997, 2004; Van Maanen 2010; Watson 2008). The complexity of merger processes, particularly in academic institutions, shows itself in the language sensemaking actors use. This sensemaking is permanently negotiated (Czarniawska 1997), which indicates that capturing this process can be fruitfully carried out by reconstructing its 'narratives of change', as what John van Maanen (2010) calls 'tales from the field'. The same narrative, or storytelling, approach has been extensively advanced by Vaara (2002, 2003; see also Risberg, Tienari & Vaara 2003). Narrative analysis, then, allows for a temporal and historical account that links discursiveness to subject positions and identity (Vaara 2002:215-217).

Narrative modes of interpretation make no absolute claims of truth, but rather suggest verisimilitude, endowing experience with meaning through the careful association of concrete (bottom-up) stories that are historically contextualised (Boje 1995; Brown et al. 2009; Czarniawska 1997; Gabriel 2000; Tsoukas & Hatch 2001:983). In this view, people in organisations lead storied lives, meaning that organisational actors present their stories as accounts of meaningful events 'with plots that weave together complex occurrences into unified wholes that

reveal significant instances of organising, or organisational becoming' (Brown et al. 2009:325).

Based on a broad research review in organisation studies, Mats Alvesson presents a set of metaphorical images of self-identity, constructed in organisational contexts. These self-identity constructions are important devices for individual actors to position themselves – in various degrees of ambiguity and coherence – vis-à-vis the often messy contexts in which they live (Alvesson 2010:17). Central to this approach of identity is the individual as storyteller (*homo narrans*) producing 'reflexively organised narratives', or 'images', built out of what Alvesson calls 'cultural raw material: language, symbols, sets of meanings, values, etc.' (Alvesson 2010:11). The seven narratives or images distinguished by Alvesson are 'self-doubters,' 'strugglers', 'surfers', 'storytellers', 'strategists', 'stencils' and 'soldiers' (Alvesson 2010:7). The first three images refer to an individual context with insecurity, ambiguity and fluidity as the main characteristics whereas the last three are more collectively contextualised and show some more coherent and robust characteristics. The middle narrative positions the actor as primarily a storyteller, the pivotal interface and the root metaphor of all others (Alvesson 2010:20), a view that is supported by Gabriel's *Storytelling in Organizations* (Gabriel 2000) in which he convincingly argues that through stories, or narratives for that matter, deep and often hidden meanings held by organisational members can be retrieved.

## ■ A note on research methodology

In the next section ('F-1 student self-identity narratives'), the ongoing process of self-identity constructing through storytelling by UFS F-1 students is conceived and presented as *self-identity work* which 'refers to people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness' (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003:1165; Watson

2008). In the South African context, Jonathan Jansen (2017) wrote a book after stepping down as rector and VC of the UFS in 2016, in which he also presented the educational narratives and counter-narratives predominantly by students from his own university, similar to his earlier work on a merged Eastern Cape higher education institution. Walker's (2005a) account of race narratives amongst post-apartheid university students at UFS is another study that locates student self-identity narratives into a layered and contextualised perspective on the wider organisational and societal arena in which the struggle over (the meaning of) change and transformation in South Africa's educational sector is played out.

The narratives presented hereafter give a multifaceted and diverse picture of how UFS students make sense of the changes the university is going through since the mid-1990s, and more precisely since 2009 under the leadership of its rector and initiator of the leadership programme, Jonathan Jansen. These narratives essentially concern (presumed) changes in the campus culture of the university in Bloemfontein. It is these narratives of students' sensemaking efforts that I try to make sense of (Brown, Patrick & Nandhakumar 2008). Student narratives are particularly important for studying campus culture because they do in a way 'predict' the future of the university, as it is also explicitly mentioned in the rationale of the F-1 leadership programme itself.<sup>12</sup> Of course, the staff and faculty are also strong bearers of campus culture, but they are less explicitly targeted as change agents by the university leadership, which may well be one of the reasons why change is so slow (see also Higgins 2007, 2013).

The research for this study is based on ethnographic fieldwork amongst and interviews with UFS F-1 students over the years 2012–2016. In the conclusion, I will draw some parallels with Walker and Loots' (2016) and Bryson's (2014) studies, who both present

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12. See <http://www.ufs.ac.za/leadership-for-change-programme/leadership-for-change-programmes/home-page>.

the stories of the UFS's first F1 student cohort. In this chapter, I predominantly use narratives from the F1 students who came to Amsterdam for their exchange in the years 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The reason to do so is twofold. Firstly, using data from a number of consecutive years gives the study a diachronic character, which, I believe, is fitting for a study on transformation. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, as host of the F1 groups in Amsterdam, I was able to develop a trust relationship with the students, which allowed me to 'shadow' (Czarniawska 2007) them as well as interview them, both in Amsterdam and during various field visits to Bloemfontein later on. My regular research visits to UFS and my involvement in the F1 programme as a Dutch host gave me an excellent position to do participant observation as an engaged scholar (Van de Ven 2007). The narratives presented here are mostly based on recorded interviews and informal talks with some 25 students held both in Bloemfontein and in Amsterdam. The narratives are both unique and representative as they tell individual stories that contain elements shared by several others including students who went to universities other than the VU and AUC. Part of particularly the last talks took place during the so-called debriefing meetings I was able to participate in during my visits to Bloemfontein, and during the two GLS I attended in 2015 and 2018 in Bloemfontein. In the latter meetings, UFS staff and hosts from all participating international universities met respectively for two weeks during the 2015 GLS, and one week during the 2018 GLS, with more than a 100 former participating students from the F-1 programme, and the student and staff delegations from the foreign hosting universities. At these occasions, it became clear that similarly diverse experiences of transformation were noticeable amongst all students, no matter whether they went to Japan, the USA, Belgium or the Netherlands (Amsterdam). Therefore I contend that the stories presented are to a significant extent representative of the broad and diverse range of participant views on transformation of the F-1 programme at large and that the analysis holds beyond the experience of the Amsterdam students.

## ■ F-1 student self-identity narratives

Alvesson's emphasis on self-identity as an important concept for studying organisational identity allows for a more playful relationship between data, theory and concepts than organisational identification theories generally allow (2010:3-4). Juxtaposing different self-narratives, or images as Alvesson tends to call them, allows to show the diversity and ambiguity of identities people construct. The present transformation phase in South African HEIs, that is conceptually wide-ranging and multifaceted, really requires such a perspective. The concrete narratives presented below reflect the wide number of meanings the concept of 'transformation' is given within the (UFS) context. Analogously to Alvesson, I distinguish seven narratives that broadly represent the self-understanding of F-1 students vis-à-vis transformation at the campus they belong to. These self-identity narratives range from critically activist to opportunistically individualist. The selection of the narratives was to show exactly this diversity. I chose to present the most telling stories (Table 7.1 gives an overview), but also respect the demographic, disciplinary and gender diversity of the total F-1 population, which shows an overrepresentation of white students. Although the narratives described below have similarities with the ones that Alvesson uses, I have not tried to compare them to the 'original' ones. The distinction between more individualistic narratives and more (politically) engaged has some resemblance with Alvesson's typology. Anyway, Alvesson's middle position of the storyteller holds for all South African students included.

## ■ The spiritual mediator

*Hendrik* is a coloured theology student living in one of the oldest student residences of the UFS campus, that is now slowly being transformed into an ethnically mixed residence. He is from a poor family in the Eastern Cape, and told me I was the first with whom he has shared his story:

**TABLE 7.1:** Seven student self-identity narratives.

<b>Student name, gender, ethnicity<sup>13</sup> academic discipline</b>	<b>Self-identity narrative</b>
Hendrik <sup>14</sup> , male, coloured, theology	The spiritual mediator
Driekie, female, white, drama	The hesitant Afrikaner
Bonolo, female, black, industrial psychology	The critical outsider
Florence, female, white, law	The English marginal
John, male, white, law	The reflective politician
Dino, male, black, economics	The born leader
Anisha, female, black, accounting	The ambitious woman

Source: Kamsteeg (2016:5).

‘I’m planning to do my thesis on anthropology and theology, because I have discovered that the Bible has some great stories of cultural diversity. My ambition is to become a lecturer in academia, as I can convey a message pretty clearly. To realize this I will go again to Europe, come back to Bloemfontein and give back what I learned’. (Student, male, 2014)

Hendrik links his mother’s advice to ‘make a lot of people to look up to you and follow your example’ directly to his leadership role in the F-1 group that visited Amsterdam. He semi-jokingly tells that he was deliberately assigned to go there:

‘Why Amsterdam? Well, I don’t know why, perhaps they thought this guy is a theologian, let’s see how he will handle Amsterdam with all the challenges, the red light district, homosexuals, etc. I must say I now think I was blessed to be thrown in the deep, to learn about student life in Amsterdam’. (Student, male, 2014)

13. Although the use of the concepts of race, ethnicity and colour are highly contested, they are part of everyday life and very difficult to avoid, both by researchers and people in their daily talk. Practically all forms in South Africa even ask to identify oneself as belonging to one of the classical race categories designed under apartheid. Race and colour also do matter in South Africa for the way people themselves define their identities, despite the fact that non-racialism has become the official policy in the country (McDonald 2006; Maré 2014). The very concepts are crucial to the transformation debate, and are also regularly used by the students in this study. As a category, I prefer ‘ethnicity’ over ‘race’ because of the connotations of the latter.

14. The identity of the students is protected by using pseudonyms for all names and other references.

He strongly believes that this whole F-1 experience has helped him to grow personally:

‘It has made me think differently, cognitively and emotionally. I now act differently, because I feel that I need to be more informed. You know, knowledge is power, it feels like I need it to get to know people. I have changed and learned to put myself in uncomfortable positions, I take myself more out of my comfort zone. Like e.g. going into townships, learn from the blacks, how they do their trade’. (Student, male, 2014)

The clearest reference Hendrik made to the transformation concept is when he asked me about John Coetzee’s novel *Disgrace*. He had read this book in Amsterdam and was eager to explain how reading this book changed his ideas about black and white in South Africa:

‘It was such intense reading, because of the deep hidden message in that book about South Africa. I immediately thought of it this way, the father in the book first was close to his daughter but then they grew apart. The father represents the apartheid government and the daughter the black people in South Africa. He could have prevented it from going wrong, like we could have prevented apartheid, which we did not. He knew that what he did was wrong, much like most apartheid people knew they were wrong’. (Student, male, 2016)

He immediately goes on to tell that since he came back his life has changed, his focus is different:

‘South Africa has been a disgrace, but what we are experiencing now it is ‘amazing grace’, how Mandela acted the way he did, disgrace is now slowly eliminated and I am part of it, by talking to other students, taking part in the F-1, going into communities. My Pentecostal pastor teaches us that traditions are of value, but not if they refer to something wrong. I now see that e.g. some residence names, with names of old apartheid defenders, have to be changed. The UFS needs to uphold the image, can’t have things on campus that are wrong’. (Student, male, 2016)

Hendrik stresses that he must make a contribution to the transformation process, take his responsibility for changing the



campus culture, by speaking out and mediating between fellow students (which he later factually did during the Shimla Park rugby incident in which he was present as a player). Hendrik's stance on transformation clearly stresses both personal and collective responsibility; his religious motivation is a feature that is more often – though generally less explicitly – expressed by F-1 students.

## ■ The hesitant Afrikaner

As a creative student *Driekie* felt greatly at ease in Amsterdam where, contrary to South African universities' practice, students are encouraged to critically discuss any issue they want, on an equal footing. This she had also learned in the preparatory meetings of the F-1 programme:

'They actually made me think differently, accept people as they are – I suppose that is what transformation is about. Now when I hear someone talking racism, I stand up and say it. I would not have done that before'. (Student, female, 2014)

Yet, she continues about race:

'But race will never not be a problem in South Africa. Cultural differences, how we see things, people don't talk about these things; when talking racism people immediately shut the doors. Here at the university we started talking about it, but not to a point that we are getting any better. Here, because all the problems we have had, the Reitz hostel incident, it has opened the doors, and we can't close them anymore, the keys have been thrown away. I have so many black friends now'. (Student, female, 2014)

But then she takes back a little, which produces some cracks in her story:

'Now that the top management wants to change the name of student residences bearing the name of former Apartheid figures, everything is blown up again. They also decided black and white should go together in the residences, and that they are going to

choose your roommate for you. People start to protest'. (Student, female, 2014)

Asked whether this affects her, she says:

'Well, the two [*black and white students*] can't really function together, because as people we are different. It's ok if we can choose, but when you are forced, actually I could not do it. I have done it, for two or three weeks, but there are differences. And that girl I lived with, she could speak Afrikaans, she was more white than black, because she spoke our language. I don't think I would [*with someone who doesn't speak Afrikaans*]. It's not racist, it's just my preference ...'. (Student, female, 2014)

This self-narrative shows us an open-minded student, who is nevertheless strongly affected by what Jansen calls the *Knowledge in the blood* (2009) transmitted to her by her Afrikaner background and the active role her parents play in Afrikaner circles. She is hesitant about her transformative attitude but rather outspoken in the sense that for her as an Afrikaner girl the radical transformation demands she often encounters at university go a bridge too far. The socialisation of Afrikaans women Driekie has experienced has surely passed the 'sitting pretty' identity of many older white women in post-apartheid South Africa (Van der Westhuizen 2017), but Driekie's story shows an ambivalence that many white students feel regarding the consequences of transformation: they want to be recognised as a minority without being associated with the militant conservative groups defending white rights.

## ■ The critical outsider

Bonolo is a third-year Sotho speaking off-campus living industrial psychology student. Since 2013, there is a place where off-campus living people can gather between and after classes. She is one of the leaders in this residence, which in her opinion is one of the most diverse:

‘We are proud to have a fully mixed residence; you will find everything here: black, white, boys, girls, English, Afrikaans, Zulu, gays, lesbians, etc. much like in Amsterdam!’ (Student, female, 2014)

Bonolo went to Amsterdam with the F-1 group led by Hendrik. In her opinion, he was a good leader, but she believes more female leadership should be stimulated in the programme. During the group activities in Amsterdam, she often stood up to speak for the group:

‘Yes, more girls should stand up. There are sufficient leaders, but they don’t dare to run against a boy, particularly not if it is for a SRC position. But from my F-1 group there are now several who go for the residence committees. I myself want to broaden my horizon, like Antjie Krog [*famous white anti-apartheid writer and poet*], and perhaps study anthropology. My ambition is to go abroad, do an international master and then return and change the university. There is so much to change, e.g. the language policy ... You can apply only if you speak Afrikaans. It is a shame’. (Student, female, 2014)

Bonolo ironically remarks that transformation is the first word that you learn at the university these days, but that it is often used in a purely rhetorical sense:

‘Now I’ve heard they gonna pay us to tell transformation stories. I wish I had a proper story, but I just don’t have one. I want true transformation, I miss Amsterdam’. (Student, female, 2016)

Her experience in Bloemfontein, and also with the F-1 group in Amsterdam, indicated that she deliberately chose to keep outside of what she considers a suffocating campus culture. At the same time, Bonolo refuses to translate her culturally critical views into political militancy, as she believes organised student groups are too often dominated by party politics.

## ■ The English marginal

Transformation is often regarded as bringing black and white together, yet since the days of the Anglo-Boer war differences between English-speaking people and Afrikaners are noticeable.

This becomes clear in the story of Florence, a 22-year-old law student. Her school background gave her a position strongly diverging from her Afrikaner compatriots:

‘In my English school, my class was very diverse so I am used to racial differences. I now attend classes in English, which means that I have classes with black people as well, whereas my Afrikaner friends only go to class with Afrikaner people, which are mostly white’. (Student, female, 2014)

Florence was well aware of the role language played in the residences through the position she took in her residence:

‘At first we asked some black girls that I knew in the residence committee, so that we would be able to attract other black people to the residence. If you walk in the house you cannot only talk Afrikaans the whole time. In our house meetings we now only speak English and with our committee meetings we speak English as well. So it has been a whole process of changing our routine actually’. (Student, female, 2014)

Florence, like Bonolo, also touches upon the diversity issue expressed in the distance between on and off-campus living students. Much of the university policies are focused on the students living on-campus, but the large majority lives elsewhere in the city. She points out that the strong focus on the residences is regrettable. A considerable group of students live off-campus and she thinks that they will never be part of the transformation process because they do not even know about the challenges on campus. She gives an example:

‘The other day I had attended a SRC dialogue session where all off-campus students were invited as well, and from the more than 20 000 UFS off-campus students only around 100 students were present. They think student activity is not for them, and they never hear about what we are discussing on campus’. (Student, female, 2014)

Florence’s narrative shows that whiteness and Afrikaans are often joint obstacles to transformation, marginalising white students who want to break traditional boundaries by pleading for the binding role of the English language. Her case shows how difficult

it is to combine cultural characteristics associated with identity positions that are framed antagonistically (Kamsteeg & Wels 2004). Language differences, on which she puts her hopes, is not an easy way to go (Heleta 2016).

## ■ The reflective politician

John, an English-speaking law student, held the transformation portfolio in the SRC after his participation in the F-1 programme. He also works at the Institute of Reconciliation. His F-1 experience has played a decisive role in his university career, raising his consciousness about university transformation:

‘It has made me think about the subconsciousness of discrimination around us. I’ve learned to think before saying something. You must do things with your F-1, if you don’t, it is waste, but many just move back into their comfort zone. During my F-1 visit we learned about LGBT and race. It really opened my eyes beyond UFS’. (Student, male, 2014)

Upon his return to Bloemfontein, he started his leadership career:

‘You come back to campus, and you are comfortable again. We started making it a bit more uncomfortable on campus. One example I always take is the house meetings. First years are completely separated, meetings are done in Afrikaans, there is no diversity in the mentality, some house meetings start with prayer. That is why I started leading a day residence, which took a lot of time. There are other examples of it, of F-1 people moving to leadership positions, though it is difficult to put yourself out for an official position. You may also lose which is why some simply return and concentrate on their studies’. (Student, male, 2014)

He has some outspoken ideas about the diversity within the F-1 programme. Although it is explicitly a programme that targets black and female leadership, it is predominantly white men that emerge during and after the programme:

‘Why do black students not apply? It is a cultural issue; for them it is big thing to travel, leaving your parents. Something that is perhaps not as much present in black culture as it is in white culture. Within the groups it seems also that blacks seeks [*sic*] blacks, and whites

seeks [*sic*] whites. Perhaps because we meet each other only one or two times before leaving, and don't get used to meeting each other before'. (Student, male, 2014)

This last remark about black and white meeting for the first time via a programme like F-1 is illustrative of the separation of black and white cultures. Bryson's *It's a Black and White Thing* describes the first steps of the UFS transformation project and is hopeful about the future. She is also very clear about the presence of deeply rooted identities when she quotes a white student telling that 'I'm more comfortable in my own skin' (Bryson 2014:81). Yet this same student thinks the programme has at least broadened his horizon.

John is clear about the programme's contribution to transformation:

'For me it does, I'm an example myself. It is an amazing programme, because it is about learning new ideas. And it is these ideas that helped me take on leadership positions. In the SRC I had to defend the F-1, because the programme costs a lot of money for relatively few students and that money could be used for other purposes. SRC people don't always value the long-term investment, because they give political priority to the easy-to-solve short-term issues they encounter. It is my job to politically defend the programme, and help refine it'. (Student, male, 2014)

Like Dino, whom we will hear in the next narrative, John has a political take on transformation, but, in contrast to Dino, he resists working along – short-term – party political lines. He is clearly in search of alternatives, which are – as other F-1 students confirm – not easily available. John's attitude is shared by some other students who deliberately chose not to go for an F-1 scholarship.

## ■ The born leader

Dino is one of a number of highly politicised economy students from one of the black residences, who, after taking part in the F-1 programme, became a student leader with strong political

ambitions. After having served in the residence committee, he was elected as vice president in the SRC, together with his residence mate who also was an F-1 and who became the SRC president. Like John, he is combining his studies with volunteer work at the Institute of Reconciliation, working on a study on transformation and student leadership:

‘For this study we selected people who were leaders before 2010, when rector Jansen’s transformation policy became effective; then we have a group of student leaders who became active in the years 2010-2012, the formative years of “leadership for transformation”; and finally a group of leaders who are now operating with the consolidated knowledge generated in the previous two years. We consider leaders to be those who take positions in the residence councils, in the student associations, and in the SRC’. (Student, male, 2014)

For Dino, like many student leaders, an active ANC member, the political and academic route go together in a quest for personal development. Moreover, he is actively seeking to improve his knowledge and skills by applying for funded courses and training programmes nationally and internationally:

‘For me transformation takes the political route, next to the academic path through the defence of student rights, and against those sectors in the university that are defending traditional vested [*white*] interests. I’d say you grow from one position to another’. (Student, male, 2014)

He maintains that the path he has taken is destined for him, and that the Amsterdam experience as an F-1 group leader prepared him for his present tasks:

‘For me it’s another thing coming back and using what you learned. As a leader I have still a long way to go. So much to be tackled. There are so many senior students, staff, lecturers who are here from before Jonathan Jansen’s time. They are from before the transformation agenda. We as F-1’s have learned that this must change, but many others are not yet there. They do resist transformation. Many senior students, and particularly white staff, do not see the need for transformation’. (Student, male, 2014)

His ideas on transformation are rather encompassing:

'It is not only race, or gender, it is about the whole outlook of the university, e.g. the residences. Interaction is limited, teaching is in different languages, which is not good for interaction. One medium of instruction would help'. (Student, male, 2014)

He is not fully positive about the F-1 programme, however, as it serves only a small part of the first-years:

'It has created an us versus them situation. Coming back you must have a significant impact, if you don't see that so, you should not be in the programme. It is an investment. Not everybody does that, that is where the critics come in. One part is active, but others spoil the opportunity. The F-1's should do more. I suggested the dean of students to improve the programme. We should work more on getting to the white community on campus. Some of it is still very Afrikaans and conservative'. (Student, male, 2016)

Amsterdam has helped him to develop some ideas about himself, his identity and his future:

'We saw a lot of diversity in Amsterdam, unlike others who went to Japan, or China. We were privileged to conduct research in that diversity field, that was an experience. We were sent into the field, the neighbourhoods. You could choose a research theme such as race, class, religion. Studying race in the Netherlands, that is of significance. I want to bring this experience further'. (Student, male, 2014)

After the interview, he went off to a next SRC meeting. In the evening, he sent out political messages on his cell phone: vote ANC in the coming elections. Dino represents a minority amongst the F-1 students who see their participation in the programme as politically advantageous curriculum vitae-building. Dino is clear about his work future. His economy studies serve a political purpose, as for many who were active in the (post-)2016 'must-fall' protests (Booyesen 2016). He pursues a job in the ANC (government administration), but before going there, he aspires to do an international Master's (which, in 2019, he started effectively).



## ■ The ambitious woman

Not all F-1 students take what they learned through the programme as the start of a leadership career. Anisha, a 21-year-old accounting student, has taken it first and foremost as an encouragement to become successful in society by pursuing a career with her university training. Yet she has also learned from her participation:

‘I have become a more open-minded person as a result of participating in the programme. In the two weeks that I was in Amsterdam I have seen homosexuals are people like myself. After my trip I told my friends that the people in Amsterdam are like this and like that. Now I think that a lot of my friends have adopted this mentality of open mindedness. That is how I believe I can make a change in the smallest way’. (Student, female, 2014)

Another eye-opener for her was the way the lectures were delivered in Amsterdam:

‘Student cultures are way different, I discovered when I saw students from different studies really interacting with each other. That made me think that our world [*in Bloemfontein*] is a bit closed. This is also clear in my residence which is very Afrikaans’. (Student, female, 2014)

Yet university leadership is not her cup-of-tea. She is in accounting and very determined to go for a career in banking or investment management. Her studies, in combination with the broader horizon F-1 gave her, have stimulated her career ambitions:

‘I just don’t have the time. I am going to Johannesburg, I am a bit tired of the Free State, I go to a private university. Leadership in our field of accounting is different, task oriented. This is how I feel. Most of the F-1’s, coming back from the abroad trip tend to go for the leadership positions, e.g. in the residence council and they build up a sort of a fan base, which then helps for the SRC, yet they hardly partake in leadership outside of campus. That is where I will grow and become a successful professional. I am prepared to work hard for it’. (Student, female, 2014)

Anisha is one of several black students for whom the F-1 participation had a strong transformative and emancipatory

effect, without awaking in her the aspiration to take part in any form of collective struggle. She firmly believes that transformation is the result of personal effort and that black students are individually responsible to move beyond the effects of an underlying culture of whiteness (Steyn 2001; see also Haffajee 2015).

The seven self-narratives presented above could easily be supplemented by other testimonies of student transformation engagement, and I do not claim to give a fully representative picture of F1 student experiences. But perhaps more important is the question what these different self-narratives mean, and what do they tell about the effects of the F1 change programme? Before coming back to this question in the final part of this chapter, it is worthwhile to follow some of the students to Amsterdam and the three international encounters that ran parallel to the F1 programme: the GLS in Bloemfontein that took place in the South African winters of 2012, 2015 and 2018.

## ■ Future leaders at the Global Leadership Summit

Over the years 2010–2016, several hundreds of young Bachelor students have participated in the UFS F-1 programme and visited one of the foreign partner universities. In total 28 students (and four staff mentors) spent two weeks in Amsterdam, living on the campus of the AUC and actively joining the AUC students in the Global Identity Experience course that is part of the core curriculum of all AUC Bachelor's programmes. They took lectures, made assignments, conducted a collective research project on diversity in one of the Amsterdam neighbourhoods and finally gave a presentation of their acquired knowledge, skills and experiences in a manifestation in the central hall of the AUC Science Park campus. During the two weeks in Amsterdam, the South African students withstood the cold Dutch winter while exploring a city struggling with so many, though not all, of the problems they were so familiar with in South Africa but that they had never known to exist in a First World country like the

Netherlands: economic inequality, ethnicity, gender and language differences. Many of them made friends with Dutch or other European students, visited them in their student houses for dinner and together explored the city's nightlife. Some of them managed to find a bursary to come back to the Netherlands (or another European country) to continue their studies abroad. Although part of them had travelled abroad before, for many visiting Amsterdam was a vast leap forward in broadening their spatial and mental horizon. Especially the black students positively expressed their amazement about the informal and cosmopolitan environment of the Dutch university, and in their view, absent signs of discrimination on campus and in the city.

This mental horizon broadening also held for the Dutch AUC students. Their academic training at AUC is largely theoretical and literature-based, and particularly the Global Experience Course they had to take is for them not much more than a mandatory exercise. However, during the four years that a group of South African students joined them in class, part of the AUC students saw theory on identity politics, race and diversity issues come to life in the discussions they could have in class with their experience-near fellow students from South Africa. The other way around, many South African students could not see the relevance of the in their eyes over-theorised academic articles they had to read in class. The assignments, then, were certainly a struggle, except for the field research part in downtown Amsterdam or one of the city's working-class neighbourhoods. All in all, the South African students did well in the course, which was not self-evident, given the fact that they arrived in a strange environment (quite a few had never left South Africa before), and were expected to make a head-start in a theory course together with well-settled international students only two days after arrival at Schiphol airport in mid-winter. I have never seen students adapting so quickly and broadening their minds in the cascade of impressions they received.

Reversely, the GLS the UFS organised as a kind reciprocal gesture in 2012, 2015 and 2018 were surely more disrupting and horizon-

widening for part of the Dutch VU and AUC delegation than being in Amsterdam had been for the South Africans. The GLS meetings the UFS organised aimed to involve staff and students from the overseas partner universities in the South African transformation process, but they also created a safe space to discuss commonalities and differences in diversity-related issues from across the world (Roux 2012). In each of the three meetings, hundreds of students walked, slept and discussed together for almost two weeks (2012, 2015; in 2018, it was only one week). The first two GLS meetings were held under the responsibility of rector Jonathan Jansen who had instigated the programme, and the 2018 version was held under the auspices of his successor, Francis Petersen.

All three GLS events consisted of a mix of lectures, discussions, working groups, theatre plays, music and social events in and around the Bloemfontein campus and in the city. In 2015, there was also a two-day visit to the UFS Qwaqwa campus, a 3 h drive Northeast of Bloemfontein. In 2018, a visit to the newly founded Sol Plaatje University in Northern Cape's capital Kimberley was frustrated by local protests and roadblocks in that city. Although the GLS welcomed various well-known and reputed experts on the themes of transformation, leadership, race, education, globalisation, gender, social justice and reconciliation, for both the South African and the international students exchanging experiences and sharing life on campus was the most important. The South African students participating (not all of them had an F-1 experience) were particularly glad to meet and have the time and space to discuss their daily problems and challenges openly amongst themselves, and also share them with non-South Africans who showed empathy and understanding as much as their sensitivity allowed them. For the latter, these discussions were often overwhelming. Quite a few of my Dutch students were shocked by the stories of poverty, discrimination and violence heard by them, as well as by the living conditions in the townships they witnessed during the outings. For them, concepts and theories came to life, and finally appeared to refer to real-life problems. In some cases, this led to deeply emotional encounters; sometimes they were simply speechless, puzzled and lacking the sensibility to react properly.

Interestingly, the various self-identity narratives described earlier were also noticeable in the student group meetings. There were Afrikaner students concerned about a possible loss of identity, politically engaged black students demanding justice beyond reconciliation, more reflective and analytical students – both blacks and whites – careerist thinkers and reconciliation-minded students. The majority of them showed leadership qualities equal to or stronger than those of my Dutch students. Perhaps the most intriguing of all was that practically all groups – not only the one I was mentoring during the 2018 GLS – showed the capacity of building a common identity across their different national, social, cultural and political positioning vis-à-vis the complex and challenging issues at the table. I often felt that I was witnessing and listening to the merging of self-identity building and group identity formation. Had indeed the F-1 experience, and particularly the exchange part of it, created the conditions that will produce the future leaders it was meant to deliver in the first place?

Over the years, several former F-1 programme students obtained leadership positions, for example in the SRCs. Some of them participated in the student protests of March 2016, when after some violent confrontations the UFS campus management decided to fence off the campus with barbed wire, as students protested writing graffiti slogans on university buildings (e.g. the name of Steve Biko appeared on the library building – later the name of the building at the Department of Student Affairs' offices was renamed as the 'Steve Biko House'). Former F-1s also participated in the debates on 'decolonising the curriculum' and changing 'campus culture' that took place in the aftermath of the 2016 protests. Some even pursued an international career after finishing their studies. Yet only the future will show what will come of all the ideas and plans displayed in the students' self-narratives and what will grow from the national and international relations built in the context of the F-1 Leadership for Change programme.

## ■ Conclusion and discussion

The seven UFS student self-identity narratives presented show how diverse the discursive positioning vis-à-vis South Africa's societal and institutional transformation process after more than 25 years still is. The leadership programme the students participated in clearly made them aware of their responsibility to contribute to university and even societal change. They all acknowledge that the programme has changed them on a personal level. Some have become more critical and reflective, while others started to explore more active ways of 'making a contribution', either along political lines or by seeking a personal career. The transformation concept clearly does not mean the same to all of them; the identity work they display in their narratives on self and others (Jenkins 2008) does not lead to one, or even more, central, distinctive and enduring group identities either (Albert & Whetten 1985). Some narratives show a more robust and coherent self-identity, particularly the more politically inspired ones, while others show more ambiguous and insecure positions. In that sense, the F-1 students here presented reflect the kind of self-identity pattern – from self-doubter to the more soldier-like type, with a more individual and contextual orientation respectively – that Alvesson (2010) described. All students are storytellers, that is they discursively make sense of their take on the transformation project, and what transpires from all these stories is that the programme – and particularly their trip abroad to Amsterdam (but the same holds for the other academic centres of exchange) – has widened their horizon beyond the culture of the home academic institution and the one they visited.

The adoption of a broader vision made them reflect on two related issues in particular that they feel are hampering transformation: language and colour (race). In various ways, all students refer to the effects of a still racialised society, and perhaps even more confronting for them: their racialised

university in particular. The student protests that started in 2015 with the Rhodes Must fall movement revolved around these same issues. The unhappy marriage between language and race is particularly played out in the historically Afrikaans language universities that scholars such as Steyn (2001) and Higgins (2007, 2013) characterise as places of institutional whiteness. Whether this culture of whiteness is still as prevalent as it was in pre-1994 South Africa can be doubted, but Jonathan Jansen's (2009) powerful analysis of white students' nostalgic embarrassment (based on student stories from the former Afrikaner University of Pretoria in the 1990s) has perhaps not lost its full plausibility yet (see also Kamsteeg & Wels 2012) . The debates and protests at the Bloemfontein campus forced the F-1 students to take position although not all of them did so - as became really clear during the GLS in 2018.

The self-identity narratives presented above confirm what Keet and Nel (2016), Walker and Loots (2016), as well as Jansen (2016) argue in their recent studies on the development of UFS democratic student citizenship over the last number of years. The Walker and Loots (2016:66) study asserts that all but a few students of the first F-1 cohort positively responded to the space universities offer for reflecting on and responding to the transformation problem. Jansen even attributes 'positive leadership' qualities to the students resulting from what he calls sensory leadership demonstrated by the (his!) university. Keet and Nel (2016:137) also perceive progress amongst UFS student leaders, although they stress that 'too good to be true' outcomes need to be taken with caution, because of what Bourdieu (in Keet & Nel 2016:137) calls 'collusive objectification'. They also point to the structuring force of habitus in the institutional field that tends to set limits to the likelihood of students taking up new responsibilities, as well as of researchers to be blinded by their own engagement (Keet & Nel 2016:139). Keet and Nel's study was based on interviews with students who served one or more terms in the SRC of the university, which often proves to be a stepping-stone for a political career. It was in the SRC positions that they

experienced the institutional limits of transformation, which also comes to the fore in the present study. Keet and Nel's students mostly opted for the political (collective) route to change; the F-1 students whose narratives I presented above display a broader array of options, including non-political and individual pathways. The contribution of the self-identity narratives-based approach taken in this contribution must, however, necessarily be modest. The narratives show that the university is a crucial place for identity work and subject positioning, but also that this identity work may take different shapes. Yet I believe that context-sensitive 'tales of the field' (Van Maanen 2010) contribute to a better understanding of how higher education transformation is shaped and interpreted. The social, cultural and political complexity of higher education transformation is to a large extent reflected in the various self-identity narratives of the students. Engagement – and that includes F-1 students – is never evenly distributed, yet multifaceted, and always contested.

In February 2016 confrontations during a rugby match on the Bloemfontein campus between students, their families and most probably people from outside of the university were followed by a series of incidents that had occurred at other universities in the country before. The UFS then joined the denominationally varied group of universities that have since then been struggling with their institutional past, and particularly the question if and how to 'decolonise' academia. This last issue has broadened the debate to include socio-economic injustices, and the crumbling morality of the state and the so-called parastatals in relation to the responsibility of the university and its students (see e.g. Booysen 2016; for an international discussion on the topic of decolonisation, see also Donskis et al. 2019 & Crul et al. 2020). The number of topics future F-1 students – if ever there will be new cohorts – need to include in their orbit of change and transformation has expanded rather than diminished. Although this may not sound as a hopeful message for present and future student generations, I nevertheless strongly believe that each of them will make a relevant contribution. This optimism is primarily based on the



various stories of self-identity themselves, who were each in their own way forward-looking and optimistic. Moreover, the stories also show that the paths towards transformation, however multifaceted and meandering they may appear, have in many ways been paved by the participants' experiences in the F-1 exchange programme. This was particularly noticeable in the many meetings between South African and international students at the various GLS, where previous exchange experiences were revived and retold, and the wide variety of individual student paths and identities – not only those of the South African students – seemed to blend in a kind of common social identity that could open new and common vistas on assuming leadership roles in a broad number of environments. Storytelling appears to be a powerful device for building the future.

# Race, religion and reconciliation: Academic initiatives, leadership development and social change

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Greater Cleveland; University of the Free State; Global Leadership Summit; Leadership for Change; International education.

## ■ Overview

In a June 2019 *Traditions & Beliefs Newsletter*, I offered the following introduction to research activities related to this chapter (Williams 2019b):

As someone who served as a Cleveland State University (CSU) faculty host for delegations from the University of the Free State (UFS) in 2011 and 2013, a member of the CSU delegation to the 2012 UFS-sponsored Global Leadership Summit (GLS) in Bloemfontein, South Africa; and a Fulbright Specialist on the Qwaqwa campus of UFS in 2019, I have had first-hand experience working with American and South African students who readily accepted the challenges associated with becoming change agents on their campuses, in their local communities, and in their countries. In almost every instance, students were invited to read, listen to, reflect upon, discuss, and write about the ideas of such leaders as Nobel laureates the Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu; and Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela – especially as these ideas related to the legacies of institutionalised racism and the need for truthfulness, forgiveness, and reconciliation in the 21st century. (p. 7)

This chapter includes an analysis of programme-related primary documents from 2010 to 2013, archival evidence from *The Vindicator* student newspaper at Cleveland State University (CSU), survey data related to the views of third-year history students at the UFS (Qwaqwa) and oral history evidence from interviews with CSU alumni. In the final analysis, this study seeks to enhance the level of ‘understanding of the ways in which ideas that are rooted in or related to religious and/or spiritual traditions’ (*Traditions & Beliefs Newsletter* 2019:7–8) might enhance or hinder the development of transformational leaders and post-secondary learning in secular societies.

## ■ The dead hand of the past and the living legacy of apartheid: Introduction

For Sinsonke Msimang and other South Africans, the TRC of President Nelson Mandela's government missed the mark when it tried to establish a process that would 'bear witness', record and, when appropriate, grant amnesty to the perpetrators of crimes of apartheid. With legendary human rights activist and Anglican Church leader Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the helm, Msimang writes in *Foreign Affairs* in an article entitled 'All Is Not Forgiven: South Africa and the Scars of Apartheid' that the TRC was, indeed, 'influential in shaping Africa's narrative of forgiveness and redemption'. He later added, 'Some people saw the entire process as a religious experience'. It did not, however, 'address the wounds of apartheid that continue to plague South Africa'. Msimang ends his article on a cautiously optimistic note, suggesting that change is possible and will not necessarily involve the 'flames of retribution', but the process of transformation will 'require courage a commitment from a *new generation of leaders*' (emphasis mine) (Msimang 2018:3-7). The UFS has joined forces with educational institutions across the globe to help train these very leaders, and, as information below suggests, religion might very well be one of the many factors that will continue to shape the views of future generations of leaders and social justice advocates in the global community.

In accepting the challenges associated with moving beyond a past that included so much, pain, suffering and death, Professors B. Dube and H.V. Molise are convinced that the aforementioned 'new generation of leaders' are not likely to be alone in their struggle to transform South Africa. In the *Journal for Contemporary History* in an article entitled 'The Church and Its Contributions to the Struggle to Liberate the Free State Province', Dube and

Molise (2018) state that many of the same pastors and congregants who supported Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the South African Council of Churches and other sectarian organisations during the anti-apartheid era have continued their struggle for true freedom, justice and social and economic equality in the post-1994 era (Boesak 2014 cited in Dube et al. 2018; Mukwada et al. 2013, cited in Dube et al. 2018):

Although the struggle against formalised, legalised apartheid has come to an end, the struggle for justice is not over, and that struggle has evolved into global struggles against new forms of global apartheid and new and renewed struggles for justice, and all struggles involve challenges to prophetic theology at its deepest core.

The struggle of the church of the Free State has taken on a new dimension; that of addressing poverty in the community. The Free State, particularly the Afromontane area, is largely impoverished and faces migration and unemployment.

Poverty is evolving rapidly, especially when the concept of poverty is broadened to incorporate notions of relativity, vulnerability and capability deprivation. (p. 170)

In addition to reducing poverty, these scholars provide evidence to show that churches are also promoting peace in their effort to rebuild South Africa and eliminate 'that which prevents [citizens] from attaining total emancipation, freedom, and equal opportunities' (Dube et al. 2018:172). This church-based struggle could benefit directly or indirectly from the work of the UFS.

## ■ Transformational and transactional leadership: An overview

In the welcome address that appeared in the printed programme for the inaugural GLS in July 2012, Jonathan Jansen, Professor, VC and Rector at the UFS, described his home institution as one that was 'in the throes of transformation, an institution facing up courageously to our wounded past'. Professor Jansen (2012) then went on to say:

The University of the Free State has been described as a bold South African experiment. In addition to our commitment to the academic project, we are probably the only university in the world that places reconciliation at the centre of its other core commitment, the human project. We pursue this objective not only on the clean pages of a new strategic plan, but also in the messiness of everyday campus life as we seek to bring together black and white, urban and rural, middleclass and very poor, English and Afrikaans and other African languages, natives and foreign nationals. (p. 2)

As a black faculty member at CSU, one of the American institutions that had agreed to partner with (UFS), I had already come to see Professor Jansen as a visionary leader. This was due in no small measure to my classroom experiences and other formal and informal engagements with UFS students and staff members during their 2011 visit to CSU. The students' analyses of and



Source: Photograph taken by CSU student using Regennia N. Williams' cell phone, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Regennia N. Williams.

**FIGURE 8.1:** The group photo of Dr Regennia N. Williams (third from right) and the 2011 cohort of University of the Free State students appeared in the Spring 2012 issue of the *Traditions & Beliefs Newsletter*, a publication of Williams' Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD).

commentaries on primary and secondary documents in my African American History class (HIS 216) were incredibly insightful and thought provoking. This was especially true when it came to our discussion of the Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 'Letter from a Birmingham City Jail', an important piece of protest literature from the Modern Civil Rights Era in American history and required reading for UFS F1 programme participants.

In that historical moment, I gained a new appreciation for the transformative power of teaching and learning, and I witnessed post-secondary students of different races, cultures, genders, classes and nationalities engaging in difficult dialogues about the need to learn from painful and often bloody pasts and then work together to chart a course for a better future for citizens throughout the global community.

In the matter of Dr King's 'Letter' (August 1963), it is worth noting that he addressed his remarks to White clergymen, who felt that his non-violent southern church-based movement for equal rights and social justice for black Americans was 'untimely'. King's (1963) response included these memorable lines from his now classic statement:

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct-action movement that was 'well timed' according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word 'wait'. It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This 'wait' has almost always meant 'never'. It has been a tranquilizing thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration. We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied'. We have waited for more than three hundred and forty years for our God-given and constitutional rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jet-like speed toward the goal of political independence, and we still creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward the gaining of a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. (pp. 5-6)

By linking the freedom struggles of African Americans to those of Africans and Asians, King reminded his readers that, '[i]njustice

anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere’, and, to a certain extent, presaged the work of Professor Jansen, his colleagues and at least some of the CSU delegates to the 2012 Summit in South Africa.

As this discussion will show, there is evidence to suggest that ideas emanating from various faith communities continue to play an important role in preparing transformative leaders in the 21st century, just as they did during the latter half of the 20th century. Specifically, this case study focuses on three post-Summit projects that have received support from CSU and other community partners in Greater Cleveland, Ohio and the US Department of State’s Bureau of Cultural Affairs via the Fulbright Program, namely:

- The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs and the Traditions & Beliefs Newsletter, two e-publications/Open Educational Resources that explore ideas that are germane to discussions of transformational leadership, race relations, religion and reconciliation. Launched in 2009 as a print journal and reformatted as an e-journal following my 2010 Fulbright Fellowship in Nigeria, The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs is produced by the Center for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (The RASHAD Center, Inc.) and disseminated throughout the world via CSU’s Engaged Scholarship initiative.
- The ongoing efforts to enhance ‘Praying Grounds: African American Faith Communities, A Documentary and Oral History Project’, a digital archival initiative and part of ‘Cleveland Memory’, the brainchild of William Barrow in CSU’s Library Special Collections.
- A new digital oral history project that focuses on leadership, change and the evolving role of religion and spirituality in the USA and South Africa since 1994, as seen through the eyes of GLS and CSU alumnae and members of faith communities and academic communities in South Africa’s Free State Province. Launched with initial support from the RASHAD Center, Inc. and Cleveland Public Library (‘The People’s University’), the



concluding section links this project to my summer 2019 Fulbright Specialist research and teaching activities at UFS (Qwaqwa campus).

Eventually, all of the digital oral history interviews and transcripts will also be available online. While these are relatively new initiatives, evidence that staff members in CSU's Michael Schwartz Library gathered using Google Analytics, CONTENTdm and other digital tools suggests that, as of November 2019, more than 23000 individuals throughout the global community had accessed and downloaded Praying Grounds and *Traditions & Beliefs* Engaged Scholarship resources. A related challenge, however, is associated with measuring the transformative power of these archival, research, writing and conference activities in the lives of current and future student leaders and other individuals since the late 20th century.

## ■ Transformational leadership, race and religion

In her article 'Transformational Leadership: Flow, Resonance, and Social Change', Enas Elhanafi (2019) offers the following definition of leadership to the readers of *The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs*:

Leadership is a dynamic relationship between leaders and followers. Successful leadership depends on an individual's ability to influence followers (Lipman-Blumen 2004, in Hickman 2010). Factors such as passion, commitment to purpose, and shared common goals and culture play a vital role in leader-follower relationships, which leads to followers developing their own inspiration and motivation (Aldoory and Toth 2004; Clawson 2012; Clawson and Newburg 2001; Molenberghs, Prochilo, Steffens, Zacher and Haslam 2015; Van Eeden, Cilliers and Van Deventer, 2008). In other words, effective leaders stimulate people to do more than they would ordinarily do otherwise. (p. 1)

For 'Transformational and Transactional Leadership' (2019), author Simone I. Flynn examines the two very different leadership styles and their impact on the behaviour of individuals in group

settings, both in the workplace and in the wider society. Flynn (2019) explains that the earliest scholarly discussions of the transformational or transactional leadership dichotomy are associated with the work of Bernard Bass, who, 'in 1985, developed the transformational or transactional model of leadership. Bass based his model on the work of James McGregor Burns who coined the concepts of transactional and transforming leadership in the 1970s' (Flynn 2019). According to Flynn (2019):

'Transactional leaders' refers to leaders who motivate their followers in the direction of the stated goals by clarifying work role and task requirements. Transactional leadership is a common management style that involves a chain of command and defined structure in which subordinates relinquish authority to their supervisors. In transactional leadership systems, subordinates are expected to do what their supervisor tells them to do. People are motivated by reward and punishment, such as increased pay or termination [...]

'Transformational leaders' refers to leaders who look beyond their own interests to act for the good of the organization. Transformational leaders tend to share similar traits, characteristics, and behaviours. For example, transformational leaders exhibit vision, staff development, supportive leadership, empowerment, innovative thinking, and charisma. Transformational leaders give their followers a cogent and inspiring vision of the future, treat them as individuals and encourage their development, give them encouragement and recognition, promote trust and cooperation among them, help them develop novel approaches to old problems, and instil in them pride and respect for one another and for their work. (p. 2)

Based on the above discussion, it would not be an exaggeration to suggest that Archbishop Desmond Tutu, The Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela were three of the most celebrated transformational leaders in 20th-century world history and the global struggle for human and civil rights and that they all had strong ties to religious communities. For both Tutu and King, the connections are more obvious, perhaps, than they are for Mandela.

At the height of his career as a tireless champion of the anti-apartheid cause in South Africa, Desmond Tutu held important

positions in the Worldwide Anglican Communion and eventually served as the leader of the liberation theology – influenced South African Council of Churches, which ‘helped to facilitate the anti-apartheid struggle by black churches’ (Dube et al. 2018:166).

In a similar fashion, the scholarship of Taylor Branch and Michael Eric Dyson shows that, like Tutu, King distinguished himself as a transformative leader within the black church community, first and foremost, and then in a variety of other faith communities and throughout civil rights and social justice communities, although he was only 39 years old at the time of his assassination on 04 April 1968. For many who participated in and gave financial or in-kind support to America’s Modern Civil Rights Movement, King was, indeed, a Baptist preacher, the pastor of a black Baptist Church, the founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and, perhaps most importantly, the moral voice of the movement itself (Branch 1988; Dyson 2000).

In Mandela’s award-winning biography *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995), readers do not find the story of someone who held formal positions within religious organisations. Instead, there is a detailed discussion of the work of leaders in churches and church-sponsored programs and institutions and their impact (positive and negative) on the lives of South Africa’s people in the 20th century. For example, Mandela, who was affectionately known to many as Madiba, his Xhosa clan name, described the hope that black South Africans of his generation associated with the availability of education, and the incredibly positive difference that schools affiliated with the Methodist Church had made in his young life. On the other hand, Mandela (Mandela 1995; Williams 2019b) also considers the reality of the damages done to black communities when students were denied equal access to quality education under the Nationalist government’s apartheid system in the post-World War II Era:

*Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farmworkers can become the president of a great nation. It*

is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another [...]

Yet, even before the Nationalists came to power, the disparities in funding tell a story of racist education. The government spent about six times as much per White student as per African student. Education was not compulsory for Africans and was free only in the primary grades. Less than half of all African children of school age attended any school at all, and only a tiny number of Africans were graduated from high school.

Even this amount of education proved distasteful to the Nationalists. The Afrikaner has always been unenthusiastic about education for Africans. To him it was simply a waste, for the African was inherently ignorant and lazy and no amount of education could remedy that. The Afrikaner was traditionally hostile to Africans learning English, for English was a foreign tongue to the Afrikaner and the language of emancipation to us.

In 1953, the Nationalist-dominated Parliament passed the Bantu Education Act, which sought to *put Apartheid's stamp on African education*. (pp. 166-167)

Mandela goes on to say that in the face of the increasingly limited educational programs favoured by the Nationalists after 1953, even denominational religious bodies that had offered excellent educational opportunities for black South African children in an earlier era eventually bowed to government pressure to conform to the new standards or risk losing all public support for their programs.

As an American who was born in the late 1950s and came of age during the 1970s, I often felt that my life experiences were far removed from those of students living under apartheid in South Africa. All of that began to change, however, following the 1976 student uprisings in Soweto and other townships and, in the year in which I graduated from high school, the 1977 murder of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko while he was in police custody. These and other highly publicised events during the 1970s and 1980s helped to raise the level of awareness of the challenges that South Africans faced, and 'college-aged students, performing

artists, and other American activists added their voices to the South African-led chorus calling for an end to apartheid rule' (Williams 2019a:n.p.), support for responsible corporate citizenship in the global community, the release of ANC leader Nelson Mandela, who had been sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964 and the creation of a democratic government in South Africa (Onslow & Van Wyk 2013:524-525).

Then as now, those who were willing to stand up for change came from different races, classes, cultures and nations. None, however, seemed to embrace the ideas associated with the role of transformative leaders in bringing about social and political change more than black South Africans, whose lives had been so circumscribed by apartheid. Some of their names, including those of Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, would become household words. The legacy of their 20th-century struggle continues to shape the action agendas of visionary South African leaders, including Professor Jonathan Jansen, Professor at Stellenbosch University, former VC and Rector at the UFS, recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Higher Education Administration Degree from CSU (2010), and the progenitor of the triennial UFS GLS in 2012. While in Cleveland in 2010, Professor Jansen was the guest of honour for *Transformation and Reconciliation in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, 'a themed dinner event sponsored by the Roslyn Z. Wolf Endowed Chair of Urban Educational Leadership at Cleveland State University' (CSU 2010).

As a member of the delegation from CSU, I served as a faculty mentor for students in the Race Cohort for GLS 2012 and gained an appreciation for the high level of professionalism and commitment associated with planning for and assembling hundreds of college students, faculty, and staff for this program. (Williams 2012). This chapter is one of several GLS follow-up activities, which now includes two South African related issues of *The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs*; Volume 6, 2018-2019 (already published in the fall of 2019) and Volume 7, 2019-2020 (target publication date fall 2020). The themes for these volumes are 'President Nelson "Madiba" Mandela, The Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr., and the New Millennium: Social Movements

2.0’ and ‘Jazz, Jobs, and Justice: From the American South to South Africa and Beyond, c.1960–Present’, respectively. For both volumes, the goal is the same: To facilitate learning directly from and about some of the diverse groups of students, scholars, artists and others who served as change agents during the subject eras. The same can be said of the oral history narratives, survey results and the reading and analysis of related secondary sources that also informed this study.

## ■ Narratives on religion, leadership, and change: An oral history in two parts

In June of 2019, the eve of the 400th anniversary of the beginning of chattel slavery in the British colonies that would become the USA, I partnered with Cleveland Public Library to launch Part I of



Source: Photograph taken by Regennia N. Williams, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Regennia N. Williams.

**FIGURE 8.2:** Pictured in this airport photo before their arrival in South Africa are the members of Cleveland State University’s student delegation to the 2012 Global Leadership Summit. They are (left to right) Jasmine Elder, Estefany Rodriguez, Kat Sullivan, Dan Morgan, Mo Al Bitar and Chris Caspary.

**Oral History Interview Protocol for  
'Race, Religion, and Reconciliation: Academic Initiatives,  
Leadership Development, and Social Change'**

1. Please state your name and institutional affiliation.
2. How long have you worked at this institution or in this field?  
(Feel free to discuss previous employment experiences.)
3. What is your primary field of expertise?
4. Can you tell me about your early life? What are your parents' names?  
When and where were you born? What schools did you attend?  
Who served as your most influential teachers, mentors, colleagues, etc.?
5. How long have you lived and worked in Ohio?  
What attracted you/your family to this part of the country?  
Do you have other family members in this area today?  
Why have you chosen to remain here?
6. Please tell me more about your experiences as an undergraduate student at Cleveland State University, especially as it relates to racial and cultural diversity.
7. When and how did you first become aware of the major social and economic challenges that people of colour (Black Africans, Coloured, and Indian) faced during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras in South Africa's history?
8. Were you involved in the Anti-Apartheid Movement or any social justice movements in the United States? Explain.
9. When and under what circumstances have you travelled to South Africa - as a student, worker, conferee, elections observer, etc.?
10. Are you familiar with the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the history of post-apartheid South Africa? If so, please tell me what you know about it.
11. If you attended the University of the Free State's Global Leadership Summit in 2012, please describe your experience as it relates to the following:
  - The application and interview processes
  - Meeting and working with other delegates from around the world
  - Writing about your experiences while in South Africa and since your return
  - Applying any lessons learned to your current work.
12. In what ways can the personal transformation of students influence the transformation of higher education institutions?
13. How can institutions take global learning initiatives to scale (both in terms of the number of participating students and partner universities) to influence the institution systemically?
14. What is the reciprocal effect on higher education institutions collaborating on global learning initiatives, especially if these institutions are from different continents in the world?

Source: Wahl and Pelsler (2019).

**FIGURE 8.3:** Oral History Interview Protocol for 'Race, Religion, and Reconciliation: Academic Initiatives, Leadership Development, and Social Change'.

a two-part oral history project. Titled 'Race, Religion, and Reconciliation', this part of the project was designed to gather information about the impact of the Leadership for Change Program and the GLS on former participants, to consider the place of these initiatives in the larger history of student leadership development at CSU, and to gain a better understanding of the

existing ties between South Africans and African Americans in the post-apartheid era.

The informants included Estefany Rodriguez and Jasmine Elder, two 2012 GLS alumnae, and the Reverend Mylion Waite, a former anti-apartheid activist and organiser with Cleveland's Interchurch Council (ICC).

This discussion begins with a consideration of the evidence gathered from the oral history with Waite, since her experiences as a CSU alumna and her work in the surrounding community in the 1980s helped, in some very significant ways, to lay the foundation for the 21st-century activities that would involve CSU and UFS students, faculty, staff as well as members of numerous other campus communities. The interview protocol for the Cleveland portion of the project appears in Figure 8.3. The concluding section of the chapter references 2019 interviews.

## ■ **First person narratives: The Reverend Mylion Waite, Cleveland State University Alumna**

The Reverend Mylion Waite is a licensed social worker and the Associate Pastor of Cleveland's Antioch Baptist Church. She holds post-secondary degrees from Cuyahoga Community College, CSU, Case Western Reserve University and the Ashland Theological Seminary. For more than 20 years, she worked with the ICC, serving as the director of Church and Society. She also served as an adjunct faculty member in the Social Work Department at CSU.

The daughter of African American Christians who left their Alabama homes and moved north to Ohio as part of the 20th-century Great Black Migration, this native Clevelander is also someone who developed the ICC's position on various social issues, including those that South Africans were grappling with during the 1980s and 1990s. Her oral history narrative focused on





Source: This photograph is a still from the Cleveland Public Library's oral history video collection. Photograph used in keeping with the terms of an international Creative Commons License, CC BY-NC-SA.

**FIGURE 8.4:** Cleveland State University alumna, the Reverend Mylion Waite, is pictured above during her June 2019 oral history interview in the Special Collections area of Cleveland Public Library.

the influence of the family, the church and the academy in shaping her worldview (Waite 2019):

I grew up in Cleveland, actually on East 87th Street off of Cedar, just a few blocks from the [*Antioch Baptist*] church and attended Cleveland schools. My dad [*Henry Ford*] was a truck driver. My mom [*Lula Ford*] was a homemaker, and I had four sisters.

In addition to that, church was always the centre of our lives. It turns out that my mom became a minister and a pastor when I was age 16. And so I learned a lot just being in church, watching my mom. Not many men [*accepted*] women ministers at that particular time. As a matter of fact, she left the Baptist denomination because at that point they were not recognizing women as clergy, and she started her own church ...

In addition to starting her own church, she was a social justice advocate. She was also a community of one in a sense of providing for people. I can remember my mom feeding people on the street without any government grants, without any type of outside

assistance. She made sure that people who were hungry, who came – people actually knocked on a door, and she would feed them. She walked down the street, and she'd say, 'son have you eaten today?' And they always, somehow, seemed not to have. She said, 'come with me'. And so I watched my mother being a person who didn't look for any accolades. She just did what she thought the Bible was informing her that she should be doing.

I think she was the greatest social worker I ever knew – in addition to being a wonderful pastor. My mom was my model in terms of how you carried yourself in the community, being concerned for other people and also striving, using all that you had, to be the best that you could be, and always believing that where you felt you lacked God was going to provide the other part. (n.p.)

Rev. Waite also provided detailed information about the difference that mentors in her home, church and educational environments made in her life. For Waite (2019), the influence of these role models and the ability to travel internationally had a tremendous impact on her life:

My mom always said, 'God has a plan. He has work for you to do'. And, later on in life, when I went to work for the Council of Churches she would always say, 'God has a plan for you, a purpose'. [*I would say*] 'I'm doing it, you know. I'm helping to feed the hungry. I'm housing homeless people'. So, she said, 'that's social work, but there's something else He wants you to do'. And so that always stayed with me.

Then, later on, I got the call to ministry, and she was right. It was so, so clear. I first heard that call in 1987. Later, when Reverend [*Marvin A.*] McMickle came to Antioch, he asked, 'what are you going to do about your call?'. And I said, 'what call?' ... So we talked about it, and I thought, well maybe I'll just check out seminary, but I wasn't fully committed to it. I wanted to teach Sunday school, and so he said, 'well that's a good place to start'.

From there, I went to seminary, and he licensed me and then ordained me in 1995 ...

I've been very blessed. I've had so many wonderful people in my life who wanted to share with me, but one person that I will always lift up is the Reverend Dr Donald G. Jacobs. Dr Jacobs was the Executive

Director of the Interchurch Council. He and I developed a friendship, and then he became my mentor and my encourager.

I later became the associate director of Church and Society, which put me over all of the programs and which then opened up so many other doors for me. As a result of that position and working with the Council, I think I finally have visited about 20 different countries now related to meeting human needs and social justice. (n.p.)

It was through her work at the ICC that Rev. Waite (2019) began organising 'Free South Africa' protests and marches, inviting labour and social justice activists as well as college students – including those at CSU, to join the protests:

I think once we started to learn more about life in South Africa, you know, in terms of the inequities; that people could work in an area and then they would be expected to leave the area at night ... the schooling, the fact that families were separated. Husbands would go, and they would work for months apart from their families ... So, when you put all of that together it was just a horrible, horrible, inhumane way of living. When people started to see this, it just became [*clear that*] it was just wrong. Everybody knew it was wrong. (n.p.)

During her tenure with the ICC, Rev. Waite was well aware of the legacy of the work of the Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. and the ongoing activism of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Both leaders shaped her thinking during her college days and afterwards (Waite 2019):

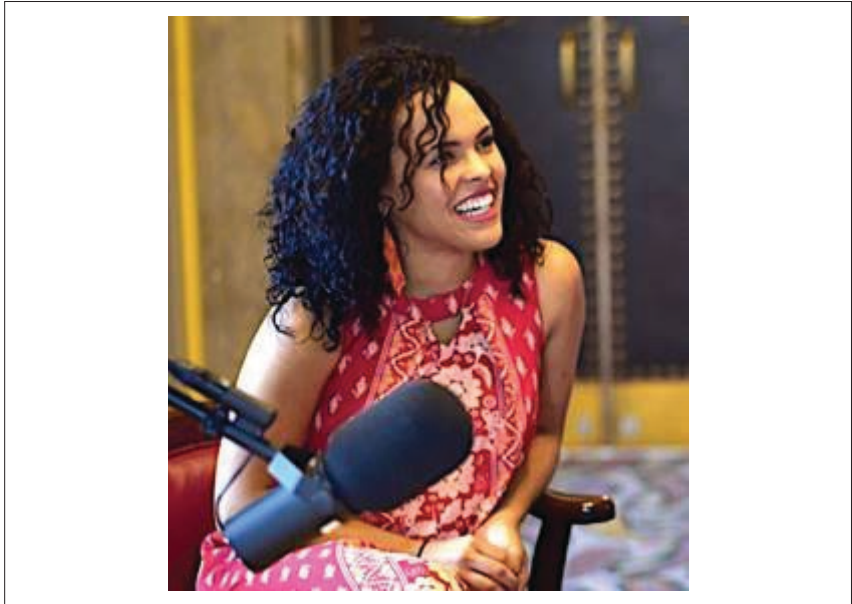
Bishop Tutu certainly contributed a lot to my thought about social action and social justice. Dr King, of course, everybody knows Dr King, and we often just associate him with the 'I Have a Dream' speech, but he was so much more than 'I Have a Dream', which is very important ... Its thinking about how we all live together, how we share in God's earth together, and what it means to be, to care for one another ... I believe in talking more about reconciliation and forgiveness and how important it is for us to forgive one another. It's not just a one-sided adventure, and if we're going to live together on this earth it requires that we live in forgiveness. It took me a while to really understand what Bishop Tutu was trying to get at when he put together [*those*] reconciliation hearing[s] ...

[*Tutu*] talked about morality, the morality of it all. It wasn't just the church, but he was able to get people, all kinds of people, to come together on this ... It was not just the Anglican Church. (n.p.)

Through her work in the church, her college and university training and her social justice activism with the ICC, Waite found her voice and came into her own as a leader.

## ■ **First person narratives: Estefany Rodriguez, Global Leadership Summit and Cleveland State University alumna**

As a Latina immigrant to the USA from the Dominican Republic, Estefany Rodriguez faced and overcame numerous challenges on the road to securing two post-secondary degrees at CSU, including challenges associated with family separation, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, second language acquisition and



*Source:* This photograph is a still from the Cleveland Public Library's oral history video collection. Photograph used in keeping with the terms of an international Creative Commons License, CC BY-NC-SA.), with permission from Cleveland Public Library.

**FIGURE 8.5:** Cleveland State University alumna Estefany Rodriguez is pictured above during her June 2019 oral history interview in the Special Collections area of Cleveland Public Library.

more. As an American citizen who identifies as black, she brought a wealth of knowledge about diversity-related issues to her work with the UFS student delegates during their 2011 visit to CSU, her participation in the 2012 GLS and this oral history research project. In the opening minutes of her 2019 oral history interview, she stated (Rodriguez 2019):

I work at Cleveland State, and I also graduated twice from Cleveland State, obtaining my bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's in public administration ... I've worked at Cleveland State in this specific role for three years now. I support students who graduated from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Before then, I worked as a student employee.

Since 2010, [*my focus has been*] public administration with education. When I decided to pursue my degree in public administration, I wanted to ensure that I kept my passion for education involved. I believe that education is social justice, and I always say this because education provides access to those of us who may have been underrepresented over the years and didn't have the access because of lack of education, either systematically because of systemic oppression or just limited access financially.

I care about the growth of youth in urban settings, so I thought pursuing a degree in public administration would allow me to provide that access. I did not want to become a teacher, but I wanted to just literally provide the resources and access to students who were like me at some point. (n.p.)

When asked about her awareness of the major social and economic challenges that people of colour, including black Africans, Indians and mixed race people in South Africa faced during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras, she stated (Rodriguez 2019):

I first learned about [*these challenges*] when delegates from South Africa came to Cleveland State; I believe it was 2011. I was selected as one of the peer mentors for the students ...

Before they arrived, we attended a training to learn more about South Africa ... I knew of Nelson Mandela but I didn't know the extent of how apartheid took place, because, unfortunately, our history classes do not teach us as much ... So, I did not get to learn that.

Also, with having an education in the Dominican Republic and then here, the first time that I learned about it was during that training. I learned about the different pass[es] and the areas that black South Africans could not go to. That, to me, I remember, was shocking. So that's when I first learned about it, then I became passionate to learn about it, so that's why I continued to get involved. (n.p.)

Asked whether she considered herself to be a part of a movement before, during or since her experiences in South Africa and/or in other parts of the world, she said of her experiences (Rodriguez 2019):

That was a pivotal moment of my life. That Leadership Summit impacted my life, and I can go on about that. But I remember, since I was a little kid, I always had this fire, when people were treated wrong. I remember talking to you about it. I wrote about it, but being from Dominican Republic ... when I was a little kid I experienced it, too. The schools that I went to there were predominantly [*for*] white Dominicans. At times I experienced [*discrimination*] because I didn't fit here and ... also getting treated badly by family members, and seeing injustice always got me upset when I was a little kid. (n.p.)

In describing her very adult and life-changing experiences working with the South African students at CSU in 2011 and the 2012 GLS at the UFS, Rodriguez (2019) went on to say:

Meeting new people from different places [*was life-changing*]. I remember when the delegates came to the U.S. In those two weeks, it was learning about them, learning their perspectives, but the fire really rekindled when we went to South Africa in 2012. The conversations were very charged, and I remember (I'm pretty observant, so I don't talk much; now I talk a little more.) I was quiet for most of the trip for a couple reasons, but you know I was just observing and listening to all the conversations and people. So many countries were represented – Japan, Netherlands, a couple universities from the U.S., so just seeing people from so many places come together and the cohorts that we were placed in, because we were placed in cohorts for social justice and education; everybody that I remember ... 'Social Constructs of Race', 'Change Agents', 'Reconciliation', 'Globalization'. 'Gender'. And the teachers and the faculty went with us ...

We would keep the conversations going after the workshops ... I remember the Friday night at the cafeteria when we all got done with dinner, we put music on and everybody was dancing together.

We were all just dancing in a circle, and we were coming together. It was the most beautiful experience ...

I remember the next night we got together with another cohort. I don't remember where we were sitting, but it was some sort of lounge area, and we continued talking about how the rooms were divided. Inside the rooms, well they said that they were integrated – like they were black and white, but in reality inside a room it was [*segregated*], and that was the regular setup of the dorms. We talked about it. We all got together from different countries to talk about how we felt about that. We talked about how education and our countries were, so we just bonded so much outside of the workshops.

It helped me develop a different perspective of the world how I viewed the world, and it made me feel like, okay this fire that's always in me was for a reason, and there are other people like me; there are other people who feel the same way that I do. (n.p.)

Cleveland State University's GLS Newsletter contained brief essays from student delegates, including Rodriguez. A member of the Education cohort, she wrote (Rodriguez 2012, cited in Williams 2019d):

These interactions provided my greatest learning experiences and I feel that students really wanted changes to happen and they had open minds regarding the issues going on in their country and in the world. (n.p.)

Asked whether she still felt that way, she said yes, because the newsletter statement referred to the heated conversations about the room set-up. To her mind (Rodriguez 2012, cited in Williams 2019d):

Everyone felt strongly about social justice in their countries, in their institutions, and South Africa. We all developed this caring for each other, and we were going through and offering each other solutions. (n.p.)

Rodriguez (2012, cited in Williams 2019d) believed then and she continues to believe now that she can make a positive difference in her community:

I've been able to do that in various ways. I was going to become a school psychologist because I care about, like I said, representation and education ... but I realized, you know, as a school psychologist I'm not taking action as much as I would like to, so I decided to pursue my degree in public administration. With that I did a lot of research about education in urban settings and I always said I wish I could find a role in which I was helping students pursue an education, because, like I said, education is social justice for me. (n.p.)

With regard to the ways in which the personal transformation of students might influence the transformation of HEIs, Rodriguez (2012, cited in Williams 2019d) stated:

Something that I liked – and I believe that can and should be, and I know when some institutions have started to be applied is just the concept of civil discourse. And that's something that I noticed that took place there in the Leadership Summit. We need more of that ... We can't just mask problems. We can't just not have conversations. We have to address this conversation ... As some of us go through this development, we should create those spaces and give people a seat at the table to continue to have these conversations to change systems. (n.p.)

## ■ **First person narratives: Jasmine Elder, Global Leadership Summit and Cleveland State University Alumna**

As a native Clevelander and a lifelong member of St. Timothy Missionary Baptist Church, Jasmine Elder is well acquainted with the history of religious institutions as change agents. She participated in the 2012 GLS when she was an undergraduate student. Today, she holds both a Bachelor's degree with a double major in psychology and sociology and a minor in women's studies and a Master's Degree in adult learning from CSU, and she works as an employment specialist serving individuals who have struggled with homelessness. She is also active in a number of community outreach ministries at her church, and she replied to questions about her primary field of expertise in the following manner:





Source: Photograph taken by Jasmine Elder, exact date and location unspecified, published with permission from Jasmine Elder.

**FIGURE 8.6:** Cleveland State University alumna, Jasmine Elder.

‘I would say leadership and education ... When it comes to education, I care so much about it. I encourage people to really be about it ... I work with individuals who obviously experience some type of rough time, some type of trauma in their lives, and it ended that they’re homeless, so what we do is we put them in permanent housing. As an employment specialist, I help them find jobs.

‘A lot of the time they realize that, oh I don’t have a high school diploma. Oh I don’t know this skill/these technical skills. I don’t know how to read. I don’t know how to write. Then, while its not strictly written into my responsibilities, duties, and roles; I’m a very strong advocate about, oh let’s go back to school ... I’m always promoting education ... I kind of try to encourage that as much as possible, and I’ve had plenty of clients go back to school’. (J. Elder, pers. comm., June 20, 2019)

As an undergraduate student at CSU, Elder joined the TRIO program, an initiative that offered support for first-generation

college students and the AHANA Program for African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American students, where, as she stated during the interview:

'You really start to see ... a lot of just different types of cultures come together. I think that was my first real exposure ... I grew up in an all-black community. You rarely would see anybody that did not look like me'. (J. Elder, Pers. Comm., June 20, 2019)

Elder also spoke candidly about her encounters with diversity in a South African setting:

'When I went over and engaged in the workshops, you know, all of the activities ... I feel it really gave me the energy to be more passionate about stuff that matters ... You know those disparities between rights exist, but it wasn't really, I guess, when [*I was*] at Cleveland State. I was doing fine; it wasn't like it was hitting me. But going over there, seeing ... knowing that I'm a transformational leader ... breaking up into a cohort ... meeting people around the country ... I couldn't do that at Cleveland State, but I'm somewhere else doing that. Being around so many passionate leaders kind of just energized the conversation for me to step up ... I just needed to be around people in order for me to start. So yeah, I have to say that that really was the turning point; being in the midst of it like you can't help but to get involved. And I mean we had very heated conversations at one point ... I think it really just made me feel like I have to be passionate about something, because I was able to be a part of such an experience.

'I can't turn my back on people because we may not be in the same situation. I think that's really what that Summit did for me: There are people just like me; this could be me ... I would love to be like this revolutionary-like leader; just like stand up, you know, somewhere and not get in trouble for it, but like also being willing to take risks'. (J. Elder, Pers. Comm., June 20, 2019)

Elder also noted that cohort discussions sometimes focused on the role that the church might play in relieving suffering and addressing some of the other political challenges that we were hearing about:

'I think, maybe, in most of my sessions, they referenced God. Obviously, I'm one of faith ... Faith is very real; hope is alive, so that was inspiring.

‘We did go to a church [*in South Africa*]. We had a discussion in one of the churches across the street from the campus of the University of Free State ... the Qwaqwa campus’. (J. Elder, Pers. Comm., June 20, 2019)

She also noted, however, that religion can sometimes create new challenges in the life of a community and become a hindrance:

‘With a lot of our social issues ... people are losing, like we said, hope. One of the things, I think, that religion does is tell us to have that ... so I think that’s how it helps.

‘I think, systematically, the politics of religion is what hinders transformation. I mean, we have a lot of things going on in today’s society where people think that God is against things like that, so that could start to hinder people, depending on your message ... There’s a difference between religion and spirituality, and I think when one is not connected with themselves it is much harder to deliver some type of message of hope, to be faithful, just being able to be okay with yourself, and know where you stand spiritually, before we try to deliver some type of message ...’ (J. Elder, Pers. Comm., June 20, 2019)

Elder later identified the ‘disconnect with our LGBT community and our churches’ as one of the hot button political issues that might be a hindrance, if people tended to shy away from involvement with religious institutions out of fear of being mistreated or judged.

In the final analysis, she remained convinced that one of the best things that institutions of higher education can do to promote leadership development is to promote international education:

‘Study abroad. Be in a different place, and learn about someone’s culture - and not have to do it here or read a book ... really making it more accessible early on in people’s educational pursuit. Because at the end of the day, if I don’t know about it I can’t achieve it. And then make it more affordable ... Maybe we should have had to study abroad. I can’t learn [about] only the adults here. So it was a higher ed check ... Make it more accessible; get our kids to think about it more. A lot of kids never know that they can travel the world.

‘Create more spaces to have these difficult conversations and then all of us gaining something. We’re gonna gain knowledge from this

whether you want to listen to her or not; whether you want to see or not. We're gonna gain something, by being able to open your voice ... When I'm sitting in a class right now — and the history classroom was something like that, and I hear something, I can speak up. Just little things like that, being able to change the course of what's written ...' (J. Elder, Pers. Comm., June 20, 2019)

A few years after leaving South Africa, Elder shared that she thought about her GLS experiences and decided to visit a tattoo parlour, where she got a tattoo that says, 'Be the Change', echoing the sentiments of Mohandas K. Gandhi, who also had a South African-related narrative, '[b]e the change that you want to see in the world'. Elder says the tattoo is a constant reminder that you see 'every time you look at my arm, because I want to do something different'.

## ■ Conclusion and the need for additional research: Doing oral history in an American-South African context, University of the Free State (Qwaqwa)

In *Doing Oral History*, Donald A. Ritchie (2014:xii) suggests that '[t]he end of apartheid in South Africa unleashed new interview projects because oral historians realized that [South Africans'] George Washingtons and Thomas Jeffersons were still living'.

Indeed, there is an abundance of evidence in South African library and archival collections, including those at UCT, to support Ritchie's claim about the perceived value of the first person narratives of the nation's founding fathers ... and mothers! UCT's Centre for Popular Memory (CPM) helped build one such collection that now contains more than 3000 interviews. In describing the work of the CPM, Renate Meyer, the former director of the CPM and UCT's current Head of Special Collections, said (UCT 2019):

When we started the CPM, there was a surge of interest in 'voice'. It wasn't long after South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994

and there was a lot of interest in community voices, struggle voices, multi-faceted versions of history and a focus on oral history as a research methodology. The centre's activities were based on the belief that people's stories have the power to contribute to social and developmental change. As we hear, see, imagine and empathise with others, we can contribute to altering attitudes, perceptions and policy. (p. 1)

Like Meyer, I have spent many years recording 'community voices' in my work as an oral historian or social historian. My belief in the value of this type of research led me to identify current and former students and educators in Qwaqwa who would share their oral history narratives and their views on the evolving role of religion and spirituality in post-apartheid South Africa since President Mandela's election in 1994. The interview protocol for this component of my summer 2019 Fulbright Specialist Project-related research appears in Figure 8.7, and the resulting narratives offer unique insiders' perspectives on this topic.

Page 16 of the Module Guide for HIST 3728, Part I, 'How to Make History: Oral History', a course for third-year history students at UFS includes the following statement in Footnote 8 (UFS 2019):

From the 1950s, led by the Belgian scholar Jan Vansina, historians began to collect their own oral material in the field in Africa, alongside anthropologists, exchanging experience of methods and interpretation. Jan Vansina's first recording was in the Congo in 1953, of a Bushong poet-historian who told him, 'we carry our newspapers in our heads'. (p. 16)

During the summer of 2019, It was my great pleasure to try, as an American, to access some of the 'newspapers' that South Africans 'carry in [their] heads', as part of a larger effort to gain a better understanding of the evolving role of religion, spirituality and transformational leadership in the history of the Free State (c. 1994-2019) and throughout the global community. Time and space did not allow for the creation of a comprehensive study of this topic. It is my hope, however, that my concluding remarks,

***South African 'praying grounds' oral history interview protocol for 'the evolving role of religion and spirituality in South Africa, c. 1994-2019'***

1. Please state your name and church and/or choir affiliation.
2. How long have you been a member of your present church or choir?
3. Can you tell me about your early life? What are your parents' names?  
When and where were you born? What schools did you attend?  
What was the name of your family's church, and who was the pastor?  
What kind of music was used in the worship service? Etc.
4. How did you become a member of the church?  
Can you describe the experience of joining' the church? Was an invitation extended?  
If so, what song, if any, would the congregation likely sing during the invitation?  
Can you sing a little bit of that song now?
5. How soon after joining the church were you baptised?  
Were you baptised indoors or outdoors?  
Who conducted this service? How did you dress for the baptism? Were other individuals baptised with you? Were there special songs for the service?  
Can you sing a little bit of one of those songs?
6. How long have you lived in this part of South Africa? What attracted you or your family to this part of the country? Do you have other family members, close friends, musical arts colleagues, etc. in this area today? Why have you chosen to remain in this part of South Africa?

**Religion and Social History Questions**

7. What were some of the major challenges facing religious leaders and their congregants during the apartheid era?
8. How did the work of the church improve the quality of lives of South African citizens living under apartheid and/or help to undermine the apartheid system?
9. Were you, your relatives, your church, or your pastor actively involved in the anti-apartheid struggle?
10. In addition to meeting the spiritual needs of members, does your church provide any social services, such as job training and placement, operating hunger centres or homeless shelters, etc.?
11. How has the role of the church in South Africa changed since the advent of Democracy in 1994?
12. What are some of the major issues that South African churches are grappling with today?
13. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the evolving role of religion and spirituality in South Africa?

**The complete list of interviewees includes the following names:**

1. Rev. Paulus Mohatlane
2. Elder Mokole A. Mosia
3. Rev. Alfred Komako
4. Katlego Mtshali (Undergraduate Student)
5. Dr Jared McDonald, Historian and Acting-Vice Principal
6. Mzuzomuhle Ndumiso, Post-Graduate Student
7. Matseliso Makhubo, Post-Graduate Student and Staff Member

**FIGURE 8.7:** South African 'praying grounds' oral history interview protocol for 'the evolving role of religion and spirituality in South Africa, c. 1994-2019'.



Source: Photograph taken by Regennia N. Williams, August 2019, Qwaqwa classroom, published with permission from Regennia N. Williams.

**FIGURE 8.8:** Historian and my co-instructor Dr Jared McDonald (front row, right) in an August 2019 Qwaqwa classroom photo with third-year history students enrolled in our Oral History Module.

based in part on UFS student responses to the survey shown in Figure 8.9, will serve as catalysts for further research.

Having taken a close look at four of the 10 life oral history narratives that I gathered specifically for the 2019 research that would inform this study, there are three activities that remain at the top of my list of research-related priorities:

1. To transcribe, analyse, and make available to library patrons all interviews and survey results in a digital archive.
2. To identify additional South African and American narrators for this oral history project in 2020.
3. To write and speak about this topic in ways that will, in the spirit of Dube and Molise (2018); put South Africans at the centre of the recounting of the history of religion, spirituality and leadership development in their lives while resisting the urge to view the past only through the Anglo-American lens of coloniality.

In August 2019, 33 third-year students in my Oral History Module on the Qwaqwa campus gave me, by way of their survey

**Religion and spirituality student survey**

**Instructions:** Please do not include your name on this form. Use your knowledge of South Africa's history and/or your personal experiences to answer the following questions by drawing a circle around the response that best represents your feelings on the subject matter.

1. Religious institutions and/or church-affiliated organizations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas were aware of the challenges that church and community members faced during the apartheid era.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
2. Religious institutions and/or church-affiliated organizations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas were actively involved in efforts to improve the quality of life for South African citizens living under apartheid.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
3. Religious institutions and/or church-affiliated organizations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas helped to undermine the apartheid system.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
4. Someone in my family participated in the church-related anti-apartheid struggle in the Greater Qwaqwa community.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
5. Religious leaders of our time have a responsibility to speak out against government corruption and social and economic injustices.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree

**FIGURE 8.9:** Religion and Spirituality student survey.

*(Figure 8.9 continued on the next page)*



6. Religious institutions and/or church-affiliated organizations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas have the resources (time, talent and finances) to serve as change agents in their communities.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
7. Religious institutions are important social and cultural centers in Qwaqwa.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
8. Since 1994, religious institutions and/or church-affiliated organizations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas have supported the provision of social and economic services, such as job training and placement and food distribution.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
9. Since 1994, individuals in my family or community have benefitted greatly from support services (social, economic, educational, etc.) provided by a religious institution or church-affiliated organization in Qwaqwa or some other rural area.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
10. The influence of religion and spirituality in Qwaqwa and other rural areas has declined since 1994.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree

**FIGURE 8.9 (Continues...):** Religion and Spirituality student survey.

responses, information that highlights the need for further research on the evolving role of the church in the new South Africa. For example, 24/33 respondents (73%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that ‘[r]eligious leaders of our time have a responsibility to speak out against government corruption and social and economic injustices’. However, only 16/33 respondents (48%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that ‘[r]eligious institutions and/or church-affiliated organisations in Qwaqwa and other rural areas

have the resources (time, talent and finances) to serve as change agents in their communities'. These findings, based on a small, non-random sample of students are not necessarily representative of the feeling of majority of Qwaqwa's church members, but they may lend additional support to Rev. Paulus Mohatlane's argument about the lack of resources amongst churches or church leaders who would - if only they could - do more to improve the quality of life for residents in their communities (P. Mohatlane, Pers. Comm., August 5, 2019). Given that more than one adult member of Rev. Mohatlane's Courageous Faith Church in Zion was enrolled in classes at UFS when I visited in August 2019, there might very well be leaders-in-training in that Qwaqwa congregation and others in the surrounding community. Only time and more research will tell.



# An integrated understanding of theory, learning and transformation

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**Keywords:** Comparison; Similarities; Differences; Self-awareness; Leadership identity; Challenging the status quo; Global challenges; Interconnected identities; Global commons; Leadership and a complex context; Systemic nature of change; Developing countries.

## ■ Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to return to the overarching question of this edited volume, namely: In what ways did the F1L4C and GLS programmes enhance student leadership development, within

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higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces?

In an attempt to answer this research question, this final chapter will first compare the conceptual framework, established in the first two chapters of the volume with the content of the rest of the chapters. This will be done by underlining similarities and differences between the existing body of literature and the perspectives raised by the various authors of this volume. It is believed that this comparison will provide a firm foundation to conclude with some generalisations about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development, within higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces. Through this, the author – as the principal editor – will aim to create a deeper and more integrated understanding about student leadership development, global learning and higher education transformation.

## ■ **Similarities and differences between the conceptual framework and authors' perspectives**

To establish a logic flow, this section will categorise the similarities and differences between the conceptual framework and authors' perspectives according to the same broad categories outlined in the first two chapters, namely, (1) basic principles of student development, (2) theoretical models on student leadership development, and (3) theoretical perspectives on global learning, especially from a perspective of higher education transformation. This section will also discuss some of these similarities and differences as a way to 'prepare the ground' for the generalisations at the end of this chapter.

### ■ **Comparison 1: Student development theory**

Student development is experience-driven. In Chapter 1, Wahl and Mason-Innes explained the responsibility that institutions of higher learning have to create learning experiences that can

sufficiently challenge students' existing patterns of behaviour and thought. In this regard, Jansen (ch. 3) and Pelsler (ch. 4) mentioned how the UFS took up this responsibility when, in 2010, this institution established the F1L4C and the GLS programmes. The aim of these development programmes was clear; to disrupt societal patterns of racial segregation and discrimination in individual students, the institution and society. The UFS decided that the most effective way to create transformational leaders would be through the creation of global learning spaces.

Although many post-secondary institutions have initiated global learning initiatives, the UFS programmes are considered to be uniquely different. Firstly, these programmes were initiated as a direct response to a moment of crisis. In Chapter 3, Jansen explained how a notorious racist video exposed institutional racism at the UFS in 2008. Although this crisis moment was located within the university, it also served as an indicator of a broader class of problems concerning higher education transformation. The way that the UFS responded to these challenges is important because it provides an example of how institutions can become what Taleb (2012) calls 'anti-fragile' – how to benefit from negative experiences and turn crisis moments into learning experiences.

Secondly, the F1L4C and GLS programmes illustrate how HEIs can use their agency to initiate global learning spaces in partnership with institutions in the global North. Thus, the UFS initiative is different in the sense that the origin and coordination of this global learning initiative were located in the global South. Partnerships were built from an institution in a developing country to institutions in developed countries. This is significant because it opens new avenues showing how the transformation of higher education could be initiated and coordinated. Although it could be expected for universities in the global North to initially consider novel ideas like the F1L4C and GLS programmes, the fact that many of these institutions remained to be collaborative partners over almost a decade is an indication of the reciprocal benefit they also received through these learning experiences. The authors

of Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, as well as Addendum A – all from partnership universities – created a deeper understanding of how the F1L4C and GLS programmes enriched the learning environment for students and staff from partner universities.

The third unique aspect of the UFS global learning experience is that it provides an example of a relatively larger global learning initiative. Over 9 years (from 2010 to 2018), the F1L4C and GLS programmes collectively involved 780 student participants and 259 staff members from 109 institutions across four continents. Differently stated – the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes were large in scope and time. Therefore, the practical explanation that Pelsler provides in Chapter 4 on how the UFS established, coordinated, monitored and evaluated this global learning initiative could be extremely valuable in creating a deeper understanding of how large-scale global learning initiatives can be initiated and sustained.

Another concept fundamental to student development is dissonance. In Chapter 1, the authors explained why it is important that learning experiences create a dissonance (or disequilibrium) in students' existing patterns of behaviour and thought. Therefore, an important question arises about how the F1L4C and GLS programmes created dissonance for participating students. Differently stated, was the learning experiences created through the F1L4C and GLS programmes challenging enough to facilitate change in students? Throughout the edited volume, various authors – including Baillie, who provided what can be perceived as a very critical analysis in Chapter 5 – indicated the positive changes that occurred in students because of the UFS global learning programme. One specific aspect of change, as highlighted by Bell and Bell (ch. 6), is the change in socialisation patterns of participating students at the UFS. These authors make a valuable contribution, through SNA, by indicating how the F1L4C and GLS programmes disrupted the socialisation patterns of UFS students across race, gender and campus location; something which resulted in more integrated social networks. Furthermore, the developmental effect of dissonance created by the programmes was not only applicable to UFS students. Kamsteeg (ch. 7), DuBois

(Addendum A) and Williams (ch. 8) all indicated how the paradigms of participating students from partner universities were challenged. Although these authors indicated how the UFS 'global learning initiative sufficiently disrupted students' existing patterns of behaviour and thought, they also illustrated how the F1L4C and GLS programmes provided support to students.

Chapter 1 highlighted the reciprocity between challenge and support as an important aspect of student development. How did the UFS ensure that the learning experiences remained within Vygotsky's ZPD? Also, did the university ensure that the right level of challenge was coupled with the necessary support? In Chapter 4, Pelsler underlined the fact that the role played by staff mentors to mediate global learning experiences for students was an important component of the F1L4C and GLS programmes. What is notable is that staff members from both the UFS and partnership universities were involved in this role (although UFS staff were more intently involved during the F1L4C programme). This is important because it might highlight for HEIs a crucial aspect of building strong collaboration in the ambit of joint global learning initiatives. Furthermore, the UFS provided focused pre- and post-travelling training and support to students participating in the F1L4C. This kind of support to students in developing countries seems to be important, especially because of the sudden mobility and quick exposure to different environments. It can be said that the UFS prepared students well for their international visits (for many students the first experience of this kind ever – as Jansen indicated) and further assisted to reintroduce them back to their home institution and own communities.

In summary, mentoring together with pre- and post-visit support contributed to the readiness of students to adapt to the challenges presented through the F1L4C and GLS programmes. Although the UFS provided individual support to students, it is clear from this edited volume that the developmental role of the context within which the UFS global learning programmes existed also had a significant impact on the development of students.



In Chapter 1, Wahl and Mason-Innes highlighted the impact that developmental contextualism could have on student development. To this effect, the impact that different contextual systems have on one another, and their interconnected role in the development of individual students, become vital considerations in understanding student development. In Chapter 3, Jansen aptly illustrated how patterns of societal racism in central South Africa (and beyond) impacted the institutional context of the UFS, and how this interconnection impacted the student population before his appointment as rector and VC in 2009. Jansen stressed the fact that the development of individual students cannot be separated from the interconnected influence that contextual forces have on student development. The UFS could, therefore, not change individual students without also changing the context within which they develop. One of the ways the UFS chose to facilitate this integrated approach to transformation was through global learning. Thus, the UFS global learning project becomes an interesting case that illustrates the notion of developmental contextualism, especially that student learning and development – also within the ambit of global learning – cannot be separated from the interconnected impact that different contextual systems have on students.

In summary, it is evident from different chapters in this volume that the basic building blocks of student development were present in many aspects of the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes. That this global learning project was initiated and sustained from the context of a higher education institution in a developing country (South Africa) in the global South, provides a unique lens about how global learning can be understood. In this regard, one specific aspect that might be unique to the UFS project is the institutional and societal contexts (presumably different from that of developed countries in the global North) that gave rise to, and ultimately influenced the impact of this global learning project.

Although the authors of this edited volume raised perspectives very similar to the basic principles of student development theory, the question regarding how the UFS F1L4C and GLS

programmes compare with the different models of student leadership development still remains (as discussed in ch. 1).

## ■ **Comparison 2: Leadership development models**

In Chapter 1, Wahl and Mason-Innes discussed seven different models of leadership development. However, in comparison with the perspectives of authors who contributed to this edited volume, which aspects of the leadership development models were present in the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes?

### □ **Self-awareness**

Three leadership development models – the servant leadership model, the SCM and the LID model – emphasised the importance of self-awareness in the beginning phases of leadership development. In most chapters, the authors explained how the F1L4C and GLS programmes facilitated self-awareness amongst participating students; not only for the students from the UFS but also for participating students from partner universities. Thus, this work points out the fact that global learning initiatives can support the development of student leaders, specifically in the way it facilitates self-reflection. However, what the authors of this volume show is that the kind of self-reflection facilitated by global education brings ‘perspective consciousness’ (as explained in ch. 1) to the fore. Differently said, global learning enables a particular aspect of self-reflection; that students become aware of themselves – their perspectives, privileges, biases and worldviews – concerning that of diverse others. Hence, global learning becomes an effective tool for developing student leaders. In this regard, the authors highlighted two specific aspects of the F1L4C and GLS programmes.

The first aspect is the role of mentors which seems to be crucial to facilitate self-reflection in a global learning programme. Pelsler (ch. 4) and Kamsteeg (ch. 7) particularly illustrated the

important role that mentors played in the UFS global learning programmes. Although a substantial body of literature supports the important role of peer mentors in the learning, development and success of higher education students, what the UFS project illustrates is that mentoring seems to be especially important for students from a developing country, particularly during their participation in a global learning initiative. The importance of mentoring relates directly to the notion of challenge and support, as discussed in Chapter 1. Here Feuerstein's theory on mediated learning experience (MLE) might be helpful to create a deeper understanding of why Pelser and Kamsteeg emphasised the important role of mentors in the UFS global learning project.

The theory on MLE underlines why learning experiences must be mediated – by another more experienced human being – to individuals hailing from deprived backgrounds. Based on his work spanning more than six decades with marginal groups across the world, Feuerstein explains why direct exposure to learning experiences is not optimally conducive to the development of individuals from marginal groups. Nevertheless, according to Feuerstein, the accurate mediation of learning experiences can develop within these individuals the ability to ultimately gain from direct exposure to learning experiences (Feuerstein, Feuerstein & Falik 2010). Although it cannot be assumed that all students who participated in the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes came from deprived backgrounds (backgrounds that generally deprive individuals from sufficient exposure to MLEs), it is generally true that many students in developing countries (like South Africa, and in particular the Free State province) come from disadvantaged backgrounds. This contextual challenge, in itself, makes the mediation of global learning experiences vital to the development of individuals from marginal groups. Thus, the emphasis that authors within this work placed on the importance of mentoring, supports the need for MLEs. What is at stake is that institutions of higher learning, specifically

in developing countries, invest substantial resources to expose students directly to global learning experiences, but without mediating these experiences effectively. In doing so, these institutions might run the risk that, despite their investment, students may not develop in a way that was envisioned. In this regard, the UFS global learning project is useful in that it illustrates the importance of mediated learning, through mentoring, as a way to enable effective self-reflection as a key component of leadership development.

The second aspect of the F1L4C and GLS programmes that assisted to enable self-reflection amongst participating students (and staff) was dialogue. Different authors indicated how the incorporation of dialogues created a conversational space conducive to self-reflection. What is important is that dialogues took place in the context of diverse groups within both the F1L4C and GLS programmes. This intentional incorporation of diversity enhanced the process of self-reflection, as respectively indicated by DuBois (Addendum A) and Williams (ch. 8). The importance of dialogue confirms what Suransky highlighted in Chapter 2, namely, that global learning must be a collaborative process that integrates multiple perspectives (often contesting perspectives) aimed at big questions revolving around our collective humanity – in the case of the UFS project, issues of reconciliation and social justice. Furthermore, it might be helpful to highlight the fact that the UFS intentionally used the performing arts (e.g. drama productions and films) to enhance discussions (also in the form of panel discussions) and dialogues. From Pelser's account in Chapter 4, it seems that the incorporation of arts enabled deeper reflection (also self-reflection) during group conversations.

The notion of self-reflection opens the way to another aspect associated with various leadership development models, namely LID.

## □ Leadership identity

From the seven leadership development models outlined by Wahl and Mason-Innes in Chapter 1, the LID model (Komives et al. 2005) maintained a strong focus on developing the ability to view the self as a leader. Although this model strongly advocates for developing a leadership identity, some other leadership development models also uphold this objective. The ALU (2017), for example, encourages the fostering of personal values and an individualised life-mission that underpins purpose-driven learning. These aspects are also present (although less prominent) in the relational leadership model (Komives, Lucas & McMahon 2007). What is important is that the notion of identity and how it relates to leadership received a particular focus in this edited volume.

In Chapter 7, Kamsteeg focused on identity. He emphasised the dynamic interplay between self-identification and social-identification by using self-identity narratives from participating students in the F1L4C and GLS programmes. This dynamic interplay of self-identification and social-identification has important implications for the development of student leaders.

The first implication, as indicated by Kamsteeg in Chapter 7, emphasises the fact that HEIs cannot foster the development of leadership identity without considering the dynamic interrelations between students' 'internal strivings' and the institutions' 'external prescriptions'. Kamsteeg highlights the fact that meaning-making is not exclusively an isolated individual and internal process, but it is also negotiated within a social context. It is here where the authors of this edited volume could make an important contribution to the framework for student leadership development. On the one hand, the authors of Chapter 1 outlined different models for leadership development that emphasise the development of leadership identity as a key component of leadership development. On the other hand, the authors identified the contextual impact of the environment in which leadership development is taking place as an important aspect of

leadership development. What is noteworthy is how others in this edited volume affirm both of these aspects highlighted in Chapter 1, in particular Bell and Bell (ch. 6) and Kamsteeg (ch. 7). Thus, this volume points out the fact that higher education practitioners must consider how their institutions, and the social dynamics within them, shape and script the construction of self-identity within individual students.

The second implication that the dynamic interplay of self-identification and social-identification has for the development of leadership identity is that there are different ways for students to position themselves as leaders. In Chapter 7, Kamsteeg identified seven different self-identity narratives that participating students in the F1L4C and GLS programmes developed. These narratives indicate different ways in which students chose to position themselves in relation to transformation at the university and in society. To put it differently, there is more than one way to lead and to change society, and this is also true for student leaders. It is, therefore, important that institutions of higher learning provide different pathways for students to lead in a variety of ways. Here, the UFS global learning project could make an important contribution.

In her evaluation of the F1L4C and GLS programmes, Baillie (ch. 5) raised concerns about institutional over-regulation and expected compliance to the transformational goals of the UFS; the so-called concept of 'stakeholderisation'. Although Kamsteeg (ch. 7) provides a different perspective when compared to Baillie on how the UFS allowed students, particularly politically active students, to give expression to their unique leadership positionalities, Baillie raises an important point by emphasising that institutions shape the construction of self-identity of student leaders – and this is evident in the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes. Although there might be different perspectives concerning the extent to which the UFS allowed the expression of different leadership positionalities, a crucial question arises: In what ways are institutions that are challenged (like the UFS) by the imperative of institutional transformation, more vulnerable to

the temptation of limiting the expression of different self-identity positionalities amongst student leaders? In other words, will students be allowed to lead in different ways, even if it might contradict the transformation objectives of the institution? The UFS global learning project highlights these as important questions when considering the development of students' leadership identity.

In comparing the leadership development models, as outlined in Chapter 1, with the authors' perspectives on the F1L4C and GLS programmes, similarities and differences arose in relation to self-awareness and leadership identity. Another topic that shows strong similarities and differences is the extent to which the UFS allowed emerging student leaders to challenge the status quo.

## **□ Challenging the status quo**

Almost all of the leadership development models, as discussed in Chapter 1, underline the importance of developing leaders as agents of change; namely, to become transformational in the way they lead. This implies an ability to challenge the status quo, to question and often contest existing ideas. The question can, therefore, be asked: How did the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes develop this kind of transformational leadership in students?

Various contributions revealed that participating students had a well-developed ability to question and contest issues of discrimination and social justice, both within their institutions and in the broader society. Several authors maintained the view that the content of the F1L4C and GLS programmes and the process of robust discussions developed strong transformative capabilities within students. These capabilities were not only developed through the programmes' dialogues and conversations but also through projects. Pelser explained in Chapter 4 how participating students in the F1L4C programme were expected to initiate a project, in line with programme objectives, after their return to the UFS. Furthermore, Williams (ch. 8) illustrates how

participating students from a partnership university became involved in impactful projects in their communities after they participated in the UFS GLS programme. Thus, the content, process and projects of the two UFS programmes developed specific skills in students to challenge, question and contest. However, to what extent were participating students allowed to contest and question institutional structures and objectives outside the objectives of the F1L4C and GLS programmes?

Different authors made different conclusions about the extent to which students were allowed to challenge the status quo in their institutions. Baillie (ch. 5), on the one hand, questioned the relative freedom students experienced during the time of the F1L4C and GLS programmes to disrupt the institutional status quo beyond the programme objectives. On the other hand, Pelsler (ch. 4) and Kamsteeg's (ch. 6) provide a different perspective and suggest that students experienced some level of freedom to challenge the status quo. Nevertheless, what remains important is that this edited volume asserts that higher education practitioners allow students to develop the capability to challenge, question and contest. Although this robust aspect of leadership development might create immediate discomfort for institutions of higher learning, it remains an important skill to develop, especially if it is combined with notions of mutual respect, human dignity and civility.

In summary: Although many more comparisons can be made between the various models for student leadership development in the existing body of literature, and the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes, similarities and differences are prominent in relation to self-awareness, leadership identity and transformational leadership. These similarities and differences, together with those stemming from the comparison done in the first section of this chapter, provide a firm basis to make generalisations about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development. What remains is to compare the conceptual framework for global learning, as conceptualised in



Chapters 1 and 2, with how authors perceived global learning in the F1L4C and GLS programmes.

### ■ **Comparison 3: Global learning**

Wahl and Mason-Innes (ch. 1), as well as Suransky (ch. 2), provided theoretical perspectives on how global learning is conceptualised in the current body of literature.

These theoretical underpinnings will be used as a comparative framework for this section. In this regard, the following aspects of global learning will be used to categorise the content: (1) global challenges, (2) diversity and interconnected identities, and (3) global commons and access to global learning.

#### □ **Glocal challenges**

Global learning should not only be globally positioned but should also be globally-minded. Thus, how did the UFS direct the F1L4C and GLS programmes towards addressing transnational challenges on a global scale? The rationale that Jansen provided in Chapter 3, as well as Pelser, outlined in Chapter 4, make it clear that the UFS global learning project was to a large extent about higher education transformation, especially at the UFS but also beyond. In this regard, a focus was specifically placed on issues of race, reconciliation and social justice. One of the ways the UFS chose to do this was through developing transformational student leaders through global learning, particularly facilitated through the F1L4C and GLS programmes.

Although various authors positioned the UFS project as an example of how higher education transformation could be approached (i.e. a focus on the transformation within an institution), Jansen (ch. 3) and Kamsteeg (ch. 7) bridge the UFS transformation project beyond the institution. For the UFS, education became a tool to transform society. From the rationale Jansen provided in Chapter 3, it is clear that he positioned the

UFS project in ways that could facilitate the rethinking of contemporary social problems that speak to the human condition – specifically concerning race, reconciliation and social justice. In this regard, the F1L4C and GLS programmes played an important role.

Furthermore, this volume makes it evident that the architecture of the global learning project challenged the dominance of agendas in the global North related to knowledge production. What makes the F1L4C and GLS programmes different is that they were initiated and coordinated from the global South. Although many contextual challenges arose from this location, the fact remains that the production of knowledge – as a collaborative process, as Suransky indicated in Chapter 2 – was led from a developing country in the global South. This knowledge production revolved around issues of higher education transformation, race, reconciliation and social justice, as well as student leadership development. What is remarkable is that many credible HEIs from the global North actively participated and benefitted from this project.

Although the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes were globally positioned and globally-minded, it is important to consider to what extent the UFS successfully linked the global context of these programmes to the local context of the UFS and its community.

## **□ Diversity and interconnected identities**

Various authors in this edited volume indicated the success of the F1L4C and GLS programmes to enable students to function and engage actively in globally diverse settings. In this regard, Pelser explained how the architecture of these programmes intentionally connected students from diverse ethnicities, genders, campuses, countries and even continents. Furthermore, Bell and Bell (ch. 6) showed how the social networks of UFS students expanded beyond previous segregated lines, and

DuBois (Addendum A) and Williams (ch. 8) illustrated how the social networks of students from participating institutions also diversified because of their participation in the UFS global learning experiences.

One specific aspect that various authors highlighted was that the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes developed the students' ability to engage in dialogue with diverse others about contemporary issues. Various authors maintained that the UFS global learning spaces enabled an interactive process within a diverse setting, and upheld multiple perspectives on the causes, consequences and solutions for societal challenges. Additionally, it seems that how the GLS programme, in particular, facilitated dialogue sessions enabled students to express their perspectives and articulate ideas with diverse others from around the world. In various chapters, the authors also highlighted the fact that these conversations enabled students to reflect on their own positionalities and privileges. It, therefore, seems, from the perspectives raised in this edited volume, that the UFS was largely successful in upholding the value of plurality, especially through dialogues, in its global learning project.

However, Wahl and Mason-Innes (ch. 1) and Suransky (ch. 2) raise an important consideration, namely that global learning (or glocal education) cannot only focus on how local issues relate to global and transnational challenges. According to Suransky, global learning spaces should also channel critical thinking skills towards complex issues within the local context. Thus, how did the UFS ensure that the plurality of ideas – discussed during the F1L4C and GLS programmes – translate effectively to real problems in local settings?

The fact that the UFS required F1L4C-students to initiate a project – aligned with the UFS transformational goals – at their campus after their overseas visit, could be interpreted as an attempt to align the local and global identities of participating students. Furthermore, the structure within the UFS that allowed many students to be elected into formal leadership positions

might have provided a platform from where these students could affect real change at their institution. Yet, Baillie (ch. 5) indicates that the perception arose from non-participating students and UFS staff that the FIL4C and GLS programmes were elitist. In addition, Baillie states that student leaders who emerged from these programmes eventually lost some influence amongst the broader student population because they were seen as a mere extension of university management (as discussed above). This crisis of legitimacy is somewhat implied by Kamsteeg in Chapter 7, who alluded to the fact that the student protest movement, starting from 2015 at the UFS and many other South African universities, highlighted real contemporary issues. These issues largely revolved around matters of access to affordable higher education, the decolonising of higher education, living wages of low-ranking university staff and gender-based violence. Therefore, to what extent were the FIL4C and GLS programmes relevant to these real issues that arose (during the time frame of these programmes) from amongst the broader student population?

To answer this question, it might be helpful to revisit some of the perspectives raised by Suransky in Chapter 2. Suransky argued that the global discourse concerning the decolonisation of universities could provide a deeper understanding of global education. To this effect, Suransky identified connectivity (together with positionality) as a key consideration. Decolonial learning aims to connect global learning with concrete issues in local communities. Suransky defends the importance of students going into local communities to engage a plurality of perspectives. These interactive community-based conversations and collaborations provide the basis for further meaning-making. This meaning-making process is further framed in a process of self-reflection during which students consider how their positionalities create certain interpretive lenses. When these perspectives are considered, a question arose about how the FIL4C and GLS programmes facilitated what Suransky defines as 'cycles of critical reflection and action'.

It is difficult to derive from this edited volume a direct connection between the global learning spaces created by the F1L4C and GLS programmes and the real issues of the university community (specifically the broader students community) at the UFS, at least in the way Suransky defined decolonial learning within global education. The authors give no clear indication of the extent to which participating students went into the broader university community to engage in dialogue about real issues that students might face. Was there a multifaceted understanding of the challenges facing the broader student population? Furthermore, not one of the authors indicated how the F1L4C and GLS programmes created a feedback loop from conversations within the university community to the reflexive activities of the global learning spaces of these programmes. Conversely, Baillie (ch. 5) underlines the perceived gap that widened between the UFS global learning project and the rest of the university community.

This perceived gap between the global learning spaces and local communities gives rise to the need to understand more deeply the notion of creating global commons. Global commons, as a way to create access to global learning for all students, therefore, becomes an important aspect of comparing the conceptual framework of the first two chapters with the perspective raised by other authors in this edited volume.

## □ **Global commons – accessible to all**

In Chapter 1, Wahl and Mason-Innes underlined three dimensions to global learning programmes that can create a deeper understanding of how to make it more accessible; namely, to avoid the occurrence that global learning only becomes available to some elite students who gained access to the internationalisation endeavours of their university. In comparing the F1L4C and GLS programmes with the three dimensions, some strengths and shortcomings might be identified in relation to the UFS project. These dimensions are: (1) the attributes of the institution and its

students, (2) resources and (3) institutional location of the programme.

### ▣ ***Institutional and student attributes***

The most distinctive attribute of UFS students who participated in the F1L4C and GLS programmes is that they were first-year students. Different authors raised arguments for and against this selection criterion. Jansen (ch. 3) and Pelsler (ch. 4) explained that the rationale behind this selection criterion largely revolved around the potential to nurture these students – assumedly less influenced by the institutional racism of that time upon entry – to become transformative leaders that can change the institution. Although Baillie (ch. 5) outlined the counter-arguments for this selection criterion, Kamsteeg (ch. 7) confirms the relative success of this approach. In his explanation, Kamsteeg illuminates the different leadership positions that these students eventually occupied to influence the university environment in various ways. Another attribute of F1L4C and GLS student cohorts was diversity. Again Jansen (ch. 3) and Pelsler (ch. 4) explained why it was important for the UFS transformation project to ensure that student cohorts were diverse in terms of race, gender and campus. Bell and Bell (ch. 6) concluded that this attribute of the UFS F1L4C and GLS cohorts resulted in enriched social networks beyond previous lines of marginalisation. Thus, the inclusion of first-year students and the intentional inclusion of diversity as selection criteria characterised the UFS global learning project in a particular way. This means that these characteristics created access to a specific group of students.

Another aspect that influenced access to the UFS global learning project is the unique institutional characteristics. In arguing for increased access to global learning, Wahl and Mason-Innes enumerated several institutional attributes. To begin with, a well-established and articulated institutional mission and strategic plan were identified as crucial aspects to establish global commons. Jansen (ch. 3), supported by authors like Pelsler (ch. 4),

Bell and Bell (ch. 6), Kamsteeg (ch. 7) and Williams (ch. 8), clearly illustrated how the F1L4C and GLS programmes formed an integral part of the UFS mission and strategic plan. Simultaneously, what was undoubtedly a strength of the UFS global learning project was that Professor Jansen, as rector and VC, became a passionate advocate for the project. He also provided strong institutional leadership and fostered collaboration with various international partners. Jansen's clear articulation of programme objectives, as illustrated in Chapter 3, also provided a shared conceptualisation and vocabulary in relation to global learning within the university. Thus, the authors of this edited volume asserted that many of the institutional characteristics enable access for UFS students to the F1L4C and GLS programmes.

However, although both programmes were firmly established within the UFS mission and strategic direction, and strongly supported by its senior management team, Baillie stated in Chapter 5 that 'somewhere around 2012-2013' the programme 'become dislocated from its original objectives with a range of consequences to shape its recognition and misrecognition within the UFS space moving forward'. In this regard, Baillie provides an analysis of complex systemic powers that played in on the UFS transformation project as a whole, resulting in the fact that the F1L4C and GLS programmes slowly drifted away from the institution's core focus. What is worth noting is that Baillie, in essence, confirms the importance that global learning projects remain firmly established within the core mission and strategic objectives of institutions. What is at stake is that institutions fail to establish global commons – as a way to create access to global learning for all students – and this merely becomes just another programme amongst so many other programmes. One of the ways to counter this is to value the active involvement of academic personnel in global education.

## **Resources**

Above all other resources, the involvement of academic personnel (as an interdisciplinary resource) was singled out in Chapter 1 as an extremely valuable resource for global learning.

Thus, to what extent did academics from different disciplines assist during the F1L4C and GLS programmes, especially with the facilitation of collaborative learning? Although Jansen (ch. 3) alluded that the UFS senate had to be convinced of the academic value of the F1L4C programme at its inception, the UFS had relative success in infusing the academic enterprise of the university into its global learning project. Pelsler (ch. 4) mentioned that several UFS academic personnel were involved as staff mentors. Furthermore, the UFS IRSJ - an institute aimed at enhancing scholarly practice in the areas of race, reconciliation and social justice - was actively involved in the learning facilitation of the GLS programme specifically. Baillie also confirmed in Chapter 5 the scholarly contribution that was made by the UFS global learning project. Additionally, a number of external academics from partnership universities were involved in the programmes, of which some actively contributed to the evaluation of the developmental impact of the programmes. The involvement of academics is clear from the contributions made to this edited volume by scholars such as Bell and Bell (ch. 6), Kamsteeg (ch. 7), DuBois (Addendum A) and Williams (ch. 8).

On top of the academic resources availed, the UFS allocated institutional funding towards the F1L4C and GLS programmes. What is important to note is that Jansen revealed in Chapter 3 the difficulty the UFS had to fund a global education project at this scale within a resource-strained environment. One of the ways in which the university tried to manage this was to partner with institutions in the global North who were willing to carry the cost of hosting student cohorts from the UFS, and also send delegations to the GLS. In this regard, DuBois' contribution in Addendum A is valuable, because it opens the internal dynamics in partner universities that were needed to provide this kind of support. However, Baillie reported in Chapter 5 that the resistance against the continuous institutional investment this project demanded from the UFS grew to ultimately become a strong argument against the continuation of the project. These dynamics are important because they create a deeper understanding of



the real challenges universities in the global South face to initiate and sustain global learning projects, especially if it involves student mobility.

### □ ***Location within the institution***

The last consideration to establish global commons as a way to enhance access to global learning is where it should be located within an institution. It is clear from various authors that the UFS global learning project largely revolved around big questions related to race, reconciliation and social justice. This approach, in itself, implied a strong collaborative approach across the institution – as opposed to a more condensed approach, such as faculty-led courses with a global theme. In Chapter 4, Pelsler explains how the following division within the UFS worked closely together to establish an integrated institutional project: (1) the Office of the Rector and VC, and the associated Office for International Academic Programmes; (2) Student Affairs, in particular the Office of the Dean: Student Affairs and the Office for Student Leadership Development; (3) International Affairs; (4) Communication and Marketing; and (5) the IRSJ. Although many of these departments and divisions continued to work together over 9 years, as Baillie indicated in Chapter 5, their collective focus to reach the institution’s transformation goals in a coherent way diminished with time. It is interesting to note that access to the F1L4C and GLS programmes diminished in parallel with the level of institutional collaboration in the later years of the programme. This confirms the need for a firm institutional positioning of global education if universities wish to establish global commons effectively.

To sum up: Many similarities and differences arise when comparing the conceptual framework – as created in Chapters 1 and 2 – with the perspectives raised by authors in the last six chapters (i.e. ch. 3 – ch. 8). These similarities and differences form the basis of our next section, which focuses on themes that might be more generalisable. This is important to create a deeper

understanding of student development theory, student leadership development and higher education transformation.

## ■ General themes

The similarities and differences considered in the comparison in the last section give rise to three overarching themes, namely, (1) leadership and a complex context, (2) the systemic nature of change, global learning and student leadership, and (3) global learning in developing countries. In concluding with these themes, the author aims to convey more generalisable principles to the reader.

## ■ Leadership and a complex context

The perspectives raised in this edited volume confirm the fact that many aspects of the different models for leadership development remain important for the current generation of higher education students. In this regard, various authors affirmed the value of self-reflection, leadership identity and transformational skills embedded in different models for leadership development. Although strong similarities were identified between the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes and the existing body of theory on student leadership development, the UFS creation of global learning spaces as a way to develop student leaders suggests a shift in how the context for leadership development has been conceptualised to date.

Various authors in this edited work articulated the fact that the contexts in which student leaders develop seem to be complex, multifaceted and interconnected. This complex interconnection often lies in the dynamic interplay between the global context and the local context. Strangely enough, the complexity of the developmental context seems to be less prominent in the current theoretical models for student leadership development. What the UFS global learning project, therefore, articulates is the complexity of the context in which student leadership takes place. This is important to develop within students the capabilities to lead within a complex world.

In this edited volume, different authors argued differently about how successful the F1L4C and GLS programmes were to uphold the integrated complexity of a global world. However, in each chapter, authors acknowledged the vast number of participating students, staff and institutions from different continents over almost a decade. This means that the nature of the global learning project, in itself, was complex. Various authors confirmed that this complexity in the nature of the project, and the ability of the UFS to integrate different aspects of it, added significant value to the development of students. Thus, the F1L4C and GLS programmes suggest that there could be real educational value in creating large-scale global learning projects of a complex nature. The developmental values of these large-scale projects are locked up in their complexity; namely, that they integrate multiple dimensions on a global scale to create a complex environment that is conducive to the development of student leaders who are prepared to lead in a complex world. Additionally, the UFS project confirmed that the interplay between the local contexts and the global contexts of the student experience remains paramount to connect global education within real issues in real communities.

This multifaceted complexity of the environment in which student leaders develop, points towards the systemic nature of higher education transformation.

## ■ **Systemic nature of change, global learning and student leadership**

The perspectives from several authors in this edited volume emphasised that higher education transformation is highly influenced by the systemic nature of change. As a rule, this volume reiterates the fact that different social systems - linked to students and staff - continuously influence one another and interactively influence the development of students. In this regard, it must be acknowledged that developmental ecology and developmental contextualism are well-established theoretical

concepts in the field of student development, as indicated in Chapter 1. However, what is different for this work is that the authors pointed out an added layer of complexity.

From various chapters, it is evident that the UFS was not only interested in how different social systems influenced one another and how they coherently impacted individual students, but also how student development – through the F1L4C and GLS programmes – could become an intentional impetus to transform the university environment. In other words, the UFS added another layer of complexity to the already complex dynamics between social systems and student development, namely, objectives for higher education transformation. Thus, this edited volume explains more clearly the deeper dynamics associated with this interplay between student leadership development, higher education transformation and global learning spaces.

Various authors illustrated the fact that the UFS conceptualised this three-pronged dynamic in a way that could facilitate systemic transformation on personal, institutional and societal levels. This strategy distinguishes the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes from other global learning initiatives because it positions global learning not only as an initiative to develop individual students but also as a tool in higher education transformation. What was similar between the UFS project and other global learning projects was that it fostered collaborative learning within diverse groups focusing on transnational issues – in this case, issues of reconciliation and social justice. However, what was different was that the UFS used global learning to position the university as a sort of mediator-of-change in society. In this regard, the UFS took upon itself a role to use global education as a tool to first change itself, and then the broader society – and the F1L4C and GLS programmes played a crucial part in this strategy. This mediatory role had serious implications.

In Chapter 5, Baillie indicated how the systemic integration of student leadership development, global learning and higher education transformation objectives impact on one another

continuously and in various ways. Thus, what the UFS project illustrates is the reciprocal influence that different parts of an integrated system have on one another. For example, the party political resistance against the UFS institutional transformation objectives subsequently influenced the perceptions about the FIL4C and GLS programmes. All of this had a reciprocal influence on student leaders and their development. This edited volume, therefore, points out the risk of integrating higher education transformation (in particular transformation objectives of institutions) with global learning and student leadership development. In this regard, higher education practitioners and administrators should carefully consider how added layers of complexity will impact different social systems within the university environment. This is especially true for institutions that wish to enhance student leadership development by creating global learning spaces.

The systemic-holistic perspective, discussed in this section, also has implications for how global learning is facilitated in developing countries.

## ■ Global learning in developing countries

This volume indicated that enhancing student leadership by creating global learning spaces in developing countries is different from global education in developed countries. Authors asserted the fact that the contextual challenges within developing countries pose different demands to institutions that wish to use global learning as a way to develop student leaders. Some of the challenges that were mentioned in the chapters include financial constraints. The UFS project is helpful in this regard because it outlines practical examples of how global learning spaces can be created in a resource-strained environment. To begin with, the fostering of partnerships with institutions in the global North seemed to be an effective strategy. What is important is the reciprocal benefit that must be fostered for partner universities. Various authors highlighted the fact that the GLS, which brought

all the partner universities together, provided a rich collaborative scholarly experience within a context that is different from the developed world. In this regard, experiencing first-hand the challenges facing two-thirds of the world's population facilitated a transformative learning experience for students and staff from partnership universities. Additionally, for many scholars from the global North, the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes became a data source for North-South research collaboration. Thus, in looking differently at their context, institutions in the global South (especially in developing countries) could use aspects within their environment – that could be perceived as negative – as a comparative advantage to advance global learning in a particular way.

However, this edited volume also explained that initiating global education in a resource-strained environment limits students' access to the mobility aspect of global learning. Authors provided different ways of how institutions in developing countries can still provide a rich global learning experience to a large percentage of their student population. In this regard, it will be imperative to create global commons as outlined in some of the chapters. The author, therefore, trusts the fact that this edited volume will provide a deeper understanding of how global partnerships can be created across the Northern and Southern hemispheres, as well as partnerships that are not only globally positioned but also develop globally-minded leaders who can be practically effective in their communities.

To summarise: Three themes emerged from the comparison between the conceptual framework, formulated in the first two chapters of this work, and the different perspectives raised by authors in the remaining six chapters. These themes were as follows: leadership and a complex context; the systemic nature of change, global learning and student leadership; and global learning in developing countries. It is believed that these themes provide certain generalisations about how the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes enhanced student leadership development,

within higher education transformation, through creating global learning spaces.

## ■ Concluding remarks

This edited volume unfolded in four parts. To begin with, the first two chapters provided a conceptual framework, drawing from the existing body of literature. To this effectively, the authors of these chapters focused on the theoretical underpinnings of student development, models for student leadership development and global learning. Where Chapters 1 and 2 contextualised this volume theoretically, the authors of Chapters 3 and 4 contextualised it historically. Thus, in the second part of this work, the author of Chapter 3 focused more intently on the rationale behind the inception of the UFS FIL4C and GLS programmes, while Chapter 4 outlined the architecture of these programmes. The third part of the volume consists of four chapters (ch. 5 to ch. 8) and Addendum A. In these chapters and the addendum, authors from around the world used different approaches to make scholarly contributions from different perspectives. In the last part (ch. 9), the principal editor compared the different perspectives – raised by authors in all the previous chapters – to identify similarities and differences. The primary aim of these comparisons was to make generalisations in relation to student leadership development, higher education and global learning – as separate concepts and also regarding the way they could interact with one another.

It is believed that this edited volume has theoretical, practical and emotional significance for the reader. Firstly, the editors trust the fact that scholars will find this edited volume theoretically significant. The aim was to provide new conceptual insights about student leadership development, higher education transformation and global education previously not available in the literature. In this regard, the authors moved beyond the personal developmental value of student leadership development and global learning, to include perspectives on institutional and

societal transformation. It is in the interaction between different concepts – student leadership development, higher education transformation and global learning – that authors identified certain contradictions and similarities with the existing body of literature.

Secondly, it is believed that higher education administrators and practitioners will find practical significance in this edited volume. The editors have aimed to provide a transparent account about how the UFS has conceptualised, established and coordinated a transnational global learning project. What is unique for the UFS global learning project is the fact that it involved many students and staff from various universities across the world and spanned almost a decade. Furthermore, the UFS project is unique in the sense that it was initiated and administered from a developing country in the global South. The authors' perspectives on this aspect of the F1L4C and GLS programmes provide insights that were previously less known. Thus, this edited volume illuminates not only the successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses of the UFS global learning project but also the operational dynamics that gave rise to these results. It is believed that these insights will be practically significant to higher education practitioners.

Lastly, the editors trust that this edited volume will also be emotionally significant to those individual students and staff who participated in the F1L4C and GLS programmes. Since their inception, many important connections were made between individuals from very different backgrounds. The editors trust that, through this edited volume, the feeling of these connections with others will be rekindled and that individuals will be mobilised once again to take action in positively changing the lives of others.

The volume also has certain limitations. Although it would have been impactful to include more scholarly contributions in the chapters, it was not practically possible. This limitation also means providing a limited number of perspectives to the reader. The editors, therefore, want to recognise that there are many



more scholars across the world – specifically those who participated in the F1L4C and GLS programmes – who might be able to provide more nuanced understandings on the UFS global learning project. In this regard, it is recommended that more scholarly publications about the UFS global learning project (or projects with similar dimensions) are produced from other scholars in the field.

Another limitation that the editors want to highlight is that this edited volume only focused on a global learning project from one institution – the UFS. Although wide in scope and relatively long in span, it is limited in this regard to its evaluative potential. It is, therefore, recommended that HEIs, who may find some aspects of the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes relevant to implement, also publish comparative studies. Such comparative studies might enrich the perspectives raised in this edited volume even further.

The preface of this edited volume started with a quote from Nelson Mandela; a quote that points to the transformative power of education. The UFS unlocked this transformative power by using a crisis moment in its history to enable personal, institutional and societal transformation. The creation of global learning spaces played an important part in this transformation strategy. To this effect, the UFS F1L4C and GLS programmes were innovative in nature and bold in the mission to develop transformational leaders. Many lives were impacted by this project. It is hoped that this edited volume will continue to extend those aspects that positively changed the lives of individuals, institutions and societies.

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# International partners' experiences and observations of the F1L4C: Reflection from Edmonds College

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## ■ Introduction

The Leadership for Change program at EdCC<sup>15</sup> brought two student groups from the University of the Free State (UFS) in 2013 and 2016. While one might look at it as a transactional international exchange partnership, I would like to argue that it brought diverse groups of individuals together, and through intense experiences and conversations, individuals were able to forge friendships, newfound perspective and connections that last a lifetime. All participants, American and South African alike, were forced to move past comfort zones very quickly and to look at the power and privilege that runs as an undercurrent in modern society. Depending on our race or socio-economic status, we can have the ease of prosperity or continual roadblocks. Furthermore, our country of birth can automatically add an advantage, or create a disadvantage, for future educational and professional opportunities. I fully believe that the Leadership for Change program ignites newfound options for life and that one must keep striving for a better society and world. As one looks at today's political leaders and the deepening divisions across countries and borders, it is more important than ever to invest in our youth and education systems. In particular, critical thinking and care for others is key in making all of our future's brighter. If I do not believe in this, I have let dismay and despair have hold on my idealism. It is important to highlight that EdCC was the only community college participating as a partner with the UFS. Unique within the field of higher education around the world, American community colleges are built upon open doors and educational access. Diverse groups of students access the community college system, and this was absolutely highlighted through our Leadership for Change program. Because of the

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15. Author's note: Edmonds Community College recently changed its name to Edmonds College in the spring of 2020. This is a result of a nationwide movement as so many community colleges are increasing their offering of four-year baccalaureate degrees. Edmonds College remains steadfast to the same mission and vision where students and the community are at the heart of all we do.

ethnic diversity of community colleges, many community college students struggle with the ongoing effects of institutional racism, something that students in South Africa also absolutely experience. By including a community college in the program, participants were able to see how these issues can be addressed by community-based educational institutions. In the following pages, you will read about my own journey to South Africa and how I returned to the United States (US) as a changed person. In a world that did not make much sense to me at the time, what I did know was what UFS needed from their students – newfound perspective and leadership skills. I did not have a ‘manual’ on how to create this unique exchange programme – what I did have was my own experience in South Africa coupled with years of international travel experience as a student and as a young professional. Through instincts and broad cross-campus leadership support from EdCC, our partnership with UFS was exciting and ground breaking. It is also a testament to professional development. When an institution invests in its employees, I believe they bring back innovative ideas and a fresh perspective. Organisations can truly thrive. Please note that this chapter uses an ethnographic research approach and offers an experiential perspective to the Leadership for Change program. In hindsight, I wish I would have collected more ‘data’ to quantify the students’ growth and change of perspective. We are always learning. However, I can wholeheartedly say that all of the students and staff that participated in the Leadership for Change program were changed for the better ... let me tell you how it came together and what we experienced.

## ■ Journey to South Africa

A key component of the successful Leadership for Change program at EdCC was my own first-hand experience at the UFS. I was connected to the UFS through my former graduate advisor, Dr Maresi Nerad, at the University of Washington (UW). I met her during a course on the internationalisation of higher education, and the class was a breath of fresh air amidst other topics in my



graduate program that seemed to only focus on domestic education issues in the US. I quickly approached her to become my advisor and she fortunately accepted. I appreciated her insight and guidance as I finished up my Master of Education while working full-time at EdCC. I was taking one graduate course per quarter and I was constantly balancing work and graduate school obligations. As I neared graduation, Dr Nerad shared that she would be heading to South Africa, to the UFS, to offer technical guidance on their graduate school. She also mentioned, depending on how things went, that perhaps I could join the university on a short-term basis for some research and programmatic support. When this became a potential reality, all I could think about was going to South Africa. Both excitement and trepidation became my constant companion. A few months later, things looked promising and I approached my boss. Fortunately, the college offered professional leave for employees who have been at the institution for a significant amount of time. Also fortunately, my boss was the Vice President of International Education and truly believed in the power of international exchange. If we wanted cross-cultural understanding and a welcoming of others from around the globe, it was important that we walked the talk. Arrangements were made, including buying an incredibly expensive plane ticket to South Africa, and the fortunate subletting of my apartment in Seattle to a French couple, who was doing post-doctoral research at the UW. I welcomed them from the airport, handed over my keys and headed to my mom's house to finish up final preparation. She drove me to Seattle-Tacoma airport, one of so many trips she has made over the years to drop me off for some international destination. It became customary not to make the goodbyes too long or else one of us would start tearing up. This was a quick goodbye and my tears started later at the boarding gate when I found a card from her stuffed in my backpack. Over 24 h later, I found myself in Johannesburg, South Africa and enthralled with all the languages and accents I was hearing around me.

A short plane ride later was my final destination, Bloemfontein. The judicial capital of South Africa, the city was in the central part

of the country and near the Lesotho border. There did not seem to be too much chaos in this laid-back part of the country, and I was surprised at how ‘western’ things looked. I was quickly welcomed and set-up in my new residence for visiting scholars. The university seemed expansive and something of pride in the area. I met the key staff members and was then able to attend the inaugural Global Leadership Summit (GLS) for the following two weeks. I watched and listened as over 200 students and staff from around the world discussed the South African higher education system and the country as a whole. Hope, anger and forgiveness were the highly discussed topics with heated emotions. Even more important, the youth were being looked to as the change agents for this newly democratic country. It was imperative that agents of hope and change emerged from this deeply wounded country.

## ■ Personal transformation

The GLS was a whirlwind and I tried to learn as much as possible of what was facing the UFS, a divided university that imploded after the racist Reitz incident and new leadership that was doing everything humanly possible to bring its students and staff together for the sake of the future of the institution, and ultimately, the country itself. I dove into my work at the Office of Student Affairs and the OIA. I listened, and worked, as hard as possible ... I realised later what a gamble they had taken on me and that it was important that I prove myself. They had not met me previously and had no idea of who I was and why I would care about their students and university. Perhaps they had worked with previous international faculty and scholars that brought an air of superiority or a lack of work quality. I hoped neither of these would be the case for me. Fortunately, research projects and other programmatic duties kept me busy in the office. I made friends, travelled, and knew how fortunate I was to have this opportunity. The six months went by so quickly and I found myself back in dreary Seattle at the end of December. I returned to my old apartment and wondered what I was supposed to do with my life. Heading back to EdCC was equally disconcerting. My stable job was there waiting for me and

people were happy to see me. Friendly conversations were quick and customary. 'How was Africa? You have a tan! We missed you'. I realised that most people did not want the whole story about South Africa ... what the country was grappling with, the hopes and fears of the students at UFS and what I was supposed to do with this life-changing experience. I quickly found my answer when the college was able to become an international partner with UFS. After a conversation with my boss upon my return, I formed a small planning committee, and we were able to have a Skype call with UFS in February 2013 to explore things further. Within the following month, a draft schedule and price quote was provided to UFS for us to host students at the college. We were also fortunate to receive a visit in May 2013 from the UFS OIA during a two-week trip to the US. The UFS delegation was able to meet the key EdCC stakeholders and enjoyed dinner at the Edmonds waterfront. We were thrilled to know that the college would be welcoming students in September 2013. In the following months, more detailed planning occurred with student participants and travel dates were confirmed. The EdCC Housing Office quickly moved forward to match the students with local host families. As the plan emerged for the two-week immersion program to focus on diversity within higher education institutions, things became clear. In a world that did not seem to make sense to me at the time, I did know what UFS wanted for their students ... an opened worldview, to have deep-held beliefs challenged, and the ability to look more objectively at what was happening at the university and within the country. Furthermore, what each student could do to make positive change come about. This was asking a lot of their students, and it was important that I did everything possible to make this life-altering change happen.

## ■ Leadership for change initiative/ Edmonds Community College

My work in preparing for the first Leadership for Change cohort was consuming and something I rarely had time for in my regular

work duties. Additional hours at work and the weekend made it possible. What kept me going was what I wanted for the students – a once in a lifetime opportunity that would help them grow and be seen as leaders. Furthermore, they also needed to see themselves as leaders. In preparing for the students, I was also beginning to see my college from a completely different perspective. Our Office of International Student Services was a powerhouse. They welcomed thousands of international students every year to study at our highly rated college. Many of our international students then transferred to top-tier universities in the US. There was also a short-term study abroad office that created programs and immersion classes for foreign students to have a quick experience within American society. A robust home-stay housing program also provided foundation, so that the UFS students could live with local families. What was so great about many of these host families is that they were already hosting at least one international student ... the UFS students found increased diversity within their own nightly accommodation. For me, it was vital that the UFS students made connections with EdCC students. I learned this through my previous experience at the GLS 2012 ... it was an excellent program but was very academically focused. After about a week, students simply could not sift through the robust topics anymore and began to behave restlessly. There were a few student groups at EdCC that I had in mind and that included our student leaders, the Associated Students of Edmonds Community College (ASEdCC), through the Center for Student Engagement. Through the Center's administrators, student leaders were briefed on the new visitors and various activities were planned. There was also another student program on campus that was vital for connection – the Northwest Community College Initiative (NWCCI), which brought international students to local colleges for a one-year training program. Funded by the US State Department, this group of students were from less affluent countries and would bring another level of perspective to the UFS students. A key administrative component that made the program successful

was a newly staffed position at the college to focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Her title was 'Special Assistant to the President' and this brought a vital equity and diversity perspective to the program. Also, through my boss, there was incredible support for this unique program because of his decades in international education. I am very clear now that this would not have been so successful if it were not for the support of these two key individuals.

In September 2013, EdCC welcomed seven students from UFS and their staff mentor. The two-week program was jam packed, and as fall quarter classes had just begun at EdCC, I focused the first week of activities to have students understand the local area as well as the bustling city of Seattle. I wanted them to see, and feel, the diversity of the area before honing in on the college itself. Our planning committee had met numerous times to review the two-week program and provide input. The stakes were high as this was a highly visible program for UFS, and EdCC was the first community college allowed to host a group. The daily schedule for the students was very busy and careful coordination was needed regarding logistics and transportation. I could not have facilitated this program without the support of my colleague, who had years of experience working with the short-term groups on campus. The first full day on campus began with a welcome reception followed by a cultural identity workshop led by our NWCCI staff members. The group then headed downtown to meet with OneWorld Now!, a local non-profit that sends Seattle-area high school students abroad as well as providing leadership opportunities and foreign language instruction. As we were meeting with the OneWorld Now! students at the organisation's downtown office, I could not help but notice some of the South African students continuing to look out the window. I then saw what they were seeing ... the line-up of homeless individuals at a neighbouring building for dinner and a night's rest at a local shelter. This certainly was not planned but it was an important moment. Even in an affluent country, and city like Seattle, the divide between the haves and have-nots is a true reality. We

ended up inviting some of the OneWorld Now! students to join us at a Mariner's baseball game afterwards. The next few days at EdCC began to gain momentum for the group with class attendance, learning about campus initiatives and local cultural visits to the Hilibulb Cultural Center (a native American cultural centre at the Tulalip tribal reservation) and the Northwest African American Museum. The ASEdCC hosted a reception for the students and this began the student-to-student connection. It was amazing to watch the students come to know each other and just have general fascination in understanding what is 'American', 'South African', etc. The students were so fascinated with each other, and it was amazing to watch that connection flourish. The end of the first week included a tour of the UW and the Wing Luke Museum, Chinatown-International District. The group was fortunate to go to the Wing Luke Museum with the NWCCI students. Again, it was rewarding to see cross-cultural friendships in the making. The UFS students were in awe of a program such as the NWCCI initiative and the scholarship opportunity provided by the US State Department. In fact, there were two students from South Africa in the NWCCI student group. While in Chinatown, the group was also able to tour the Chinese Information and Service Center because of a connection with one of the OneWorld Now! students. It was unique to visit a local non-profit that serves a very specific population, including an after-school program for children and activities for senior citizens.

As the group headed into the weekend, a big visit was planned to the Pacific Science Center and the first-ever exhibit focused on race in Seattle. 'Race: Are We So Different?' opened that Saturday and we were one of the first groups to go through the exhibit. Joining the UFS students was a group of our ASEdCC student leaders. Fortunately, the Science Center collaborated with the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative to provide trained facilitators to lead both a pre-workshop and post-workshop. This visit was a turning point for the group on multiple levels. Firstly, the UFS and EdCC students had just begun

to feel comfortable with each other, so there was a decent level of connection amidst the students. Secondly, the exhibit did an excellent job of showing how race and marginalisation has been devised and orchestrated for hundreds of years with the constant pitting of groups of people against each other. Thirdly, how so many white people have benefitted from these deep disparities and currently lived with more advantages and wealth than people of colour. And finally, through the exhibit, the students could talk about their own confusion, frustration, anger and guilt for being born into an incredibly unequal society. The post-workshop allowed the voices of hurt and sadness to be heard ... I believe we were able to see one another from a different perspective. And ultimate, we all wished for a better society for each and every one of us. Fortunately, that Sunday was free for the group as we all needed to rest and re-energise. Heading back to campus for the final week, we met with president Dr Jean Hernandez. She spoke about her career, rising above difficult moments and how being the first female Latina president at the college had presented both opportunities and challenges. The UFS students were also able to attend several classes on the following subjects: Intercultural Communication, Diversity Studies, American Culture, International Relations and an English as a Second Language (ESL) course. The ESL course was close to my heart as this is the program that I serve. Our college has one of the largest ESL programs in Washington State, and it was so important that the UFS students saw the incredible diversity within our own community and how immigrant and refugee students found support and educational advancement at the college. The final few days included a Social Justice Toolkit workshop and a lecture on women's empowerment around the globe. As we took the group to the airport, I could not believe what had happened. The students indeed had a once in a lifetime experience! They were able to look at themselves, and others, with a more critical lens. They also appeared to have increased empathy and to understand the difficulties that their fellow students and country members had experienced. They made new friendships with

EdCC student leaders, found commonalities about being a student and shared fears about life after higher education. A few words from the UFS students are as follows:

'You have truly made me become a global citizen'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'I have truly benefited and learned so much'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'It was remarkable being here'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'This experience has been life changing and one I will always treasure in my heart'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'I have learned and gained so much from being here. It was truly transformative'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

'Thank you so much for opening my eyes and facilitating in me growing spiritually as an individual. My life has been influenced and perspectives have been changed'. (Student, gender undisclosed, date unspecified)

## ■ Student voices

I was able to recently meet with two EdCC student leaders who had profound experiences because of meeting the students from UFS.<sup>16</sup> The first student, Zamzam Hufane, will be finishing her university degree within the next year at Washington State University. She is a member of the McNair Scholars Program and plans on pursuing a doctorate in the field of psychology. When I met Zamzam in 2013, she was an energetic and curious member of the EdCC student leadership group (ASEdCC). I wanted the ASEdCC students to be a part of the UFS student experience but I honestly did not really know what would happen in terms of connection and impact. Fortunately, the conversations and

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16. See additional online student testimonial video from the 2018 Global Leadership Summit at [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o1bcJJTNX\\_OUEgd5cXR3CtIWD9\\_QPH-d/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o1bcJJTNX_OUEgd5cXR3CtIWD9_QPH-d/view?usp=sharing).



friendship were transformational. When talking with Zamzam at a local coffee shop, I was thrilled to see her growth and the light shining from her eyes as she relayed her stories of the UFS students and South Africa. She discussed how great it was to meet students from another culture and talk about similarities and differences about life and being a student. More specifically for Zamzam, her family had immigrated from Somalia years ago and she felt a special connection to the group as she herself navigates higher education as an underrepresented minority. Zamzam talked about visiting the Race Exhibit with the UFS students, and how it was a turning point within the group dynamics. As the UFS and EdCC students discussed topics in the post-visit workshop, raw emotions came through. As varying levels of awareness and opinions emerged, Zamzam appreciated that arguments were not laced screaming or yelling; it was simply an exchange of heated ideas to try and come to a different understanding. She mentioned that friendships with American students can end because of a difference of opinion or varying political views. From this conversation at the Race Exhibit, bonds were only strengthened: 'They're not afraid to speak their mind. You don't have to ask them twice. I looked up to them as role-models' (Student, female, date unspecified). She also discussed how Americans really do not have discussions about reconciliation and have a history of sweeping race or inequity issues under the rug. Unfortunately, now, 'it seems like the United States is going backwards' (Student, female, date unspecified). Because of the scares of apartheid, Zamzam really appreciated how the UFS students were constantly pushing themselves, and each other, past comfort zones. The students could have difficult conversations and it would not ruin the friendship. As Zamzam's connection to the group was strong, she was one of the first to apply to be a part of the EdCC delegation to travel to UFS in 2015 for the 2nd GLS. She reminisced about the hospitality, care and connection amongst all the students - even those who were not attending the GLS but whom came in contact with the group. She recently travelled back to South Africa for several weeks to meet up with her friends. Many commented that she actually 'followed her word' about a return visit to South Africa. She has admiration for the UFS students as

they utilise their newfound leadership skills and confidence – growing to become student leaders at their institution and within other professional or community responsibilities post-graduation. Zamzam believes it was an honour that Edmonds was the only community college represented amongst the global partners. It also helped showcase the diversity and inclusivity of the college – something that many of us can take for granted as we go through our daily work duties and to-do lists. She also reminded me how the EdCC students attending the GLS did not have to pay for travel expenses as ASEdCC funded the opportunity. Through a cross-campus committee, all student applicants went through a rigorous selection and interview process. Seven unique students were invited to travel to South Africa in July 2015 for the two-week GLS. For so many students, the cost of international travel and study abroad programs are simply out of reach. In summing up my conversation with Zamzam, I asked her how this experience impacted her life. She replied, '[i]t changed my life in the simplest of ways and I have lifelong friendships on a deeper level' (Student, female, date unspecified).

Lia Andrews recently graduated from EdCC and currently manages the campus farm and cultural kitchen. She hopes to begin her studies soon at the UW to focus on environmental horticulture. I enjoyed talking with this bright young woman and hearing her take-aways from the 2015 student group as Lia was part of the ASEdCC student group that helped facilitate the 2nd Leadership for Change group at EdCC. I appreciated her honesty as she discussed the authentic and unique connection with the UFS students. She admitted that she has not had any kind of similar experience since then. Similar to Zamzam, she had great conversations with the students about life in the US and American culture. Lia mentioned that the overall visit was challenging because she is introverted by nature but found ease in making friendships and was subsequently brought out of her shell. She shared a great story about taking some of the UFS students to a bubble tea shop – something that could be quite normal for a student in the Seattle-area but a very foreign experience for

someone from another country. Lia also highlighted that she was one of only three American students who were a part of this ASEdCC student group as the rest of the group were comprised of international students representing various countries. As someone born in the US, she was really able to talk about topics from a US perspective and commented, '[t]his is where barriers break down and we're both human' (Student, female, date unspecified). She brought even more of a global perspective in that the experience helped her see how there might be absolute international political conflict amongst countries, but getting to know how the actual people within those countries are quite different - stereotypes and perceptions can be quickly transformed. Lia commended EdCC for providing the institutional support and resources for the Leadership for Change program.

## ■ Reflection/preparation for the future

In working with the Leadership for Change initiative, I have felt a sense of awe that is difficult to describe. I now realise that my journey to UFS was only one part of the story - that the bigger part of the story was to connect South African and American students on a completely different level. To showcase and invigorate my well-run community college into something to be so proud of. For different offices and groups on campus to come together on behalf of the UFS students - to show what we do well and what still needs to be worked on. It also prepared us to join the GLS in 2015, as well as welcome another student group in January 2016. For each experience, I tried to learn and grow. I listened to the feedback from my colleagues on how to improve things and various campus or community connections to explore. For example, as we prepared for the next group in 2016, I knew to give more free time so that we were not constantly behind the schedule. I also wanted the students to connect even more so was able to invite ASEdCC student leaders to most of the groups' planned activities. I truly wanted friendships to flourish instead of hurrying from one planned event to the other. In January 2016, we added a

walking tour of downtown Seattle and visited FareStart, a local non-profit that trains individuals struggling with addiction and homelessness for careers in the hospitality industry. It was so vital that the students continued to see the inequities within the US. While this might sound odd, we visited our local prison for a day as the college runs the educational programs at Monroe Correctional Complex. The dean there allowed us to visit for a tour and to talk with a few inmates. The UFS students were nervous and honestly, so was I. It was truly an eye-opening day and also offered glimmers of hope to see the inmates furthering their education. We also travelled to our state capitol in Olympia for the day and met with local politicians who were themselves trying to instigate change and refused to give up after defeats and varied political battles. The group experienced service learning through EdCC's Day of Service on the MLK Jr holiday and learned more about the indigenous tribes who once inhabited the Pacific Northwest. More class visits and lecture attendance rounded off the visit, including a campus lecture from Dr Michael Eric Dyson, an American academic and author who focuses on the continued oppression of black Americans and the privilege of whiteness.

It is important to reiterate that transformational work is never produced within a silo ... support and input was vital from both the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership and the Office of International Student Services. We met many times to discuss what we wanted the students to experience. For example, participating in community outreach to organisations that could support diverse perspectives such as the Tulalip Tribe and our visit to the Hibulb Cultural Center. I also wanted the students to experience a community college classroom but knew I could not develop a short-term daily class on my own. I reached out to faculty to make specific classroom visits happen. Again, I was connecting with faculty members on the EdCC campus that I might never have interacted with otherwise. This was positive for the UFS students, as well as for other EdCC students who were curious about their visit to the college and what life was like in South Africa.

## ■ Implications for future groups or new partnerships

In looking back at EdCC's partnership with UFS, so many things came together to make it exceptional. Personally, I was determined in making this partnership successful for so many reasons. It was an honour to be the only community college amongst all of the global partners. I felt this was our chance to share the community college model that is a cornerstone of the American higher education system, but is not really part of the international landscape. I wanted to honour all of the work that UFS was doing on behalf of transformation and its students – I simply did not want to be one more international academic who visited a foreign country, offered advice and then walked away. Also, I wanted to show my institution the value of professional leave and that time spent away can be reinvigorating with the potential for new initiatives or partnerships. I was determined and this determination pushed me through in leading this program. I also needed the support of my institution's leadership and I found this through my boss at the Vice President level as well as the Special Assistant to the President role. They helped to access funding and connected with other EdCC colleagues to make sure the program was supported and visible:

'The UFS Leadership for Change, to my knowledge, is the only program of its kind in the world. It brought transformational change to students from around the world by allowing them to explore their personal experience with racism and injustice and to learn from one another. Doing this work while exploring another culture added to the power and significance of the program and combined learning about culture, history, and how institutions are in a position to continue or to thwart systems of injustice. From a U.S. community college perspective this is highly relevant to our diverse student body and our community. The University of the Free State is to be commended for its leadership in creating and sustaining this effort and I hope that it will be able to continue this important work in the years to come.' (David Cordell, Emeritus Vice President, International Education – EdCC, n.d.)

The broad support was truly grassroots and I continually knocked on doors on behalf of the UFS students. Knowing that I wanted the students to have a transformational experience, I pushed past my own barriers and any thoughts of doubt. I recently spoke with Dr Tonya Drake, who was in the Special Assistant to the President role and was later promoted to Vice President of College Relations. She is now Chancellor at Western Governors University (WGU)-Washington (see WGU 2020a). The WGU-Washington is the only state-endorsed university that operates entirely online. It is a private, non-profit institution established by the state of Washington and works in partnership with its parent institution, Western Governors University (see WGU 2020b). In talking with Dr Drake, all of our months of planning quickly came back to me. She spoke about our own perspective and really enjoyed seeing 'our' world through the lens of the UFS students. In particular, she loved the students' energy, willingness to explore and the availability to be open to new ideas. It was Dr Drake's leadership that made our visit to the Race Exhibit happen. It is so interesting though - we really had no idea what would 'happen'. We had the same 'experience' of the exhibit, but Dr Drake highlighted how our lenses were so very different. Seeing all the students sharing their experiences and personal perspectives was transformative. Dr Drake also travelled with the EdCC cohort to the GLS 2015 - she mentioned that she talks about her experience quite often and that it was 'very humbling'. She was fascinated by the youth's sense of advocacy and how they can change their world. She also reminded me that it can be taboo to talk about race and 'whiteness' in the US, and that the UFS students were vocal about race and what it meant to the lives of South Africans. She noted that she wishes the college could have performed more with this experience. For example, Dr Drake and I had many conversations about the potential nature of transformational travel focused on students, but programs, staffing and resources need to be built in support of this. None of us had the professional bandwidth to make this happen on top

of our regular work responsibilities. The notion that UFS students were able to travel to EdCC without any personal financial cost was something to not be taken for granted. I kept this value in mind as we prepared for the 2015 and 2018 Global Leadership Summits ... I wanted students to apply for their merit and potential contributions as leaders; not who might be able to afford the high cost of travel to South Africa. Fortunately, the ASEdCC provided funding, as well as the EdCC Foundation and a local scholarship focused on equity and diversity. EdCC students were able to apply for a once in a lifetime experience and not be concerned about the financial implications.

## ■ Conclusion

The Leadership for Change initiative truly instigated change in all of its participants. It brought together different offices and departments on the EdCC campus to welcome, and come together, on behalf of the UFS student groups. It also laid the groundwork for EdCC to fund students and administrators to attend the GLSs in 2015 and 2018. So many more people could experience the depth of South Africa and its students' hopes for the future. The subsequent summits were transformational journeys, full of awe-inspiring learning, conversations and friendship. The Leadership for Change program is also a testament of supporting professional growth for staff members or administrators. Through my time at UFS, I began to understand the program at a deeper level and what they were seeking for their students. I brought this knowledge and passion back to my American institution. Fortunately, through supportive colleagues and leadership, I was allowed to move this initiative forward. I could have been told 'no' so many times. Instead, I heard encouraging words and the belief of such a unique program. The institution truly supported this work. My hopes for the future rest on the fact that I would like many more individuals to receive the opportunities that I received ... so, I must continue championing the educational systems and individuals within so that we all have the possibility of transformation.

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This scholarly book is about the development of student leaders through creating global learning spaces, within the context of higher education transformation. The framing of questions in the existing body of research mainly focuses on how global learning initiatives develop students' ability to explore and interact with cultures and worldviews different from their own. Although these research questions have value, very few scholars ask questions beyond the personal development of individual students. In what ways can the personal transformation of students influence the transformation of higher education institutions? How can institutions take global learning initiatives to scale, both in terms of the number of participating students and partner universities, to influence institutions systemically? What is the reciprocal effect on higher education institutions collaborating on global learning initiatives, especially if these institutions are situated on different continents? The scientific discourse presented in this book not only addresses these issues, but also creates a deeper understanding of how student leadership development can be enhanced through looking at global learning initiatives in a new way and within a different context.

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Leadership for Change is a germinal text that is needed in higher education today. The current challenges faced by higher education administrators need insightful, visionary, and transformational leaders. I am certain that the theories, research, practice examples, personal narratives and policy initiatives in this book will motivate all readers and to recreate their existing environments to make room for social justice and equity.

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