

**THE RELEVANCE OF TOWN AND REGIONAL  
PLANNING EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Town and regional planning in South Africa is challenged by global – and local – economic, social and political changes; the weight of its history in the apartheid past; a poor image; and ultimately, a functional change in the traditional role of planners. South African planning schools have to more and more deal with under-prepared students and cope with competition from other disciplines.

The crucial question is: does planning education prepare graduates adequately to make a contribution to the profession within this context?

This thesis examines the relevance of planning education at South African universities. This is done firstly by comparing South African trends in planning to international trends, and secondly, by assessing practitioners' views on the relevance of planning programmes, and whether their skill requirements match the skills seen as important by planning educators and those offered by graduates. The empirical research was done by assessing four universities' planning programmes, interviewing senior staff at these universities, and surveying 40 planning practitioners in the corresponding four metropolitan areas.

The main issues under enquiry were: the relevance of planning curricula; students' practical experience during training; specialist versus generalist education; undergraduate and/or post-graduate education; life-long learning, and the core skills and competency requirements upon entering the planning profession.

The world needs planning, and planning education is the key to the survival of the profession. With certain reservations, it is concluded that planning education, through the teaching of appropriate skills, is relevant for planning practice. To a large extent, planning education at South African universities follows international trends.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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The following acronyms and abbreviations were used in the thesis:

ACTRP	Association of Consulting Town and Regional Planners of South Africa
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
APS	Association of Planning Students
BESG	Built Environment Support Group
CAD	Computer aided design
CBD	Central business district
CBO	Community based organisation
CPD	Continued professional development
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CV	Curriculum vitae
DFA	Development Facilitation Act
DPASA	Development Planning Association of South Africa
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIS	Geographic information systems
GNP	Gross national product
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IDP	Integrated development planning
KZN	KwaZulu Natal
LDO	Local development objective
LED	Local economic development
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non governmental organisation
NSCAD	Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (Canada)
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RTPI	Royal Town Planning Institute
SA	South Africa
SACTRP	South African Council for Town and Regional Planners
SAITP	South African Institute for Town Planners
SAITRP	South African Institute for Town and Regional Planning
SAPI	South African Planning Institute
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
TPI	Town Planning Institute (U.K.)
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States
UCT	University of Cape Town
UN	United Nations
UND	University of Natal
UP	University of Pretoria
US	University of Stellenbosch
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
WWW	World-wide web

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Why the topic?

Town and regional planners are still searching for a definable role that is sufficiently appropriate to justify their existence as a distinct profession. There is no shortage of mandates for planning, suggesting that perhaps planning is not really a profession at all, but a loose, diverse confederation of ideas and concerns. Many have called for the end of planning as an organised profession. Others argue that exactly the lack of a defining paradigm and its flexibility have been the primary survival mechanism of planning and that this flexibility will enable planners to be ready for whatever may be required of planning in the future.

The South African context is quite unique, featuring numerous peculiarities. Town and regional planning in South Africa is still struggling to come to terms with the past, as the profession was associated with the discredited apartheid ideology. Fortunately for planners, the new government is sympathetically inclined towards planning, placing a strong focus on socio-economic upliftment. However, planning is struggling to shift from process to delivery (Harrison, 1995: 6).

Considering the divergent views on planning in South Africa and elsewhere, tertiary education in town and regional planning is being pulled in two directions. One direction goes with the demand for academic legitimacy in a professional degree programme, and the other is the demand made by professional practice for well-prepared and adequately trained new employees. These two needs exert separate pressures on planning curricula (Ozawa & Seltzer: 1999: 257).

According to Friedman (1996: 89-90), Harrison (1995: 2), Hamza & Zetter (2000: 441) and Diaw *et al* (2001: 11), planning education needs critical examination. They reason that after the last 40 years of planning, the concepts of both planning and planners have undergone major changes, as the profession has adapted its self-understanding to changing circumstances. Planning education, therefore, has to follow suit and also adapt its conception of planning and planners.

At academic institutions, as in professional practice, planners are competing for career positions with people trained in other disciplines such as policy studies, public administration, law, ecology, engineering, geography, architecture, landscape architecture and applied economics. Planners therefore have to redefine themselves in order to compete successfully as urban professionals. Operational knowledge and skills imparted in planning education must be formulated in the context of South Africa as a developing country.

Instead of seeing it as a state-driven process to regulate urban growth, planning is now perceived as a set of interventions to address the impacts produced by global economic processes. The challenge in developing cities is to promote urban governance in areas where the majority of activities are informal, illegal or statistically unaccounted for. Also needed is an understanding of the processes of rapid social transformation in cities, of competing interest groups and the role of urban social movements. Planning education must impart an understanding of the relationship between the radically changing nature of cities and the role of government.

Globally, the economy has changed from a mass industrial production economy to an information-driven service economy and 'flexible' production. Most of the developing world is, however, excluded from the global economy and this is creating an even larger gap of inequality, poverty, polarisation, overexploitation, social exclusion and environmental degradation in many parts of the world. Planning education in developing countries was essentially constructed within the social, economic and ideological framework of a bygone

colonial era. In the past, planning students hardly received any real preparation for the new realities of a globalised world, from which the developing world is largely excluded. Society also finds itself in a post-modern period opening up to a multiplicity of voices. Little attention in planning education used to be given to socio-cultural, contextual understanding or processes of communication and participation. The present challenge for planning education is to produce graduates who are prepared to function effectively within a volatile, short-lived and overwhelmingly complex South African environment.

Teachers, students and practitioners have raised questions about the adequacy of planning education to address the above-mentioned changing nature of planning, the changing role of planners, the changing role of the state, the changes effected by a global economy and a changing society. There are many debates in planning circles about aspects of planning education such as the need and extent of practical experience while studying, diversity in planning programmes and of the profession, generalist versus specialist education, continued professional development, and the core skills and competencies necessary for qualified planners in the profession.

The global shifts within the planning profession and the debates in planning education are evident in South Africa too. In addition, South Africa faces its peculiar post-apartheid challenges such as the reconstruction and development requirements, the need to address backlogs in infrastructure and service provision in ways that would help to integrate and restructure cities and regions, and the need to construct new, integrated systems of planning that are responsive to changing conditions and needs. Planning education also experiences its own contextual challenges such as the shifts in tertiary education, the slow growth in the planning profession, the poor public image and self-image of planning and unique planning policies and legislation – adding a developing world flavour to the debates in planning education.

Building on the available literature regarding these shifts in the planning profession and debates in planning education, and on the empirical survey of the South African planning profession's view of town and regional planning education, this thesis hopes to make a contribution in the area of the relevance of planning education programmes in South Africa at present and for the future. This study forms part of a larger proposed study by the planning schools of South Africa and research done by Harrison and Todes (2001b) on the changing nature of planning and planning education. Planning schools have responded in different ways to the changes in planning, yet they all agree that a more systematic study should be made of the changing nature of planning, emerging relationships with other fields of study, and the implications of the shifts in planning – on the profession, on the planning market, and consequently on planning education.

This study deals with the last aspect, namely planning education – specifically the relevance of planning education in South Africa. Embarking on this thesis, the author's intention was to arrive at suggestions and recommendations for an educational framework, for planning education to adapt successfully to the challenges of the present global economy and the current requirements of planning practice in South Africa.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives**

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the qualities and shortcomings of planning education, by assessing the planning programmes of four tertiary institutions in view of the changing requirements of planning, and the demands on planning education by planning practice. The four universities are not assessed individually, but serve as representatives for planning education in South Africa.

The primary aim of the thesis is therefore to evaluate the relevance of contemporary planning programmes in South Africa. Some secondary aims and objectives are the following:

- What is the nature of planning practice in South Africa today? This is addressed in chapter 2 of the thesis.
- What key competencies and skills are required (and might be part of the curricula of planning schools), in the light of the changing nature of planning? Chapter 3 of the thesis addresses this question.
- How has planning education developed and responded to changes in the profession in South Africa? This is addressed in chapters 3 and 4.
- What do the planning programmes consist of in four of the planning schools in South Africa? This is addressed in chapter 4 of the thesis.
- How do these curricula match the required skills and the demands from practice? This is addressed in chapter 5 of the thesis.
- How should the present planning programme be revised to be made more relevant to planning practice? Chapter 6 of the thesis addresses this question.

The assessment of the planning programmes is influenced and determined by the histories of planning practice and education in South Africa and elsewhere, followed by a view on how the international and local contexts are changing and how planning and planning education should respond to this. Planning programmes in South Africa are evaluated in terms of the above, to determine if they are successfully adapting to the challenges of the present global economy and the current local requirements of planning practice. Lastly, this thesis suggests some concrete ways to adjust the planning programmes in order for planning education to more adequately prepare graduates for planning practice in South Africa.

### 1.3 Scope and limits

Many research articles and papers on planning education have appeared, but up to now, none have brought the requirements in key skills and competencies together with the curricula and planning programmes as presented by planning schools. In addition, this study could also make a contribution towards conceptualising the changing nature of planning practice and the need for revised curriculum development in South Africa. The study is likely to generate further research within planning, as it provides a starting point to include more university and technikon planning schools in the research on programme development.

This research can impact on the planning community by feeding into the development of curricula of planning schools, seeing that it establishes the required competencies and appropriate sets of knowledge that might form the core of planning education. The findings are also likely to add to the existing databases on planning schools and views from the planning profession. The research is furthermore applied and can be disseminated within the discipline through workshops and conferences, as well as individual interaction (Planning schools, 2001: 7).

It is vital to set out, within the parameters of this thesis, what it does not attempt to accomplish:

- It is not within the scope of this thesis to offer a comprehensive narrative of the history of planning practice or planning education internationally, in South Africa or in any of the planning schools. It only gives an overview.
- It is not within the scope of this thesis to offer a comprehensive overview of all the planning education debates. It only deals with some key debates in order to focus the study and the recommendations. Third World issues are therefore not scrutinised separately in the empirical work.

- It is not within the scope of this thesis to offer a comprehensive overview of all the planning programmes and curricula at educational institutions in South Africa. The research covers four universities, whilst no technikons, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or various other institutions offering planning education were approached.
- It is not within the scope of this thesis to evaluate the content of every subject forming part of a planning course. Instead, an overview of the total planning programme is given.
- It is not within the scope of this thesis to interview NGOs in the empirical research about their view on planning education, albeit not discrediting the role they play in the planning profession.
- It is not within the scope of this thesis to offer a comprehensive overview of planning practice. Since the focus of the study is the relevance of the planning curricula for planning practice, the latter will only be examined insofar as it relates to planning education.

## 1.4 Methodology

### 1.4.1 Components of the study

The project is designed to include the following components as per the Planning Schools Proposal to the National Research Foundation (Planning schools, 2001: 4-5):

**International and South African history of planning.** A study was made of planning history in several countries to determine the respective influences it exerted on planning in South Africa. There are different opinions as to why a profession needs to revisit its history, ranging from the encouragement of pride in our profession, to ensuring we never forget our mistakes and err again – the latter motivation being appropriate for South African history. The evolution of planning in developing countries was also studied to reflect the unique challenges facing planners in the developing world countries.

**The history of planning education internationally and in South Africa.** The history of the development of planning education in South Africa and elsewhere was also researched. The contextual study draws on histories of British and American planning education due to their influence on South African planning education. South Africa inherited many British and American planning ideas and principles, British individuals played an important role in planning education, and written material available in South Africa mostly came from specifically these countries.

**International and South African trends in planning education.** An analysis was made of the debates and trends in planning education in various parts of the world. These include the generalist versus specialist debate; arguments on the significance of gaining practical experience while studying, and querying whether academics are qualified to provide this practical training; the emerging trends in planning and how planning education responds to the trends; skills and competencies needed in qualified planners; and the relevance of planning education for training future planners. Curricula development in other countries was also assessed – as a basis for comparison with developments in South Africa. The empirical research investigated South African views on the afore-mentioned debates by interviewing planning practitioners as well as planning schools.

**The relationship between skills required and planning education.** This involved an investigation into employer perceptions as to the relevance of current planning education, planning-related skills needed in practice, and whether universities indeed equip students with these skills and competencies. The contents of curricula were considered, as were the need to gain practical experience during training and the need for continued professional development

afterwards. Employers in government and private sector were requested to complete a questionnaire on planning education as well as a skills matrix. The latter listed core skills and competencies which were ranked in importance by planning professionals who also indicated whether graduates are seen to have command of these skills or not.

### 1.4.2 Units of analysis

The focus of the study was on university education, so four universities were selected to form the central unit of analysis. The universities were selected on the basis of two historically Afrikaans and two English universities – two of them presenting undergraduate planning education and two offering only post-graduate planning education.

The second unit of analysis was planning practitioners in the public and private sectors employing recently graduated candidates within each university's immediate community. Availability of respondents from the planning profession was also taken into account in selecting the planning schools, thus it was decided to choose universities in metropolitan areas. Except for Pretoria (where the author is acquainted in planning circles), the help of university staff was enlisted in selecting these planning practices and departments, as they, after all, are aware of employed graduates from their planning schools.

The four universities selected were the University of Stellenbosch as an historically Afrikaans university presenting a post-graduate planning course (it was decided to include Stellenbosch to be the representative of the Cape Town Metropolitan area, since, in fact, Pretoria is the only historically Afrikaans university situated within a metropolitan area); the University of the Witwatersrand as an English university presenting both undergraduate and post-graduate planning courses; the University of Pretoria as an historically Afrikaans university presenting both undergraduate and post-graduate planning courses; and the University of Natal as an English university presenting post-graduate planning courses.

Forty planning practitioners (ten from each relevant region) participated in a qualitative analysis of experiences and perceptions of the relevance of different aspects of the planning programme.

**Table 1.1 - Number of public and private sector respondents per area**

Area	Private sector	Public sector	Total
Johannesburg	5	5	10
KwaZulu Natal	4	6	10
Pretoria	6	4	10
Western Cape	6	4	10
Total	21	19	40

Practitioners were also requested to complete a skills and competency matrix, indicating the most important skills and areas of knowledge for qualified planners. Only 25 of the 40 practitioners responded by completing the skills matrix.

**Table 1.2 - Number of public and private sector respondents per area for the skills matrix**

Area	Private sector	Public sector	Total
Johannesburg	3	3	6
KwaZulu Natal	1	4	5
Pretoria	5	3	8
Western Cape	2	4	6
Total	11	14	25



### 1.4.3 Nature of the surveys

The survey of town and regional planning education at the four universities was a comprehensive inquiry into the planning programmes in their totality. The aim with this survey was to serve as a background to the empirical research in which professionals from the planning community assessed the relevance of planning education. The survey had four basic areas of enquiry, namely the nature of town and regional planning practice, the characteristics of planning students, the nature of planning education and planning curricula (for the questionnaire, see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was completed during face-to-face interviews with heads of departments or key personnel of planning departments. Marketing brochures, web sites, course outlines, yearbooks and other kinds of documentation were also used to gather information. In some cases additional information was requested in follow-up e-mails.

The information gathered from the respective planning schools was synthesised and is presented as the view of all four planning schools, unless otherwise stated. At first, findings were presented per planning school, but due to the commonalities in planning programmes and in philosophies regarding planning education, this resulted in much repetition and duplication of views. It was thus decided to deviate from the base-level assumption that planning schools differ in programmes, to one of concentrating on the similarities between programmes.

The survey of private and public sector planners features four basic areas of enquiry, namely company information, qualities anticipated in planning graduates, extent of satisfaction with graduates, perception of the relevance of planning education and the key skills and competencies required of graduates (for the questionnaire, see Appendix 2). The questionnaire was completed during either a telephonic interview, face-to-face interview or via e-mail, whichever the respondent preferred.

Respondents were given a matrix of skills and competencies for indicating which ones they regarded as essential for qualified town and regional planners. Respondents were also asked to evaluate whether graduates straight out of planning school indeed have command of these skills and competencies. The categories in the matrix were devised at a meeting of planning schools in Bloemfontein in 2000 (a list of these skills and competencies can be found in Appendix 3), but the sub-outcomes were extended to include more skills and competencies mentioned in the international literature as reviewed in chapter 3 of the thesis.

The initial response rate for completing the skills matrix was very poor, because the matrix was a separate document on a web page, which many respondents did not bother to visit. It was later added at the end of the questionnaire, which dramatically increased the response rate.

### 1.4.4 Analysis and interpretation

The information gained during visits to the universities has been analysed and presented per topic as being representative of planning education in South Africa, unless otherwise specified. Information obtained during interviews with planners has been analysed and also presented in thematic sections. In chapter 5, the views of university planning staff are compared with those of professionals in planning practice as far as the questionnaires corresponded, as well as with the literature on international trends in planning education.

## 1.5 Chapter outline

Chapter 2 starts with retelling the historical evolution of the planning profession internationally and in South Africa. This chapter moves on to discuss the nature of planning practice today as

influenced by the changes in the global and local contexts. In the last section, this chapter investigates the future of planning in other countries as well as in South Africa.

Chapter 3 traces the history of planning education in South Africa and elsewhere. This is followed by an examination of the key debates in planning education such as the generalist-specialist debate, the relationship between planning education and practice, diversity in planning education, the value of internships, and continued professional development. It is followed by a discussion on a relevant framework for planning education, especially in developing countries as South Africa shares many challenges with these countries. The last section of the chapter compares views on skills and competencies to be taught, and what the core curriculum should entail.

In chapter 4 the findings from studying the planning programmes at the four universities are discussed – serving as background to the empirical research in which professionals from the planning community assess the relevance of planning education. The survey describes universities' views on the changing nature of planning practice, the characteristics of planning students, the nature of planning education and planning curricula, the challenges they experience in the changing tertiary environment and declining student numbers.

Chapter 5 brings the findings from surveying the planning profession in the public and private sector to light. In this chapter the practitioners assess the preparedness of students and the relevance of planning education; they provide opinions on generalist versus specialist education, undergraduate versus post-graduate education, continued professional development, gaps they have noticed in the planning programmes, and suggestions for improvements. They also indicate the most critical skills and competencies for qualified planners, and what areas of knowledge planners should master. The last section of the chapter compares the views of South African planning practitioners and South African university staff, and compares the views of the international planning community with those of South African planners.

Chapter 6, presents no new evidence, but synthesises the thesis by concluding on the relevance of planning programmes in adapting successfully to the challenges of the present global economy and current requirements of planning practice. Highlighting the challenges for planning educators in South Africa, it also presents concrete suggestions and recommendations for planning programmes to ensure relevance in preparing students for planning in South Africa today and in the future. The recommendations are on the same topics and debates as those reflected in the literature review, the university survey and the survey of planning practitioners. It could be viewed as best practice for town and regional planning education programmes.

## CHAPTER 2: THE TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNING PROFESSION – PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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The field of planning has been in a state of change (and crisis) ever since its inception. However, almost all professional disciplines are constantly torn between conflicting demands of theory and practice and are crisis-prone as they respond to rapidly changing patterns of needs in a society they are meant to serve (Friedman, 1996: 92).

This literature study will not only be concerned with these 'conflicting demands of theory and practice' as have been examined by many South African and international academics, practitioners and other critics, but will also explore the changing needs of the planning profession and the way planning education responds and should respond. The latter is addressed by considering an educational framework for planning education.

The following two chapters review the often conflicting, diverse and radical viewpoints – giving an overview of diverse opinions, which will in turn determine the findings and recommendations of this study. As this thesis revolves around planning education, the sources consulted are technical works by well-known, reputed academics such as Allmendinger, Baum, Beauregard, Castells, Cherry, Devas, Friedman, Harrison, Healey, Mandelbaum, Muller, Oranje, Rakodi, Tewdwr-Jones, Todes, Smit, Sandercock, Watson and Zetter.

This chapter starts with an account of the history of planning as a profession, specifically in Anglo-American countries, and covers the influence of distinguishable trends on the establishment of planning as a profession in South Africa. What also emerges from South African histories is the effect apartheid has had on planning, and how it distinctly 'coloured' the history of the local planning profession.

This chapter, the first one of the literature study, further probes the nature of planning practice at present, and considers the future of the planning profession as part of a globalised world. These trends are to ultimately influence the requirements for an educational framework, specifically the skills and competencies needed by graduates when entering the planning profession.

The second chapter of the literature study, i.e. chapter 3, reviews the history of planning education as being intertwined with the history of the profession itself. It furthermore gives various opinions about the nature of planning education and what it should involve, according to the critics. Included would be: practical experience, generalist or specialised courses, and diversity in planning education. It also explores the skills believed to be essential for planning practice, to be acquired through planning education. The core of the educational framework, the planning curriculum, finally comes under scrutiny, providing an indication of the compatibility between the skills and competencies required by planning practice, and the skills and competencies taught in planning schools.

Chapter 2 now commences with explaining why an account of the history of town planning is relevant.

### 2.1 Histories of the town and regional planning profession

#### 2.1.1 The need for an account of planning history

*"Cities are plugged into the globe of history like capacitors: they condense and conduct the currents of social time. Cities are full of stories in time, ... their narratives are epic and everyday; they tell of migration and production, law and laughter, revolution and art. ... their*

*registry is never wholly legible because of each foray into the palimpsest of city surfaces reveals only traces of these relations*" (Holsten, 1998: 37).

Others, such as Healey (1997: 7), express the opinion that *"every field of endeavour has its history of ideas and practices and its traditions of debate. These act as a store of experience, of myths, metaphors and arguments, which those within the field can draw upon in developing their own contributions, either through what they do, or through reflecting on the field. This 'store' provides advice, proverbs, recipes and techniques for understanding and acting, and inspiration – ideas to play with and develop."*

Sandercock states that *"Professions, (like nations) keep their shape by moulding their members' (citizens') understanding of the past, causing them to forget those events that do not accord with a righteous image, while keeping alive those memories that do"* (1998a: 1). *"In constructing histories of itself, the planning profession is moulding its members' understanding of past struggles and triumphs, and simultaneously creating a contemporary professional culture around those memories, those stories"* (Sandercock, 1998b, 33). By telling some and not other stories, a professional identity is shaped, invested with meaning and then defended. South African planners are not yet at a stage, it seems, where they are able or allowed to *"forget those events that do not accord with a righteous image."* This country's apartheid history still strongly influences our getting to grips with the current planning milieu.

According to Beauregard (1998: 184-185), planning histories may have been written to empower or disempower their readers by controlling how the past is presented. Historians also write in and for the present by exploring the justification of planning and the contemporary efficacy of planning practice. Historians therefore decide what the readers should know, often reflecting a different picture from reality. This used to be the case in South Africa during the apartheid years.

Sandercock brings to our attention the contribution to planning history made by minorities, a contribution that has largely been ignored. In the U.S., social relations of gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexuality have been brought into the centre of historical analysis, and have begun to transform applied fields of history (Dubrow, 1998: 57). It seems that the gay and lesbian experiences are getting a lot of attention in contemporary literature. In *"Making the invisible visible"*, Kenney (1998: 120) expresses the view that the *"inclusion of gay and lesbian histories and viewpoints in planning history continues the recent shift of planning history and theory away from a focus of institutional responses to urban inequalities toward the collective, street-level responses of those subject to this discrimination."* In South Africa the process of transforming the accounts of history to incorporate the experience of all races, has only started. This account of the planning history of South Africa may therefore lack the contribution of previous disadvantaged races to the development of the urban environment.

For the purposes of this study, Cherry's explanation for the need of an historical account of the planning profession is both valid and clarifying: *"... planning history offers insight from the past, sheds light on the present and projects a guide to the future"*(1993: 3). For him, the history of planning strips away the circumstances, exposes influences of key people, reveals the pressure of competing sectional interests, dusts away the preconceptions and biases, accounts for why things happen, demythologises and thereby allows new truths to emerge.

There are different opinions as to why a profession needs to revisit its history – ranging from motivations such as encouraging pride in our profession, to ensuring we never forget our mistakes and err again. The latter motivation is quite appropriate for South African history.

### 2.1.2 Forces that influenced the history of planning in South Africa

In reflecting upon the history of town planning in South Africa, Oranje (1997: 182-183) identified the forces that influenced planning, together with the role and experience of planners in South Africa as the following:

- The policies of the government of the day
- Trends in planning in the U.K., the U.S. and Germany
- The mood of the time – reformist, modernist or postmodernist
- The dictates of the market
- The economic fortunes of the white middle and high income classes in the country
- Individuals and their visions for planning.

Floyd (in Smit, 1989: 64) agrees with Oranje that the emergence of South African planning legislation was influenced primarily by British town planning thought, but also by German, French and American thinking. Many individuals as well as the Transvaal Planning Association also propagated planning and influenced the direction of national planning thought.

An overview of the history of planning in Britain, as the most important force that shaped South African planning, is provided in the first part of this section, followed by an overview of historical planning trends in developing countries. The rest of the forces, having shaped South African planning history are discussed in the latter part of this section on planning history. As Africa (1993: 5) states in his account of the history of planning - the periodisation in this section attempts to show dominant hegemonic ideas and practices that characterised a period, and does not suggest neatly compartmentalised periods in history.

### 2.1.3 British planning history

#### 2.1.3.1 Planning prior to the World Wars: The formative years

According to Cherry (1992: 2), town planning took root in the conscious regulation, by the state, of the urban environment. In Britain, the U.S. and parts of Western Europe it began as a response to the legacy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrialism and problems associated with urban growth. Various models for future cities became popular internationally, such as the Garden City and the Radiant City. Central planning between 1930 and 1980 was again an international feature in which town planning was well presented. After the world wars, planners became part of multi-disciplinary, multi-professional teams engaged in planning and welfare-related programmes.

It is important to note the international transfer of planning ideas and ideologies to explain the varied nature of planning practice around the world. According to Cherry (1992: 2) planning in Britain and Germany tended to borrow from one another, whereas France proved resistant to the English suburban model. The United States had little to offer Europe and through colonial links, previous colonies, such as South Africa, embraced British planning ideas – often without much customisation for the local environment.

In the formative years, planning in Britain was mostly social planning aimed at meeting the social needs through programmes of social welfare: health, education, parks and provision for old age. This was in response to many people's protests against the evils of unsanitary housing and overcrowding in a time of wealth and ostentation. People objected to the high urban mortality rate, they sought the regular supply of fresh water, the efficient removal of waste and the ready availability of fresh air (Cherry, 1993: 3-4).

Town planning, a term first used in 1906, commenced with matters of design and layout (with a bridge via housing to social planning) but ultimately extended to land-use and land management, aesthetics and civic art, community development, roads and transport, conservation, redevelopment and renewal. The notion that society might be comprehensively planned signalled the arrival of the age of planning, while the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 set the scene for planning legislation in the U.K. Planning thereby became a state activity in social and economic affairs (Muller, 1993: 1; Cherry, 1993: 3, 6).

Regional development originated between the wars, first with a concern for management of natural resources and river basin development, and secondly with matters such as regional economic development, location of industry and settlement policy. This was specifically evident during the depression years of 1921 and 1929-1932 in Britain (Cherry, 1993: 3-7).

Planning was largely considered, in the early years, as an expression of – very much individual – creativity and artistry, with little interactiveness within the profession (Harrison, 2001a: 77). This was due to change after the World Wars, as planning became more institutionalised.

### **2.1.3.2 Planning in post-war Britain: Physical planning and design**

During and after the Second World War, a view emerged in Britain that the state should play a more active, interventionist role in society, in order to establish a new system of planning, to protect the best of their landscape and to regulate physical and economic change. As planning was institutionalised and scientised, the planner's task became prescribed according to procedural rationality. The role and the significance of individual creativity became marginalised. This view of urban planning was only questioned in the 1960s because of the outcome of post-war planning practice (Taylor, 1998: 7; Harrison, 2001a: 77, Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 134). The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 is generally seen as the watershed in the development of town planning as a form of institutionalism in Britain (Devas, 1993: 67).

The physical devastation caused by the Second World War contributed to the extensive influence of planning in Europe. It was assumed that social and economic ends could be achieved by physical means, and there was great confidence in the capacity of the public sector. The idea that physical planning could affect social and economic life was almost pivotal to planning thought at that time (Taylor, 1998: 8; Harrison, 2001a: 77; Africa, 1993: 9; Devas, 1993: 67).

Town planning theories worldwide were often similarly preoccupied with visionary plans or designs that showed how the ideal town or city should be spatially organised. Harrison (2001a) would have classified this as the romantic side of planning. Soria y Mata's nineteenth-century plans for linear cities, Le Corbusier's plans for the 'contemporary city' in the 1920s and 30s, Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' and Frank Lloyd Wright's plans for the 'Broadacre City' in the 1930s were examples of this approach (Taylor, 1998: 17-20; Cherry, 1993: 4; Devas, 1993: 67).

For the period when planning was regarded as a form of art, it was considered as an extension of architecture in the sense of being concerned with the design of whole groups of buildings and spaces – 'townscaping'. Architects, civil engineers and surveyors were seen as being the most competent to do this 'townscaping', and they competed with each other for work (Oranje, 1997: 70-72; Taylor, 1998: 8-11; Africa, 1993: 7).

These disciplines therefore resisted the establishment of urban planning as a separate profession in Britain (and in countries such as South Africa). Although the British Town Planning Institute had been established in 1913 and had petitioned for a Royal Charter in 1948, it was not until 1971 that the institute succeeded in obtaining the grant of a Royal Charter to become fully

recognised as a distinct profession. Also, in 1947 the first of a number of important planning Acts was instituted to attempt to create a single all-embracing system within which planning activities could fall (Taylor, 1998: 8; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 37). Planning is therefore regarded as a relatively 'young' profession.

Analogous to the work of an engineer or an architect, plans were seen as blueprints for the future form of the town – all roughly the same size with same-sized local shopping centres, primary schools and open green spaces. The focus of planning was on development control and forward/ master planning. It showed no real understanding of how different residential areas actually function, or how different areas and urban functions tend to develop (Taylor, 1988: 14, Africa, 1993: 10).

This was also reflected in the immediate post-war era, when urban planners tended to assume they knew best what sorts of physical environments were unfit for people to live in. Accordingly, they did not even consult the inhabitants about how they would like to see their surroundings planned. This lack of consultation with people demonstrates planners' failure to appreciate a distinction between matters of fact and matters of value. Planners were therefore criticised for not recognising the value-laden and political nature of urban planning, and according to Tewdwr-Jones, this was when the poor image of town planning commenced (Taylor, 1998: 29-34, 43; Oranje, 1997; Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 126).

The most compelling critique against planners came from Jane Jacobs in her book 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities' in 1961: "*Cities are an immense laboratory of trial and error, failure and success, in city building and city design. This is the laboratory in which city planning should have been learning and forming and testing its theories. Instead the practitioners and teachers of this discipline (if such it can be called) have ignored the study of success and failure in real life, have been incurious about the reasons for unexpected success, and are guided instead by principles derived from the behaviour and appearance of ... suburbs, tuberculosis sanatoria, fairs and imaginary dream cities – from anything but cities themselves*" (Jacobs, 1961: 16).

### 2.1.3.3 Planning in the 1960s and 70s: The systems theory and rational decision-making

Planning thought changed radically during the 1960s – with no room for creative individualism anymore. This being a time of large-scale urban growth, suburbanisation, high levels of employment, mass consumption and the 'arrival' of the motorcar, a need was felt for the discipline to acquire an intellectually firmer foundation. Systems theory, with its technical and seemingly sophisticated vocabulary of 'modelling', 'mathematics' and 'science' seemed to provide this foundation. While planning was still seen as an exercise in physical planning and design by some, a younger generation of planners started seeing it as an 'error-free' exercise in the analysis and control of urban areas and regions viewed as systems. Systems theory and rational decision-making as parts of a modernist movement had their widest impact on planning thought during the 1960s and early 70s (Taylor, 1998: 59-66; Harrison, 2001a: 77, Africa, 1993: 13-16).

Modernists had a desire to radically break away from the past, and this was expressed in culture, architecture, the arts, philosophy and planning. Modernism believed that the world could be a better place by casting aside tradition and creating a neatly ordered urban form to complement the geometrical simplicity of modern architecture. Modern urban planning was characterised by 'utopian comprehensiveness' to build or rebuild complete new cities or parts thereof.

This drastic 'clean sweep' redevelopment caused widespread public protest. High-rise housing redevelopment schemes replaced 19<sup>th</sup> century terraces and major schemes were developed to

accommodate the rising tide of traffic. Whole communities were disrupted and many people were dislocated. The systems and rational process view of planning failed to grasp that decisions should rest upon value judgements about the kind of environment to be created. Public protests against urban planning judgements suggested that these judgements were political, rather than technical or scientific. Africa argues that for the first time, planning education began to seriously question and criticise planning practice for being overly ambitious and unrealistic (Taylor, 1998: 75-77, Africa, 1993: 16).

The theory of planning as a rational process of decision-making and action, coupled with the systems view of planning, continued to dominate planning theory into the 1970s. Planning became a comprehensive redevelopment activity, particularly in inner-city locations, by slum clearance, road-building programmes and new town development. It was, however, acknowledged that political judgements were necessary during the planning process. Still, planning was criticised for its abstractness and generality – its lack of content and substance (Taylor, 1998: 130-135, Africa 1993: 17, Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 134).

#### **2.1.3.4 Planning from the 1980s to the late 1990s: The effects of modernist planning**

For almost 20 years following the Second World War, British urban planning theory and practice were dominated by a concept that saw urban planning essentially as an exercise in physical design, viewed to be most appropriately carried out by architects. This idea of urban planning as architecture on a large scale persisted throughout the 1960s and most planners received an architect-planner education and training. Urban planning was viewed as an art until the systems view and the rational process view of planning burst onto the scene in the 1960s – the first paradigm shift. Since then urban planners have received training and education as scientific system analysts.

The second paradigm shift in urban planning, from modernism to post-modernism, happened during the last twenty years. Post-modernists rejected the simplicity of modern functionalist architecture and sought to bring back style to enrich the aesthetic character of contemporary buildings. Underlying modernism was a more fundamental, intellectual orientation involving reliance upon reason and science – an optimistic belief that, through rational analysis and greater scientific understanding, human beings could create a better world for themselves. This confidence in modernist architecture has become seriously dented, with post-modernists criticising modern reliance on science and even questioning reason itself.

Planning in the 1980s and 90s therefore acknowledged its planning mistakes, and tried to correct some of them by embarking on environmental planning, development of social and post-modernist theories, and communicative planning.

#### **Social theories**

Although unemployment and its accompanying hardships severely hit middle-class people in the 1980s and 90s, an ongoing concern with the plight of the poorest and most disadvantaged groups in society has become implicit in the consideration given to inner city decline and regeneration. A number of planning theories have therefore come to focus on developing hypotheses about social inequalities and planning for equal opportunity. Another shift in perceptions of social issues is observed in the planning theory literature: in the 1980s and 90s research on social disadvantages started to focus on equal opportunities in relation to gender, race and disability, instead of social class (Taylor, 1998: 141-148).



### **Environmental planning**

A specific wave of concern that arose in the 1960s and 70s, was the ecological damage being done to the natural environment by human activity. During the 1980s a number of environmental disasters and scientific evidence of changes to the earth's global ecology generated a second wave of concern. A need was felt for national and international action, and the 1992 Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, where delegates at the conference committed themselves to an Agenda 21. With the acceptance of Local Agenda 21 planning became more involved in the ecology of the city. A spate of theoretical work was developed that concentrated on specific environmental problems and how to alleviate them through proper planning. However, urban planners have learnt more about how best to go about the practical process of town planning than about the kinds of environmental qualities urban planning should be aiming at. One of the challenges facing urban planners is the development of better theory about environmental qualities that urban planning practice should help to bring about (Taylor, 1998: 149-150, Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 134, 167-168).

### **Post-modernism**

Planning theorists in the 1970s and 80s gave little attention to urban design and aesthetics. This attitude was changed during the 1980s, with the emergence of post-modernism. A number of architects turned against the anonymity of functionalist modernism and argued for a richer, more aesthetic architecture (Taylor, 1998: 150-151, Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 134).

### **Market orientation**

Planning also became more market-orientated, moving away from state control over physical and economic development. During the 1990s market orientation became viewed as an important aspect of urban revitalisation and regeneration of inner cities (Taylor, 1998: 150-151, Tewdwr-Jones, 1999: 134).

### **Communicative planning**

During the 1960s, most urban planners received no training in implementation aspects. Consequently, many local governments accumulated a chest full of 'bottom-drawer' plans that were never implemented. In the mid 1970s planning found itself subject to large-scale rationalisation programmes, privatisation, deregulation, the emasculation of local government, and cutbacks on funding. In the 1980s, planners were reduced to sterile economic agents. By the early 1990s planning came to be seen as a process of communication and negotiation – 'communicative planning theory'. The communicative planning theorists and post-modernists were motivated by the ideal of democratic, participatory planning incorporating all groups that stood, for example, to be affected by environmental change, and not just the powerful actors who were in the position to implement major development and environmental change, in which the planner has a facilitating or brokering role (Taylor, 1998: 136-141; Harrison, 2001a: 77, Griffiths and Thornley in Africa, 1993: 17, Healey, 1997:29).

#### **2.1.4 The history of planning in the developing world**

Urban planning in the developing world has evolved significantly different from one country to another, given the enormous diversity of cultures, conditions, political positions, and legal and administrative systems. However, they have all been influenced by changing ideas, ideologies and fashions, and have certain historical characteristics in common, such as social and political commonalities rooted in the colonial history of the subcontinent.

In shaping the pattern of urban development, many developing countries were influenced by colonial powers. Britain, for example, had a major influence in shaping the pattern of urban development and planning in many parts of Africa and Asia (also South Africa). Colonial governments provided the necessary infrastructure to facilitate trade and maintain public order, but unfortunately they were more interested in what they could extract from their colonies than the conditions of the indigenous people (Devas & Rakodi, 1993: 35-38; Devas, 1993: 65; Watson, 2002: 2).

Many colonial countries received their independence in the 1950s and 60s. The newly independent governments faced the huge task of national development with limited financial resources and skilled manpower. During this time cities grew without any planned framework and without the resources to maintain the post-colonial infrastructure.

Despite this, the 1950s and 60s were decades of confidence in the prospects for economic development in the newly independent nations. There was a strong belief that public sector planning could bring about economic development. Much of the industrial development of that period tended to be capital intensive, thereby limiting job creation and forcing people to work in the informal sector. However, governments perceived this sector as illegal, unauthorised and competing with the formal, legal sector – although it could have contributed to the economy to a large extent if allowed to do so.

Urban development in developing countries has consequently been heavily influenced by a traditional anti-urban view. Cities have been perceived as dangerous, parasitic on the national economy, wasteful of agricultural land and a haven for the unemployed and criminal. Urban migration has been seen as overloading urban services, and limiting city growth became a major objective. People were therefore moved around, out of some localities and into others, trying to reduce urban densities and, above all, stopping in-migration to cities. It was thought that if the population could be held stable, the planners could catch up in the provision of services; if population growth could be reduced, it could more closely approximate to 'available resources' and then transportation, housing and water would be more or less adequate (Harris, 1983: 7; Devas, 1993: 77-78).

During the 1950s and 60s, the provision of housing was a prominent preoccupation for planners. National Housing authorities were established in many countries to construct public housing. The provision fell far short of the need and was far too costly to be afforded by the poor without subsidy. Studies showed, however, that the poor provided themselves with shelter, that also served their needs better and was much cheaper than public housing (Devas, 1993: 80).

Related to the housing issue, was the question of access to land as a critical constraint to providing shelter. Squatting and invasion of land as well as informal, private subdivision of land were common, although illegal and contravening of planning and building codes. Access to land for the poor became more difficult. In many cases traditional land allocations had effectively become market transactions, and illegal land occupation organised by land grabbers and often supported by politicians, was the order of the day (Devas, 1993: 84).

Contrary to the confidence of the 1950s, the 1960s and 70s brought disillusionment with the public sector economic development approach, as it did not result in benefits for all – the gap between rich and poor kept widening. In the 1970s, theorists tried to achieve 'growth with equity'. For many poor people, this basic needs approach meant inferior levels of service (Devas, 1993: 94-96).

Most colonial cities were subject to formal planning exercises in the form of blueprint master plans. Such plans tried to modernise African cities in the Western image and often resulted in large-scale removal of informal settlements and small traders. At a government level, dissatisfaction with these traditional, rigid and inappropriate master plans led to two rather

different responses: Structure Planning and Action Planning. These plans were designed to provide a broader strategic framework for subsequent local plans, and were to take account of the regional context, and of transportation, housing, sanitation, water and environmental issues.

The problem with master planning in the developing world was its failure to deliver results at the ground level. Time and effort were required for producing a master plan often with apparent irrelevance to the real needs of the citizens. The growing inability to implement the plans and World Bank advice to replace the plans with urban management approaches, meant that most urban areas expanded without formal state planning and are considered 'ungoverned' (Devas & Rakodi, 1993: 36; Devas, 1993: 85-88; Diaw, Nnkya & Watson, 2001: 3).

This neglect of the cities is not only to the peril of the city dwellers, but also to rural communities. Cities remain one of the most powerful engines of growth for a whole society. Urban and rural sectors are not only competing sectors, they are also complementary sectors, in whose interaction in playing their specialised roles lies the hope of general transformation (Harris, 1983: 13).

Poor management, lack of competition, corruption, ambiguous legislation, poor planning, lack of resources and shortage of skilled personnel all contributed to the failure of the public sector to provide effective services. The 1980s saw a significant reduction in the scale and nature of public sector activities in many countries. There was a move to the right, with emphasis on the market mechanism and the private sector. National economic planning went into abeyance, public sector industries were privatised, public spending was reduced, and many controls and regulations on the public sector were removed (Devas & Rakodi, 1993: 37; Devas, 1993: 98; Mabogunje, 2000: 171).

The 1980s also saw an increasing awareness of environmental damage being done. In more recent years the top-down approach by governments was questioned, and a more communicative process established. There is a shift towards developmental planning, with the focus on working with the community, as people in developing countries are beginning to demand alternative planning approaches to the traditional colonial methods.

In conclusion it can be said that despite lengthy planning documents, speeches and ambitious schemes for urban development that include employment creation and improvement, there appear to have been no effect in shifting the real pattern of expenditure. Millions of metropolitan inhabitants continue as before to find work, create shelter, feed themselves and their families – in appallingly poor conditions – without the help of the public sector. It is a miracle of unconscious collective ingenuity, owing little to actual planning (Harris, 1983: 9).

The emerging patterns of metropolitan activity – and thus land-use – were not generally foreseen by most of the planning agencies, nor are they a result of planning. The matrix of economic activity continually reshapes the patterns of land occupation and of activity, with little apparent reference to plans and maps in the planning office. Cities are therefore not planned at all. Land is regulated and people are moved, without an apparent indication that such regulation or movement is in the interest either of those affected or of anyone else (Harris, 1983: 14).

To a large extent, South Africa shares the developing world's growing pains. Britain initially had a major impact in shaping the pattern of South African cities, on planning ideas and planning education. As an ex-colony, South Africa struggled for autonomy from the U.K. planning profession for many years, as it now struggles to secure the support of the new elite since the country's transition to a non-racial democracy. The next section discusses the South African history of town and regional planning in more detail.

## 2.1.5 The history of town and regional planning in South Africa

### 2.1.5.1 The making of history

*“Stories about the past have power and bestow power. The impulse to tell new stories about the past shows that time itself is a perspective in the construction of histories. Successive generations of scholars do not so much rewrite history as revisit it and re-present it, investing it with contemporary meaning”* (Sandercock, 1998a: 1).

South African academics such as Smit, Oranje, Muller, and Harrison, and a dissertation by Africa were mostly consulted in this reconstruction of the history of the town planning profession (chapter 2) and the history of planning education (chapter 3) in South Africa. Each author engages with the power of history by moulding our understanding of past struggles and victories. These authors have created a professional culture and identity in choosing to tell some stories and state some facts, and omit others.

Beauregard (1998: 189) criticises South African planning histories by saying that, with some exceptions, authors failed to portray history in a way that reveals options for *“efficacious action”*. The dominant style, according to Beauregard, was deterministic. Planners are mostly portrayed as having had little influence over the content and form of the laws under which they laboured so that planners appear passive, especially in the apartheid years (although he says such behaviour is doubtful).

The following points provide some context and background on the authors whose work has been consulted extensively:

- Professor Dan Smit, an honorary professor of the University of Natal, now holding a position at the Institute for Social Studies at The Hague, interprets planning history in South Africa as being firmly rooted in what he calls a ‘new urban sociology’ and therefore tends to stress the significance of social structure. Smit views planning as a *“collective response to contradictions which are ultimately traceable to the social organization of production”* (1989: introduction). He regards himself as a political activist, advocate and academic and therefore a progressive planner. Smit’s doctoral thesis in Town and Regional Planning at the University of Natal, deals with the political economy of urban and regional planning in South Africa from 1900 to 1988.
- Professor Mark Oranje (1997), head of the Planning School at the University of Pretoria, tries to produce a cognitive map of the complex totality of planning as well as the future of planning. He approaches planning as a complex language game with a history of 150 years. He tries to give answers to Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? Where should we be going? – concentrating on the regulatory and disciplinary practice of planning. Oranje and Smit therefore complement each other. Oranje’s doctoral thesis in Town and Regional Planning at the University of Pretoria, deals with the language game of South African urban and regional planning: a cognitive mapping from the past into the future.
- Professor John Muller, a retired professor of the University of the Witwatersrand, describes the history of planning education and the profession at the hand of unusual levels of vitality, productivity and creativity (1993:1, 7). He relates the South African planning history to the planning history in France, Germany, the U.S. and especially Britain. He credits the founding of the discipline in South Africa to several individuals and various professional societies. His opinion is that the development of planning education and the profession have run in parallel paths.

- Professor Phillip Harrison, head of the Planning Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, regards himself a pragmatist. He is concerned with “*both romantic creativity and goal-directed, purposive action*” and is of the opinion that planners need to have a vision and a ‘will to plan’, despite knowing that “*utopian dreams will never be realised in any absolute sense, and that planning will always have negative unanticipated consequences*” (2001a: 69).
- Another contributor to the history of town and regional planning in South Africa is Elroy Africa, a master’s graduate from the University of Natal, now employed in the Department of Provincial and Local Government. He made extensive use of Smit’s doctoral thesis for his understanding of the trajectory of planning education in South Africa, and specifically the University of Natal. Africa is a black planner who *inter alia* addresses the hardships of other black students and planners, scorning paternalism, racism and insensitive affirmative action.

Beauregard (1998: 194) declares that histories should empower by portraying complexities, offering numerous opportunities for action and allowing the less powerful to have influence.

Certainly omitted in the history of town and regional planning in South Africa, is the role of female planners. The only prominent woman mentioned in Oranje and Smit’s thesis is Nola Green, and Africa mentions Lulu Gwagwa. Even the authors on planning history are all male. Could that be ascribed to the fact that there were no ‘foremothers of city planning’ in South Africa, as Peter Hall states? Or are they failing to appreciate the contributions by many women working outside the profession (due to exclusion from its ranks) (Sandercock, 1998a: 8)? What about the contribution of specific tribes and racial and ethnic groups? June Manning Thomas states: “*A creditable historian of urban South Africa and of urban planning in South Africa should be compelled to consider such issues in his or her work*” (1998: 199).

It is clear that a number of voices have been excluded and marginalised in the discourse of South African planning history (Kramsch, 1998: 164). The history of planning in South Africa necessitates a far more inclusive set of narratives than those having been brought into play in this section. In South Africa we have not yet moved from what Sandercock (1998a: 30) calls ‘planning history’ to ‘planning’s histories’.

With these critiques in mind, here then follows an account of the history of urban planning in South Africa.

### **2.1.5.2 Planning as a reactive, administrative and technical activity: 1830-1930**

Although planning started out as a profession in the mid 1900s, Oranje (1997: 34) takes the advent of planning in South Africa back to the 1830s. Statutory town planning was built around legislation “*enabling interventions for the public benefit in inter alia the use of land, housing and living conditions in towns/cities and the course of future urban development.*” As explained earlier on in the account on the history of urban planning in developing countries, this form of town planning originated in the U.K., Europe and the U.S. and was exported to the colonies.

In the 1860s and 70s, when gold was discovered and railway lines transformed peripheral Witwatersrand villages to the centre stage of the South African political economy, the establishment of towns was mainly initiated by the State for administrative and military purposes. Initially there was no need for land-use control or layout design, but in the 1830s the Cape Colony, and later Natal and the Boer Republics passed elementary legislative attempts to ensure “*the good order, health and convenience in towns*” (Oranje, 1997: 35; Smit, 1989: 48).

Townward movement picked up momentum from the 1870s, and specifically after the Anglo-Boer War (1899 to 1902) and the Great Depression in the 1920s. This was due to a growing shortage of farming land for both the Europeans and the Africans, employment opportunities in towns, the devastation and droughts in the countryside and the expulsion of white labour tenants from farms. Most towns were unable to accommodate the influx of people and extensions were urgently required. The resultant need for land opened up opportunities for speculation in urban land. *“This combination of need, greed and lack of control saw towns grow ... with no consideration being given to co-ordination with existing layouts or any other interests, other than those of the speculator”* (Oranje, 1997:36). The result was uncoordinated city growth with high social costs as no provision was made for any social institutions. Serious slum conditions started to develop on a big scale and the overall health and well-being of the community were neglected (Oranje, 1997: 42-45; Smit 1989: 49-51).

In 1903, certain regulations were passed, aimed at better administration, management, control of land speculation, and regulating the establishment and the proper layout of towns in terms of land-use and density. There was, however, little progress in getting further legislation passed. This was due to the outbreak of World War I, but also due to the land surveyors' technical and self-centred view of town planning. Land surveyors seemingly did not regard town planning as a 'social/ moral/ higher calling', but rather as a way of ensuring the survival of their profession (Oranje, 1997: 37-38, 42-45; Smit, 1989: 49).

From the start, township establishment was regulated in a segregationist way. Planning legislation prohibited people of colour to reside in any town or village, or owning property, and people were forcibly relocated to newly established native locations. The first of these was Klipspruit, established in 1905 after the outbreak of the plague in 'Coolie Town' in the central business district of Johannesburg (Oranje, 1997: 41-42; Smit, 1989: 51-52). *“This contradiction between the need to banish very low income workers to the periphery and the need to reproduce their labour at very low cost, has remained a central contradiction of the spatial form of South African cities”* (Smit, 1989: 51).

The white electorate's growing preference for racial segregation and a fear of black competition in the workplace had been simmering for some time then. Peripheral townships were established in many cities due to suggestions that the removal of blacks would greatly improve the living conditions of the whites. It had resulted in the appointment of the Stallard Commission in 1921, and the subsequent passing of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, No 21 of 1923 that provided for the establishment of separate native locations. These developments impacted on urban planning in the creation and strengthening of separate residential areas (Oranje, 1997: 47-48; Smit, 1989: 51-54, 60, 61). *“Ethnic engineering was considered a legitimate part of town planning from its earliest beginnings”* (Smit, 1989: 60).

Susan Parnell (quoted in Beauregard, 1998: 190), is of the opinion that *“South African adoption of international planning principles on overcrowding, housing funding, and slum removals were a deliberate endeavour to forge segregationist policies by enhancing urban conditions of whites.”*

White landlords rented out squalid and crowded accommodation to blacks finding their way back from the peripheral areas, or augmented their salaries by 'shack farming' their backyards. This resulted in the amendment of the Transvaal Local Government Ordinance in order to regulate dwelling density. Conditions in these areas and the municipal 'locations' were appalling and there was a massive under-delivery of services, threatening the health of thousands of people.

At this time there was much infighting between land surveyors and architects as the two most dominant professions in town planning. Both groups feared invasion into their domain by other professions and both held town planning as their professional territory. Influenced by

international trends in planning, there were calls from 1916 onwards for cooperation between the surveyor, the architect, the engineer, the landscape architect, the sociologist and the legal expert in the planning of a town. The general opinion, according to Muller, was that the basic attributes of town planning differed from, and extended beyond the scope of these professions (Muller, 1993: 2; Oranje, 1997: 38-39, 52; Smit, 1989: 53).

Many of the early advocates of town planning in South Africa came from Europe, therefore South African planners used to be influenced by developments and philosophies in other countries. European influencing grew stronger in the post World War I era of improved communication, transport modes, more printed material, more visits overseas and overseas visitors. This was evident in the 'city beautiful', 'garden suburbs' and 'civic pride' movements, the concept of zoning and the notion of the expert professional to take care of planning on behalf of the ignorant public (Oranje, 1997: 48, Smit, 1989: 64, 66; Muller, 1993: 2).

The result was numerous calls by members of the Town Planning Association (founded in 1918) for rational, comprehensive town planning schemes and the regulation and control of these schemes. After much consultation and discussions, the Transvaal Townships and Town Planning Ordinance was passed in 1931. Similar ordinances were passed in the rest of the Union of South Africa. Oranje (1997: 52) considers the first Transvaal Ordinance as the last legal step "*in the birth of statutory planning ... enabling public intervention for the public benefit in inter alia the use of land, housing and living conditions in towns/cities in the course of future urban development.*" Smit (1989: 65), stresses that the Ordinance was closely modelled on the British Town Planning Act of 1925 and that planning in South Africa was born with a partially idealist flavour imported from Europe.

Town planning thus started out as a reactive, administrative and technical activity in response to the conditions in urban areas. Town planning also started out at a time when racial segregation was being enacted and intensified, thus influencing and shaping planning for a long time. Smit (1989: 64) on the other hand, argues that urban planning was probably not a necessary response to any urban crisis of the early 1900s, and was therefore rather anticipatory in nature. To conclude: planning was ushered onto stage by a degree of structural necessity, individual agency and even colonial idealism.

### **2.1.5.3 Minimalist planning versus grand-scale planning: The 1930s**

With the passing of the Transvaal Town Planning and Townships Ordinance in 1931, the Cape Province Ordinance in 1934, the Natal Provincial Ordinance in 1932 and the Free State Ordinance in 1947, zoning and town planning schemes became the central attraction of town planning, and became a tool for segregating residential areas in South Africa (Oranje, 1997: 57-59; Smit, 1989: 70-71).

Local expertise was not available, and an English firm, Adams, Thompson and Fry, was appointed to assist with the drafting of the town planning schemes. Individuals, for example Bowling and Floyd exercised a definite influence on the development of South African planning – leading it on a 'sober path' as Oranje (1997: 69-70) calls it, or putting a pragmatic and minimalist stamp on it, according to Smit (1989: 72-73, 98), by simply reinforcing or building on existing patterns of growth. However, whereas urban planning in white areas was essentially minimalist in nature, ethnic spatial engineering happened on a grand scale (Muller, 1993: 5).

Rural planning took the form of 'betterment' planning in the reserve areas, introduced in 1936 as a result of the acceleration in the flow of blacks to the cities. It was not outright successful due to the fear of whites that the native reserves would become too economically independent and they would then lose their pool of cheap labour.

Despite the attempted ethnic spatial engineering, squatter camps began to burgeon around Johannesburg, and after many unsuccessful attempts from the local council to remove them, the council instituted the first major site-and-service scheme. (The schemes were later destroyed due to struggles emerging in the 'shanty towns' and becoming a political threat.) The Slums Act passed in 1934, empowered local authorities to take the necessary measures to clear the slums. Given the background against which the Act was promulgated, municipalities relocated people according to race in highly ordered public housing schemes, where whites were housed in somewhat higher standard housing schemes (often in the areas where black slums were cleared) and blacks were relocated to satellite towns far outside the towns. Due to the lack of funds, the houses and living conditions did not differ much from the slums (Oranje, 1997: 66-67; Smit, 1989: 81-84, 85-87, 99).

Another level of spatial engineering was the number of new towns established in the 1930s-1950s, with direct State intervention. The first new town was Vanderbijlpark, designed by Floyd and McManus who borrowed from American and British experiences. It was followed by Sasolburg, designed by Kirchofer in 1951, borrowing from Radburn in the USA. Other new towns were Richard's Bay, Sishen and Saldanha. The discovery of the Free State gold fields led to several new towns being established, such as Virginia, Harmony and Welkom – largely private initiatives (Smit, 1989: 78-80).

During this time, the Modernist Movement in Architecture was founded by a number of fervent followers of Le Corbusier and other European modernist architects. The movement played an important role in the establishment of town planning in South Africa in the following years by intensifying the prevalent idea that there was, indeed, a rational, universally applicable, technological, ever-lasting, quick fix to complex socio-economic-spatial-political problems – albeit not necessarily in the built form as propagated by the Modernist Movement (Oranje, 1997: 60-65).

Antagonism between the professions also surfaced again during this period. Opinions differed on what town and regional planning entailed, and on the purpose and aim of planning. For some, town and regional planning was to make a living and for some it was a calling. For some it was art, for others a science, for some a social science, for others an economic science. But it was generally agreed that only experts could operate in the field of town planning – meaning *“intelligent men with a vision and trained minds – i.e. training and expertise in land surveying, engineering and/or architecture or even better: a diploma in town planning”* (Oranje 1997: 70-73).

It is clear the 1930s was not a period of unusual levels of vitality, productivity and creativity, as Muller would describe some stages in the history of planning in South Africa: minimalist urban planning was the order of the day. On the other hand, it was a time of the reinforcement of segregationist planning where ethnic spatial engineering happened on a grand scale. It was also a time when the profession struggled to find its feet, with much infighting between the professions practising planning, as to what planning involved.

#### **2.1.5.4 Reconstruction and social reform: 1940-1954**

The separation from the British profession seems to have been difficult and long process. A Southern African branch of the British Town Planning Institute (TPI) was formed in South Africa in 1944, after a second application, and included a number of Southern African countries in its membership. The profession finally attained autonomy when the South African Institute of Town Planners was formed in 1946. The South African Town and Regional Planning Institution succeeded this body in 1951 and was renamed the South African Institute for Town and Regional Planners in 1971 (Muller, 1993: 4,5; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 3).



During the Second World War, the South African economy grew rapidly in the cities, whilst the economies in the reserves collapsed. Urbanisation increased, as black workers flocked to the cities for work and overtook the white population in absolute numbers in 1946. No houses were built during the war period, and the workers had to find refuge in overcrowded shacks, corridors, slum neighbourhoods, and backyards – living in appalling conditions. The housing problem became a major focal point with planners, architects and politicians. In the end the bulk of new housing went to whites, whereas housing conditions for black people showed little improvement (Oranje, 1997: 78-79; Smit, 1989: 84-85).

The Smuts government's increasing concern with the reconstruction of the country in the early 1940s, led to the establishment of the Social and Economic Planning Council in 1942 – the first real major attempt at regional and national planning in South Africa. The government set about promoting housing and the construction sector via the building societies and subsidised housing loans. With many international examples of regional planning and political support for the concept, planners embarked on the bettering of the lives of all – including black people (Oranje, 1997: 79-81; Smit, 1989: 88).

The 1940s also saw the first tentative attempts by the government to promote industrial decentralisation, by establishing the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) in 1940. The IDC established a number of important productive ventures in the peripheral areas, although Smit (1989: 95) is of the opinion that these “*interventions can be understood as technocratic attempts to facilitate accumulation by bringing capital, raw materials and labour together in locales and sectors of the economy in which private capital has either neglected or been unable to develop.*”

On the political front, the National Party campaigned for the 1948 election. The party promised agriculture that, if elected, it would clamp down on the urban influx and ensure a rural labour supply. It promised the white electorate the upholding of the job colour bar, that black political opposition would be crushed and that white safety and interests would be ensured (Smit, 1989: 108). With the election of the National Party in 1948, the promulgation of the Group Areas Act, 1950, and the election of Dr HF Verwoerd as Prime Minister in 1959, reconstruction took on a completely new dimension – that of designing and constructing the apartheid state (Oranje, 1997: 82-84; Smit, 1989: 95, 100). “*This led to a city more structured and quartered than anything that had preceded it*” (Davies in Smit, 1989: 100).

One consequence thereof was the emergence of urban social movements among black people around the state-supervised transport issues, servicing as an early index of the tumultuous times to come. These movements also started to resist planning threats to their neighbourhoods, and lodged a mineworker strike in 1946. Growing black political opposition became apparent in the late 1940s and early 1950s (Smit, 1989: 91, 107).

Although Prime Minister JC Smuts did attempt to address the housing problem proactively, the 1940s thus saw an exacerbation of the black housing problem after the election of the National Party. With the promulgation of the Group Areas Act came a clamp down on urban influx, and the apartheid state was officially born. Apartheid triggered strong political reaction in resistance to many of the inhuman laws and regulations of the new government. Nineteen forty six saw the final autonomy of the South African Institute from the TPI.

#### **2.1.5.5 Designing and constructing the apartheid state: 1955-1970**

With the adoption of 'grand apartheid' in the late 1950s, the dramatic reconstruction of South African cities and the spatial reengineering gave impetus to regional planning and a policy of decentralisation. South Africa experienced unprecedented economic growth in the 1960s due to government intervention. Significant resources were allocated to regional planning in order to

deal with the Group Areas Act that required complete segregation of racial areas. So, for example, a freehold township such as Sophiatown was entirely destroyed and a working-class suburb for whites, called Triomf, was established on this land (Oranje, 1997: 100-101; Smit, 1989: 100, 101-105, 110; Africa, 1993: 47).

Urban renewal in South African cities, or rather urban segregation, was undertaken under the pretence of slum clearance. Many planners became partners of the forced removals under this guise of urban renewal. Government demolished inner urban areas and cleared squatter locations, breaking up families and relocating them outside the cities to fulfil their ideological aims. The 1950s and 1960s were periods of enormous, monotonous, sprawling and highly controlled black townships on the urban peripheries (the townships were not to be too attractive, otherwise black people would have no incentive to move to the homelands), while planners became experts in low-cost housing layouts. However, McCarthy (in Smit, 1989: 114) argues that apartheid spatial engineering in the cities cannot be explained solely in terms of forcing of legislation. Clearly, white capital had a say in it as well. In Durban, white businesses acquired prime land and banished Indian traders to 'Oriental Plazas' (Oranje, 1997: 105-107; Smit, 1993: 112-115, 123-125, 136-138).

Low-cost housing projects did, however, not solve the housing problem, and the Verwoerd government came up with a 'site and service' scheme by the mid 1950s. At this stage, local authorities provided only basic services such as communal water points at street corners and bucket sewage systems. Residents were supposed to build their own houses. This scheme came to an end in the late 1960s as government decided to focus its building endeavours in the homeland towns, in order to curtail the black urbanisation process. South Africa was now conceived of 'separate development' and the government undertook to create viable economic homelands and Bantustans.

Nonetheless, most of government's incentives to lure manufacturing to the Bantustans and the homelands were unsuccessful, as the manufacturers saw no economic or political reason to move to the reserves. Meanwhile whole black townships were relocated to Bantustan areas of up to 70 kilometres from white towns in the late 1960s. An estimated 670 000 people were relocated to KwaMashu, Mdantsane and Garankuwa – commuting to white cities. This led to a major transport crisis in South Africa and did nothing to relieve the housing backlog in the cities. Once again, planners were partners in constructing the apartheid state by designing the layout of the towns in the homeland areas (Oranje, 1997: 107-108; Smit, 1989: 117, 118-121, 134).

In August 1964, a national Department of Planning was established for co-ordinating the planning of the group areas and to further the government's urge to "*delineate, restrict, ban, control and dictate whatever happens in the country, between and/or by whom*" The establishment of the Department of Planning strengthened the link between planning and apartheid, as spatial planning and the implementation of the Act became inextricably tied up with each other. Whereas planning in the U.S. in the 1960s brought forth a new role for planners – that of social advocate for the weak and the powerless, the link between planning and apartheid in South Africa became even stronger with the passing of the Physical Planning and Utilisation of Resources Act in 1967. The aim of the Act was to reverse black urbanisation and create economically independent ethnic African states. In the administration of the Act, town and regional planners involved themselves for the next few decades as apolitical, indifferent, technical administrators and bureaucrats (Oranje, 1997: 102-105, 118; Muller, 1993: 14; Africa 1993: 47; Smit, 1989: 108-111).

On the political front the African National Congress (ANC) became a force to be reckoned with in the 1950s, exacerbating white fear of black people. The Group Areas forced removals in the cities did as much to provoke political opposition as they did to repress it. The tightening of influx control was only partially successful. The economic collapse of the reserves continued

and blacks migrated to the cities in large numbers. The Tomlinson Commission recommended the continued economic development of the reserves to ensure that "*politically dangerous concentrations of blacks did not develop in the cities*". However, political instability peaked in the 1960 Sharpeville killings during a demonstration against the Pass Law. This provoked further resistance in the rest of the country and resulted in the banning of black opposition movements and a clampdown on political activists (Smit, 1989: 108, 116-117, 138).

Life in the 'white' cities did not stand still, and in the early 1950s the decentralisation of shopping facilities in shopping centres became fashion in South Africa. The tertiary sector began to boom, and Johannesburg saw the country's first skyscrapers as demand in office space increased, which in turn caused congestion. Finance districts started to emerge, freeways and downtown parking garages were built and high-income white suburbs sprawled. In all of this, planners became involved in town planning schemes and the amendments thereof (Oranje, 1997: 109; Smit, 1993: 140-141, 144, 150).

Also worth mentioning is that in 1954, after many attempts, the South African Institute for Town Planners (SAITP) was established. Membership to the Institute were at first open to all persons involved in town planning, but this changed, when from the late 1960s, membership was reserved for persons with an approved town planning qualification only (Oranje, 1997: 117).

The 1950s and 1960s saw the adoption of grand apartheid with the demolition of inner cities and the removal of people to townships on the periphery of towns and cities. At first they were provided with site and service, but government decided to focus its attention on the development of the homelands and Bantustans. The consequential increased political unrest came as a response to the tighter influx and pass controls. In all of this, planners acted as the spatial designers and administrators of the apartheid city. As Harrison (2001a: 82) states, "*planning was deeply (yet unevenly) implicated in the system that systematically deprived the majority of South African citizens of basic rights and livelihoods.*"

#### **2.1.5.6 The rise of the progressive planning movement: 1971-1990**

Up to this period, measures taken by the government to redirect growth to the border areas in order to achieve an apartheid state, were not sufficient. Concern over high costs and inefficiency of the decentralisation policy was expressed by a number of groups. South Africa started experiencing more manifestations of open political revolt during the mid 1970s and 1980s due to the progress of the black consciousness movement and liberation movements to the north of South Africa, international pressure, the Soweto uprisings and the dramatic rise in membership of black trade unions in the cities. The workers union movement had made substantial gains and the metropolitan areas had become cauldrons of labour activism and political ferment. However, many factories in the Bantustan areas disallowed union activities, refused to acknowledge them or even repressed them to a large extent. The stage was set for a decade of intense popular opposition in which the ANC gained considerable support and a number of civic organisations emerged. School boycotts virtually paralysed black education as massive stay-aways and strikes were organised (Smit, 1989: 174, 176, 214, 218, 221, 261).

In July 1985 a partial state of emergency was declared, followed by a national state of emergency less than a year later. An estimated 35 000 troops were deployed in 93 townships on a semi-permanent basis. The State "*moved ruthlessly to restore control*" and many progressive leaders were detained, banned or forced underground. Far-right political parties re-emerged in the late 1980s, at the same time when liberal whites started to lobby for change in social apartheid – the latter realising the threat that international isolation posed to domestic economic growth (Smit, 1989: 222-225).

The PW Botha government tried to form alliances with Indian, coloured and conservative black communities in order to build a buffer against “black radicalism”. The government hoped that by giving itself a multi-racial complexion, the world could be fooled to believe that apartheid was dead (Smit, 1989: 236).

The progressive town planning movement began with isolated advocacy practices in the late 1970s and early 1980s and developed into a mature movement addressing planning practice inside and outside of the formal planning apparatuses. Dewar, Smit, Muller, Watson and others began questioning and criticising planners’ involvement in apartheid planning – those in private practice serving in the needs of white clients, and those in the public sector serving the apartheid needs of the State. There was a growing politicisation of planning in the 1980s as a new generation of planners challenged the conservatism of the planning profession.

This progressive movement had its origins in the activities of a few progressive planners, recent graduates and lecturers from the Durban campus of the University of Natal, the University of Cape Town and later the University of the Witwatersrand. In Durban, lecturers, graduates and students became involved in the activities of the civic organisations in the area, and established the Built Environment Support Group (BESG). In Cape Town they provided advice and support for the civics. The upgrading of townships and urban renewal became important aspects of the progressive struggle. The civics themselves actively recruited sympathetic planners who were able and willing to work outside the system. They involved planners in their struggle against removal, for technical assistance, training and education, negotiation, community defence and policy aid. The University of the Witwatersrand founded Planact in 1985 and became involved in a number of projects in Transvaal and the Eastern Cape. This included support and advice to a number of black communities in these provinces. The English-medium universities became known as a few organised locales of resistance against the government and this led to the development of a rich, progressive culture on some of the white campuses in the 1980s.

A serious dilemma for progressive planners was that virtually every intervention in black urban life occurred under the watchful eye of the State Security network run by the police and the military (Smit, 1989: 304-306, 308, 353; Oranje, 1997: 141-143; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 4-5).

The majority of planners however served the same purpose as in previous decades, namely playing the role of a-political, technical experts – they followed the approach as set out by the apartheid government for planning, with very little moral or intellectual base (Smit, 1989). Afrikaans-speaking universities were thus training students specifically for employment within bureaucracies. Advocacy planning did not really feature in their curricula and students ended up as planners who worked for municipalities in highly technicist and regulatory environments. They were mainly concerned with the establishment and administration of town planning schemes and their work appeared to be a-political.

The progressive movement called on all planners to reassess what they were doing. Not many heeded these calls until the 1990s, when reassessment became necessary for the survival of the profession due to great political turbulence, severe economic crisis, and a decline in the growth of the white population (Oranje, 1997: 131-133; Smit, 1989: 271, 275-276, 304, 322).

It became clear in 1985 that the technocratic consensus that held planning together was beginning to crumble. Political and economic circumstances were forcing planners to take sides, as apartheid planning had disillusioned many planners. Planners and other development professions in Natal launched the Planning and Development Association in 1986, and planners in the Western Cape launched the Development Action Group in 1987 as an advocacy group outside the South African Institute of Town and Regional Planning, which did not contribute to the debate. Similar groups were developing in other parts of the country and a large number of stakeholders were invited to participate.

Many black activists started to seek training in areas relevant to the struggle, such as town and regional planning, and began to redefine planning education. Much of the early radical planning literature in South Africa involved the local application of theoretical work developed abroad. Progressive planners in South Africa immersed themselves in the literature and began to develop new theoretical insights (Smit, 1989: 313-317, 322, 335, 376).

In 1986, government released the White Paper on Urbanisation, effectively reversing years of anti-urban policy by recognising urbanisation as inevitable. By then there was a massive housing shortage, exacerbated by the announcement of the end of influx control – overcrowding and political revolt went hand in hand with deteriorating township conditions. Due to a fiscal crisis the government had earlier on announced that the provision of housing for all ethnic groups was the responsibility of the private sector. Government would only provide plots (serviced, in some cases) where people could build their own houses (Smit, 1989: 181-191).

The transport problem also took on bigger proportions. In the 1980s South Africa was in a serious economic crisis and apartheid's spatial engineering became increasingly problematic. Government was subsidising up to 80% of the economic-transport tariff for workers living 50 km or more from their work. The state could no longer afford this, so the emphasis was moved to competition and the privatisation of the transport sector. The state was able to withdraw from the highly politicised transport industry by allowing mini-bus taxis to operate as part of the overall transport system (Smit, 1989: 195-196).

On the statutory planning front: metropolitan planning began to receive more attention from the 1970s onwards, as planners realised that urbanisation and urban sprawl were redefining the way they should think about urban areas. Structure plans became the overall policy plans and this led to guide plans becoming statutory for metropolitan areas in 1975. Local economic development planning was introduced in the late 1980s and broadened the scope of urban planning. This could be ascribed to the local manifestations of the economic and political crises and resulted in a number of new planning approaches, such as strategic planning, corporate planning and the rethinking of traditional land-use control measures.

By the 1980s, planners were more often getting the opportunity to facilitate a participation process in communities – white communities at first, or separate participation by races. The process was not a highly involved one, as real empowerment only became part of the process at the end of the 80s. As in the U.S. and Britain, planners also became aware of the looming environmental crisis and called for compact cities, high densities and the conservation of historical buildings and areas (Oranje, 1997: 130-133; Smit, 1989: 202, 211, 291-292, 300).

Concluding this era: in spite of increasing political revolt against government and its policies, most town planners were technocratic administrators of the various town planning ordinances in the 1970s. By the 1980s, the government had started to clamp down on black political movements and activities, with some progressive planners starting to question planning's involvement in implementing government policy. Lecturers, students and graduates from the English universities became involved with the civic organisations outside of the formal planning system. These planners assisted black communities with advice, redevelopment and upgrading plans and education.

Planning became divided on the apartheid issue, and it was only when the survival of the profession became threatened in the late 1980s that planners heeded to the calls for planning to reassess what it was doing. New planning approaches, such as strategic planning, facilitation and community planning, corporate planning and the rethinking of traditional land-use control measures came to the fore. Planning also became more aware of environmental and conservation issues.

### 2.1.5.7 The New South Africa: 1991-1999

Even before the 1990 opening of parliament speech by State President FW de Klerk, some planners had applied their minds to the reconstruction of South African cities (Africa, 1993: 60), but as Smit (1989: 304) points out, to that date, these progressive planners had not provided any concrete alternatives to apartheid planning. He is also of the opinion that "*it (is) abundantly clear that urban and regional planning in South Africa does not cut a particularly progressive profile.*"

After 1990 many more planners began to recognise the context within which planning should be functioning, and then embarked on changing their practice as a matter of survival.

A number of new government initiatives directed at planning saw the light in the 1990s. They were embodied in the following:

- **The Development Facilitation Act (DFA), No 67 of 1995:** The most important implication for town planning was the institution of land development objectives (LDOs) for local authorities. These LDOs were the beliefs of planners, calling for change turned into statutory requirements. Many town planners were involved in formulating these targets and objectives for local governments.
- **A workshop hosted by the Department of Land Affairs:** In 1995, the Department of Land Affairs sponsored a workshop at Club Mykanos on the future of the planning profession. Progressive planners pushed hard for reform and the workshop committed itself to the principles of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and to transformation within the profession. A draft bill for the planning profession in the changing South Africa was only completed in 2000.
- **The Local Government Transition Second Amendment Act, No 97 of 1996:** This Act provided for the preparation of integrated development plans (IDPs). Many planners in private practice are involved in the formulation of these IDPs (Oranje, 1997: 148-151, 169-170; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 6). This was followed by the Municipal Systems Act and other legislation related to IDPs.
- **The Development and Planning Commission:** The Minister for Land Affairs instituted this Commission in 1997 in accordance with the DFA to advise on planning for and the regulation of the use and development of land. The Commission studied all the planning laws in each province to reveal an extraordinary complex and inefficient legal framework. The Commission recommended rationalising the situation through overarching national legislation (South Africa, 2001: 3; Development and Planning Commission, 1999: 1).
- **The Green Paper on development and planning:** The Green Paper was the outcome of the findings of the Development and Planning Commission. It focuses on the spatial dimension of integrated development planning. The Green Paper makes recommendations regarding a common approach, vision, paradigm and terminology for spatial planning; capacity; roles and spheres of government; co-ordination and integration; speeding up development processes; improving the land development management system; and legal and procedural certainty (South Africa, 2001: 2; Development and Planning Commission, 1999: 22, 65-72).
- **White Paper on spatial planning and land-use management:** The White Paper followed on the Green Paper. The purpose of the White Paper was to form a comprehensive framework for local authorities embarking on integrative development planning and land development activities of all sectors and spheres of government and private sector. The Paper provides policy perspectives and anticipates land-use legislation to enable a structured process (South Africa, 2001: 1, 4).

These new government initiatives resulted in the following changes to planning practice in the 1990s:

- A decline in land-use management and physical planning and a rise in the concept of development planning, particularly integrated development planning and sustainable urban development.
- A strong focus on addressing backlogs and the developmental and spatial distortions caused by apartheid.
- A greater awareness of the rural poverty in the country, and a shift in focus towards land restitution and rural development.
- Planning being brought strongly into the terrain of local government, strengthening the connection between planning and public administration and management.
- A strong focus on public participation, transparency, ethics, facilitation, negotiation and mediation in line with government policies and practice. At the same time planners had to take on a number of new roles (negotiator, communicator, facilitator, mediator, project manager and problem solver) to ensure sustainable, people-driven development (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 5-6; Oranje, 1997: 147-148, 157-158).

The 1990s also saw the rise of competing and parallel fields of activity, such as economic development, environmental planning and project management with an increase in the blurring of boundaries and overlap between planning-related professions (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 6).

Environmentalism became a major aspect of planning during the 1990s, and specifically after the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. However, the basic statements remained shallow and town planners have failed to implement many of the resolutions. Local economic development, strategic planning and city marketing also became catch phrases in the 1990s and local governments embarked on strategic planning processes to replace the Structure Plan (Oranje, 1997: 151-152, 155).

Many town planners still made a living off development control and town establishment during the 1990s, despite criticism against development control and initiatives by government to rewrite the Ordinances. Others busied themselves with researching alternatives to the present system of development control and township establishment (Oranje, 1997: 153).

Membership to the Council and the Institute became quite an issue in the 1990s, together with the redistribution of skills and money in the conflict-ridden parts of South Africa. Back in 1944 the Institute required a planner to write a qualifying examination. In the 1960s, this said examination could only be taken when in possession of a planning qualification, excluding people from the planning fraternity while not possessing a planning qualification. In the 1980s, planners could register with the SACTRP and would be called 'town and regional planner'. The increase in numbers and the passing of the Town and Regional Planners Act, No 19 of 1984 as a regulative bargain between the profession and the state, led to a rise in the status and recognition of the profession. The Town and Regional Planners Act, No 19 of 1984 was significantly amended in 1993 and 1995, providing for *inter alia* the recognition of town and regional planning technicians' registration with the Institute and the Council. Planners who did not endorse the actions taken by the apartheid government, did not want to gain statutory recognition under this government – wishing not to compromise their autonomy (Oranje, 1997: 138-141; 186-188; Africa, 1993: 50; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 3).

In 1992, black planners raised several issues with regard to their involvement in the planning Institute, which were brushed aside by the meeting. This threatened to divide planning in South Africa along racial lines. Professor Muller arranged a workshop for black and 'progressive white' planners. It was decided to establish the Development Planning Association of South Africa (DPASA) in 1994, after more fruitless rounds of negotiation with the Institute. DPASA failed to attract significant funding and struggled to appeal to planners beyond Gauteng. More correspondence followed between the DPASA and the SAITRP and the two organisations started working towards amalgamation. In 1996, the two bodies amalgamated to form the South

African Planning Institution (Oranje, 1997: 162-168; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 5; Africa, 1993: 62).

The 1990s, thus, saw a number of new opportunities for planning in the new South Africa. Numerous policies and legislation were written for the reconstruction and development of South Africa, which required the involvement of planners for the implementation thereof. These new fields included integrated development planning, local economic development, development control, environmental assessments, strategic planning, land restitution, and community participation. The new fields also required the town planners to act in new capacities – mediator, negotiator, facilitator, project-manager and problem solver. Planning, therefore, had much going for it in the 1990s, but unfortunately factions within the profession still did not see eye to eye and many black planners felt unwelcome in the organised profession. Planning seems not to have taken full advantage of the opportunities this period in the history of South Africa presented to the profession.

#### 2.1.5.8 The disappointment of planning: 2000 - ?

Hopes were high for planning to become a “*grand and romantic endeavour of reconstructing a damaged society*” after 1994. Planners expected to be the drivers of post-apartheid reconstruction, specifically spatial reconstruction, so that physical land-use planning would gain new importance. Smit called it “*mediators of territorial politics*” with strong negotiating and mediating skills (Harrison, 2001a: 71; Africa, 1993: 61). Gwagwa (in Africa, 1993:61) thought that especially black planners would play an important role in the reconstruction of the country: “... *the 'subjective' experience that African planners add to their 'objective' interpretation of problems and solutions are likely to be much closer to that of their African clientele. ... the social distance between African planners (regardless of their class position) and the African poor is very close. The African planners' cultural predisposition and language advantages also put them in a relatively strong position as process facilitators.*”

The objectives of post-apartheid planning were generally well-intentioned and progressive, but the high expectancies are now giving way to disappointment and even a sense of failure due to post-apartheid planning's inability to support the government as needed. Harrison ascribes the disappointment with planning to the low quality of housing provided in terms of the RDP, the apparent failure of planning to deal with the spatial fragmentation created by apartheid, the slow and bureaucratic process of land reform and restitution, national government's inability to implement effective integrated development planning, and difficulties the planning profession has in responding to change. These failures have had tragic consequences for communities and individuals (Harrison, 2001a: 71, 83; Harrison & Todes, 2001a: 6).

Oranje (1995: 1-2) points out that planners have had everything they could wish for in the post-apartheid era: a country in dire need of large-scale development, decision-making public officials of whom many are concerned with capacity building and reconstruction, a business sector sharing these sentiments, international assistance and investment and finally a PLAN, approved of by most sectors of society. However, he puts the disappointment down to planners spending time and money on debating the role of planners and futile definitions of planning, while opportunities simply pass them by.

Dewar (1995: 407, 412-417) ascribes the disillusionment with the profession to the abysmal track record in managing the urbanisation process, measured in terms of the performance of the urban environment resulting from current planning and management processes. The practice of town planning is flawed and contributes significantly to the poor performance of urban settlements. The resulting urban form and structure are still imposing huge costs on individuals, especially the poorest people, and society alike.



Diaw *et al* (2001: 11) attributes the perceived poor performance of the profession to the fact that spatial planners have been seen as generalists (and not specialists) in the whole reconstruction effort, and have therefore been marginalised. Planners find themselves ill-equipped, not only to deal with complex new institutional conditions and legal requirements, but also to relate to community organisations and to present technical facts in a way that the community at large can understand.

The planning profession faces a number of dilemmas. The profession is closely tied to government structures and is especially affected by political and institutional transformation, such as new political power structures, provincial government, forms of local government, structures for planning, legislation, types of plans, development application processes and systems of land-use management, new policies in related fields, appointments of, and relationships with politicians. However, the relative success of the planning profession in renegotiating its position with the new government was offset by institutional failures. Once a profession that was confident and visionary, planning now appears to be apologetic and unsure of itself (Harrison, 2001a: 84; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 7, 10-11).

Another dilemma planners face is a divided and fragmented society where nation-building and consensus are necessary, yet individual creativity and freedom should be nurtured and protected. According to Harrison (2001a: 78), post-apartheid planning has fallen prey to standardised concepts and formulae, and to “*new dogma enshrined in legislation, manuals and government legislation.*”

South African planners stripping a planning issue of its history, emotion and politics in their attempt to be rational and objective, further exacerbate this dilemma. The emotive voices of the community or individuals are often reduced by planners to an inaccessible and technical language (Harrison, 2001a: 80-81). On the other hand, non-rational factors such as clanship, political patronage and racial identity can take hold of planning in the absence of an appeal to reasoned thought. One of the advantages of integrated development planning in South Africa is the rational allocation of resources in these areas.

Harrison (2001a: 71, 78) does, however, agree with Oranje (1997) that the new dispensation has brought along ‘romantic’ and ‘visionary’ opportunities for planning unheard of in the past. An example is integrated development planning that is now a central theme in government on a national and local level. The challenge for planners is to keep the debate open, preserve diversity in their approach and provide for individual creativity.

Harrison & Kahn (2001: 3) summarise the history of planning in South Africa by highlighting the following themes:

- The struggle to establish planning as a profession, separate from land survey, architecture and engineering.
- The creation of professional associations to represent the growing planning community in South Africa.
- The struggle for autonomy from (but continued recognition by) the planning profession in the United Kingdom.
- The struggle to create planning as an academic discipline and to control the production of knowledge. Town and regional planning became an established profession in the hey-days of apartheid, and was strongly influenced and tainted by segregationist ideologies.
- Conflicts over the relationship between the profession and the State leading to the Town and Regional Planners Act, 1984.
- Tensions within the profession over the relationship between planning and apartheid during the mid to late 1980s.

- The struggle to secure the support of the new elite with South Africa's transition to a non-racial democracy (added comments by Oranje, 1997: 173).

### 2.1.6 Summary and conclusion

Planning is probably not the most innovative, dynamic and pioneering profession to be found. This may be due to the origin of planning in developed countries, being an administrative and technical activity in response to objections to the high urban mortality rates and unhealthy urban conditions. Although there have been visionaries in the planning profession, historically planning has been a reactively leading profession, not a pro-actively leading one.

It should therefore come as no surprise that planning has often been in a crisis in terms of its survival as a separate discipline. If planning is mainly reactive, it is only 'useful' in times when urban (sometimes rural) areas experience problems. Planners are then called in to solve the problem, but little attention is given, or opportunity allow for planners to be pro-active. At times when urban areas are at peace, the usefulness of planning again gets questioned. (There are some exceptions such as Australia, where the communities themselves place big emphasis on pro-active planning.)

Planning in the developed world went through various philosophical and interventionist phases. Initially planning was an administrative and technical activity with much infighting between the professions practising planning. Then planning became rather institutionalised and interventionist in nature, as governments realised that social and economic ends could be achieved by physical planning. Systems theory came and went in the developed world, but not without leaving its scars. Planners became preoccupied with visionary plans or designs, tending to assume they knew best what sort of physical environments were fit/unfit for people to live in.

Developed countries realised their mistakes and began taking cognisance of environmental planning, development planning and collaborative planning. Planning then became a consultative procedure between planners, government and the community, so that by the early 1990s, planning came to be seen as a process of communication and negotiation.

In developing countries, such as South Africa, planning was forced upon cities by colonial powers or foreign individuals, rather than being realised organically because of a perceived need for planning. Not a pro-active activity either, planning sought to solve the urban problems – or what they deemed as problems – the Western way, by relocating people, regulating land-uses and urban growth, and shaping the pattern of urban growth. In South Africa planners became the spatial designers and administrators of the apartheid city.

Planning in developing countries soon lost its glamour as newly independent governments faced the huge task of national development with limited financial resources and skilled manpower. For city managers the task was of impossible proportions, resulting in cities growing without any planned framework and without the resources to maintain the post-colonial infrastructure. An anti-urban view by governments in these countries resulted in the repression of the informal economy and urban growth, and under-supply or no supply, of housing and services.

Planning in the developing world certainly did not result in benefits for all. Today, millions of people continue as before to find work, create shelter, and feed themselves and their families – in exceedingly poor conditions – owing little to actual planning, which in turn is limited by available resources.

In South Africa, planners also realised their mistakes – some were forced to change for the sake of survival. Planners embraced new fields of planning such as integrated development planning, local economic development, environmental assessments, strategic planning, land restitution,

and community participation. The new roles that town planners are obliged to play, i.e. mediator, negotiator, facilitator, project manager and problem solver, accord with planners' activities worldwide. But despite the high hopes fixed on planning in South Africa, huge disappointment has set in because full advantage has probably not been taken of the opportunities presented to the profession during this watershed period in the history of South Africa.

What is the relevance of the account of the history of the planning profession?

As a profession, we need to know where we come from in order to determine where we are at present and what we should aim to become in the future. The past has provided us with a store of experience and debates from which we can draw our own conclusions, and understanding of what we are now and get inspiration for what we want to be in future. We learn from the past and should try not to repeat mistakes. As South African planners we could learn even more about our past by listening to the histories of minorities, not recorded in the official accounts of the history of planning in South Africa. We should build a culture and shape our profession around our history, which is a difficult, painful and unsure process for South African planners at present. *"Planners are as disorientated by the anticipation of the changes to come as by the concrete experience of change"* (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 10-11).

Knowing now at least where we professionally come from, the next section provides an account of the nature of planning practice in answering these questions: What is planning? What is the purpose of planning? What is the role of a planner? What is the planning domain?

## 2.2 The nature of planning practice

### 2.2.1 What is planning?

Planners are still searching to identify a role for planners that is sufficiently efficacious to justify their existence as a distinct profession. There is no shortage of mandates to planning, ranging from dealmaking and political-economics to institutional designing. Brooks (1993: 143) has come to realise that virtually all of these approaches are valid and appropriate some of the time, under certain circumstances. Planning needs its analysts, front-counter service providers, creative idea people, skilled political actors and negotiators, but one planner cannot be all of these combined or possess all these skills. He concludes that it is time to abandon the search for a single overarching, discipline-defining paradigm, but celebrate the diversity, flexibility and continued survival of the profession. Kieman (in Africa, 1993: 36) agrees with Brooks on this and argues that a common view of planning is neither desirable, nor possible, as planning is bound by political values.

Brooks (1993: 143-144) goes as far as suggesting that perhaps planning is not really a profession at all, but a loose, diverse confederation of ideas and concerns. In fact, lack of a defining paradigm, and the flexibility of planning have been its primary survival mechanisms and this flexibility will enable planners to be ready for what ever the future has in store.

There are as many definitions and explanations of what planning is, as there are planners, planning institutes and planning schools. *"Planning, like democracy or environmental protection, has become a meta-narrative that everyone can agree on but not pin down and say what it actually means"* (Allmendinger & Chapman, 1999: 3). There is therefore no single definition as to what planning is, and there will probably never be.

This section explores the nature of planning, by providing a spectrum of definitions for what planning is, why planning is needed, whom we plan for, what the planning domain is and what skills and competencies planners need in order to be able to plan for our communities.

Our own Draft Planning Profession Bill defines planning as: *“the discipline which manages and regulates land-use in the built and natural environment by co-ordinating and integrating social, economic and physical factors in order to further human development and environmental sustainability”* (South Africa, 2000:2).

The following table provides an overview of various individuals and institutions' definitions of what planning is:

**Table 2.1 - Various planning definitions**

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	What is planning?
Bryer (in Oranje, 1997: 97)	A science that organises the human environment.
Oranje (1997: 289)	A future-orientated, creative, participatory profession built around legislation and other internationally enforceable measures.
Castells (1992: 75)	A professional practice. A way of looking at society and space and acting upon them.
Hague (1994, 20)	Planning is about caring for places. Planners care for places in different ways – conserving existing qualities, improving what is there, or even destroying existing features to meet new needs.
Hague (in Oranje, 1997: 171)	A creative, facilitative and accommodating process. It is to design with nature.
Susskind (Hamlin: 1978: vi)	Planning involves thinking ahead or organising to get things done.
Town Planning Institute (in Faludi, 1978: 108)	A process involving a recurring cycle of operations.
Pearse (in Oranje, 1997: 97)	A science. The arts of architecture and landscape design, and the sciences of sociology, civil engineering and hygiene contribute to the science of town planning.
Baum (1997a: 21)	Acting planfully.
Ndzombane (1995: 1)	Planning is dealing with the problems and opportunities created by the high rate of urbanisation and population growth in general.
Page (in Oranje, 1997: 145)	The systematic drafting of a constructive and co-ordinated plan of action in terms of scientifically processed data and according to set rational objectives through a competent body for application and implementation in a clearly demarcated area.
Throgmorton (2000: 367, 377)	Action in the flow of persuasive argumentation.
Mallows (in Oranje, 1997: 120)	An art and science of handling the environment. It is the creation of the physical framework for human life.
White Paper on spatial planning and land-use management (South Africa, 2001: 22)	Land-use planning is the planning of human activity to ensure that land is put to the optimal use, taking into account the different effects that land-uses can have in relation to social, political, economic and environmental concerns.
White Paper on spatial planning and land-use management (South Africa, 2001: 22)	Spatial planning is the planning of the way in which different activities, land-uses and buildings are located in relation to each other, in terms of distance between them, proximity to each other and the way in which spatial considerations influence and are influenced by economic, social, political, infrastructural and environmental considerations.
Planning schools of South Africa (2000)	Plan, design, manage and implement the development of human settlement in an integrated and creative way.
Career Development Centre: Mount Holyoke College (2001)	Urban planners work alongside residents, politicians, and special interest groups to better understand the need of the community. They assess the vision of the community, the available resources and obstacles in the way of obtaining the vision.
University of New England (2001)	Planning is gathering information on a particular issue, checking the views of relevant persons and organisations, assessing and analysing situations, summarising the pros and cons of proposals, and preparing reports and recommendations.
Royal Australian Planning Institute (2001)	Planning is developing relevant projects, policies, processes and plans.
Association of Collegiate Schools of Planners (Friedman, 1996: 94)	Planning helps to evaluate and seize opportunities and to understand and solve problems.

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	What is planning?
Rutgers' Department of Urban Planning and Policy Development (Friedman, 1996: 95)	Planning is an interdisciplinary, flexible field of study.
South African Planners Homepage (2001) hosted by the South African Council for Town and Regional Planners (SACTRP), the South African Planning Institution (SAPI), and the Association of Consulting Town and Regional Planners of South Africa (ACTRP)	Planning is orderly urbanisation, providing for residential, commercial, industrial and community uses by analysing environmental and socio-economic factors and preparing appropriate development plans. Planners are not only involved in the design of new urban developments, but also with the administration, management and legal aspects of developments.
U.S. Department of Labor (2001)	Planning develops long and short-term land-use plans. Planners are involved in various activities: promoting the best use of a community's land and resources for residential, commercial, institutional and recreational purposes; deciding on alternative public transportation systems, resource development and protection of ecologically sensitive regions. Planners may formulate plans relating to the construction of new buildings, public housing or other infrastructure and address issues such as air pollution and the effect of growth and change on a community. They can also be involved in drafting legislation on environmental, social and economic issues. Planning deals with future needs and changing demands of communities.
New Zealand Planning Institute (2001)	Planning is concerned with the physical aspects of the natural and built environment. Planning is therefore a process that sets a framework to manage change in the natural and built environment. It is a way of managing scarce resources as we move towards the future. Planning deals with today's problems and tomorrow's challenges.
American Society of Planning Officials (Hamlin, 1978:vi-vii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ On a municipal level the planning authorities are concerned with regulating the development of housing, roads, industry and recreational spaces. They are also involved in the improvement of the social service systems that provide health care, education, and manpower training.</li> <li>□ At a provincial level planners working with public agencies, councils of government and special districts spend a great deal of their time co-ordinating the activities of local governments.</li> <li>□ On a state level, planners are involved in the formulation of environmental policies, the administration of transportation, housing, community development and criminal justice programs. Planners are specifically concerned with the implementation of welfare programs and the integration of economic and physical development efforts. In the non-profit arena, many planners are involved in low-cost housing provision.</li> <li>□ There are also research institutes throughout the world where urban planners devote themselves to the full-time study of urban policy issues.</li> <li>□ In the private sector consulting firms sell their services to various units of government as well as to individual entrepreneurs and corporations involved in large-scale projects.</li> <li>□ There are also international organisations such as the IMF, the UN and the USAID, that employ planners in a variety of roles concerned mostly with economic and social development.</li> </ul>

It is very difficult to summarise in one definition what planning is. *"Planners are notorious for the difficulties they have in explaining to others ... what they do."* Some see it as a convenient tag for their own speciality, from urban design to environmental management. Others see it as a meta definition for the totality of the urban (Friedman, 1996: 94).

Within the South African context as and for the purposes of this thesis, planning could be defined as: an integrative, multi-disciplinary profession dealing with today's problems and tomorrow's challenges in creating and improving the physical, social and economic framework for equitable and sustainable human environments. It is a creative, facilitative and

accommodating process between various stakeholders, in which the planner is a persuasive voice-in-the-flow.

### 2.2.2 Why do we plan?

According to Perloff (1957: 10), the stage was set almost from the start for the ever-widening view of the planning field. With the development of planning as a profession, there came a succession of additions as to the aim of planning. *“From (1) an early stress on planning as concerned chiefly with aesthetics, planning came to be conceived also in terms of (2) the efficient functioning of the city – in both the engineering and the economic sense; then (3) as a means of controlling the uses of land as a technique for developing a sound land-use pattern; then (4) as key element in efficient governmental procedures; later (5) involving welfare considerations and stressing human elements; and, more recently, (6) planning has come to be viewed as encompassing many socio-economic and political, as well as physical, elements that help guide the functioning and development of the urban community.”*

The following list tries to summarise the reasons individuals, planning institutes and planning schools offer as to why planning is necessary:

**Table 2.2 - Why planning is needed**

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	Why should we plan?
Bryer (in Oranje, 1997: 97)	To improve order that human life could progress to higher levels.
Oranje (1997: 289)	To ensure the sustainable use of resources, justice in all its dimensions and the creation and widening of choice. To enable intervention in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The use of land and other resources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The housing and living conditions in all forms and at all levels of human settlements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The course of future development.</li> </ul>
Throgmorton (2000: 367, 377)	To argue for their visions, construct inclusive processes, negotiate the meaning of key concepts, respond to unexpected events, take existing rules and prior decisions into account, rely upon their own substantive knowledge, configure arguments, argue persuasively in diverse media and be finely attentive to the this-ness of practice.
Faludi (1978: 170)	To enable politicians to take political decisions in a political way by knowing and accepting all their consequences.
Susskind (Hamlin: 1978: vi)	To deal with the problems that people have holding their communities together, coping with the pressures of urbanisation and development, and trying to provide an opportunity for everyone – especially the poor and the disadvantaged – to improve their lives.
Town Planning Institute (in Faludi, 1978: 106)	To prepare and control the implementation of plans for changing systems of land-use.
Pearse (in Oranje, 1997: 97)	To anticipate growth, to provide a future-orientated scheme that makes arrangements for the reception and distribution of industries, houses, and places of recreation.
Page (in Oranje, 1997: 145)	For the orderly existence of man.
Hague (in Oranje, 1997: 171)	For the development and organisation of human settlement.
Mallows (in Oranje, 1997: 120)	For the use and enjoyment of mankind.
The planning schools of South Africa (2000)	To respond to the critical challenges facing South African society and to promote the equitable and sustainable development of people and places.
U.S. Department of Labor (2001)	To provide for growth and revitalisation of urban, suburban and rural communities, while helping local officials make decisions concerning social, economic, and environmental problems.
Career Development Centre: Mount Holyoke College (2001)	To further the welfare of people by creating convenient, healthy, efficient and attractive environments.

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	Why should we plan?
South African Planners Homepage (2001) hosted by the SACTRP, SAPI, and the ACTRP	To improve the quality of life of all urban inhabitants, and to ensure optimum use is made of the environment.
New Zealand Planning Institute (2001)	To try and create employment opportunities, provide a choice of housing types and locations, and to encourage good urban design and urban renewal. In a way it seeks to improve living conditions for the community, providing a balance between individual wants and community needs. Planning allows society to make decisions between alternatives and to balance the interest of different groups.
White Paper on spatial planning and land-use management (South Africa, 2001: 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The principle of sustainability requires the sustainable management and use of the resources making up the natural and built environment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The principle of equality requires that everyone affected by spatial planning, land-use management and land development actions or decisions must enjoy equal protection and benefits, and no unfair discrimination should be allowed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The principle of efficiency requires that the desired result of land-use must be produced with the minimum expenditure of resources.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The principle of integration requires that the separate and diverse elements involved in development planning and land-use should be combined and co-ordinated into a more complete or harmonious whole.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The principle of fair and good governance requires that spatial planning, land-use management and land development must be democratic, legitimate and participatory.</li> </ul>
Royal Australian Planning Institute (2001)	<p>To assist government, private organisations, groups and individuals in the community to achieve their future objectives. The planning profession aims to:</p> <p>Improve the quality of life of people.          Make living and working environments safe, healthy, efficient and aesthetically pleasing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan for the future growth of cities, and regions and its land-uses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan specific projects to ensure the most harmonic relationship with the environment, by developing and re-developing towns, cities and rural areas.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advise on the most appropriate types of land-uses for any given area, by assessing current and future land-uses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Work in specialised areas such as economic development, urban design, tourism, social planning and environmental planning.</li> </ul>
American Society of Planning Officials (Hamlin, 1978:vi-vii)	To regenerate the inner city and depressed rural areas, to provide new and better housing at affordable prices, to involve people in the decision-making process, to combat pollution and conserve scarce resources, to design more efficient public services and to search for solutions to long-standing social problems such as discrimination and inequality.
Association of Collegiate Schools of Planners (Friedman, 1996: 94)	To help society manage change, to preserve and enhance the quality of life in a community, to protect the environment, to promote equitable economic opportunity and to manage growth and change of all kinds.
Rutgers' Department of Urban Planning and Policy Development (Friedman, 1996: 95)	To achieve social betterment in the world.

Friedman (1996: 94) is quite cynical about the ever-increasing purpose of planning. *“All one can gather from definitions or the aim of planning, is that planning is generally thought to be a good thing, presumably more so than efforts that are unaided by planning.”*

To try and define the reason why planning is needed within the South African context and for the purpose of this thesis, one could define it as: to ensure equitable, efficient and sustainable use of resources in the intervention, development and improvement of the environment and the course of future development.

### 2.2.3 The various roles of planners

During the course of the development of planning as a profession, planners were seen in many roles at different times in history. These roles included:

- Designers (1910s) when planning was seen as “an art and a science”
- Communicators (1920s and 1990s) when, in the 1920s, planning was seen as an instrument to create aesthetically pleasing and functional environments
- Researchers (1930s) when planning was seen as an economic and social science
- Logical analysers (1930s)
- Synthesisers (1930s)
- Co-ordinators (1940s and 1950s), when planning was seen as the advancement of humanity and an instrument for the organisation of the physical environment in the 1940s
- Servants (1940s and 1950s)
- Technical administrators (1940s and 1950s) when the 1950s saw a realistic, more minimalist view of planning
- A-political technical expert (1960s) when planning was seen as co-ordinating in nature. Technology and hyper scientific methods were used in calculating the optimum settlement pattern
- “Professional” researchers and teachers (1970s and 1980s) when planning was once again seen as an art and a science in the 1980s
- Entrepreneur-planners (1970s and 1980s)
- Advocates and empowerment for the disadvantaged (1970s and 1980s)
- Generalists or specialists (1980s) when planning was once again seen as an art and a science
- Visionaries (1990s) when planning was seen as a number of things, such as the “development and organisation of human settlement”, “a facilitative and accommodating process”, “designing with nature”, and “management”
- Facilitators (1990s)
- Mediators (1990s)
- Pro-active and creative (1990s)
- Entrepreneurial problem solvers (1990s)
- Designers of Integrated Development Plans (Oranje, 1997: 95, 189-190, 193-194).

A number of individuals and institutions identified various skills, competencies and roles that planners need in order to be able to fulfil the planning function. These include the following:

**Table 2.3 - The role of the planner**

<b>Individuals, planning schools and institutes</b>	<b>What is the role of the planner?</b>
Throgmorton (2000: 367, 377)	Planners are meandering skilled voices-in-the-flow.
Town Planning Institute (in Faludi, 1978: 108)	The planner plays a central and crucial professional role. Competencies include a command of the planning process as a whole that qualifies and entitles him to organise and co-ordinate all planning operations as well as to design and control the implementation of the plan or policy.
Baum (1997a: 21)	The ability to use knowledge in action.
Ndzombane (1995:1)	Planners are required to introduce communities to design concepts, facilitate the establishment and day-to-day running of a fully representative project committee, chair the meeting, keep the minutes, undertake socio-economic research, facilitate the planning and lay-out of the settlement, and lead the professional team. Planners are the trusted advisors of the community and need mediation, interpersonal, analytical, conflict resolution, financial management and business leadership skills.



<b>Individuals, planning schools and institutes</b>	<b>What is the role of the planner?</b>
The planning schools of South Africa (2000)	A qualified urban and regional planner should be able to plan, design, manage and implement the development of human settlement in an integrated and creative way.
Career Development Centre: Mount Holyoke College (2001)	Urban planners can acquire several roles requiring them to be technical, analysts, researchers, program developers, agents of social change, managers and educators.
New Zealand Planning Institute (2001)	Planners need to understand how society works, what the environment is, how activities relate to each other, what effects activities can have on people and the environment, and how activities should best be managed. Planning work is extremely varied and a key skill needed is the ability to bring together a wide range of information, and to present it concisely and analytically. This requires qualitative and quantitative research skills.
U.S. Department of Labor (2001)	Planners have to assimilate infrastructure, economic, social, land-use and community information in order to prepare reports used, together with input from the community, to draw up plans. Urban and regional planners often confer with land developers, civic leaders and public officials, and function as mediators in community disputes, speak at civic meetings, and defend their proposals before legislative meetings. In the private sector, planners either specialise in a single area such as transportation, demography, housing, historic preservation, urban design, environmental and regulatory issues, or economic development, or must be able to do various kinds of planning in smaller organisations.
South African Planners Homepage (2001) hosted by the SACTRP, SAPI, and the ACTRP	The planner may undertake a task in collaboration with a multi-disciplinary team consisting of other professions such as engineers, economists and social scientists and often acts as the project leader of such teams. They may also specialise in certain aspects of town and regional planning such as the use of computers in solving planning problems.
American Society of Planning Officials (Hamlin, 1978:vi-vii)	Planners are key assistants to policy makers.

Planning plays a central – even mediating – role in structuring the urban habitat. Planners are not the most powerful actors involved; corporations, organised groups from society and politicians are much more powerful. However, planners cannot be ignored because they are often in the service of other or all of the interest groups as a specialist of some sort. Only by working in close collaboration with each other can these urban professionals make their full contribution (Friedman, 1996: 98).

To try and define what the role of the planner is and what skills and competencies are needed within the South African context, and for the purpose of this thesis, one could say that since planning is a multi-disciplinary profession, a planner always works in a multi-disciplinary team in which the planner often acts as one or more of the following functionaries: project leader; communicator of the community's needs; designer of a policy or plan; manager of the implementation of a policy or plan; facilitator, negotiator and mediator between various stakeholders; qualitative and quantitative researcher; administrator of the policy process; advocate for the powerless and the disadvantaged; problem-solver; advisor to politicians, the community and the private sector; visionary; educator; skilled voice-in-the-flow; generalist.

#### 2.2.4 The planning domain

Sandercock (1998b: 131) suggests that in order to prepare planners for the twenty-first century, planning needs to identify its specific domain so as not to be declared redundant every decade. Macdonald (in Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 2), agrees that the primary goal of the profession is to achieve and maintain a degree of 'social closure' that would ensure adequate economic

protection for members of the profession as well as status in the social order. The sub-goals include:

- Carving out a jurisdiction for the profession
- Defining the social reality for the area in which the profession operates
- Controlling the production of professional knowledge
- Defining boundaries and relationships with other occupations
- Gaining and maintaining the support and sponsorship of political elites.

*“The failure to sustain a regulative bargain with the state leaves the profession without any protection from competition and raises the spectre of ‘deprofessionalism’ ” (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 2).*

According to Oranje (1997: 239), some forms of planning have not been adaptive to the needs of the time, and there are but a few niches/fields that planners could claim for themselves. Planners have, nonetheless, carved out a jurisdiction for themselves in the following existing niches:

- Land-use management/control
- Urban design
- Township establishment
- Geographic information systems (GIS) and other technology-driven information decision support systems
- Housing
- Property development
- Policy formulation regarding sustainable use of the environment
- Integrated strategic development planning at various government levels
- Local economic development (LED)
- City marketing
- Metropolitan planning and management
- Regeneration of central business districts (CBD)
- Rural development and land restitution.

The planning domain according to some individuals, international planning schools and planning institutes, as well as our own institute, involves the following:

**Table 2.4 - The planning domain**

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	The planning domain
Sandercock (1998b: 13)	Constituting a set of socio-spatial processes subject to constant change. These are: <input type="checkbox"/> Urbanisation <input type="checkbox"/> Regional and economic growth and change processes <input type="checkbox"/> City-building processes <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural differentiation and change <input type="checkbox"/> Transformation of nature <input type="checkbox"/> Urban politics and empowerment.
Friedman (1996: 98)	Planners work on land-use, redevelopment, housing, historical preservation, regional economic growth, the environment, transportation, community development, social policy and development planning. All of these specialisations have found a home in the domain of planning where they share an overarching concern with the dynamics of the urban milieu.
White Paper on spatial planning and land-use management (South Africa, 2001: 22)	Social, political, economic and environmental concerns.

Individuals, planning schools and institutes	The planning domain
New Zealand Planning Institute (2001)	The majority of planners in New Zealand are employed in the public sector, while others work in private consulting firms, providing independent advice to clients.
Association of Collegiate Schools of Planners (Friedman, 1996: 94)	Most planners work at the local level, but they are concerned with issues that affect the world.
U.S. Department of Labor (2001)	Most new planning jobs arise in the more affluent, rapidly growing urban and suburban communities. An increasing proportion of planners is employed by private sector by companies involved in research and testing or management and public relations. Others are employed in State agencies dealing with housing, transportation, or environmental protection, and a small number work for Federal Government.
South African Planners Homepage (2001) hosted by the SACTRP, SAPI, and the ACTRP	On a national scale, planning determines in which parts of the country growth should occur, and also in identifying conservation areas for natural environments. In each region of the country the planner analyses the available resources and the capacity of the region to accommodate the growth envisaged by the national plan. On a metropolitan level, planners are studying alternative settlement patterns where certain patterns of development have already been established. In neighbourhoods the planner's work may involve improving what already exists by restoring it, or by planning new sites for residential, commercial or recreational purposes.
American Society of Planning Officials (Hamlin, 1978:vi-vii)	Planning takes place in public, non-profit and private settings

Friedman (1996: 96) attempts to suggest the substantive domain of planners arises at the intersection of six socio-spatial processes that together produce the urban habitat. In addition to a basic knowledge about the urban habitat, planners have to acquire specialised knowledge through which key problems arising from the dynamism of the urban habitat can be addressed. For each speciality, this should include at least six dimensions:

- A historical perspective of the speciality, how it has evolved, its internal culture, the contending schools of thought, and its leading personalities.
- The political economy and institutions through which relevant policies are made and carried out.
- A detailed and critical knowledge of the current theories and controversies pertaining to the speciality.
- The dominant research paradigm in use.
- Familiarity with the standard methods and models of analysis in use within the speciality.
- Involvement with clinical practice focused on the speciality, but allowing for collaboration with related sub-fields of planning (Friedman, 1996: 98).

The substantive domain of planning is therefore the urban habitat in its multifaceted aspects. Friedman argues that this professional domain is on the same level of generality as the domains of other professions (Friedman: 1996: 96-98).

William Lucy (1994: 305-306) approaches planning in a totally different way from those who delineate a specific domain for planning. In his article 'If planning includes too much, maybe it should include more', he says that planners should take a more expansive view of planning – incorporating a larger intellectual domain, by particularly including public administration and policy analysis. He acknowledges the controversy on whether planning does include too much and so lacks both a clear intellectual paradigm and a central core of professional practice. He believes planning has no central principle other than nurturing the healthy connections between people and place.

Lucy (1994: 305) argues that planning should expand, because other professions are ill prepared, by their conceptual foundation, for leadership. Public administrators and policy analysts receive an essential non-spatial education, with excessive reliance on micro-economics. Architects and landscape architects lack conceptual grounding in social, economic and political processes.

To try and define the planning domain within the South African context, one could define it for the purpose of this thesis as the urban and regional habitat in its multifaceted aspects. The planning domain encompasses the following aspects (although not exclusively): land-use management and control, urban design, environmental conservation, township establishment, urbanisation, GIS and other technology-driven information decision support systems, public administration, housing, integrated development planning at various government levels, local economic development, city marketing, metropolitan planning and management, regeneration of the CBD, rural development and land restitution, urban politics and empowerment. Planners work in the private and public sector on national, provincial and local level, as well as for NGOs.

### **2.2.5 Summary and conclusion**

Oranje (1995: 4) has a point in saying we should be open to as many definitions of planning as the community of planners wants to produce, as it will strengthen our community, and that these definitions should all be regarded as equally important – a celebration of multiculturalism, pluralism and diversity.

For the purpose of this thesis however, one could say that a meta-definition of planning is that it is an integrative, multi-disciplinary profession dealing with today's problems and tomorrow's challenges in creating and improving the physical, social and economic framework for human settlements in its multifaceted aspects, by ensuring sustainable and equitable use of resources. It is a creative, facilitative and accommodating process between various stakeholders in which the planner is one skilled-voice-in-the-flow.

## **2.3 The changing context of our world**

### **2.3.1 How has the world changed?**

The world is constantly changing around us: "... *the present is vanishingly brief and ephemeral, a short instant whose location in time is continuously shifting from future to past.*" "*The present is where continuity and change must be reconciled*" (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 225).

The period since the economic crises of the 1970s has seen considerable shifts in the nature of economics, cities, and regions, placing new demands on planning and planning education. Key changes have included: globalisation, interconnectedness of our world, economic restructuring and integration, interdependency, new technologies, the growth of informality, global warming, development of communication and transport technology, socio-cultural homogenisation versus increasingly pluralist societies, political challenged countries, growing poverty, accelerated information flows, shifting demographic structures, increasingly multicultural societies, new forms of governance, the rise of the 'civil' society, breakdowns of boundaries and the growth of environmental, feminist and other social movements (Planning schools, 2000: 1; Alexander in Friedman, 1994: 378; Afshar, 2001: 339).

The global reach of these changes has provoked the recognition of a 'globalisation process'. There is no escaping the fact that the impact of globalisation cannot be avoided, even for Africa, which is marginalised by the unfolding process (Mabogunje, 2000: 165).

Various authors have tried to grasp these changes and what impact they are having and will have on society. Allmendinger (1999), Castells (1992, 1998), Sandercock (1998b), Afshar (2001), Warren, Warren, Nunn and Warren (1999), Mabogunje (2000), Hamza & Zetter (2000) and Allmendinger & Chapman (1999) have tried to explain some of these changes in more detail.

### **2.3.1.1 Political change**

At the political level communism as a system has ended, meaning the control of the communist party over the state and the control of the State over society. The dismantling of communism in the East European countries can be ascribed to the inability of the communist system – based on the control of information – to assimilate the fundamental revolution in information technology, and the burden of the military budget (Castells, 1992: 73, Allmendinger & Chapman, 1999: 1, 8).

The end of the Cold War has strengthened the USA's position as a superpower, and the Asian Tigers started to play a more important role in the global economy. Fundamentalism is on the increase, striking at the heart of people's livelihood, as illustrated by the bombing of New York and Washington in September 2001. Another example is the suicide bombings by Palestinians in Israeli territory.

### **2.3.1.2 Changing social and political will**

Two aspects that have significance for planning are sustainability and sustainable development, emerging as grassroots-level concerns that are forced upon governments by non-governmental organisations, whose role has been to catalyse, mobilise, and give directions to civil society. These concerns are pollution, urban sprawl, inner-city decay, air quality, climate change, and even employment and social change. The challenge is for planners to integrate these sustainability concerns with short-term strategies for market economies, which are in conflict with one another (Allmendinger, 1999: 248; Mabogunje, 2000: 168).

The demand for improvement of the quality, choice, value, and accountability of public service, such as planning, has resulted in more transparency and scrutiny of services, and more participation by the public (Allmendinger, 1999: 249).

### **2.3.1.3 Implementation agencies**

Governments are increasingly depending on other institutions for implementation of policies and the provision of urban infrastructure. The state is playing a generally reduced role and deregulation of direct service provision will continue. Government will become regulators rather than service providers, leaving the service provision to private sector. No country can therefore ignore the role of the private sector any longer. If planners are to become more involved in service provision, they will need to involve the local communities more by way of public participation (Allmendinger, 1999: 251-253; Mabogunje, 2000: 168).

If the state's autonomy in directing urban growth and transformation is increasingly constrained, who governs cities? Hamza & Zetter (2000: 439) try to answer the question. Many new categories of urban interests have institutionalised themselves and are now bargaining for power and responsibility over the future of the city. This includes conventional public sector authorities and agencies, NGOs, community-based organisation (CBOs) and political parties.

### 2.3.1.4 Economic change

A new global economy has manifested itself. Trends such as the consolidation of the global capitalist economy, accelerated by the collapse of socialist regimes and underpinned by information technology that places extraordinary powers in the hands of financial managers, can be identified. The forces of economic integration are redistributing the power to those who have the financial, technological and political resources to exploit the expanding markets of global integration. They benefit the transnational corporations and the financial and technical experts on whom they depend, at the expense of others.

That is why multinational corporations are growing to unprecedented power and supplant the nation state in controlling the use of force on a global scale. The role of the nation state will continue to be reduced, due to its inefficiency in providing services and due to privatisation becoming the norm. Global capital is now dictating foreign and domestic economic policy, as financial resources can now be transferred from one end of the world to another with the press of a button. As information becomes more freely available, investors are able to compare performance between countries in reaching investment decisions (Castells, 1992: 74; Castells, 1998: 354-358; Allmendinger & Chapman, 1999: 4-5; Warren *et al*, 1999: 54; Sandercock, 1998b: 203; Mabogunje, 2000: 167).

It is a different matter altogether in the developing countries. Although cities in developing countries are able to present a comparative advantage in the globalised economy: labour costs are low, the regulation of production is less restrictive, land and facility costs are low and tax concessions are advantageous, not all the cities provide the conditions which multinational corporations are seeking, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, for the cities and the countries that have attracted foreign capital, there are profound implications for managing these cities in terms of the spatial and physical impacts they have. These include rising costs due to higher employment, impact on land markets, land-use patterns and increasing house and land prices (Hamza & Zetter, 2000: 437).

For the 'formal' city to remain competitive, cheap labour is necessary which in turn requires low servicing and development costs for the poor. This ensures that the formal economy can only survive if it co-exists with the informal economy and illegal settlements. These processes influence the pattern of urban development and physical change (Hamza & Zetter, 2000: 438).

Not everybody will therefore be getting rich due to the new global economy. There is consensus that the problems Africa face, are more extreme than elsewhere in the developing world. According to Diaw, Nnkya and Watson (2001: 1) and Watson (2002: 6), economies today are in a worse state than they were at independence. The mean annual growth rate of real GDP per capita has declined steadily and millions of people are living in absolute poverty. Levels of HIV/Aids are extremely high, undermining possibilities of economic recovery and Africa is marginalised from the global economy.

Many blame the World Bank Structural Adjustment Policies for the economic decline and the weakening of governments, to the extent that from an economic and political point of view, sub-Saharan Africa has become irrelevant. This has again resulted in warfare, endemic violence, state collapse, war-lordism, ethnic conflicts, child slavery, interpersonal violence linked to crime, and a weak civil society. NGOs did not develop organically and in co-operation with government as in the developed world, but in conflict with government and with an unpredictable life span, and often cause communities to be fractured by different perceptions of the same problem or issue (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 2; Watson, 2002: 6; Edwards, 1996: 16).

### 2.3.1.5 Technological change

The technological changes we experience are affecting all spheres of life – economic, social, political, financial, and institutional. Castells (1998: 353; 1992: 75), Mabogunje (2000: 167) and Harrison (1995: 6) see the twenty-first century as marked by the completion of a global information superhighway, and by mobile telecommunications and computing power, thus decentralising and diffusing the power of disseminating information, delivering the promise of multimedia and enhancing the joy of interactive communication. It will be the century of genetic engineering and manipulation of living matter. The information economy will mature and unleash the productive potential of this information revolution. Human labour will produce more and better with less effort. Mental work will replace physical work in most productive sectors of the economy. This information technological revolution constitutes the basis of the global economy as it creates the infrastructure for world integration of production and management.

### 2.3.1.6 Cultural and social change

According to Castells (1992: 75), two fundamental social movements are having an effect on the way we think and the way we organise our lives: The feminist culture that is undermining patriarchy as a fundamental social category institutionalised in every aspect of our lives, and the environmental movement that is redefining society's relationship with nature.

This time and age are also characterised by movements of people across national borders, the tolerance of greater diversity and the general pattern of development, resulting in cultural and social changes (Mabogunje, 2000: 168). Allmendinger and Chapman (1999: 2, 10) and Castells (1998:71-81) sees this 'new world order' or disorder, as unfortunately intertwined with rising inequality, poverty, polarisation, overexploitation, social exclusion and environmental degradation in many parts of the world, but also within countries

Watson explains this as 're-traditionalisation', paralysing Africa by the revival of age-old traditions and cultural practices. Examples are the endurance of sorcery and witchcraft; the revival of African religion and traditionalisation of Christian churches, the persistence of ethnicity, increasing informalisation of the economy, the dominant role of kinship networks and the apparent 'failure' of modern politics (Watson, 2002: 7).

### 2.3.1.7 Complexity and chaos

There seems to be increasing complexity in who does what? The boundaries and locations of action and power are increasingly blurred between and among governments, multinational corporations, humans, and machines, as well as between terrestrial and non-terrestrial space. It seems that making things 'happen', such as addressing homelessness, poverty and pollution is becoming increasingly difficult even though society seems to be becoming more sophisticated. Governments do not longer have control over their workers, economies, and capital, and information can flow freely around the world undermining national initiatives. Projections of the future are becoming increasingly difficult and cannot be made along linear paths anymore, making future planning even more difficult (Allmendinger & Chapman, 1999: 5; Allmendinger, 1999: 254, 258; Warren *et al*, 1999: 50-51).

### 2.3.1.8 Post-modernity and post-structuralism

Planning is in effect a modernistic profession (Allmendinger, 1999: 264-265), finding itself in a post-modern era. The challenge to planning is to encourage a plurality of difference, becoming more sensitive on the whole.

### 2.3.1.9 Spatial change

The space of flows has become more important than the space of places. Major organisations operate in real time in a planetary system connected by flows of information, which is not controlled by any specific society, but is likely to shape the lives and futures of these societies. Power and function are territorialised, but people still live in places. The danger in this historical spatial dichotomy is the lack of communication between the power and the people, between cities and citizens and that there will simultaneously be regions and people included as well as excluded in the global economy, causing territorial differentiation (Castells, 1992: 75; Castells, 1998: 354; Afshar, 2001: 339).

Within these countries, and specifically the cities, there is a highly differentiated pattern of access to resources reflected in the growing spatial divisions between the poor masses and the well-connected elite. Cities are characterised by extreme forms of inequality, division and social breakdown. A formal, well-serviced core develops, housing the elite, then follows some attempt at providing working class housing, and an extensive 'informalisation' of the urban fabric and land-use. The poor are increasingly spatially and socially excluded from access to the few formal opportunities cities do have to offer (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 3; Watson, 2002: 1, 10).

## 2.3.2 Effects of these changes on planning

The above mentioned major changes have taken the world by storm at a global level on the political, economic, technological, cultural and spatial fronts. *"We are living in the midst of a fundamental process of historical change that is affecting the intellectual and social foundations of planning and its practice"* (Castells, 1992: 73).

The result of this changing context is that urban systems and areas, being the traditional concerns of planners, are fundamentally changing. Globalisation is urbanising our world in specific ways, municipalities and regions are competing in the global market, technology and telecommunication revolutionise planners' contexts in which they work and the way they work, the constituencies of planners become increasingly ethnically diverse, and state and the public sector is changing as the assumption that this sector should lead decision-making and action is challenged. Planners do not and cannot have answers to all problems in this complex and changing society.

The changes to our world have different implications for planners in the developing than in the developed world as these changes manifest in different ways. Levy (1992:81-83) summarises the effects of the changing context on planning in the U.S. as the following:

- **The scale of planning:** Due to the fundamental changes to the urban systems and areas – traditional concerns of planners – the scale of planning has expanded by new items being added to the high end of the scale, but nothing being cut from the lower end. The development of specialities and subspecialities has resulted in fracture lines developing within planning (the layer-cake effect as identified by Batty).
- **Planning and politics:** Due to the deregulation of service provision by government, planners have become more involved in daily politics. This has forced planners to start



thinking in terms of electoral terms and not much further than that. Planners often have to deflect citizen wrath from the political establishment.

- **Citizen participation:** Citizen power grew drastically in part due to requirements by legislation and due to citizens becoming more politically skilled and active.
- **From city to suburb:** Much of the planning action moved to the suburbs. Planners are following the population, the capital and the growth.
- **Dollars and cents:** Planners became more involved in entrepreneurial and operational activities as planning departments became the tail on the community development dog. Flexibility, adaptiveness and quick responses became cardinal values when the winds of funding shift.
- **Development initiative:** Much of the development of land-use plans passed from the planner to the developer, so that the planner became more of a judge of the plans and a negotiator of planning compromise.
- **Academic strain:** The planning professorate became more traditionally academic, causing division between educators and the practising alumni. They also became more radical, creating a further rift between education and practice.
- **Design:** Planning schools de-emphasised design to such an extent that many students in planning schools can graduate without ever having sat down at a drafting board.
- **Social planning:** The social planner has difficulty formulating a credible and comprehensive agenda. However, the profession never had a mandate from society to engage in grand acts of social planning. This further divides rather than unifies the profession.
- **Certainty of an uncertain future:** Planners lost faith in long-term prediction, making comprehensive planning seem less important. Many things became unpredictable and thus unplannable due to the increasing complexity of society.

In the developing world, planning scarcely relates at all in practice to the really important issues, to the complexities, subtleties and abstractions of real life. Planning agencies are reduced to making marginal reactions to events determined not only outside their control, but even their awareness. They do not in any real sense plan at all (Harris, 1983: 13).

How are planners reacting to this changing context in which they work and what are the challenges for the planning profession? Let us first look at parts of the developed world.

### 2.3.3 Challenges for planning in the changing context of the developed world

In the developed world, the state no longer supports the sort of progressive interventionist planning it used to do. Planning traditionally sought to address and represent the needs of society through the agencies of state, which are now increasingly unavailable to planners. Contemporary planning must define its role in a world where governments are in retreat, fiscally overburdened and directed by transnational investors.

Planners can and must respond to changing circumstances within their political or ideological environment if they are to remain useful and effective (Laburn-Peart, 1991: 10, 15). Planners have different opinions as to how planning is reacting or should react to this changing context. Some, like Tewdwr-Jones (1999: 134) are of the opinion that planners are not reacting or repositioning themselves at all. Others are positive that planning can and is making a difference. "*We need not only accommodate change, we can choose to effect it*" (Isserman quoted in Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 224).

But is planning 'choosing to effect change'? It would seem that planning has changed noticeably, and for the best, but according to Tewdwr-Jones (1999: 134) on the other hand, the planning process is becoming devoid of intellectual discourse concerning broader spatial or strategic issues while planners are concentrating on their successful role being little more than

the local neighbourhood watch. Tewdwr-Jones acknowledges that others think the global changes have opened up the doors for planners to get involved in many more activities than previously. Strategic planning for transport, economic development and environmental protection are fundamental matters for town and regional planning, but planning practice is also inextricably bound up in the potential and powerful nuances of governance. Planning in specifically the U.K. is therefore reduced to nothing more than a checklist of activities – proceduralism – and therefore public sector planning practice is becoming increasingly devoid of unique skills.

Planners in the U.K. public sector are starting to see themselves as administrators and have retrenched into thinking of planning in a less visionary way, following the adverse criticisms of their efforts by the public. These planners now begin to believe that planning control *is* planning, so that, according to Tewdwr-Jones (1999: 138-140, 145), town planning is no longer a political and professional activity, but a rampant technocracy. British students no longer view the public sector as an interesting place within which to work, as it does not possess varied, challenging or exciting planning tasks. Many planners in the U.K. find difficulty in realising their personal visions in practice because of the lack of intellectual discussion and a refusal on the part of other planners to acknowledge and debate change..

Town planning is suffering from a severe, though outdated, image problem, which needs to be tackled. Planning as a process suffers from a legacy of past images, poor decisions, visionary planning mistakes and perceptions that the discipline is anti-community. This unenviable image of town planners in the U.K. specifically, is causing practitioners much distress and embarrassment, to the extent that they are abandoning the phrase 'town planner'. They are rather calling themselves 'planners', 'consultants' or 'environmentalists', or even 'local authority officers'. According to Tewdwr-Jones, planners have been intent on accepting the abuse and have not faced up to the poor images, have not been careful to admit their mistakes too readily and may not have taken sufficient account of the community aspect. Planning needs to reassert itself as a unique central facilitating component of socio-economic restructuring, at the same time bolstering the image of planners and legitimising the planning profession (1999: 125, 132-133, 141).

Sandercock (1998b: 203-204) is more positive than Tewdwr-Jones about new forms of progressive planning emerging worldwide, namely a bottom-up style, addressing social, cultural and environmental justice issues in cities and regions that are being shaped by larger forces of demographic and economic mobility.

Sandercock (1998b: 30) is very clear about the new forms of progressive planning that should be emerging in a changing world:

- Means-end rationality may still be useful for building roads and dams, but practical wisdom should play a more important role.
- Planning is no longer exclusively concerned with multi-sectoral and multi-functional plans, but more with negotiated, political and focused planning. It should become less document-orientated and more people-centric.
- There are different kinds of appropriate knowledge in planning – which knowledge, in what situation, is the question. Planners have to learn how to access other ways of knowing, as local communities have experiential, grounded, contextual, intuitive knowledge, manifested in various ways.
- Community empowerment should happen by moving from a top-down, State directed reliance to community-based planning from the ground up.
- The 'public interest' and 'community' have to be deconstructed to recognise the influence that one has on the other. Multiple politics must be acknowledged requiring new kinds of multicultural literacy (Sandercock, 1998: 30).

It is understandable that there are conflicting opinions as to the planner's reaction to the changing context of our world. Tewdwr-Jones is of the opinion that planning has not even noticed changes to the broader spatial or strategic issues, and is devoid of intellectual discourse. He sees planning in the U.K. as nothing more than a checklist of activities and increasingly devoid of unique skills.

He speculates that the reason for planning's lack of dynamism could be an image problem to which planners are not facing up and that they need to reassert planning as a unique central facilitating component of socio-economic restructuring.

Others are convinced that planners are addressing social, cultural and environmental justice issues by taking on new progressive roles. Castells (1992: 78) urges planning practice and education to position itself at the intellectual forefront of the new world rather than getting relegated to the back offices of the last wave of urban speculations. A renewed planning field needs a renewed intellectual foundation – planning and planners could be a significant part of this new history.

How does the developing world react to the changes in the global economy and what challenges do they pose for planners?

#### **2.3.4 Challenge for planners in the developing world**

It must be acknowledged that the developing world presents a concept for very diverse countries. It ranges from the underdeveloped economies of sub-Saharan Africa, through the Latin-American countries to the Pacific Rim. However, planners and managers of cities in the developing world face similar challenges for the management of urban development and the provision of services from available resources: people are left without adequate shelter and without access to safe water or sanitation, while haphazard patterns of urban growth have caused economic inefficiency, environmental degradation and human misery (Mabogunje, 2000: 166; Devas & Rakodi, 1993: 1, 8). This section specifically concentrates on sub-Saharan Africa.

Urbanisation in the developing world is not over yet. The United Nations (UN) projects the level of urbanisation to rise to 61 percent in 2025. The rise in urbanisation has provoked concerns and anxieties of what this could mean for the quality of life of the world's population, for social relations domestically and internationally and for environmental conditions generally (Mabogunje, 2000: 165).

Hamdi (1996: 2) describes the developing country in very vivid terms: "...one of those which regularly features in the UN ledgers, with alarming statistics on urban poverty, urban growth-rates, mortality rates, urban services indicators, population projections, and the like. In a country which typically has been making a net transfer of cash to western banks equivalent to £9 for every £1 it has borrowed, in repayments and debt servicing and which amounts to around 16 percent of its GNP; whose major cities exploded between 1970 and 1985 by around 135 percent and which are still growing at 6 percent each year; with over 80 percent of its urban population living below the poverty line, however it is defined, most of whom will live in slums and informal settlements; whose mortality rates, attributed one way or another to poverty or to poverty of its government, are between 95 and 150 infant deaths before the age of 12 per 1 000 births amongst the poor majority, and with child malnutrition standing at 40 percent of its child population; with 30 percent of its urban population lacking safe water, and with the quality of supply deteriorating rather than improving despite official reports, and whose municipal authorities are strained in administrative and other resources and manage to pick up between 25 and 50 percent of its solid waste at best."

Attempts in sub-Saharan Africa to address the above-mentioned problems are hampered by a lack of resources, the privatisation of public services, a lack of capacity and professional skills, corruption and clientelism, lack of political support and trust, and a lack of basic information around issues such as land occupation and ownership. Limitations to address the problems are also derived from inappropriate tools, methods and institutional structures, and the lack of competency also reflects modes of education and training which have not provided relevant or effective professional skills and capabilities (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 3; Zetter, 1996: 57).

Within this context, planners are faced with different challenges than before: they have to operate within a system of local government which has changed its role from administration and control to development and community participation. Planners have to hone communicative and capacity building skills in a context in which ethnic, income and other divisions run deep and consensus cannot be assumed. A second challenge is the serious lack of services for the poor population, often leading to health hazards. Provision of services is difficult because of privatisation and cost-recovery is supported, but families have a very low and irregular income. A third challenge is the environment which has been extremely negatively affected by poverty and a decline in the provision of services. This degradation often threatens livelihoods (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 4).

Not only is the developing world struggling with supplying basic services to their communities, but while a dynamic global economy has been constituted in much of the world, sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a substantial decline in its relative position in trade, investment, production and consumption in comparison with the rest of the world. It is therefore also not sharing in the global economy.

The deliberate attempt by international financial institutions to take Africa out of its 1980s debt crisis by homogenising the conditions of trade and investment ended in a considerable fiasco and aggravated the plight of the poorest of the poor. The social, economic, and political cost of this failed attempt at globalising African economies, without informationalising its societies, can be seen in the growing dereliction of a majority of Africa's poor. Formal urban markets stopped absorbing labour, generating a substantial increase in unemployment and underemployment, translating into a higher incidence of poverty levels. Agricultural production, specifically food production, has declined substantially, making many countries vulnerable to famine when catastrophe strikes. (Castells, 1998: 115-118).

Africa's exports remained confined to primary products. The survival of many African countries' economies has become dependent on international and foreign borrowing, while foreign direct investments are bypassing Africa at a time when investments in developing countries are growing substantially (Castells, 1998: 83-91; Watson 2002: 7).

Africa is also excluded from the information technology revolution and the ability to use and adapt it – the critical factor in generating and accessing wealth, power and knowledge. The human skills to operate information technology also remain totally inadequate. Before Africa can become part of this revolution, it needs to build an infrastructure with reliable electricity supply, a telecommunications infrastructure and network connectivity (Castells, 1998: 92-95).

There is also the disorganisation of production and livelihood induced by the disintegration of the state. Urban poverty, the crisis of agriculture, institutional collapse, widespread violence, and massive population movements have combined to significantly deteriorate the living conditions of many Africans (Castells, 1998: 115-118).

All of this has meant weak development of the institutions that play host to the technological and organisational innovations of the globalised world. Their fiscal incapacity has impaired the development of the nation's capital market and their competitive advantage in respect of investment in other sectors of the economy hardly come into global considerations. Poor

infrastructural development limits the capacity of African cities to spawn any major technological innovations (Mabogunje, 2000: 172).

According to Mabogunje (2000: 169-170) Africa, in at least three aspects, is unable to fully play host to the forces of a free market economy. The first issue is land, enmeshed in a kinship system of social relations that does not recognise the right to individual ownership. Land as an asset remains outside the mainstream of the market economy and cannot easily be sold or exchanged. It can therefore not be used to enlarge income or as collateral to raise needed capital. Another issue is the entrapment of entrepreneurs in their informal mode of operation due to the entrapment of skills acquisition and credit provisioning. The result is small-scale, informal sector enterprises, owned by individuals of different levels of educational attainment. A third issue is the predominance of low-capitalised, small-scale, informal sector enterprises in most African cities, that have had an incapacitating effect on their economic growth. This results in a poor tax base for infrastructural development and a limited level of disposable income, inhibiting economic growth.

However, people in sub-Saharan Africa have always found ways of survival outside of the formal economy. They have moved into legal and illegal self-employment or casual wage employment, or supplement their formal income with informal trade. Most activities are survivalist in nature and provide few extra jobs, little investment, few skills and an irregular income under poor working conditions. It is estimated that the informal sector employs 63% of the urban labour force in sub-Saharan Africa, and that this sector will generate 93% of all the additional jobs in urban Africa (Watson, 2002: 9).

High levels of poverty, insecurity and inequality intensify competition. This in turn unfortunately means that economic and political processes become open for negotiation and informalisation. Networks with the state become particularly valuable in negotiating access to resources and avoiding control and regulation. Public institutions thus become domains for specific interest groups and sites for private accumulation (Watson, 2002: 9).

Africa is therefore also a maker of its own misery. Predatory rulers dominate many countries. Whatever resources, international or domestic, arrive into the state-dominated economies, are processed according to personalised accumulation – largely disconnected from the country's economy. Access to state power is equivalent to accessing wealth, and the sources of future wealth. It results in a pattern of violent confrontation and unstable alliances between different political factions competing for the opportunity to practise pillage, ultimately resulting in the instability of state institutions and the role of the military. Political support is built around clientelistic networks and citizens must pay allegiance to the chain of patronage to be included in the distribution of jobs, services, and petty favours at all levels of the state (Castells, 1998: 98-99).

This reality presents a totally different picture from that of the developed world, where challenges posed to planners significantly differ from those in sub-Saharan Africa. Except for some Asian countries, most of the developing world is largely excluded from the global economy and this is causing even more inequality, poverty, polarisation, over-exploitation, social exclusion and environmental degradation in many parts of the world.

### **2.3.5 South Africa's response to changing circumstances**

South Africa is perceived by many as the link between Africa and the rest of the world and as the growth engine of the whole Southern African region. South Africa's reaction to the challenges of a developing world is therefore of great consequence to the rest of the continent.

The South African context is quite unique, with many peculiarities. Planning in South Africa is still struggling to come to terms with the past, as it was associated with the discredited apartheid ideology. Fortunately for planners, the new government has been sympathetic towards planning, with a strong focus on socio-economic upliftment. Planning is, however, struggling to shift from process to delivery (Harrison, 1995: 6).

The main concern in South Africa for almost the last decade, has been to replace the planning legislation and systems which were developed within the apartheid framework, furthering racial segregation. New, democratic planning legislation required community participation, guided forward planning and aimed for better spatial outcomes. Legislation takes the position that planning should be normative and not only regulatory (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 10).

Planning in South Africa, as internationally, must find its legitimacy in the concerns of the present and the future, for example, environmental sustainability, global competitiveness, new technologies and local economic development (Harrison, 1995: 8).

In post-apartheid South Africa planning has changed in response to socio-political pressures and global forces. Global shifts are also evident in South Africa, but take on local forms, posing new challenges for planning. The challenges they pose are the reconstruction and development requirements, the need to address the backlogs in infrastructure and service provision in ways that help to integrate and restructure cities and regions, while the need to construct new, integrated systems of planning that are responsive to changing conditions and needs (Planning schools, 2001: 1).

New approaches to planning have already emerged in South Africa to address these challenges. These include integrated development planning and new styles to planning, such as community participation and communicative forms of planning. Planning is seen by many as an important tool in the reconstruction of cities and regions in terms of government policies. Older forms of planning, such as land management, have become less important. The field of planning has also broadened, presenting new demands on planning education, while emerging linked disciplines, such as environmental management, municipal management, housing, development, project management and local economic development are becoming more important (Planning schools, 2001: 1).

### 2.3.6 Summary and conclusion

The globalisation of the new world economy is a tale of two cities. The ascent of informational, global capitalism is characterised by simultaneous economic development and under-development, social inclusion and social exclusion, and substantial growth of poverty and misery in specifically sub-Saharan Africa. These dissimilar manifestations of the changes that have taken the world by storm at a global level are placing diverse demands on the planning profession and on planning education.

In the developed world on the political front, planners have to ensure community participation in establishing the expected service levels. In sub-Saharan Africa on the political front, predatory autocrats dominate many countries, and the people have no political power. The political scene is marred by violent confrontations and unstable alliances between opposing political factions competing for the opportunity to practise pillage.

In the developed world on the spatial front, planners are challenged by issues of sustainable development and environmental degradation. In sub-Saharan Africa on the spatial front, planners are faced with providing houses, services and even jobs and food to the masses.

Warren *et al* (1999: 52) call this the unwillingness of planning to go beyond the known, accepted wisdom and logic in dealing with the future. At the turn of the century, planning's vision of the immediate future tended to be more-of-the-same – an almost utopian, market-based, information society in which telecommunication and technological advancements will restructure time and space to the benefit of everyone – a 'we-can-do-anything-digitally-future'. Those cities not building advanced telecommunication infrastructures could not participate in the global economy. Critical theorists, on the other hand, argue that inequalities will continue to widen between the world system's core and periphery, between global and non-global cities, and between the wealthy few and the large number of marginalised people within dual economies, and without effective political opposition (Warren *et al*, 1999: 49-51).

Foresights of the future have emerged as a common theme in planning as the very purpose of planning. Many planners understand that the processes of urban development unfold over years, as concepts approved and decisions taken today only take shape in the future, but have an impact or effect for years thereafter. For all these reasons the future cannot be ignored in planning. Many writers have started to call for renewed focus on an education in future-orientated skills (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 221).

Visionary and strategic planning has thus received much interest in planning discourse of late. It has raised planners' awareness of their role in shaping the future. Still, many agree that for all the apparent future-orientation in current planning practice, most planning efforts ring hollow, as they are rarely linked to feasibility studies of change. Planning visions lack the connection between historical realities, present trends and political realities to viable outcomes (Warren, *et al*, 1999: 49; SAITRP, 1972, 7-9). There is no articulation of political alternatives, only "... *blue-sky wish lists packaged for public consumption*" (Helling in Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 222). Others claim that "... *planning has lost sight of the future ... Planning (is) voluntarily sacrificing its role as visionary and idealist and is abandoning its responsibility to be a source of inspiration and ideas about what might be and what ought to be*" (Isserman quoted in Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 221). In the event where planners made an effort to become more relevant, short-term budget cycles and electoral processes drive efforts.

Brooks (in Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 222) reckons planners "*sorely need to return to the utopian tradition in planning*" as loss of sight of the future has undermined the soul of the profession. It seems that within planning's current framework, anticipating the future is problematic. Utopian constructs have largely been abandoned and traditional methods of making projections and modelling are not designed to detect rapid, qualitative and non-linear change. A new synthesis of skills is needed to strengthen planners' orientation towards the future. This includes all the lessons from the modern era – political relevance, public inclusiveness, quantitative techniques, narrative openness of communication, and more – while recovering lost emphases from the past (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 223; Warren *et al*, 1999: 49).

Planning, as a supposedly future-orientated profession, needs to be equipped with the knowledge and technique of how to make projections for the future and should have a view on these conflicting possibilities by critically examining projections made and alternative scenarios predicted. Losing sight of the future will 'undermine the soul of the profession'. However, it seems that planners are not always equipped to make projections of future urban development and lack the connection between present trends and historical and political realities to viable outcomes. Any discussion of the future must acknowledge how little we know about how to study the future (Mabogunje, 2000: 172).

Planners also need to look beyond the known ways of projecting the future to include 'different kinds of knowledge', as Sandercock would have termed it. Cyberpunk is one quite different way of looking at the future, with possibly more than one valuable lesson as cyberpunks' dystopian anticipations provide a context for reinterpreting many of the current utopian-like

understandings of the information age. Many authors agree that cyberpunk writings even paint a recognisable image of the modern predicament.

#### 2.4.1.1 A dystopian perspective of the future: Cyberpunk

Warren *et al* (1999,49) argues that planning theory and practice can benefit from exploring more transparent visions of the future that had been generated in the fictional world of cyberpunk<sup>1</sup>. This is the realm of artificial intelligence, cyborgs, virtual reality, nanotechnology and cyberspace. Jameson (1991: 44) has characterised the hyperspace of late capitalism as transcending the *“capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organise its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively map its position in a mapable external world.”*

Science fiction images of the future have had an influence on social consciousness for many decades. Cyberpunk is the most recent wave of this tradition and according to Warren *et al* (1999: 52), moves beyond post-nuclear and fantasy tales to narratives that make sense to us.

Graham and Marvin (in Warren, *et al*, 1999: 50) found that there is a growing mismatch between the paradigms used in predicting the future and the nature of the urban reality because of the extent to which telecommunications and other innovations are loosening and reworking urban systems. The resulting danger is that *“new spaces and new times will develop to radically affect cities while being largely ignored by the disciplines which purport to understand and manage cities.”*

*“Cyberpunk’s themes in relation to telecommunications and information technology are hyper-exaggerated visions of the familiar.”* According to Warren *et al* (1999: 52), appropriating imagination can provide planning with *“intellectual insurance against overlooking the need to critically explore the maze of technological, economic, cultural, and political tendencies currently shaping the urban future.”*

Cyberpunk’s value is therefore in providing a clearer window on a rapidly changing world by simultaneously interrelating a number of socio-economic, political, and technological tendencies and driving them to their logical end or a state of hyper-exaggeration, so the implications are accessible for examination (Warren, *et al*, 1999: 59).

#### 2.4.2 Future prospects for planning in South Africa

*“South Africa ... is a country with a very uncertain future. The future of urban and regional planning is equally uncertain”* (Smit, 1989: 380).

The reality in South Africa is that millions of people live in absolute poverty, have no or very little education, are unemployed, do not have houses and have no basic services. There is still tremendous inequality between and within races, gender, and rural and urban residents. This paints a gloomy picture of despair in anticipation of the future. Thomas comments (1998: 201) that planners are held responsible for the racial effects of their actions and the lack in basic

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<sup>1</sup> An explanation of cyberpunk is: *“Cyber relates to cybernetics – the science of communications, control and feedback and to the merger of humans and machine components creating cyborgs. Punk situates the voice as coming from a rough, alternative edge. The scientists and explorer heroes of traditional science are replaced by anti-heroes who are swept into seemingly unfathomable intrigues in a noir world where the boundaries between real and virtual experience and human and artificial intelligence dissolve”* (Warren, *et al*, 1999: 52-53).



infrastructure, even though the decision makers often were not planners, and their actions were at times unintentional.

The South African Planners Homepage (2001) describes the prospects for planning in the face of this gloomy picture of despair, as 'interesting and challenging'. There is extensive scope and need for development in South Africa and planners play an important role in organising and co-ordinating this growth. The country's growing population requires suitable accommodation and this will have to be coupled with growth in employment creation and optimum utilisation of South Africa's scarce natural resources. There is also an increasing trend towards development in the major urban and metropolitan centres. This growth will have to be properly co-ordinated and planned.

#### **2.4.2.1 Sketching four scenarios**

Oranje (1997: 230), using scenario writing and visions, brings to life four 'extrapolated' maps illustrating what the future of planning in South Africa could be, given the present circumstances in the country.

##### **The worst case scenario**

In this scenario, globalisation continues unabated, local industries struggle to keep up in the international economy and shed more jobs. Inequality thus increases, as do crime and violence and the brain-drain, more capital leaves the country and less international capital is invested in the country. More illegal immigrants perform cheaper labour, resulting in more unemployment, and there are even more unsuccessful government initiatives.

A survivalist economy develops in which competition for the scarce resources and wealth of the country intensifies. The wealthier urbanites demand more of their share of the income generated in their area. Less money is available for upliftment of the poor, for basic services and houses, and local governments are bankrupt, leading to further degradation and squalor of the urban poor. The rich urbanites lock themselves in their security villages and link up via communication technology to other affluent sectors of the world, creating a self-sustainable private world for themselves. In this scenario the environment suffers immensely and only offers entertainment to the very rich (Oranje, 1997: 230-232).

##### **Scenario of despair**

In this scenario, talk about change is abundant, and numerous policies, strategies, papers and legislation are produced which do not manage to change anything. International investments are not successful at addressing unemployment or the tremendous backlog. Crime continues to maim and waste lives, destroying the country's image abroad. The growth in the economy is not close to the population growth, resulting in more unemployment, criminal activity, despair and destruction of society (and Oranje did not even consider the effects of Aids!).

The government's income in turn remains the same, preventing them from providing basic services, implementing capital projects, and building houses. Low levels of payment for services lead to projects being carried over from one year to the next. In-migration from other African countries continues to undermine local wage levels. More security fences go up. A few activity corridors are developed, without much success. Degradation of the environment remains an issue and leads to some activity, but not to anything sustainable (Oranje, 1997: 232-233).

### **Glimmers of hope scenario**

In this scenario some major developments do not only lead to actual progress, but also to “a *more positive outlook in the collective psyche about the future*” (Oranje, 1997: 233). Talk translates into action; strategies for successfully combating crime are implemented. Business, government and labour unions resolve issues in a stabilising fashion and create an investor-friendly atmosphere in South Africa. Tourism and investment increase, employment levels rise, the tax base grows, payment for services increases and government has more funds for reconstruction and development.

Resulting in better health services, education facilities, access to information technology and welfare services, “*a better educated, skilled, housed and fed society begins to emerge.*”

The regional development of Southern Africa results in improvement of the countries’ economies as well, leading to a decrease in in-migration, and the brain drain is discontinued. Cities and provinces still compete for investment, but not in a separatist way. More taxes are generated in urban, wealthier provinces, available for the development of the rural poor. Urbanisation and rural development strategies are implemented, leading to a decrease in inequality and an improvement in the quality of life. New initiatives and processes lead to actual urban and rural development and less pressure on available resources.

The trend towards walled enclaves slows down and less polarised environments are generated. The environment receives more attention in public policy, resulting in strict measures and guidelines to minimise environmental degradation (Oranje, 1997: 233-234).

### **High hope scenario**

In this scenario, government, labour and business start working together towards attaining mutual goals as part of President Thabo Mbeki’s Marshall Plan for the Renaissance of Africa. More job opportunities are created than people entering the job market. These developments together with the eradication of crime lead to huge foreign investments and tourism, boosting the economy.

The need for government welfare services decreases and more money is invested in education and skills training. The poorest of the country has access to information technology resulting in more people being able to compete better in the global economy. The growing economy provides the government with enough tax income to implement strategies for the development of a Southern African State. Growing markets for South African products are thus created, boosting the economy further, increasing stability in the region, reducing the number of migrants to South Africa, and sharing expertise with the most underdeveloped areas. The brain-drain is reversed and experts from all over the world want to work in Southern Africa. Competition between countries, provinces and cities for investment is exchanged for strategies aimed at distributing investment throughout the region that now has greater autonomy with regard to local issues within the broader framework.

Urbanisation and rural development strategies for the whole union are formulated and implemented, leading to rural development and less pressure on existing urban and metropolitan areas. These developments in turn tend to even out inequalities and make for a substantial improvement in the quality of life.

Crime levels are greatly reduced and the trend towards security towns diminishes. The polarisation between rich and poor people is less intense and more ‘humane cities’ (according to Short in Oranje, 1997: 236) are established. The environment becomes an issue of real importance and results in strict measures and guidelines to ensure the minimisation of environmental degradation (Oranje, 1997: 235-236).

At present South Africa is somewhere between the scenario of despair and the glimmers of hope scenario. Within the context of these scenarios, the planning profession and planning education could anticipate and plan for the future of South Africa. We should plan for a country that is very slowly moving into the glimmers of hope scenario, by addressing crime, international investment, basic services, unemployment, environmental issues and the development of Southern Africa. Then, hopefully one day, we could live in the high hope scenario.

What are the prospects for planning in this scenario?

#### 2.4.2.2 What is the future of the present planning niches?

Several niches planners could claim as being their speciality, have been identified earlier on, namely:

- Land-use management/control
- Urban design
- Township establishment
- GIS and other technology-driven information decision support systems
- Housing
- Property development
- Policy formulation regarding sustainable use of the environment
- Integrated strategic development planning at various government levels
- Local economic development
- Metropolitan planning and management
- Regeneration of central business districts
- Rural development and land restitution
- Environmental conservation
- Urban politics and empowerment
- Urbanisation
- Public administration.

Given the absolute degrees of poverty, illiteracy, homelessness and inequality and the present strong commitment to reconstruction and development, all niches aiming at reconstruction and development of the country, promoting black economic empowerment and supporting SMEs are sure to have a future in this land. Fortunately, planning has entrenched itself in the integrated development planning field of municipal governance. The result has been a decline in the need for planners working in physical planning, and a growth in the demand for planners working in the field of development planning. Such fields would include:

- Housing
- Local economic development
- Public administration
- Rural development and land restitution
- Training and capacity building
- Urban politics and empowerment
- Integrated strategic development planning.

If planners are unable to continue making a contribution in these fields, or the government is unable to identify and fund these projects, the future for planners in these niches is uncertain. Securing financial support for these niches is also not an easy task. To ensure a hopeful future for South Africa, planners will have to ensure visible progress in formulating and implementing processes within the political climate and context (Harrison & Todes, 2001a: 6-7; Oranje, 1997: 240-241, Laburn-Pearl, 1991: 10).

While several of these planning fields have a future in South Africa, it does not mean that only planners have a future in these fields. Planners would have to compete with other professions in this “*professional free market*”. Oranje (1997: 261), as one of a few authors to have written on the subject, is of the opinion that the fields/niches in which planners have a comparative advantage over other people, are notably those fields with a strong spatial/physical dimension and necessitates a broad understanding of the urban processes, such as those regarding:

- Urban design
- Township establishment
- Land-use management and control
- Integrated strategic development planning.

Other fields that could also imply a comparative advantage for planners are:

- Informal settlement upgrading
- Managing urban change
- Ability to relate to and work with diverse communities
- Developing spatial frameworks
- Environmental management and impact assessments
- Understanding urban economics.

There is huge scope for black experienced planners, and middle management positions. Other forms of development and strategic planning are likely to draw on people from a wider background and a wider set of management, leadership and life skills such as sociologists, economists, ecologists, anthropologists, geographers, politicians, transport engineers, etc., where planners cannot bring an exceptional skill or expertise to the table (Harrison & Todes, 2001a: 7; Oranje, 1997: 262).

According to Oranje (1997: 261), planners would only succeed in having the competitive edge if:

- They acquire skills that others do not have
- They can apply their skills/expertise in these fields and niches
- They can keep their skills and expertise up to date.

Planners have to take cognisance of the fields in which they will have a competitive edge in future and ensure they are skilled to take full advantage of them. These are mostly fields with a strong spatial/physical dimension and necessitate a broad understanding of the urban processes. Planners should get more involved in urban politics and empowerment in future. There are also new fields emerging that planners should investigate in order to acquire skills no one else has yet acquired.

#### **2.4.2.3 New fields South African planners could investigate**

The survival of planning is still not certain. According to Oranje (1997: 262), the only “*safeguard there will be for planners is to use their basic training as a base on which to build a repertoire of skills with which to fill niches in the existing fields better than players from other language games. Alternatively, or in conjunction with the strategy of filling existing niches better than others, planners could endeavour to fill/move into previously unexplored niches/fields or create, or assure the creation of, new niches/fields in which they and their co-players can play.*”

Oranje (1997: 263) is of the opinion that planners in South Africa could become involved in the popularisation, promotion of and lobbying for the idea of an African Union, or the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to ensure a brighter future for the region and the continent. This would mean the preparation of urbanisation and rural development strategies for the whole region. If and when such an opportunity arises, planners would have to move fast to secure a niche for themselves, because the competition would be strong (Oranje, 1997: 263).

Planners could learn much from other countries in terms of successful and unsuccessful planning systems, and interventions aimed at reconstruction and development. This international research could be used to develop context-specific policies and programmes, enable planners to make less mistakes and ensure better access for the poor to all the advantages a city can offer (Oranje, 1997: 263-264).

Planners have not yet become involved in the booming tourism sector. There are many opportunities at policy development level, at NGO-level and in the private development sector (Oranje, 1997: 264). The need to preserve historical and natural environments is also becoming a major development issue in which planners can play a role (SA Planners Homepage, 2001).

#### 2.4.2.4 Where to from here?

Starting with what should not change in planning, is, according to Oranje (1997: 266-267), the normative base of planning as a distinct modernist tradition – based on definite judgements of what should be, what is right, what is wrong. There can therefore be “*no talk about deserting the central tenets of the modernist paradigm, which are:*

- *Emancipation*
- *Justice*
- *Spiritual and material progress*
- *The application of reason/rationality*

*as the foundation and set pointers on which to build and base the game.”*

Oranje (1997: 268-269) does not disregard the post-modern reality and tendencies; it is not a question of either or, but a prevalence for both. In this equation, post-modernity presents the possibilities of reminding us how complex the world is, and keeps modernity on its toes. Post-modernism holds the key to the creation of a ‘critical modernism’. This position would present planners with a foundation by which to keep the better-future-for-all faith alive.

What must be changed in planning then? The demographic profile will and should most certainly change from a white male dominated planning profession to be more representative of the population in terms of race and gender, but most specifically race. In the light of the ongoing privatisation of state entities, it is even possible that parts of state departments could privatise. This will see more planners entering the private sector (Oranje, 1997: 270).

Given the existing fields planners have taken up and the new fields identified, planners need to adapt their existing roles for the new conditions and also take up new roles. Some of the roles that Oranje has identified would include:

- **Leaders:** Planners should follow a people-centred leadership approach that does not favour certain individuals/communities when taking the responsibility of leading the nation into the future.
- **Urban managers:** A holistic field of urban management should be created with various components such as land-use management, social development, economic development, environmental management, institutional and community structures, and so on. Competent people will be needed to manage these processes and implement strategies

and projects, and only planners can claim to have such a wide view of the city and the ability to relate and link components of the city to each other.

- **Facilitators:** Planning processes, as communicative processes require facilitators who possess listening, communication, mediation and conflict resolution skills. Planners should also be able to relate conflicts to the wider political-economic, gender, ecological and cultural contexts.
- **Social inventors:** Planners need to become social inventors – people who can invent new social forms, which may be physical, social, political, economical or legal.
- **Urban designers:** (sub-role of a social inventor) Each new design needs to be unique in shaping a settlement to serve the needs of the residents – physiological, social, economical, physical, etc. It should furthermore be sustainable, placing more demands on designers.
- **Entrepreneurs:** (sub-role of a social inventor) The ability of planners to come up with inventive ways of local, regional, national and subcontinental economic development for the benefit of all the communities.
- **Strategic thinkers:** Strategic thinkers are necessary to ensure productive processes. They should have the ability to synthesise, to know what is relevant and what not, what is necessary and what not, what is useful and what not, and to see a situation for what it is.
- **Visionaries:** Planners need to come to the fore with broad holistic visions of a better future as an interactive possibility to be criticised, reflect on and improved upon. This vision should grab the imagination of the public and make them believe in planning and planners.
- **Land-use experts, creative administrators and advocates:** With the implementation of the integrated development planning (IDP), there will be a need for planners who could, *inter alia*, design spatial frameworks and implement and administer land-use systems for the implementation of these goals. Planners could also act as advocates for communities in the local development objective (LDO) process with the government (Oranje, 1997: 275-279).

Other roles to be considered, which Oranje does not mention, are:

- Rural developers
- Urban economists
- Informal settlement designers
- Environmental managers
- Heritage conservationists
- Tourist planners
- Transportation planners
- IDP experts
- An integrated understanding of urban and regional areas.

It may happen that planners no longer share a collective identity due to the number of fields they are involved in, that they start feeling alienated from their co-planners. Planners should then reconsider if they still need institutions to represent them or not. If not, then planners need to:

- Become socialised into the profession
- Develop and retain an identification with planning and its goals
- Continually think about planning and the input planners bring to the field
- Grow
- Investigate the past and learn from it
- Keep planning alive
- Critically investigate aspects of planning
- Ponder the future of planning (Oranje, 1997: 284).

### 2.4.3 Summary and conclusion

Many authors have made a strong case for the “*end of planning as an organised profession*”, as the profession lacks any unique expertise to qualify as a separate profession, but also as they “*perceive to inhibit the development of effective policies to environmental problems and the ability to understand urban problems in their political and economical contexts*” (Oranje, 1997:4). Others have however, argued for the survival of planning as an organised profession through innovation and adaptation and a belief in planning. Planners’ broad training in spatial, social and economical aspects prepares them for taking on a wider role.

The survival of planning as a profession in South Africa has also been questioned – not only the survival, but the right of existence as well. What distinguishes planning from many other disciplines that would ensure a future in planning for students presently studying towards a planning degree? In fact, there is not much. Planners are competing with non-planners in the same fields, as one does not need to be a planner to be able to plan.

Planners do have a competitive advantage over other people in those fields with a strong spatial/physical dimension, necessitating broad understanding of the urban processes. Planners should therefore entrench themselves in integrative development planning, rural development, spatial framework development and development planning. Planners also need to learn to become entrepreneurs, social inventors, strategic thinkers, and visionaries if they want to rise above the rest.

Knowing where the future would take us could provide planners with a competitive edge. Planners are best positioned to understand the urban, social and economic processes, and should use this understanding to their advantage. Planners should be creative in developing visions for the future, making the connection between historical realities, present trends and political realities and viable outcomes. Planners at least understand that the process of urban development unfold over years, as concepts approved and decisions taken today only take shape in the future, but have an impact or effect for years thereafter. Why not take advantage of this knowledge and ensure that if some of these decisions do take shape in the future, that planners benefit from them in terms of leadership positions and job creation.

To further ensure the survival of planning, planners should be innovative and create links to emerging fields that have a sure future in the globalised world. These include information technology, telecommunications, bio-technology, environmental sciences and the medical sciences. Becoming indispensable to fields with a lifespan of at least a generation, should be an aim of planning to ensure its own right of existence.

In the end it is all about whether planners want planning to survive as a profession. Planners need to believe in planning again and find a passion about a planning system that wants to make the world a better one for all.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The world needs planning. Today there are more people living in cities than rural areas, thus the role of urban planning has never been more important. The world does not necessarily need planners. The dilemma is that planning has, in the short period of its existence, made many mistakes – both in developed and developing countries. In South Africa, apartheid planning gave planning a huge blow in terms of credibility and trust, and the post-apartheid years have not been advantageous to planners’ image either. This has led to planning’s existence as an organised profession being questioned.

However, trying to imagine a world without any planning, is impossible. Planning tries to ensure integrated development planning, local economic development, development control, environmental assessments, strategic planning, land restitution, and community participation. It aims for equitable, efficient and sustainable use of resources in the intervention, development and improvement of the environment. Planners are the advocates for the powerless and the disadvantaged communities, advisors to politicians, and facilitators, negotiators and mediators between various stakeholders.

Despite the limited impact of past interventions, planners still have a key role to play in tackling the enormous problems in the developing world. Planners therefore need to reclaim their role in the planning process. After all, who is better equipped to create and improve the physical, economic and social framework for human settlements in its multifaceted aspects? Planners are skilled voices-in-the-flow dealing with today's problems and tomorrow's challenges.

Planning institutions need to nurture a love and passion for planning and what it stands for, for it has a definite window of opportunity with the present reformist fervour at government level. Planners cannot let the opportunity slip away without imprinting the need for planning on the national mindset, by popularising the idea of planning as well as the benefits derived from it. We need to actively sell planning. *"We need to prove our and planning's value to society in order to reclaim and assure our future, but also to assist society in reclaiming and assuring its future"* (Oranje, 1997: 286, 293).



## CHAPTER 3: TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNING EDUCATION - THE HISTORY, DEBATES AND FRAMEWORK

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Planning education is being pulled in two directions. One is the demand for academic legitimacy in a professional degree programme, and the other is the demand from professional practice for well-prepared new employees. The two needs exert separate pressures on planning curricula (Ozawa & Seltzer: 1999: 257).

Teachers, students and practitioners have raised questions about the adequacy of planning education for many decades. Poxon (1999) questions whether the nature of the planner's task requires professional education, and asks how planning education should respond to these changing demands.

Chapter 2 tried to answer the first of Poxon's queries. It concluded that planning does have a future, and also that planning has a competitive advantage in fields with a strong spatial/physical dimension that necessitates a broad understanding of the urban processes. Chapter 3 of the literature review will try and answer the second question as to how planning education should respond to the changing demands of our world. It will also highlight present debates and try to find answers to several other matters at issue.

This chapter starts by recounting the histories of planning education in various countries, namely Britain, the U.S. and South Africa. It continues to explore the debates in planning education such as the extent of practical experience in planning education, the generalist versus specialist nature of planning, diversity in planning education, the value of internships, etc. If the opinions on the nature of the planning profession in the previous chapter were diverse and conflicting – they are nothing compared to the views on planning education by people such as Poxon, Sandercock, Healey, Niebanck, Oranje, Baum, Perloff, Muller, Hamza & Zetter, Ozawa & Seltzer, Harrison, Todes, Friedman, Smit, Mandelbaum, Africa, Thomas, and Healey. As Ward (quoted in Africa, 1993: 37) notes: *“there are enough prescriptions for the education of the planner to run nine professions in the same planetary scale.”*

The crux of planning education – the planning curriculum – also comes under the spotlight to help evaluate the relevance of the curricula in our own planning schools, measured in terms of the skills and core competencies as identified by the planning community. The discussion in this chapter is relevant for and related to the findings of the empirical research presented in the following two chapters.

Chapter 3 now commences with an account of the histories of town planning education.

### 3.1 Histories of town and regional planning education

#### 3.1.1 Forces that influenced the history of planning education in South Africa

The overview of the history of planning education offered in the first section is essentially British and American. The reasons for these histories being important for South African planning education are mentioned by Africa (1993: 5) and Oranje (1997, 182-183):

- The first planning school was established in Britain
- South Africa as a former British colony, inherited many British planning ideas and principles
- British subjects played an important role in establishing South African planning education

- Written material on other countries, especially less developed countries, has been less accessible.

Planning, like other professions, has been pushed into universities by outside leaders of the profession, and the practitioners themselves set the curriculum and provided much of the instruction. Only later have university scholars taken the reins and developed an educational programme for the profession with evolving, rather than the past and current, needs of the profession (Perloff, 1957: 5). Some may see the time to be ripe for practitioners to again dictate the curriculum, but this is an argument for later.

Such, then, is the context within which planning education developed. The overview of the history of planning education in this section tells the story of the profession's struggles to gain recognition as an academic discipline. It also relates the phases in planning theory and the increasing diversity in planning curricula.

### 3.1.2 An overview of planning education in the United Kingdom from 1909

The growth of formal planning activities resulted from rapid urbanisation, the spread of industry and the pressures on water, land and energy resources. Many important planning tasks could not be performed and others were handled by inadequately trained people. Persons with knowledge and skills in city and regional planning were very much in demand in both the public and private planning arena, as there were serious shortages in trained personnel (Perloff, 1957: vi).

The first ever planning school in the world, established in 1909, was housed at Liverpool University in Britain. The planning school fell under the department of Civic Design and it offered a one-year, full-time, post-graduate certificate and diploma course in Civic Design. The course targeted architects, engineers, lawyers and surveyors who wanted a second professional qualification. The first head of the department, professor Stanley Adshead, regarded planning as a profession in its own right, but in academic circles it was still seen as supplementary to the education of an architect or engineer. The curricula included the following subjects: town planning, landscape design, civic development, civic engineering, civil law, civic architecture and civic decoration. Much emphasis was placed on studio work (Muller, 1993:1; Africa, 1993: 6-7; Poxon, 1999:3; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 40, 41).

The Town Planning Institute (TPI) was formally founded in 1914 and the need to promote the formal education of town planning students was chartered. It was thus clear from the early days of the Institute's existence that "*education lay at the heart of planning*" (Poxon, 1999: 4). The first entry examination into the Town Planning Institute was written in 1920 by those who already held qualifications as architects, engineers and surveyors. In 1930 a few universities started to present courses that exempted student from taking the TPI exam. In 1940 (1944 according to Rodriguez-Bachiller), the first university presented a five-year course that did not require students to have a previous qualification.

The demand for qualified town planners increased in the 1940s after World War II, but the TPI still restricted its membership to those who had come from the traditional architectural and engineering disciplines. The need for qualified town planners was therefore not entirely met (Poxon, 1999: 3; Africa, 1993: 7,10; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 39).

The world economy grew tremendously in the 1960s and 70s and the welfare state in the U.K. was at the centre of this boom. The demand for planners further increased with the expansion of planning as a state activity, but still the TPI resisted the recognition of many new planning schools. During this time the Schuster Committee reported the need for planning education to change in order to reflect the changing nature of the planning practice. A planner's work in practice was seen to be increasingly social and economic, whereas the TPI's syllabus for

planning schools throughout the 60s and 70s remained focused on physical design, plan-making and implementation (Poxon, 1999: 4, Africa, 1993: 10-11; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 43).

The 1960s and 70s saw a lot of criticism against planning theory and several alternative portrayals of the planner's role. Planners were viewed as working apart from the political fray occurring within the community for whom they were in essence working (Ozawa & Seltzer, 1999: 258). According to Batty (in Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 39), planning education in Britain thus started to diverge from practice in search for a better understanding of reality and how planning as a political and technical activity might be pursued more effectively.

In the mid-1970s the now Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) allowed social sciences – not without a struggle – to be included into the syllabus. It also became involved in prescribing the course material (the input) more than the production of plans (the output) (Africa, 1993: 20). The Institute spelled out what they considered to be the core of planning education, which consists of planning methodology, the physical environment and the administrative context, giving schools freedom to add other specialised topics to the curriculum. Healey (in Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 46) considered this change in curriculum a shift from hard to soft technology, a shift from training experts in techniques, to training experts in politics.

In Britain during the 1960s the demand by students for places at planning schools outnumbered the ones available on courses. At the same time there was a serious shortage of staff qualified in planning. They had to deal with whether to expand the size of existing schools or to create new ones. The number of planning schools increased steadily, with the first undergraduate planning course presented by Kings College. By the mid 1970s the increase in planning schools had peaked with 18 full-time post-graduate courses in Britain, producing more than 300 graduates per year (Africa, 1993: 14,17; APS, 1969: 10-13).

After peaking in the mid 1970s, planning schools started to widen their entry requirements to allow geography, economics and sociology graduates to enter the planning profession. At the same time planning experienced cutbacks on planning education funding, rationalisation in the number of planning schools and direct ideological attacks from all levels. In addition, poor flexibility of the academic system, a closed job market for graduates and no influential allies represented the reasons for a crisis in planning education. The number of planning students started to drop steadily, forcing planning schools to investigate other markets such as Third World Planning, to compensate for the shrinkage in jobs (Africa, 1993: 20; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 41).

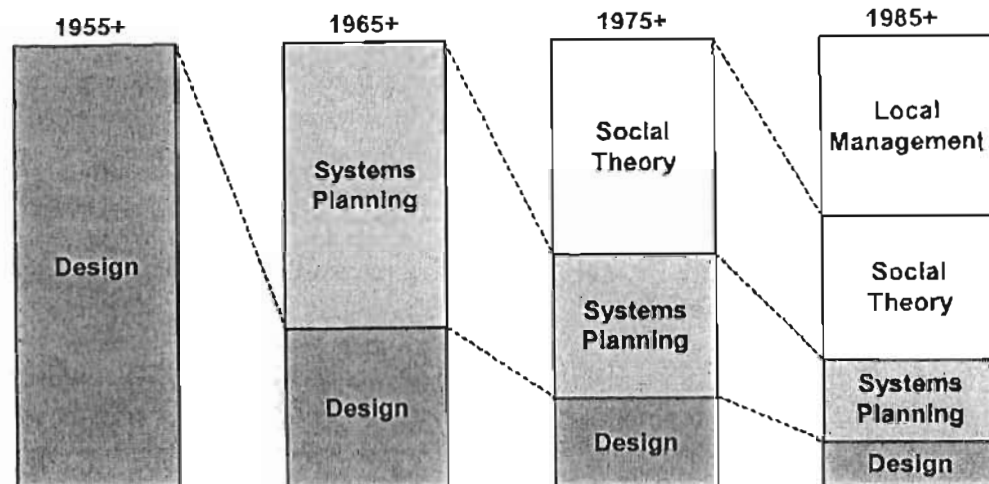
In the 1980s the RTPI again gave planning schools more scope to specialise in areas where they had expertise, so the schools had more flexibility in packaging their courses. Schools found an interest in management-related courses and started to look for new markets. All this resulted in Healey's view: "*the content of some courses began to look a little tired, lacking the logic and clarity which should have given impetus and meaning to a course of study*" (in Africa, 1993: 20), or a "*Babel of languages*" as Dear calls it (in Africa, 1993:22). Batty (in Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 42) called the curriculum superfluous and difficult to absorb due to contradicting and competing approaches. Batty termed it 'the layer cake problem'.

The period of mid-1970s to late 1980s was a trying period for planning for the following reasons:

- The worldwide economic recession in the 1980s hit planning as a public sector activity in the U.K. specifically hard
- A hostile anti-planning environment during the Thatcher era when planners were held responsible for a variety of economic problems
- A renewed faith in market-based rationality
- The ever broadening spectrum of planners' roles

- Post-modern eclecticism in planning theory and the wide range of perspectives on the nature and purpose of planning (Africa, 1993: 23; Hayton, 1998: 3).

Figure 3.1 - The layer cake problem as identified by Batty



(in Africa, 1993: 21, Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 42).

The trends in planning education in the 1990s were a continuation and an intensification of the trends already found in the 1980s. There were many calls in the 1990s for planning education to produce high quality planners and for planning to find its 'core'. The educational guidelines by the RTPI were revised once again in the 1990s, indicating an increased concern with the 'qualities of an effective planning school'. The style of the planning education syllabus moved away from a highly technical style to one that is of such a nature as to provide 'flexible specialisation', equipping students with the skills to conduct a range of tasks and some specialised knowledge. The 1991 Education Policy Statement of the RTPI argued that planning education should cover the following 'knowledge':

- The nature, purpose and methods of planning
- Traditions of thought in philosophy, science and social science
- The roles of planners
- The political and institutional context of planning practice
- The planning system context (including legal)
- Specialised areas in the planning field (Poxon, 1999: 4, Africa, 1993: 10-11, 17-21, 24).

The 1990s also saw a reinvigoration of the practice-in-planning debate, still drawing upon social science theory, but also seeking to explicitly integrate planning practice as well. A distinctive and persistent difference amongst leading theoreticians have developed to such an extent that the rational model now has a viable rival, namely communicative planning. Communicative planning acknowledges the social and political nature of planning work, thereby acknowledging that knowledge is socially constructed rather than identified, collected, and analysed by the planner in relative isolation from the general public and decision-makers. The planner is becoming an active participant in a process of social change and public discourse. However, other degree courses also started to change their curricula to include courses that planning saw as unique to its own curriculum, such as teamwork and communication (Ozawa & Seltzer, 1999: 259; Hayton, 1998: 3).

Presently, with the growth in the number of planning schools and a decline in the number of students applying for planning degrees, there is a call for planning schools in the U.K. to combine resources and merge planning schools. This would concentrate the best planning

lecturers, provide less competition for core funding and enable a wider range of courses to be presented (Price and Kinghorn, 1999: 14).

South African planning education was specifically influenced by British planning trends, and to a lesser extent by the trends in American planning education. However, the path of planning education in the U.S. was rather similar to the one in the U.K.

### 3.1.3 An overview of planning education in the United States of America from 1930

Planning education in the United States, as in Britain, developed in a piecemeal way, as an extension of architecture and engineering. The first American university to offer a specialised course in urban planning, was Harvard. The planning school formed part of the Graduate School of Design, and offered a post-graduate qualification. Soon after, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia and Cornell universities developed their own programmes. The University of Chicago followed by establishing a planning school specialising in urban and economic planning. Other universities specialised in social thinking or taught more technical skills (Africa, 1993: 7-9; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 76).

In 1957 Perloff published 'Education for Planning', a very influential book, often still referred to. His arguments kept the 'generalist-with-a-speciality' debate going through the decades. He proposed a core curriculum centred on basic planning methods for the first year of post-graduate studies, and specialisation in the second year. Many planning schools implemented Perloff's ideas (Africa, 1993: 11-12; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 77).

Key thinkers and practitioners of town planning strove towards independence from the architecture, land surveying and engineering disciplines, and argued for separate planning schools. They also contended that planning should have a broad base, be anchored in the methods and materials of physical design, and draw from several arts and sciences. By then the demand for planners was outstripping the number of graduates produced so that graduates from social sciences were allowed to take a master's course in planning (Africa, 1993: 7-8; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 77).

As the demand for planners grew in the 1950s and 60s, the number of planning schools increased at a rate of approximately three per year to 65 in the mid-1970s. In 1970 the cumulative number of graduates reached almost a million; the proportion of post-graduate students increased from 200 per annum in 1960 to 1 500 in 1975. Teaching planning became cheaper, and therefore more attractive, as less emphasis was placed on studio work – the expensive element of education. In 1975 the boom in planning education ended and the number of graduates started to drop (Africa, 1993: 14; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 77-78).

More and more schools were established outside the design faculties. Although still dominated by the physical design component, this resulted in the social sciences gaining more status in the planning curricula. The impact of social sciences was to form an independent intellectual basis for the discipline and planners became more sensitive towards the complexities of societies. Two broad camps of planners could be distinguished – the group grappling with the impact of social sciences and the political legitimacy of planning, and those who emphasised comprehensive and systems planning (Africa, 1993: 12-16).

In 1972, six planning schools presented undergraduate courses in planning, whereas post-graduate studies had occupied the primary space up to then. Many saw the expansion of planning at an undergraduate level as advantageous to planning, as a two-year post-graduate course seemed insufficient to prepare a competent planner. Moreover, before learning anything, students had to unlearn many approaches and perspectives formed during their undergraduate

training. Undergraduate education was supplying a job market for planners at a lower level and lower salary scales (Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 79).

The number of planning students started to decline in the mid 1970s, in contrast with other disciplines. Subjects such as history, sociology, political science and geography shared the fate of planning. There was pressure on planning education to be more entrepreneurial in style, more experimental, more competitive, more product orientated, technically stronger and less scientific (Africa, 1993: 19-21; Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988: 78).

In the mid-1980s an academic, Paul Niebanck (in Africa, 1993: 22) visited twelve planning schools in America. He encountered a wide spectrum of courses being offered in these schools, such as criminology, federalism, natural resources, professional communications, community health administration, conflict resolution, policy analysis, labour force planning, minority communities, and much more. The reason for this 'Babel of languages' was the changing demands on planning practice and the variety of roles planners had to assume. According to Thomas and Healey (in Africa, 1993: 22), a number of dominant roles could be identified by the end of the 1980s. These included: an urban development manager, a public bureaucrat, a policy analyst, an intermediary and a social reformer. Planning education therefore had to expose students to a magnitude of planning theories and at the same time prepare them for a multitude of diverse planning roles (Africa, 1993: 22).

### **3.1.4 An overview of planning education in South Africa**

For an impression of the authors who contributed to the account of the history of urban planning education in South Africa, see 2.1.6. The contributions of Muller (1993), Smit (1989), Africa (1993) and Oranje (1997) are referred to.

#### **3.1.4.1 The origins of urban planning education**

From 1830 to 1931 no town planning education as a separate discipline was available in South Africa. The disciplinary origins of planning in South Africa were similar to the international origins of planning education, namely architecture, engineering and land surveying. No further educational requirements were placed on planners at first, but they had to deliver on the technical requirements of the task. Onwards from 1913, town planning was taught as a course component of the surveying degree at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and by 1927, town planning was presented as a course in the Architecture Department at both the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and UCT. As from 1932 (according to Oranje, but 1927 according to Muller), the British Town Planning Diploma, being a correspondence course with an overseas educational institution and (R)TPI examination, became increasingly pre-requisite for engineers, architects and land surveyors to qualify as planners. Despite undecidedness, still, about who should perform town planning, the belief grew amongst the architects, land surveyors and engineers that additional training in town planning was indeed necessary (Oranje, 1997: 102-103; Muller, 1993: 2, 4; Africa, 1993: 42-45; Drake, 2001).

The British post-graduate Diploma in Town Planning proved unsatisfactory – resulting in the institution of the first South African adapted course in town planning, recognised by the RTPI. It was a post-graduate diploma course in the Faculty of Architecture at Wits from 1946, in which Geoffrey Pearse and Wilfred Mallows had a huge stake. The course was open to architects, civil engineers and land surveyors. By 1948, 46 students were studying towards this diploma (Muller, 1993: 4,6; Drake, 2001).

Professor Wilfred Mallows, according to Oranje (1997: 115-116) and Drake (2001), was highly instrumental in establishing town planning as a separate academic discipline. In 1939, when

Mallows arrived from the U.K., he established a practice together with an architect. He had obtained a post-war education in town planning in Britain. In 1947 he started lecturing to town planning and architecture students at Wits, following the RTPI course outline. He also lectured at the universities of Natal and Pretoria from 1952, and became the first professor in town planning in South Africa, in 1965. His approach in town planning was Geddesian, as he saw towns and regions as holistic, biological organisms – one has to understand the full working before starting to make plans. He argued strongly for planning education to train critical minds and not outdated techniques and practical skills.

The second diploma course in South Africa was instituted at the University of Natal (UND) in 1957, modelled on the course presented by Wits, and a master's degree and diploma course were introduced at the University of Pretoria (UP) in 1959. The first head of the UND planning school, Professor D.L.J. Robins, was also 'imported' from Britain in the 1970s. Planning education was therefore largely influenced by imported ideas and assumptions of individuals. The Institute for Planning at the University of Potchefstroom was established in 1965. Wits was the first to offer a full-time bachelor's degree in town planning, in 1962 (Oranje, 1997: 102-103; SAITRP, 1972: 1; Muller, 1993: 2; Africa, 1993: 42-45; Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 4).

During the 1970s and the 1980s, the planning profession experienced rapid growth in the number of planners. More post-graduate courses were instituted at the universities of Stellenbosch, Bloemfontein and Cape Town, and Pretoria was the first to offer a master's degree in town planning. ML Sultan Technikon and the Technikon of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town also set up planning courses, as more and more qualified planners were demanded to do town and regional planning work. Wits upgraded its diploma course to an undergraduate degree course and established a post-graduate course in urban design in 1976, strengthening this aspect of planning. The University of Pretoria added an undergraduate bachelor's degree to its existing post-graduate master's and diploma courses, and the University of Natal upgraded its diploma course to a post-graduate master's degree course in 1976 (Oranje, 1997: 102-103; 134, 138-141, Africa 1993: 46-47, 53).

Two events – the institution of the first town planning course at Wits and the founding of the Town Planning Institute in the 1950s essentially led to the establishment of town planning as a professional discipline in its own right in South Africa (Oranje, 1997: 93; Muller, 1993: 5; Drake 2001).

#### **3.1.4.2 The development of planning education through the apartheid years**

The National Department of Planning particularly influenced planning education and strengthened the link between regional planning and apartheid planning. Apartheid engineering furthered the awareness and the need for planners in the country due to the growth in the economy and major investment in the built environment. This resulted in the establishment of a number of planning courses at various universities.

Planning schools started to admit students from a range of undergraduate disciplines during the late 1960s. Curricula began to reflect a broad range of subjects such as suggested by Colin Buchanan from the RTPI, which included field trips or site inspections with all projects, spatial economics, mathematical modelling related to traffic engineering and land-use, and an emphasis on national and regional planning. This caused the criticism that planning education did not provide sufficient intensive academic training to graduates and that it was so diverse as to be superficial.

The overall view in the 1960s was that planning lacked quality and quantity, with few planners in the profession who were not divided in their professional loyalty. Socio-politically, planning in South Africa was rather indifferent whereas planning in Britain and the USA developed a

greater political awareness – largely due to the acceptance and influence of the social sciences. Planning education did not produce ‘thinkers’, and it certainly did not make a contribution to improving the lives of the majority of people in South Africa (Africa, 1993: 48-52, 70; Drake, 2001).

### 3.1.4.3 Planning education as part of the political struggle

In the 1970s and 1980s, South Africa was faced with a severe economic crisis and political reform. This resulted in politicisation, fragmentation and ambiguity of the planning profession. There was much internal pressure on the planning profession to clarify its political position and role in South Africa. Planners were in three groups: the government allies with a technicist view of planning, the liberal planners questioning the status quo and forming a small, progressive group of advocacy planners, and the critics like Dewar, who criticised the profession’s involvement in apartheid planning but did not necessarily get involved in advocacy planning.

Planning theory and practice became fragmented, and the prevailing conservative and neutral scholarship in the planning fraternity was challenged by the likes of Smit and McCarthy. Wits became the first planning school to recognise planning as a social discipline, and Wits, UCT and the University of Natal became involved in the political struggle of the country. Their political views certainly impacted on planning education. For the first time, black students were admitted to planning schools, and Lulu Gwagwa became the first black planning graduate in South Africa. In Britain and the USA, the number of planning schools and planning students declined, whereas most planning schools in South Africa entrenched their position in the late 1980s (Africa, 1993: 52-55, 59; Todes, 2002b).

Serious questions were being asked in the 1980s and early 1990s as to the relationship between planning theory/education and planning practice. Progressive planners questioned the relevance of planning education in South Africa, as planners found themselves in changing roles due to the economic crisis and political reforms. Wits, for example, introduced an African and Third World component into its curriculum and acknowledged the socio-political dimensions of planning, and UCT introduced a ‘humanist’ leg to planning. There was also much pressure on universities to produce more black planners (Africa, 1993: 59, 62, 66).

### 3.1.4.4 Urban planning education in the 1990s

According to Harrison and Todes (2001b: 2), the socio-political changes in South Africa have been both refreshing and disorienting. The implications of all these changes for planning education and for academics are not yet apparent. Many debates on planning education that were started in the 1990s are still continuing today. Some of these include the following:

- **Undergraduate versus post-graduate education:** Many schools in the 1980s had to choose between a four-year undergraduate versus a two-year post-graduate programme due to the limits on resources. An issue was whether planning was a basic discipline in itself or has to build upon another basic discipline.
- **The role of planning:** Should planning play a physical or a policy-making and advisory role? It was debated that the latter would find planners more in decision-making roles and as controllers of information.
- **The role of the planner:** Should planners act on behalf of one particular interest group or should they act as mediators and facilitators between various interest groups?
- **The changing nature of planning:** Third World problems were more and more becoming a concern for the rest of the world (Africa, 1993: 24).

These debates led to increasing conflict and fragmentation in planning education in the 1990s.



There was a sense of expectation and a belief that the demand for planning education would increase as the Reconstruction and Development Programme was introduced by the government. There were plans for mass education to train and equip planners for the demands of the reconstruction programme and to integrate environmental management with planning. By the late 1990s it became clear that these expectations were not going to be realised. The number of planning students decreased and planning educators have since been struggling to respond to the educational needs of students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. Academics were disoriented and had difficulty understanding the nature and the causes of the trends affecting planning education. No leadership or direction was coming forth from the weakened planning profession either (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 2; Africa, 1993; Harrison, 2001b).

Disciplinary boundaries are shifting as new fields of training are developing outside of planning – although now presented by some planning schools – and other disciplines such as public management and development are training individuals for planning related positions. These include environmental planning, economic development, public management and housing. Supported by international funding, active lobby groups and legislation requiring environmental impact assessments, the environmental cause has become institutionalised in government. Unfortunately, this environmental movement is growing parallel to planning, and planning has not been able to capture the growing market for environmental studies (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 3, 8).

In recent years, most planning schools have adapted their curricula to the changing context of political decentralisation, democratisation and the drive for service delivery to poorer groups of society. New courses dealing with urban and environmental management, impact assessment, integrated development plans, participation and local economic development have been introduced (Diaw *et al*, 2001: 12).

The growth of the 'new economy' disciplines such as information technology and business management presents even more competition to planning. This is due to the growing impact of computerisation and new technology and expected growth and changes in the finance industry. Compared to these professions, town planning is seen by the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) as a low-growth profession, expected to increase by less than 5% over the period 1998-2003, with similar expectations for related occupations (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 8).

### **3.1.4.5 Understanding the trends within the context**

The changing demands on planning education should be understood in the context of the shift in tertiary education in South Africa: the decline in the number of enrolments in tertiary education, low throughput rates, a shift towards commerce and a decline in the number of white students. There is a significant drop in the number of matriculants with exemption rates, as well as the number of matriculants offering higher-grade mathematics – which is an entry requirement to study planning. Instead, there has been a growth in the short, employment-orientated technical qualifications such as IT. Post-graduate planning courses also draw on students with a humanities background, and the number of students enrolling in humanities has declined over recent years, while in commerce the numbers have increased (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 9-10).

In 1994, according to Badenhorst (in Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 2, 10), there were only three universities with significant numbers of black planning students, whereas some universities had none. Blacks now comprise 59% of all students in higher education, whereas a decline in the absolute number of white students has become manifest. This implies that whites have either moved to private education or overseas, which is a general trend in tertiary education, but certainly has an impact on planning education. The largest movement of students has been to

distance education and technikons, with a sharp decline in student numbers at historically white universities.

These trends are generally reflected in the South African tertiary educational sector and are not exclusive to planning schools. However the established planning schools have been affected by the decline in traditional forms of planning. They have not benefited to the same extent from the growth in other areas such as public and environmental management. Planning programmes are therefore competing for the relatively small pool of existing and potential students against each other, but also against new and emerging disciplines (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 23-24).

### 3.1.5 Summary and conclusion

*“While the primary formative influences on most planning programmes in Africa can be traced to either inherited colonial systems of planning and land management, or to the influence of ‘first world’ donor organisations, the context within which planning graduates in Africa have to operate is significantly different from that in the resource-rich countries” (Diaw, Nnkya & Watson, 2000: 1).*

This is also true for South African planning programmes. South African planning education was specifically influenced by British and American trends in planning and planning education, without really being customised for the South African context. Most planning schools have only in the last decade started to include in their curricula any context-specific material pertaining to the Third World, environmental planning, economic development, public management and housing.

The aspect of planning education that showed up a difference between South Africa and the rest of the developed world, is the socio-political indifference of local planning education. Planning in Britain and the USA developed a much greater political awareness – largely due to the earlier acceptance and influence of the social sciences. In South Africa, planning education did not produce ‘thinkers’, and it did not make a contribution to improve the lives of the majority of people.

Planning education in South Africa slowly but surely expanded to more and more tertiary institutions over the years, as the demand for planners grew – especially during the apartheid years. Student numbers in South African planning schools peaked much later than in the developed world, and are now on the decline. Schools should actually have anticipated this decline due to international trends, and proactively countered the problem. The following chapter discusses how planning schools are dealing with the decline in student numbers and the accompanying decline in the quality of students. However, this should also be seen in the light of the changing pattern in tertiary education throughout the country: the decline in the number of enrolments in tertiary education, low throughput rates, a shift towards commerce, a decline in the number of white students, a significant drop in the number of matriculants with exemption rates and satisfactory entry requirement to study planning, and a growth in the short, employment-orientated technical qualifications, distance education and technical education.

Planning programmes in South Africa are therefore competing for the relatively small pool of existing and potential students against each other, but also against new and emerging disciplines of study.

The socio-political changes in South Africa after the 1994 elections have been both stimulating and bewildering, leading to increasing differences and fragmentation in planning education. There was a sense of anticipation and a confidence that the demand for planning education would increase, triggered by the introduction of the government’s Reconstruction and Development Programme. However, planning educators were at a loss and had difficulty to

understand the nature and the causes of the trends affecting planning education. Moreover, little leadership or directives were forthcoming from the weakened planning profession.

## 3.2 Debates in urban planning education

Planning education has sparked diverse debates among academics and practitioners in the planning community. Some of the debates will be discussed in this section. They include: the need for more practical experience during course work, the generalist-specialist argument, the need for more diversity in planning curricula and the need for continued professional development in the planning profession.

### 3.2.1 The debate on the role of practical experience in planning education

*“When you hear something, you forget it. When you see something, you remember it. When you do something, you understand it”* – Chinese proverb (Spellbound, 2001b).

#### 3.2.1.1 The need for practical experience

*“Teaching a discipline is not the same as teaching a profession.”* Planning, being both a discipline and a profession, creates a problem for educators. If planning is taught as a discipline, then students learn about land-uses, cities, regions, cultures, people and so on, without necessarily connecting to improving land-use allocation, cities, regions or the lives of people. Planning education should not only be about teaching concepts, but also about linking these concepts to practice (Minnery, date unknown: 17).

Baum (1997a: 21, 23), from within an American context, argues that the only way students learn to link concepts to practice is by practising planning; however, university planning curricula provides mostly for classroom activity. A higher status is consequently given to academic courses as more credits go to academic courses than practical ones, endorsing the superiority of academic work over practice. Students therefore perceive planning as being research and little is done to integrate academics and practice. According to McClendon (1993: 146), many planning theories do not reflect reality and moreover impede practice and the development of new theories. In many countries, academics and practice coexist as separate cultures making very little contact.

The question arises why students should have practical experience. Baum replies that many American students (and probably others as well) are unprepared for planning practice in that they experience difficulty making or effecting decisions under political conditions. Although research teaches students objectivity, to think abstractly, and to observe generally, planners have to practise in a world where conflict, defeat, victory and anxiety, shame and guilt are common. In practice, stakeholders with conflicting interests often try to influence planners in what they know and say. Competence requires the recognition of challenges, reflecting on them, responding to unexpected events, devising solutions, observing and evaluating the results, revising one’s actions and defending their substantive knowledge of a particular issue. These competencies, skills and capacities should be taught at university in courses that reflect a combination of theory and practice (Baum, 1997a: 22, 25; 1997b: 182; McClendon, 1993: 146; Throgmorton, 2000: 376).

Baum (1997a: 22; 1997b: 183) bases his arguments on evidence found in the large number of planning graduates who were frustrated by the complex bureaucratic and political environments that entirely differed from the rational planning practice they had expected. The difficulties they

experienced could in part be attributed to 'reality shock', but university programmes are also to blame.

The problem with existing practical courses is that planning schools list research projects, dissertations, theses, and reports to help students synthesise and apply knowledge in practice – that way labelling research as planning practice, conducted more or less free of political and organisational encumbrances (Baum, 1997a: 23). 'Live projects' should be introduced to provide students with better experience in understanding planning as a process and to serve as a vehicle for integrating course subjects and components. Then again, if practical planning projects are introduced into the course, many people in the worldwide planning community judge these projects to lack feedback because of the absence of a real-life community (SAITRP, 1972; Faludi, 1978; Niebanck, 1998; Mann, 1970; Kunzman, 1985; Willis, 1970; Healey, 1991; Africa, 1993).

The American faculty should therefore be explicit in how to educate students for various ways of planning practice and should develop training courses to give students sophistication in research, interaction and intervention, according to Baum (1997b: 182, 184).

There is truth in these arguments. Poxon conducted research at the University of Sheffield in Britain on the role of planning education in shaping the future role of planning. In terms of *teaching and learning* she found that:

- Graduates mostly recalled and reflected positively from the projects they were actively involved in – more so than being the passive recipients of dry material. Workshops and projects where they were required to apply their knowledge and were challenged to think critically about a case, were important to their education.
- It was considered important not to lose the value of theoretical reflections on practice. Many felt that the theoretical implications were only understood once they were in planning practice.
- Case studies and project work perceived to be of value to the practitioner were appreciated, as it diminished the gap between planning education and practice.
- Graduates rated their time spent as students in practice as an invaluable part of their educational experience.
- Both the practitioners and graduates stressed the value of full-time courses for providing more time for reading, reflection and the development of ideas (Poxon, 2000: 13-14).

In terms of *education and training* Poxon found that:

- On first completing their course, graduates were concerned that they did not know enough practical details of planning practice.
- After a year or so in the planning industry, they realised they had benefited from a broader educational experience. They stressed the value of education followed by training.
- Practitioners agreed that they wanted to employ well-rounded, able individuals, who had the ability to learn quickly, take ideas on board and operate effectively in many different roles within the messy world of planning practice.
- Graduates had much higher expectations of the training and staff development they would obtain in practice than what had come to fruition in reality.
- Practitioners did not want to send their staff on courses as this would reduce the time they could spend on client projects and bring in money. Some were even adamant that employees should be responsible for their own personal and professional development and that they should not expect to spend office time in continuing professional development (Poxon, 2000: 14-15).

### 3.2.1.2 The role of academics in teaching practice

There are conflicting opinions as to the effectiveness of the role academics play in teaching practice. In the U.S. the divide between academics and practitioners is quite significant (probably much more so than elsewhere). Some, like Baum (1997b: 182; 1997a: 23, 26), therefore question American academics' ability to teach different kinds of planning practice, since they chose the academic life as an alternative to the activity of planning practice. Academics find security, comfort and autonomy that is unavailable in the messier world of planning practice. They are also often unprepared by their doctoral training to teach practice. Baum speculates whether researchers can indeed teach students to practise any planning that is not research. *"By their actions and language they offer themselves, researchers, as models for students who are studying to become planners"* (Baum, 1997a: 23).

The cultural norms and incentives at American universities affect professional programmes. Academics are evaluated and paid according to the number of refereed publications and research grants they have produced. Academics would be smart to spend their time on research that would lead to refereed publications, thereby enhancing the status of the department within the university as well. These criteria work against professional programmes, where teachers devote time with their students engaging in practice and research (Baum, 1997a: 26).

The reason for Baum's fierce criticism is that he sees most academic researchers as observers – when they study natural events, they do not intentionally participate in what they observe and they have no stake in the outcome of what they observe. They try to abstract formal theories from messy, seemingly idiosyncratic situations. Practitioners on the other hand have no choice but to participate in projects and they have immediate interest in the outcome. They want their projects to be successful, to reflect well on their integrity and competence and to benefit their clients. Whether the results are theoretically significant, is secondary. Accordingly they ask different questions from researchers and they need quick answers (1997a: 24).

Sarason (in Baum, 1997a: 27) supports Baum's argument: *"We are models for our students. If we close off avenues of experience to ourselves, we also do so for our students. If we do not take risks, neither will our students. If we fear being contaminated by society, if we feel afraid of testing our ideas about society by intervening in it, and if we are always the detached observer of society and rarely if ever a participant in it, we can only give our students ideas about society, not our experiences in it. We can tell our students how society ought to be but not what it is like to try to change the way things are."*

Ozawa and Seltzer (1999: 265), also of the United States, suggest that academics should rather spend more time to interject the experience of graduates with practice into the ongoing debate within the university than attempting to distinguish planning as a discipline from all the others. At the same time, planning practice should be able to look to the university to maintain its connections to the past, so that *"mistakes are not repeated, to provide a broader view and understanding of the dynamics of planning within changing institutional and physical contexts, and as a source of innovation."* They believe that planning will survive or be eliminated because of its ability or inability to contribute to the overall learning occurring in our communities today, and not because of its ability to see planning separate from what others do.

A different, but related argument by Myers & Kitsuse (2000: 222) is that American academics fail to bring greater knowledge and intelligence to the creation of an urban planning future. Older generations of planners established a tradition of inquiry about the future, but younger generations of planning scholars have not made the future a major subject in their work. This is unfortunate, as academics have the potential to *"... offer practitioners the solid background that might inform richer, better developed statements about the future."*

It seems that neither academics, nor practitioners are equipped to address the future effectively. Myers & Kitsuse (2000: 223) argue that neither the grandiose plans of the past, nor the present, more practical planning visions are very strong on the future. None of these plans are founded in an understanding of the dynamic processes that shape the future. Academics have surrendered the future to practitioners, busying themselves with social science data that render the future an unattractive subject, instead of providing the necessary intellectual reinforcement.

Contrary to these fiery opinions, Mandelbaum (1993: 140) of the University of Pennsylvania argues that academics are often involved in practice to such an extent that the highly constrained queries and the self-protective rhetoric of funding agencies and clients structure many of their reports and services. He also argues that their classes and studios are often pale imitations of flawed agency practice. He maintains that planning practice also has a more important role to play after graduation in forming and sustaining graduates. "*The future of the profession of planning will not be won or lost on the playing fields of the Academy.*"

### 3.2.1.3 The relationship between the academy and planning practice

According to Eccles, Hamnett, Huxley & McLoughlin (1990: 39) in the Australian Planner, the obvious corollary is that each partner in the relationship between academy and the world of practice must realise what is, and what is not of consuming and enduring interest to the other. Debates over high theory, epistemology and methodology are usually almost irrelevant to practitioners. Researchers and teachers on the other hand, seldom find examples of the latest crisis of hiring and firing, a ministerial fad or quibble over the use of a technical procedure, can readily be assimilated into their development research or teaching programmes. The middle ground occupied by the specification of practically-useful detail from the wider generality of research results, and the induction of broader theoretical insights from sharper empirical instances, is that which should be cultivated and nourished.

Price and Kinghorn (1999: 14) maintain that a programme should require lecturers to spend every fifth year in practice as part of their continual professional development. Local authorities and planning consultancies should on the other hand be encouraged to spend their time in class to provide an element of realism in the education of students.

A great deal of mutual understanding also comes from totally unstructured, random, informal social and other contacts between practice and academia. The relationship should pay off when practitioners commission academics to do research for them, and when practitioners themselves are doing research as a normal part of their daily activities. Planning education and planning practice therefore need to form a partnership in educating students, and practice should also support universities while making changes (Eccles, *et al*, 1990: 39; Baum, 1997b: 186).

Mandelbaum (1993: 140-141) sees the role planning practice plays as even more important than Baum and others suspect. Although planning schools play an important role in the selection, preparation and certification of new recruits to the profession, the imprint of planning schools does not have a lasting impression, as it fades when graduates leave planning school and they are overwhelmed by powerful processes of socialisation in the 'world of work'. It is in the corridors and meeting rooms of agencies, firms and government institutions that people learn how to plan and how to be a successful planner. Planning education is diverse, often conflicting and unequal in importance, and is subordinate to the ways in which individual planning institutions sustain and develop graduates. Established practices will not be readily transformed by new recruits or by criticism from the academy.

The questions then that should be asked, are: what sort of teachers are senior practitioners for the novices they employ, or the clients, officials and citizens with whom they interact? Can practice transform itself into a seminar, exploring alternative frames, relaxing and converting

constraints, and articulate and assess alternative strategies? Does the agency accommodate and cultivate individual differences while allowing for its members to mature? Is it a liberating or a stunting tutor? Is the agency an educator in its community by continuously sustaining the relationship? (Mandelbaum, 1993: 141).

Grant also dismisses arguments by Baum and Eccles *et al*, by arguing that practitioners worldwide misunderstand the function of universities and the character of their own profession if they assume that graduates should be equipped with all the skills and competencies to be able to walk into the day-to-day-practice. It is the duty of universities to educate students and not to produce fully trained practitioners – thereby providing free training to the profession. “*It is the primary duty to enhance the intellectual and reflective capacity of our students, and to develop their analytical and critical skills and to develop their capacity for further development*” (quoted in Poxon, 1999: 6).

Kitchen also supports the argument that “*...this does not mean we are in sausage machine territory. It is not the job of the planning schools simply to turn a handle and produce graduates that the local government planning machine then proceeds to consume*” (Poxon, 1999: 6).

However, planning schools in Britain have taken heed of the criticism and have practitioner boards advising them on the relevance of their teachings to planning life. The gap between theory and practice is narrowing as many schools are undertaking research to investigate the training and educational needs of employers and how higher education should respond. Planning practitioners agree that the more exposure students can get of the real world before entering the profession, the better (Johnston, 1998: 11).

Another initiative is government departments in the U.K. setting up a mentoring programme by which students are linked to mentors ranging from planning directors to graduates in their first job. The purpose is to advise and support students on a range of employment-related issues (Hayton, 1998: 3; Harfield, 2000: 12). It seems that planning practice and planning schools are doing their bit in the U.K. to improve the relationship between the two.

### 3.2.1.4 Forms of practical experience

The National Training Laboratories in the United States determined the average retention rate of information for various forms of instruction (Spellbound, 2001b). They found the following:

**Table 3.1 - Information retention rate**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Average retention rate</b>
Formal training	5%
Reading	10%
Audio-visual	20%
Discussion groups	50%
Practice by doing	50%
Teaching others	90%
Immediate use of learning	90%

These figures support arguments for including forms of practical training into the planning curriculum. Forms of practical experience include community or voluntary service, internships, studio work, coaching and participation in practical projects.

In an article in *Planning*, Simon Byrne (1997:10) advises British graduates to get as broad a range of experience as possible right from the start due to the increasing demand on planners to multi-task and cross-cut across different areas within the profession.

### **Community service**

Susan Roakes and Dorothy Norris-Tirrell (2000: 100, 101) from the University of Memphis, stress the importance of community service learning in planning education by taking students into the community with the goal of implementing and complementing learning. When dealing with community service learning, Roakes and Norris-Tirrell argue for something more than studio work. Community service learning involves different ways of understanding by way of concrete experience. Students learn by doing, by reflective observation, by abstract conceptualisation and by active experimentation, according to Kolb (in Roakes and Norris-Tirrell, 2000, 101). Students therefore do not only gain conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills, but also operational understanding, communication, problem-solving, critical thinking and higher-level thinking skills.

Furthermore, by involving students within their own communities, their sense of responsibility, intercultural understanding and sensitivity is heightened and community organisations receive direct and indirect positive benefits (Roakes and Norris-Tirrell, 2000, 102, 109).

Volunteers (students and professionals) in the U.K. have found that working at a voluntary organisation gives them a wide range of experience and opportunities by providing professional advice to people or groups who cannot afford to hire consultants. Planners get involved, from office support to leading planning appeals, and contribute to steering groups and management committees. Students see this as valuable experience, making them more marketable and giving them a good inside view of planning (West, 1999: 16).

### **Internships**

Planners from various countries have suggested the introduction of 'sandwich' courses in planning. This entails a one-year break after three years of academic study, with the final year back in the planning school. A first degree is given after the first three years and a master's degree on completion of the whole course.

Obviously, a 'year out' type of course implies potential problems, such as re-entry into academic life, and the relative value of the graduate to an employer (APS, 1969: 13). But there are more perceived benefits. American academics such as Baum (1997a: 22, 25; 1997b: 182) and Niebanck (1998: 155) see internships as an opportunity for students to test and observe themselves in practice. During seminars they can put questions to lecturers and thus consider alternative approaches to planning practice. They would probably also get the opportunity to make sense of responsibility, authority and accountability in an organisation, thereby discovering and exploring new avenues for vocational clarification.

There are various ways to accomplish such a programme. Organisations prepared to offer internships will have to be found. An arrangement could be made that a number of interns work under joint supervision from the university and the organisation on specific projects, thus also offering academics an opportunity to engage in practice. Of course there will be some real losses for academics in terms of time and autonomy, as they will spend more time with students and consult more with practising planners on course work (Baum, 1997a: 27).

However, few planning schools require an internship as part of their programme, and those internships that are required, are often informal and unstructured. Internships also often happen towards the end of student course work, providing little time to put the experience to use in further learning.



In the U.K., employers in both public and private sectors have shown enormous interest in universities offering sandwich planning degrees, which involve students spending a year of their course duration in a professional posting. Students from universities offering these sandwich degrees get more job offers than they can fill. Companies' motivation to take students in is that they get an extra pair of hands without committing themselves to a full-time employee. This gives them greater flexibility. In return, companies undertake to provide students with a varied and challenging experience, which has increased many students' interest in planning and makes them highly marketable (Baker, 2000: 12).

### **Student participation in the governance of the programme**

Niebanck (1998: 155-157) makes out a case that students should be involved in the planning of educational programmes by choosing some or all of their subjects within a specific cohort, involving them in the marketing and publicity of the programme, designing a web page for the department, advising on the configuration of resource use and playing a role in determining the criteria for graduating the programme. By being involved in the governance of the programme, students are practising planning – they are decision-makers, inventors and co-creators. Planning thereby becomes a lived experience as well as a subject studied.

### **Studio work**

Although many planning schools do present studio work as an element of the curriculum, students commonly have a single opportunity to participate in a workshop or studio course as an interactive learning environment. At the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in Canada, students spend half of their time working on studio projects designed to assist them in acquiring knowledge, developing skills and applying their insights to practice. Studio work provides students the opportunity to test their theoretical and practical knowledge in real community planning and design settings. Most of the projects they pursue, involve a community client or contact presenting a real problem to the class, giving students essential experience in dealing with clients, organisations and the public (Grant and Manuel, 1995: 51-52).

In the first studios, students are taught to manage projects by defining problems, setting objectives, selecting methods, and preparing results. Thereafter students control these projects as far as possible, while instructors set the problems, define initial tasks, manage group dynamics, and direct activities for new students (Grant and Manuel, 1995: 52).

To teach students organisational and communicative skills, they encourage students to increasingly learn from each other across generations within the programme, by working on a series of related projects for several studios. Students also learn the ability to accommodate a variety of personalities on their team and to confront problems head-on in an open and respectful atmosphere (Grant and Manuel, 1995: 52, 55).

Building a large planning team of small, linked groups, generates considerable energy and significant returns for all participants. The teams need several types of skills: technical, research, communication, organisation and team management. Before embarking on a major project, students must be well prepared in these skills and developing leadership skills has proven very productive. The role of faculty is to manage the client's expectations, as their goals may not be fully achievable. Realistic project objectives and careful definition of deliverables help prevent misunderstanding. Pedagogical goals should still remain paramount through the process. Good preparation by faculty smoothes the way for students to succeed (Grant and Manuel, 1995: 53-56).

Examples of studio projects include conducting surveys, producing community profiles, shooting videos, building 3-D watershed models, organising open houses and workshops,

designing wall displays, writing newspaper articles for local papers, preparing environmental exercises for the school system, participating in cable-TV shows to promote the projects and producing dozens of reports on topics of relevance to local communities engaged in environmental planning activities. In the context of the projects, students learn and practise what planners do, and it allows them to test the connection between theory and practice (Grant and Manuel, 1995: 55, 56).

Studio-based learning has many advantages for both students and faculty. Although it requires major commitment of time from faculty, difficulty in keeping the communication channels open and managing volumes of information, these initiatives become collaborative efforts where faculty members and students work together to discover knowledge and create innovative solutions to help communities. Students gain immense pride and confidence in their ability as they learn to work together in effective groups. Advanced students come to respect the expertise of less experienced students while junior students turn to senior students for particular knowledge or skills they need.

### 3.2.2 The 'specialist' versus the 'generalist' debate

*"See the wood, without losing sight of the individual trees."* Mallows on the generalist-specialist debate (in Africa, 1993: 50).

Perloff (1957: 35) has identified a prevailing tension in planning education centred on recurring themes: whether to promote generalist or specialist skills, the movement to technical versus humanistic skills, the split between product (professional) and process (administrative) skills, and the two paths of professional versus scholarly approaches. Time has only added to the length of the list. This debate is centred on the very old generalist versus specialist conflict and holds relevance for the views that follow later on what a core curriculum should entail.

#### 3.2.2.1 Arguments in favour of a generalist education

*"Mastery of the planning process should be the central objective of planning education"* (Faludi, 1978: 176).

During the 1960s, at the time planning developed into a profession in its own right, the 'specialist' versus 'generalist' conflict in the British planning profession came to the fore. The specialist position was held by double-qualified planners, who were specialists. The generalist view was held by planners who were graduates in the social sciences and 'direct-entry' planners. It was clear that the whole debate was ideological, as it reflected the hard facts of life in terms of promotion chances, access to power, demarcation disputes inside local authorities, etc. It was therefore not conflict over alternative interpretations over the planner's professional role and qualifications, but rather over professional interests. After 1965, the approach to planning became more generalist, as more 'generalists' became planners (Faludi: 1978: 27-48).

Harvey Perloff, an American, proposed that planners be trained as generalists with a speciality (1957: 35). Perloff believes that a general education is required where the emphasis is on learning and thinking and problem-solving processes so that the student is provided with materials and procedures for continuing lifetime learning. A sound planning core should be included in the training programme on which advanced, more specialised and lifetime planning education can be built. A core curriculum for professional education would *"form the foundation for more specialized training in planning and for the continuing process of learning which should take place on the job"* (Perloff, 1957: 38).

Faludi (1978: 21), Mann (1970: 259), Willis (1970: 278) and more recently, Healey (1991: 183) agree with Perloff that a general core curriculum is required for the education of planners with room for specialisation beyond this core. Faludi for one argues that more 'liberal' elements should be included in the curriculum. Faludi's idea of a core curriculum is that "... it should have as wide an applicability as possible. ... it would focus on the way in which decisions are arrived at and implemented by different agents, rather than on the substance of these decisions" (1978: 23).

Moron aired his views at the SAITRP conference in 1972, that a city planner should necessarily be broad-minded to understand the needs of the community. "*The planner should have a creative and imaginative faculty of mind, a power of synthesis, and a broad human understanding.*" The planner therefore requires the broadest kind of professional qualification and the outlook of a generalist (SAITRP, 1972: 140).

The TPI stated in 1967 as part of the generalist versus specialist debate that, "*However many contributors are called on, the planner must retain his central role of organising, directing and synthesising in the planning process. The professional responsibility cannot be shifted from him, nor eliminated, without grave consequences for planning, and indeed for the human environment*" (in Faludi, 1978: 108).

Planners also warn of the disadvantages of the core-specialisation model, namely that competitive specialised empires are built in planning schools, the student body could be splintered, the layer-cake problem (as identified by Batty) in the planning curriculum is exacerbated, there is a possibility of over-specialisation, students are not guaranteed a job in their area of specialisation and increasing specialisation means increasing co-ordination with and between planning schools (Africa, 1993:35).

### 3.2.2.2 Arguments in favour of a specialist education

Specialisation in planning is inevitable according to Perloff (1957:45). Given the complexity of modern city planning, some degree of specialisation seems inevitable, but there are different approaches to and different degrees of specialisation. Faludi (1978: 24) sees no harm in specialisation if specialism develops on the basis of fairly general appreciation of the theoretical core. It is the narrow-mindedness of specialism that he opposes. However, the objective of planning education, according to Perloff (1957: 45), should be to provide expertise with a 'breadth of outlook'. A student could therefore obtain a 'planning specialisation' after or parallel to his general education and his planning core, to become a 'generalist with a speciality'. The specific planning specialisation taken by a student should reflect:

- The evolving needs of the planning field
- The interests and aptitudes of the student
- The educational background of the student
- The areas in which the university can provide specialised training of a high order (Perloff, 1957: 47).

However, according to Friedman (1996: 102-103) of the University of California, "*The days of the generalist-with-a-speciality are over.*" Planning should become the mastery of a speciality that rests on the solid foundation of what the planning domain is as well as the skills, methods and approaches that are common to all urban professionals.

Friedman feels that it would be presumptuous to assume planners have the competency over the entire range of issues embodied in the urban habitat. It should be realised that planning, like medicine and law, has a variety of specialists in the physical environment, transportation, land-use, regional economics, etc. Planners should therefore have a speciality. More importantly,

planners should have a grounding knowledge about the socio-spatial processes that, in interaction with each other, produce the urban habitat (1996: 96).

Davidhoff and Reiner (in Faludi: 1973: 36-37) and Mann (1970: 273) also believe that planning education has been excessively directed to substantive areas and has failed to focus on any unique skills or responsibilities of the planner. Such planning education has emphasised understanding of subject matter: cities, regions, facilities, housing, land-use, zoning, transportation and others. The student has found thrust upon himself a growing list of subjects qualifying him to become a Jack-of-all-trades and master-of-none. A few years away on the job, the planner sinks into an uninspired and intellectually blunted administrator-generalist or public relations semi-expert. Another point of criticism is that it is simply impossible for planning schools to prepare students for every and any possible form of planning practice. Jacobson (in Africa, 1993: 35) also argues that few students possess the attitude and capacity to become true generalists.

### 3.2.3 Diversity in planning education

#### 3.2.3.1 A need for diversity in planning education

A multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-cultural diversity distinguishes the global cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to produce a new world (dis)order. This dilemma of complex ethnic and cultural differences poses a challenge to the current ways of thinking in the planning profession. On the other hand, planning education and practice themselves are also experiencing growing but disjointed pluralism of race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality, and lack of clarity on how to handle it all. Moreover, the post-modernist era questions all thought, beliefs and universal truths, and encourages plurality and difference (Sandercock, 1998b: 3, 20; Thomas, 1996: 172).

Discourse concerning the role of race and gender in planning education has increased, but an image on how these mesh together is so far lacking. Issues of race, gender and diversity need to be incorporated into the curriculum of American planning schools – as they remain weak on these issues in a changed society (Thomas, 1996: 171; Looye & Sesay, 1998: 161).

The diversity in race and ethnicity amongst students in most countries is also quite discouraging. Given the disjointed way in which literature and curricula deal with race, it is no wonder that potential planning students have little reason to become interested in planning. Planning history may give the impression that blacks had no role in improving the cities, and courses in land-use planning and spatial development may seem irrelevant at best, oppressive at worst, if the existing social order of inequality is reinforced (Thomas, 1996: 172-173). *“Expecting women and racial minorities to sit passively in a planning classroom and study nothing about themselves and their life experiences may lead to discontent and uneven performance”* (Looye & Sesay, 1998: 162).

The need for a paradigm shift in planning education is threefold:

- To prepare students to function in multicultural work environments
- To develop more effective models of diversity in planning schools, eliminating existing points of ineffectiveness, disjointedness, or contradiction
- To develop more effective ways of teaching planning students how to promote social action and reform inequalities (Thomas, 1996: 171).

In South Africa the need for multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-cultural diversity in planning education is specifically needed to eliminate the inequalities of the past and to equitably reflect social realities. Another reason is to address the lack of planners of colour in various levels of planning, but specifically the private sector.

### 3.2.3.2 Neglected contributions in planning education

Many people have raised questions with regard to the tendency to compel students to learn planning the 'Western Way', as if all knowledge stemmed from one country and one culture: male, white, heterosexual, Western, elite – as Hooper characterises it (1998: 246).

Although not mentioned in the context of diversity, Wachs (in Hendler, 1995: xiv) is of the opinion that planners, as an intellectual and professional community, should recognise that *“every act of planning pursues certain human values and that planning is in many fundamental ways a series of statements about what we take to be right or wrong and what we take to represent the highest priorities of the society in which planning is undertaken.”*

Many histories were ignored in planning, thereby pursuing certain value statements about what is right or wrong and about who were the history makers. In South Africa the history of planning gives the impression that blacks had no role in establishing and improving cities, but rather that the townships posed health hazards to the white communities. Today black townships are still seen by many as a burden to the towns and cities.

In American planning history, as in South Africa, tribal communities were largely ignored in the path towards westernisation. Their histories were subsumed as inconsequential and were written off as casualties of Western civilisation. They were dismissed as impediments to progress (Jojola, 1998: 100, 116). However they survived through decisive action using indigenous planning models that were integrated into their own cultural patterns, reminiscent of a regional planning model.

Wirka (1998: 158) in 'City planning for girls', Beauregard (1998: 186) in 'Subversive histories' and Hooper (1998: 246) in 'The poem of the male desires' are adamant that American planning history has ignored the significant contributions women have made to the profession. Wirka and Beauregard believe that being stripped of historical relevance disempowers women – exacerbated by the *“conferring on men all power to change the world”*. Hooper (1998: 26), furthermore, explores how planning in the moment of inventing itself as master, as knower, as producer of order in disorderly cities, took on the baggage of the dominant cultural tradition – a patriarchal tradition – and hence came to function not as the emancipatory practice it preaches, but in new forms of social control directed at women.

Planning historians have excluded women in their documentation of the rise of the profession. Women were more likely to receive an education in the social sciences and to a far lesser extent in the technical professions. Wirka (1998: 158-159) bids planning to correct the 'oversight' by expanding the definition of planning beyond the boundaries of male professional identity to include other professions and movements in which women were actively doing social planning work.

Gay and lesbian people in specifically the United States are also arguing that their case be heard. Kenney (1998: 121, 131) argues that planning history should be opened up to gay and lesbian experiences, which would call for a new vocabulary, a radical rethinking of sexuality and acknowledgement of the fluid boundaries drawn around class, race, gender and age. Planners cannot ignore social and political upheavals such as the gay and lesbian upheaval.

Dubrow (1998: 57, 73) maintains that even preservation planning should take into account the diversity of communities. Often places designated as landmarks for preservation in the United States reflected the incomplete historical narrative (the 'George Washington slept here' syndrome). The gaps tend to erase the historical contributions, experience and existence of women, ethnic communities of colour, working people and lesbians and gay men. She advocates

historic preservation as an instrument for democratic and inclusive planning approaches. *“The dull and insular vision of history that has come to occupy a central place in planning education has begun to yield to livelier and more expansive approaches that are responsive to inquiries about race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual identity in urban history.”*

Little by little this particular ideological construction of authority and expertise of a planner has been breaking apart under the new political formations organised by Marxists, feminists, people of colour, post-colonial subjects – all of them critical of the definition of professional expertise in relation to the history and theory of a white, heterosexual, Euro-American male consciousness (Sandercock, 1998b: 222).

### 3.2.3.3 The process of diversifying planning education

The process of diversification in the United States has been uneven and difficult. The profession in developed countries is receiving more women, but academic programmes are just beginning to recognise the contributions women make to the urban environment. Disadvantaged groups have a greater presence in society, a global economy has emerged and students are becoming increasingly diverse. The curriculum should be changed to adapt to the changed society that students will serve. Planning students should be made aware of the diversity of the society they would be planning for, of the global, post-industrial economy they would be planning in and of post-modernism (Thomas, 1996: 172, 176; Looye & Sesay, 1998: 162).

There is not one single definition of diversity that fully captures the range of issues relevant to the incorporation of diversity into the curriculum. A diverse curriculum could include issues of race, gender, ethnicity, culture, age, disability, equity, and social justice. The American Association of University Women’s definition of multicultural education provides the following meritorious definition: *“A multicultural curriculum (1) educates students about the entire range of cultures in ... society, (2) examines each cultural groups from its own perspective, (3) includes the contributions of different groups, (4) incorporates teaching practices that adapt to different individual strengths, (5) provides diverse learning environments, thus enabling students from different cultures to achieve their full potential, and (6) aids student development of communication skills necessary to function effectively with diverse groups and within multiple cultures. Teaching us about others or teaching others to be like us, however, is not multicultural education”* (quoted in Looye & Sesay, 1998: 163).

The challenge in terms of planning education is to grow more consciously beyond traditional, mainstream-centred, male-dominated perspectives of planning and planning education. According to Thomas (1996: 174), the task is to reconstruct (not deconstruct) planning education so that it fosters the education of all students, more equitably reflects social realities and opportunities for social action, yet retains a sense of unity amidst difference.

According to Sandercock (1998b, 44, 109, 110), the diversity in American planning should start with the diversifying of planning history. Planners should reconsider the stories they tell about planning’s role in the modern and post-modern city, thereby reshaping the future. The future cannot be imagined without acknowledging the difference in politics, believing in inclusive democracy, and the diversifying of social justice claims of the disempowered communities. New multicultural literacy needs to be developed, such as the multiple histories of a community. Planners need to start listening to the voices of difference, the voices from the ‘borderlands’, in order to achieve respect for cultural diversity.

Thomas (1996: 173-174) agrees that planning literature should be diversified, since knowledge is not really objective or academically neutral. Instead, it reflects the assumptions, biases and culture of those who create it. *“When the creators are in the positions of power, their vision of truth prevails. Multicultural education expands cultural vision, showing familiar issues from*

*different perspectives, and granting credibility to cultures and perspectives often considered inferior."*

Introducing diversity into the curriculum does not only involve introducing new readings into the syllabi. It also requires commitment from lecturers, transformation in teaching methods and approaches to work by adopting inclusive teaching methods, attracting more students from ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds (Thomas, 1996: 178; Looye & Sesay, 1998: 164-165).

Thomas also has a vision of American planning education as a programme where diversity is celebrated as a source of strength and creativity. The planning programme should have extensive, but harmonious diversity in the faculty and student body, and not only the curriculum. Thomas defines this vision as having the qualities of a higher degree of tolerance and co-operation, where conflict falls to minimum, and mutual learning rises to a maximum. The purpose is to train students in unified diversity for social action to further the noble traditions of advocacy, social, equity and redevelopment planning for improving urban society. The learning environment would be supportive of women and racial groups and the common goal would be social justice and improvement for residents of urban and regional communities. Students would benefit by being prepared for work in cosmopolitan workplaces, as they would have learned that all races and cultures are valuable, as are both genders, and that diversity is a strength to be nurtured rather than a requirement to be tolerated (Thomas, 1996: 179; Dubrow, 1998: 74; Dalton, 1993: 150).

Multicultural education could enable students from all races and backgrounds to develop more positive attitudes towards different cultural, racial and ethnic groups. Students should be taught to value their own diversity to become more accepting of differences. Fortified by the inclusion of individuals who broadly represent the nations' cities and accept differences, the planning profession will have a better chance to have a positive impact on today's metropolis (Thomas, 1996: 180).

### **3.2.4 Continuing professional development (CPD)**

#### **3.2.4.1 The need for CPD in the planning profession**

In the past a university education was sufficient for the whole duration of graduates' professional lives, while today new conditions that are taking shape, are dramatically altering the world we live in. This highlights the need for continual education and training and keeping abreast with the latest developments and experience and skills required. It has been estimated that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, on average, every employed person in the developed world will change profession six to seven times during his/her career. The classic view that education is completed with one's graduation is thereby rendered to the past (Antonakakis, Dyberg, Kalaitzis, Krassadaki, 2000).

Many graduates therefore have a need for CPD a number of years into their profession, when they realise their technical inadequacies or need for specialisation. In the changing context we live in, the conditions to enter and stay in the labour market have changed dramatically. Contrary to the past, when a command of computers and intelligent software was regarded a privilege for a few, in today's world it has become an integral part of practically any employment. Acquisition of the relevant skills and knowledge is therefore necessary if planners want to enter the labour market or continue being competitive in the market (Antonakakis *et al*, 2000; Association of Planning Students (APS), 1969: 74).

Reasons for continued professional development are:

- A future change in the pattern of work of the organisation
- Forthcoming new legislation requirements
- Likely restructuring, organisational or managerial changes within or impinging upon the organisation
- Relevant social, economic, political or demographic changes
- Technological developments
- Forthcoming personnel changes or changes in staff responsibilities, for example retirements, promotions, new appointees, students on placement, staff on secondment, staff with new areas of work
- Recommendations from professional bodies, official reports, and clients' representative groups (Todd, 1987: 112).

Continuing professional development should not be a fringe activity – it is one of the most important resources a professional can draw on to maintain competence. A professional's continued development needs to be planned round strategic concerns of forthcoming practice demands – what is learned, should improve work practice. Planning schools should determine the professional demand for CPD and adapt to the demand by renewing and modernising their study programmes (Todd, 1987: 1-8; Antonakakis *et al*, 2000).

#### 3.2.4.2 What is CPD?

Continuing professional development convey an activity that should be thought of as a continuing process rather than something achieved with initial qualification. Professionals should engage in continued professional development to develop themselves, to develop others and to develop professionally. There is more to CPD than attending a one-day course, having the day off work and getting the employer to pay for it. Continuing professional development can allow planners to tailor training to their own requirements (Todd, 1987: 2; Thompson, 1998: 5).

CPD is seen as keeping abreast of the latest ideas through more informal training and education methods, such as reading literature, attending conferences, workshops and refresher courses, self-learning, learning through group projects, on-the-job training, distance learning, a post-graduate degree, etc. (SAITRP, 1972: 137-143; APS, 1969: 74; Antonakakis *et al*, 2000).

Advantages of continued professional development is that it provides:

- An occasion to bring together all members of an organisation (or units within) to join in planning their own future development.
- A means of balancing personal continued professional development interests with the needs of the organisation, the professional group, and other colleagues.
- An opportunity for all staff to gain a clear picture of the direction the organisation is going in, and of the part played by different professional and functional groups within it. They can therefore consider their own continued professional development needs in an informed and non-egocentric way.
- Information for the education facilitator and management about the continued professional development priorities of individual staff, as well as of professional or functional groups.
- Information for staff about available educational resources so that they can evaluate continued professional development (CPD) priorities realistically in the light of the proposed overall strategy.
- An opportunity for collaborative review by all staff of the way the organisation is performing, a chance to share in setting future quality targets, and to plan continued professional development so as to support achievement of these targets.



- A non-academic, practical exercise, with a real outcome, namely, the resulting CPD programme (Todd, 1987: 113-114).

### 3.2.4.3 IDP-related training in South Africa as CPD

Universities, technikons, NGOs, government departments, local councils, and other institutions present integrated development planning (IDP) training in answer to the changing legislative and policy environment in a post-apartheid era. Although presented as part of the normal under- and post-graduate courses at university, IDP short courses presented by these institutions provide valuable continued professional development to planners and non-planners (Bornstein, Harrison, Oosthuizen, Oranje, Santi, Van Huyssteen & Williamson, 1998:1-6).

Many of these short courses are not specifically IDP-related courses, but provide skills and knowledge that could assist practitioners in dealing with IDPs. For the non-planner these courses explain the basics such as community participation, the budgetary system and the legal framework (Bornstein, *et al*, 1998: 6-9). There have also been more recent rounds of IDP training countrywide.

To what extent is IDP-related training relevant for planning practice in South Africa?

IDP training addresses diversity in planning as these courses are not only presented to planners, but also to many non-planners – people from various sectors, disciplines and backgrounds. This means that many people are introduced and exposed to some form of planning practice – hopefully with positive results for the planning profession.

IDP training is truly practice-orientated and therefore relevant to numerous planning practices and government institutions. It also provides needed continued professional development to many planners and non-planners. Although planners play more of a facilitating role, they do often take the lead in providing direction to the whole IDP process, by being skilled voices-in-the-flow. Also seeing that IDPs are in the limelight in many local governments, planners taking the lead in developing the IDPs for local government could play an important leadership role in the planning community as well.

Although these courses are presented to planners and non-planners, planners are often better positioned to have the competitive edge in the IDP process, because of their generalist educational foundation. A thorough understanding of the IDP process is a skill planners cannot afford not to have, and should form part of what Oranje calls a planner's 'repertoire of skills'. Oranje (1997: 262) asserts: "*the only safeguard there will be for planners is to use their basic training as a base on which to build a repertoire of skills with which to fill niches in the existing fields better than players from other language games.*"

### 3.2.5 Summary and conclusion

Various debates are on in the worldwide planning community with regard to the educational framework of planning programmes. Academics and practitioners join the debates, and although there will never be agreement on all aspects of planning education, it is deemed healthy for a profession to take so much interest in the education of its students. In South Africa, however, planning practice should feature much stronger in the education of students.

One aspect everyone does seem to agree on is the need for students to gain practical experience while studying, in order to link learnt concepts to planning practice. However, not everybody agrees as to the extent and format of practical projects as part of the curriculum, or academics' ability to teach practical classes.

The approach to fieldwork, internships and voluntary work at South African universities is explored in the next chapter, and although South African planning schools may present more practical classes than other universities worldwide, we should consider encouraging local students to do more voluntary work, include an internship in the curriculum and base our approach to practical classes on the model presented by the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in Canada. Practitioners should also spend more time and effort to train graduate planners.

After 1965 the generalist-with-a-specialty became the norm in deciding on a core planning curriculum in Britain. A general education is required where the emphasis is on learning and thinking and problem-solving processes, with room for specialisation beyond this core. The next chapter assesses whether South African universities followed the same approach to developing curricula, and it was found that they did. All four of the universities that formed part of the empirical research believe in a generalist education, but do try to provide their students with some form of speciality as well.

Planning education and practice worldwide are experiencing growth – but disjointed pluralism of race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality, and lack of clarity on how to handle it as well. The diversification of planning curricula has had its own growing pains in most countries. Discourse concerning the role of race, gender and diversity in planning education has increased, specifically in the U.S., but an image on how these mesh together is lacking. The challenge in terms of planning education is to grow more consciously beyond traditional, mainstream-centred, male-dominated perspectives of planning and planning education.

In South Africa, we have our own challenges in diversifying the curricula. South African history of planning gives the impression that blacks, other tribal communities and women have had no role in establishing and improving cities. Their histories were subsumed as inconsequential and were written off as casualties of Western civilisation. However, addressing these inequalities is not the only challenge faced by academics. We are also faced with multi-ethnicity in classes (specifically in attended by a majority of black students) that needs to be recognised and addressed in the diversification of the curricula.

Continued professional development should not be neglected. It was found in the empirical research that South African universities are not taking this aspect of planning education seriously enough. Universities should encourage students to stick to a professional development plan, and should be able to provide graduates with the CPD they may require. It could even be a profitable way of contributing to the profession's overall competence.

### **3.3 A framework for planning education**

#### **3.3.1 The need for changes to the planning programme**

*“The future of city planning is certain to be greatly affected by the type and quality of education provided in our institutions of higher learning” (Perloff, 1957: 3).*

Historically, education has tended to reflect, rather than shape society – to follow, rather than to lead. Today the future arrives too fast for education to keep up, therefore students have to be educated for a world that does not exist yet and not for the way the world was (Spellbound, 2001a).

According to Harrison (1995: 2) and Diaw *et al* (2001: 11), academics from African countries, planning in developing countries was essentially constructed within the social, economic and ideological framework of a bygone colonial era. Planning students received little real

preparation for the new realities of a globalised world. Planners were equipped with technical skills and focused on physical planning and administrative procedures. Little attention was given to socio-cultural contextual understanding or processes of communication and participation. Students were taught to draw up plans which assumed a predictable and controllable future and steadily increasing levels of income. The present challenge for planning education is to produce graduates who are prepared to effectively function within a volatile, short-lived and overwhelmingly complex environment.

Rakodi (1996: 50) explains the need for both traditional planning education and education for developing countries, by saying there should be a fine balance between training for established planning systems which are clearly inadequate, but which provide sponsorship and career structures, and education for a more realistic and promising view of the role of planners and planning. She therefore suggests that a planning framework should include knowledge, skills and expertise in the understanding of the purpose of planning and a knowledge and understanding of the processes of urbanisation and urban development.

Hamza & Zetter (2000: 442) assume that planning education in developing countries lags very far behind practice in three crucial areas: land-market processes, the informal economy and shelter provision. They question the conventional physical planning systems' ability to cope with the factors driving change and the environmental impacts in developing countries. This poses profound challenges for the structure and content of planning education, and the knowledge, expertise and skills of planning practice. Planning education should consider the appropriate knowledge, expertise and skills base to evaluate the impacts of disequilibria on an urban level, and to design and implement policy instruments to maximise the opportunities and mitigate the negative consequences.

According to Hamza & Zetter (2000: 441), the core objective of a planning education relevant to the needs of the developing world must be to impart understanding of the relationship between the radically changing nature of cities and the role of government. Rather than a state-driven process of regulating urban growth, planning is now perceived as a set of interventions to address the impacts produced by global economic processes. The challenge in developing cities is to promote urban governance in areas where the majority of activities are informal, illegal or statistically unaccounted for. Also needed is an understanding of the processes of rapid social transformation in cities, of competing interest groups and the role of urban social movements.

A reconceived role and informal planning of the illegal city demands a reconceived knowledge base in planning education, more attuned to the economic, physical and environmental realities of most cities in the developing world. Communities should be enabled to develop their own responses within these physical, social and economic environments, rather than imposing prescribed standards and improvement practices.

Planning education must also enable graduates to appreciate different interpretations and interests, weigh them against each other, and facilitate negotiations between the different groups. Urban management is basically conflict resolution: conflict within communities, between actors, over resources and over control. Planning education should address these skills needs and understanding of the processes of city building (Hamza & Zetter, 2000: 451).

### **3.3.2 Some aspects of planning education**

#### **3.3.2.1 Suggestions for enhancing planning programmes**

Planning schools need to produce planners who are able and willing to fill niches that are no longer clearly defined and are able to create their own niches in an environment that no longer has clearly defined boundaries. Oranje (1997: 285-286), Friedman (1996: 101), Africa (1993:

39-41), Faludi (1978), Klosterman (1995: 248) and Kaufman (1995: 173) mention various possibilities that planning schools could consider to enable students for their tasks. They could ensure:

- That students develop the ability to act, to be creative, and to make sense in a wide variety of highly competitive environments with the help of technology.
- That students develop the ability to act, to debate, to be creative, to make sense in the company of other diverse people in other diverse fields.
- That students are made aware of what is said, and the implications thereof in the wide array of situations in which they may find themselves.
- That students are enabled to cope with uncertainty.
- That students acquire the ability to learn and continue learning.
- That students are exposed to more than just the dictates of the field at the given time.
- That students acquire an understanding of the core concepts with which to think and act spatially and the basic concepts associated with these concepts.
- That students are able to understand, decode, encode, translate and communicate concepts and ideas into as many languages as possible, since we are living in an increasingly diversified society.
- That students are allowed more freedom of choice in optional subjects.
- That students be made aware that planning, and therefore planning education is inherently a political activity. Students therefore need to be made aware of the underlying values of planning.
- That students be exposed to a range of skills, against the appreciation of the limitations of the professional competence.
- That students be taught practical experience in real life situations, by placing greater reliance on case studies, intensive workshops and field trips that would follow for direct observation, data collection and reflection.
- That students develop their own personal ethical frameworks by gaining an understanding of important moral, philosophical theories and concepts that underpin the ethical issues planners face. Graduate planning school is the last opportunity students have to engage in informed moral reflection and to clarify their own personal values before entering the real world.

### 3.3.2.2 Keeping pace with a globalising world

In the light of the global changes mentioned in chapter 2, Afshar (2001, 341) of the University of Guelph, suggests a globalised planning programme, as it prepares planners more adequately for a world in which global issues influence the local context. Planners taught in this way will be able to draw on a deeper and wider pool of values, knowledge and skills, and will have nurtured cross-cultural sensitivity and skills with which to address an increasingly diverse constituency.

Pezzoli & Howe (2001: 365) also argue for consideration of the global megatrends, such as economic restructuring, migration, the revolution in information systems and telecommunication technology, demands for self-governance, and environmental degradation to be reflected in planning education, as these have already profoundly transformed planning. According to the study conducted by the two authors in the U.S., planners indicated knowledge areas needing more emphasis. Included were economics, economic development and the development process, sustainable development, and multigenerational perspectives on history.

A programme with a global perspective should do the following:

- Internationalise the learning experience of the programme (courses, projects, studios, internships, research, etc.) by presenting planning as it is viewed and practised in both domestic and foreign contexts.
- Nurture the value of mutual learning, by teaching students to learn from people and contexts other than their own – often quite different, in order to address issues in their own context. They should also share knowledge.
- Develop in students an understanding and an ability to use the power of the comparative method to draw on the widened pool of shared knowledge. They should be able to distinguish between universal truths and context-specific information.
- Nurture in students respect for people and their ideas and practice, often quite different from their own, and a cross-cultural sensitivity in dealing with these differences (Afshar, 2001: 350).

Ashfar is also encouraging participation from Third World planning students, practitioners and educators, and increased dialogue between North and South.

### 3.3.2.3 Distance education

Schools and universities are increasingly exploiting the potential educational benefits of fusing computer and telecommunications technology for distance education. Godschalk & Lacy (2001: 477) define distance education as “*a process of teaching and learning that relies on (1) a mode of delivery that is available anytime and anywhere to suit the needs of individual students, (2) selective use of communication tools to facilitate self-learning as well as group learning experiences, and (3) collaborative learning approaches that encourage student-to-student and faculty-to-student interaction.*”

However Godschalk & Lacy of the University of North Carolina found that planning education programmes are slow to adopt new technology, except for the incorporation of e-mail and web technology into traditional on-campus courses. Many schools believe that distance learning is important, but few distance-learning courses are taught.

The authors cite the reasons for resistance to distance learning as planning schools not having thought deeply about, nor having had much experience with distance education. Obstacles in the way are extra demand on faculty, lack of compensation for course development, low faculty interest, incompatibility with course content, and inadequate technical support (Godschalk & Lacy, 2001: 476, 481).

Earlier in this chapter it was mentioned that “*the largest movement of students (in South Africa) has been to distance education and technikons ...*” (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 24). As a future-orientated profession, planners should show the way in applying technology to improve planning education and to cash in on the trends in South African tertiary education. Planning schools in South Africa should therefore seriously consider establishing distance-learning courses by reflecting on the following objectives:

- **Identify learning objectives:** How do you want the students to learn? Do you wish to promote cooperative or collaborative learning, individualised learning, or a combination? This could include forums, chat rooms and e-mail.
- **The home page as a resource and instructional tool:** It should be easy to use and simple to navigate, and should include information similar to a traditional course with course description, reading list, requirements, assignments and due dates.
- **Explore ways to integrate web-based readings into the course:** Virtual planning libraries should help identify documents on the world-wide web (WWW) that would be appropriate for the course on a regular basis.

- **Explore alternative strategies to present lecture materials:** This could include the use of videotapes, teleconferencing, web-based audio lectures, and the use of lesson guides.
- **Support team:** A strong instructional team is needed to offer assistance continuously. The team should include computer staff to provide training in the use of information tools, hardware and software needs.
- **Building community within the class:** Strategies are needed to promote conversations. This can be done by group case studies and constructive suggestions on others' work.
- **Private versus public teaching:** Publishing your courses on the web makes them public to an extent. The extent should be determined by the planning school by way of firewalls and password usage (Godschalk & Lacy, 2001: 485-486).

Rakodi (1996: 55) mentions that many students from developing countries study planning in the U.K. for a number of reasons, including that some of these countries are too small to have a planning school, the deficiencies in educational provision in ex-colonial countries, the low priority of planning education in some of these countries, and economic difficulties faced by others.

Some challenges to distance education that Godschalk and Lacy do not mention, are that few students in developing countries have access to the information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure required for distance education. Distance education at present lacks interactiveness, as students have limited contact with each other – which is of key importance in planning education. Distance education furthermore limits the amount of studio work that can be presented, and if the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design model is considered for practical classes, interaction and the amount of studio work are very important. Furthermore, distance education often requires more staff commitment than on-campus learning.

### 3.3.2.4 Leadership in planning

The progress and status of the planning profession also depend to a large extent on leadership and the advancement thereof in planning education. And yet, planning educators are often accused of not providing thought leadership or direction to the profession. It is important for a profession to have thought-leaders, hence the planning profession should create and train its own thought-leaders. Perloff makes out a case for the advancement of leadership in planning by suggesting the following:

- **Recruitment:** *“The progress and status of the planning profession are tied to the calibre and characteristics of the individuals who enter and stay in the city planning field.”* The quality of the planning school is also a factor in attracting planning students (programme attractiveness, quality of teachers, research activities, excitement generated by planning schools). Planning schools should make potential students aware of the opportunities available in the planning profession.
- **On-the-job training:** Planning schools should play an educational role beyond formal university training. They should take the lead in organising on-the-job training programmes, supply of study materials and teaching personnel.
- **Lifetime education:** Critical for educational leadership is a continuing growth in knowledge, skills, and breadth of vision. Planning schools should encourage graduates to write for professional journals and to *“search for new methods in carrying out their tasks.”* They could sponsor seminars and conferences in order to exchange ideas, new methods and various points of view.
- **Research:** The development of general principles and a basic methodology of planning are crucial to the profession. Also important is research into new fields in order to advance knowledge in city planning and attract first-rate people into the planning field as researchers, practitioners and teachers.

- **A programme to speed educational progress:** Both academic institutions and practitioners need to be aware of changing direction in planning, of new opportunities and of limitations in the profession that hinder progress. A careful programme could speed progress in planning education and would be of great significance for the future of city planning (Perloff, 1957: 50-53).

### 3.3.3 The future of planning education

*“The future of city planning is certain to be greatly affected by the type and quality of education provided in our institutions of higher learning”* (Perloff, 1957: 3). Questions at issue for Perloff at that time, were:

- Is planning indeed a separate field of study that needs separate schools, or is it an aspect of some other field like architecture or social science?
- Should it emphasise design skills and the applied approach or should it provide a very broad training in a research-oriented environment?

The latter question is perhaps not altogether relevant any more, but the first question also plagued other professions at critical stages in their development. Today, some planners are still questioning the autonomy of planning as a separate field of study, whether it has a specific niche and whether there is a future for the planning profession. These questions have partially been dealt with in the previous chapter. But what role does planning education have in ensuring a future for the planning profession?

If planning wants to survive this time and age, the planning profession – and by implication planning education – has to develop and position itself for the future. The changing role of government, deregulation, privatisation, declines in social expenditure, reorientation towards economic growth in the global system, new international trade blocks, large-scale immigration, a growing employment crisis, emergence of new urban forms, formation of a multicultural society, and a severe fiscal state of local authorities – all these are challenging planners to respond creatively. This is especially the case in South Africa, with its unique cultural, economic, social, criminal and environmental characteristics.

Planning education needs to respond to the shift in emphasis within the planner’s role and the changing context in which we live. Education is surely the primary vehicle for transforming the profession, and in doing so, the country as well. Oranje (1997: 286-287) foresees five ways in which this can be accomplished:

- By bringing planners from previously disadvantaged communities into the profession
- By making tertiary institutions more accessible for entrance
- By ensuring that students who want to make a positive contribution to reconstruction, transformation and development are targeted
- By producing planners with a clear understanding of how planning should ensure the reconstruction and development and transformation of the country
- By establishing a formal mid-career course for practising planners to encourage a life-long learning process.

Planning education also has to prepare students for a future in which planners will have to compete with others in the urban habitat. Oranje (1997: 287) suggests two possible changes:

- **Intra-university changes:** Given the dynamic times in which a number of people from various disciplines work together in the same fields, these people may establish new fields on the borders between two disciplines, and that field may become interdependent. Planning education would then become a component of a number of

programmes within various disciplines and would most probably become a service course in new professional disciplines that are set up.

- **Inter-university changes:** Planning schools may be thrown together to save on the national education bill, but to also increase the skills base. This will increase the possibility of students being informed by more expert opinions in more fields than is currently the case at planning schools.

Faludi (1978, 183) thought along the same line many years ago “... *planning education itself might lose its separate identity and merge with education generally. Firstly, this might be caused by the spread of planning throughout society, making planning into an essential part of general education. Secondly, by concentrating on problem-solving and the capacity to learn in politically-loaded situations and by developing project work which is tailor-made for that purpose, planning education could become a model for education in an increasingly complex, increasingly educated, and increasingly concerned society*” (Faludi, 1978: 183).

### 3.3.4 Summary and conclusion

According to Schutte (1995: 2), planning education should be aimed at guiding man towards the realisation of one’s full potential as a human being and to the full development of one’s talents. He sees the primary task of the university to consciously endeavour through all its activities, to mould the student as a human being in the fullest sense. The university’s main aim should involve widening a student’s cultural and intellectual horizons, developing his intellectual skills and educating the student to become a self-sufficient person. Planning education is challenged to adapt the learning experiences it offers to prepare students to be more effective professionals in this changing environment. Today the future arrives too fast for education to keep up, therefore students have to be educated for a world that does not exist yet and not for the way the world was.

This section has suggested some educational aspects to be considered for inclusion by South African planning schools in their planning programmes. One such aspect is becoming part of a globalised planning programme in which planning students are taught to draw on a deeper and wider pool of values, knowledge and skills, and to nurture cross-cultural sensitivity and skills with which to address an increasingly diverse constituency.

Another aspect is distance education. Although developing countries have more obstacles to overcome to successfully present courses in this way, they could combine efforts and resources to have one distance education programme for the whole country. The University of the Free State has already made some progress in this regard. As a future-orientated profession, planners should lead in applying technology to improve planning education and apply their minds to the current trends in South African tertiary education.

Planning education also needs to respond to the shift in emphasis within the planner’s role and the changing context in which we live. In South Africa we need to attract more people from previously disadvantaged communities. Tertiary institutions should be more accessible and mid-career refresher courses should be established. Planners should be produced who have a clear understanding of how planning should ensure the reconstruction, development and transformation of the country.



### 3.4 Core curriculum for planning education

#### 3.4.1 Core skills and competencies required of entry-level and qualified planners

The skills and competencies that planning practice require of planning graduates determine to a very large extent the core curriculum of planning education.

According to the Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary, a skill is the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance. It is a learned power of doing something competently: a developed aptitude or ability. Competence, according to Kirschner (in Roakes & Norris-Tirrell, 2000: 100), is "*the whole of knowledge and skills which people have at their disposal and which they can use effectively to reach certain goals in a wide variety of contexts or situations.*"

The South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) (in School of Public Management and Planning, 2001a), defines a core competency as "... *contextually demonstrated knowledge, skills and values which support one or more critical outcomes.*" Critical outcomes again, are defined as: "*Those generic outcomes which inform all teaching and learning and 'critical cross field education and training outcomes' has a corresponding meaning.*"

A skill is therefore something you can learn, whereas a competency is the ability to effectively demonstrate these skills, values and the knowledge gained in coursework. In this section, however, planners have not distinguished between skills and competencies – in fact, the two have been used as more or less the same concept.

When a client hires a person with a professional education in planning, the client has the right to expect a certain range of skills and competencies. There are countless opinions as to which skills and competencies should be included in this range that graduates require when entering the planning profession.

For many practitioners, skills in dealing and negotiating with people are the most desirable attributes as well as dealing with group processes, consensus building, being able to plan under turbulent conditions, political awareness, gender awareness, how to manage a budget and projects, critical appreciation of the public interest and having the capacity to be integrative and adaptable. Others vote for more traditional planning skills in addition to negotiation skills, such as collection, analysis and presentation of spatial data, plan preparation and interpretation, understanding systems and processes, site analysis, consultation techniques and information technology know-how (Johnston, 1998: 11; Pezzoli & Howe, 2001: 365; Poxon, 2000: 8; Rodriguez, 1993: 153; Hague, 1994: 20; Price and Kinghorn, 1999: 14; Harrison, 1995: 12).

Sandercock (1998b, 221) on the other hand is quite cynical of curriculum development based on skills and competencies in planning education. She questions the institutionalisation of planning with the claim that planning is a distinctive operation based on a unique knowledge and set of operational skills. Many professional institutions have pressed for a uniform content of planning education, with a shopping list of skills and competencies which have turned out to need continuous updating. Competence is presumed to be linked to the amount of 'knowledge' received, and 'knowledge' translates to the acquisition of skills. 'Learning' has been defined as progress through the various skills areas resulting in specialisation rather than interaction between forms of knowledge. Students have been targets of one-directional flow of skills and knowledge, without the interference of gender, race, class, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Sandercock (1998b: 225) suggests a group of five literacies (skills) the planning profession would like to see future planners armed with. These literacies include the following:

- **Technical literacy:** Some technical skills become outdated very quickly as technology advances, others can be picked up or refined in the workplace. To be technically literate implies more than just familiarity with a range of technical skills and subjects, as technical skills come with embedded assumptions, are used in ideological ways and depend on certain values to prescribe their use.
- **Analytical literacy:** Urbanists need to be educated to think critically about socio-spatial processes and how to understand these processes historically, culturally and institutionally. This requires training courses in urban political economy, in histories and theories of planning and in cultural studies. Students need to be introduced to a whole range of theories that are crucial to their understanding of themselves as actors in the world – theories of knowledge, theories of power, and theories of social transformation as well as theories of organisation and communication.
- **Multicultural literacy:** People from different histories, cultures and needs make claims on urban space and services, and challenge accepted social norms, thereby reshaping cities and the way we think about planning. Planners have to learn new languages, not just literally, but metaphorically – new ways of acting and knowing and being more humble, more collaborative, more respectful of differences. Planners have to value alternative methods of knowledge, including traditional ethnic or culturally specific modes. It involves listening and interpreting in which communicative skills, openness, empathy and sensitivity are crucial. It involves learning to work with diverse communities, rather than speaking for them. A respect for cultural diversity must influence the politics and techniques of planning practice.
- **Ecological literacy:** The environmental crises cannot be solved by the same education that helped to create the problem. Planners have to nurture an ethical care for nature in order to change people's attitudes and behaviour with regard to the environment. This includes subjects such as environmental ethics, physical planning and sustainable development, and environmental economics.
- **Design literacy:** Understanding the social and psychological aspects and impacts of design, planners cannot deny the power of design in daily life. They have to design with culture and nature in mind, and teamwork is required among planners, landscape architects, artists and communities.

Poxon of the University of Sheffield in the U.K. (2000), Ozawa & Seltzer in Oregon, U.S. (1999), Zehner in New South Wales, Australia (1999) and the South African planning schools (2000) have all conducted research into the required skills and competencies in the planning profession, for graduates to enter the labour market. The following section provides an overview of their findings.

#### 3.4.1.1 Skills and competencies required of graduates from the University of Sheffield, U.K.

Jenny Poxon (2000: 9-19) interviewed post-graduates – in the light of their working experience, undergraduates, and senior practitioners – who are employers of planning graduates. She came to the conclusion that:

- Graduates found education that had provided them with a critical way of thinking and evaluation, to be the most valuable to them in their working lives.
- Practitioners felt that planning education should nurture candidates who think creatively and plan positively for a sustainable future. Graduates were seen to bring fresh and new ideas to the workplace and compensate for those who have been in planning practice for a while and tend to gradually lose their sharpness.
- Within local authorities there was a sense that statutory land-use planning was an increasingly sidelined activity, whilst officials from other departments took on work that used to be in the planner's realm. The sentiment was that planners had to regain

their role, break free from the constraints of the statutory system and demonstrate how they could be part of proactive, creative and integrated solutions to complex problems.

- It was feared that land-use control was increasingly seen as a negative, limited administrative exercise that was being deskilled. There was agreement that it should be reinvigorated as a powerful agent of change.
- It was felt that the planning education system should not necessarily gear students up to working in a particular environment, but instead that awareness of this complexity should make them appreciate the pressures placed upon the planning process in practice and the implications it holds for future development of the profession.
- It was also felt that planning education should respond to the following:
  - The increasingly integrated nature of land-use and transport planning
  - The new regional planning processes
  - The impact of a unified Europe
  - The IT revolution
  - New approaches to local planning
  - The changing nature of local and community regeneration processes and programmes
  - The introduction of community plans
  - The increasing popular notion of planners as ‘people dealers’ (Poxon, 2000: 11-13).

Poxon concludes that *“the role of the planner is so ill-defined now that it is difficult to claim that a planning course is providing training for a particular job. Instead it should be exposing students to the complexity and intricacy of a planner’s role, ... and equipping them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes upon which further training can be build”* (Poxon, 2000: 14).

### 3.4.1.2 Core competencies required of entry-level planners in Oregon, U.S.

Ozawa and Seltzer (1999: 260) surveyed senior planners in public agencies and private firms employing entry-level planners in Oregon, USA. The survey provides insight into the skills preference expressed by planners, which in turn becomes their desired focus for a core curriculum.

Ozawa and Seltzer found all the most highly regarded skills to be communication skills. They included, in order of preference: working well as a member of the team, working well with the general public, and understanding the needs of the public or client. Alexander (2001: 378) criticises their research by arguing that these are not skills at all, but interactive abilities, positive attitude and good judgement. He re-classifies them as: being a good team player, having interactive talent, and showing good judgement.

Ozawa and Seltzer also found that other highly sought-after ‘skills’ included:

- The ability to complete tasks on time and within budget
- Being a ‘self-starter’
- Knowing how to read and interpret a zoning code
- An understanding of the planning process and the roles played by planners and others
- The ability to think and respond on one’s feet and an ability to see multiple perspectives
- Synthesising them into a single product.

A number of practitioners added other qualities required, namely: initiative, creativity, dependability, tolerance, good humour, integrity and common sense. When asked what skills would make an employee valuable enough to promote, the results were as follow: communication, teamwork, general technical ability and competence, and productivity. Also mentioned were leadership, writing, speaking, being a self-starter, problem-solving ability,

adaptability and flexibility, knowledge of codes, customer service, knowledge of the public interest, enthusiasm and motivation (Ozawa & Seltzer, 1999: 264).

Ozawa and Seltzer found that the least sought-after skills included:

- Competency in multiple linear regression
- An understanding of micro-economic theory and its application
- Competency in GIS
- Knowledge of the evolution of urban form.

Alexander (2001: 378) strongly challenges this by saying the least sought-after 'skills' are very specialised. He adds, if the respondent's domain of practice differs significantly from the particular specialised knowledge or skills, such a low rating can be expected.

Ozawa and Seltzer also found ranking low the following in sought-after skills:

- Knowledge of the limitations and uses of models and forecasts
- Ability to formulate budgets
- Use of scenario techniques for design
- Knowledge of urban structure
- Ability to visualise plans in three dimensions
- Ability to produce marketing and public information brochures.

Ozawa & Seltzer (1999: 263) suggest some distinct patterns: Writing skills were ranked relatively high, application of theoretical knowledge was ranked higher than the theoretical knowledge itself, and critical thinking skills were also valued more than a quantitative reductionist orientation.

In his commentary, Alexander (2001: 376) points out that Ozawa and Seltzer's article only includes fields of planning, such as development control, physical and land-use planning, development and urban design, without extending it to include environmental planning, economic development, transportation planning or social planning.

Notwithstanding Alexander's criticism, Ozawa and Seltzer's study provides valuable information. These results support the notion that the communicative aspects of planning and the actions of planners, need to be clearly evident as a frame for the construction of a core curriculum. Planners need to hear and be heard, interact with a wide range of stakeholders and have the ability to get the job done. Planners must be able to do more than bring information to the table. They must also be able to understand what constitutes information in the community and they must be able to put it into play. Curricula should be more integrated to teach students technical skills, but at the same time should teach synthesis and communication rather than mere analytical and dissemination skills.

### **3.4.1.3 Core competencies required of planners in Australia**

A study conducted by Robert Zehner (1999: 2-4) on skills required in practice in New South Wales, Australia from 1979 to 1996, indicates that the number of skills most widely used by planners have increased from 19 identified in 1979 to 33 items in 1996.

He found skills and subject matter that have remained important from 1979 to 1996 to be: planning law, development control/statutory planning, administration, and negotiation/conflict resolution. Skills and subject matter that have become more important are: participation techniques/community liaison, communication techniques and neighbourhood/community/urban design.

Areas that have declined in importance are landscape design, recreation/tourism planning and urban/regional research techniques. Internet access ranked very low, but is expected to increase rapidly in future.

Also interesting from this study is the difference in skills usage between the various sectors. People in private practice are more likely to be involved in environmental impact studies, costing/budgeting, survey research, marketing, statistical analysis, internet access and computer aided design (CAD). Local government planners are more likely to be involved in planning law and development control, in participation techniques/community liaison, negotiation/conflict resolution, heritage/conservation planning, architectural and landscape design and GIS work. State government planners, again, are more likely to be involved in sustainable development, urban economics, corporate planning and urban/regional research techniques (Zehner, 1999: 4).

#### 3.4.1.4 Core competencies of qualified South African planners

Various South African planning schools gathered in Bloemfontein in 2000 to discuss the core competencies needed by South African planners (not necessarily entry-level planners). The planning schools of South Africa (September 2000) agreed that a qualified urban and regional planner should be able to “*plan, design, manage and implement the development of human settlement in an integrated and creative way, responding to the critical challenges facing South African society to promote the equitable and sustainable development of people and places.*”

Planning schools do not expect candidates to possess the full set of competencies at graduation stage, but the universities see themselves as institutions for training potential planners. They expect graduates to acquire a number of skills during their initial 2-3 years in the profession – which is the required period for full registration with SACTRP (Todes, 2001).

According to a consensus reached among planning schools on the core competencies of planners, a qualified person should therefore be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- Orientation to social justice and equal opportunity
- An appreciation of the diversity of cultures and views
- A people-centred approach
- Promotion of efficiency in resource use
- An orientation towards sustainable development
- Respect for professional ethics.

Demonstration of a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge, and ability to apply this in action. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an understanding of:

- The nature, purpose and methods of planning
- The histories, philosophies and theories of planning and of development
- The theories relating to the natural, social, economic, developmental and political environments
- The theories and principles relating to the design of urban environments
- The theories relating to urban, metropolitan, rural and regional development, and to these contexts and processes
- The South African context and its particular challenges

- An application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements.

Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an aptitude to:

- Collect, analyse and organise information to determine planning processes
- Use technologies to assist these processes
- Apply appropriate knowledge pertaining to political, policy and institutional contexts, and of planning legislation and procedures
- Prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales
- Undertake planning with due appreciation of aesthetic dimensions, and with sensitivity to the links between human settlement and the natural environment
- Interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving
- Apply knowledge to the implementation of plans and to land management and development processes.

Linking and synthesising, programmes and projects from various sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An integrative understanding of development issues and processes
- An understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes
- An ability to think creatively and synoptically
- An understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occurs
- An understanding of key issues in relation to development in South Africa including local economic development, land reform, and urban restructuring and the development of integrated settlements.

Conducting academic research in order to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements
- An ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information
- An ability to apply generated knowledge to planning problems, in a creative way.

Application of the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An understanding of social dynamics and power relations
- An understanding of political processes and governance
- Strategic thinking and management
- Financial management
- Organisational management
- Project management
- Decision-making skills
- Organisational skills
- An ability to relate to and work with people
- An ability to work in teams as well as individually
- An understanding of approaches, processes and techniques associated with participatory and collaborative forms of planning
- Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills

- An ability to communicate effectively verbally, graphically and by electronic means.

Planning schools feel the most important competencies qualified planners should be able to demonstrate are the following:

- A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical issues in the public domain
- Demonstrating a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge, and the ability to apply this in action
- The ability to link knowledge to spatial plans and policies
- Linking and synthesising programmes and projects from various sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development
- Conducting academic research in order to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities
- The application of managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors.

Consensus reached by South African planning schools points to most of the core competencies mentioned by senior planners in public agencies and private firms in Oregon, USA, recorded in the study by Ozawa and Seltzer. Missing from the study in Oregon, which is mentioned by the South African planning schools, is *“A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice.”* This is an indication that countries are of vastly different contexts. South African history is one of exclusion, so local skills in *“acting in the moral and ethical dimensions in the public domain”* are a lot more important than in many other countries.

The report of the Transition Committee of the South African Council of Town & Regional Planners (in School of Public Management and Planning, 2001a) in preparing a framework for new legislation for the planning profession, sets out the core competencies of a planner as follows:

- Spatial orientation
- Creativity
- Synthesising approach
- Interventive attitude
- Holistic ability
- The ability to co-ordinate and integrate
- A people-centred approach
- A socio-economic developmental approach
- Environmentally sensitive orientation.

In the same document mention is also made of ethical, analytical and operational competencies. The ethical competency requires a basic written examination in and an oath of adherence to codes of ethics and conduct, and the analytical competency at graduate level requires that students show the ability to analyse spatial, developmental and environmental issues and to make planning proposals at local scales. The operational competency at graduate level requires a basic theoretical and practical understanding of legislation, practice and planning techniques/technologies.

#### 3.4.1.5 Skills in the developing world

Hamza & Zetter (2000: 447) devised criteria for the teaching of skills and competencies in the developing world. According to them, operational knowledge and skills imparted in planning education should be reformulated in the context of the new paradigm of urban management. This demands a model of planning education that instils techniques of development promotion

and partnership rather than an emphasis on control and regulation. Skills in designing, negotiating and financing new forms of partnerships and enterprise are needed.

They identify the following skills to be part of the tool-kit of the 'planner as urban manager' in the developing world that planning education and training should recognise: easing supply-side constraints to small-scale enterprise; developing partnerships; negotiating development gains; improving low-income group land supply; coordinating infrastructure delivery; and designing finance programmes for small-industry development.

Because governments experience greater autonomy through decentralisation, planning education and training should provide planners with new skills in the area of public finance. This includes contracting and charging for services, negotiating community gains from development opportunities, and using innovative ways to manage land. Knowledge of public finance, commercial development finance, cost recovery and negotiations regarding financial returns from partnerships are all necessary skills (Hamza & Zetter, 2000: 449).

### 3.4.2 Developing a core curriculum for planning education

#### 3.4.2.1 Is there a need for changes to curricula?

There are continuously calls for changes to be made to planning education, and by implication the planning curriculum as "*the role of the planning profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is perceived as being quite different from that of the preceding decades*" (Poxon, 1999: 1).

Price and Kinghorn (1999: 14) report that graduates and employers in the U.K. admit to being ill-equipped for the tasks and challenges in the market. They believe that a radical shake-up of the way planning education is administered, taught and funded in the U.K. is necessary, if young professionals are to have the necessary skills to support the profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

According to Friedman (1996: 89), the same holds true of the U.S. He assessed the planning degree programmes of 19 accredited American schools and one Canadian school and found that despite all the theoretical changes in planning since the mid-1950s, "*the practice of planning education continues to reproduce itself from decade to decade.*" According to Friedman, the core curriculum of planning education institutions in North America needs critical examination. The reasons are:

- After 40 years of planning, the conception of planning and planners has undergone major change as the profession adapted its self-understanding to changing circumstances in the socio-historical context of its practice.
- In the academy and in practice, planners are competing with professionals trained in other disciplines such as policy studies, public administration, law, ecology, engineering, geography, architecture, landscape architecture and applied economics. Planners have to redefine themselves in order to compete successfully as urban professionals.
- The role of the state is declining with a greater reliance on market solutions. More and more planners are working outside the state in both the private sector and the non-profit, voluntary sector of the economy.
- The North-American economy has changed from a mass industrial production economy to an information-driven service economy and 'flexible' production. Society finds itself in a post-modern period opening up to a multiplicity of voices. At the same time there is a shift from a nation-centred economy to a global economy, a borderless world.
- Cities have changed from single-centred units of relatively modern size, to vast, highly differentiated urban fields with clusters of centres. These centres function as command



and control centres of transnational investment, production, distribution and global capital accumulation.

- Economic and urban restructuring has been accompanied by philosophical criticism that energises social thought by the infusion of minorities such as women and ethnic and non-Western racial groups. These philosophies are undermining the once unquestionable faith in the powers of positivism, nomothetic science and particularly human science (Friedman, 1996: 89-90).

According to these international studies, there is a perceived need in planning practice and with some academics for change to the core curricula of universities. This study will show that, to a lesser extent, the same perceptions hold sway in South Africa among planning professionals in both the public and private sector. All four academic institutions surveyed are continuously assessing their curricula, or have in the last year made curriculum changes to address concerns in the industry, the changing global environment or the needs of the South African context.

### 3.4.2.2 Framework for a core planning curriculum

There are many views as to prerequisites for a core curriculum in planning education. Oranje (1997: 286) and Ozawa & Seltzer (1999: 259) believe that planning schools need to produce planners who are able and willing to fill niches that are no longer clearly defined. A core curriculum should enable planners to jump and dive into a multitude of niches, but also provide the option for students to gear themselves for excursions into specific fields.

Schutte (1995: 5-7) mentions a number of guidelines for designing a degree curriculum. The first one is that curricula should be in line with the envisaged aim of the degree. This aim is to provide broad, general training and education and give a thorough and fundamental grounding in the basic principles of the subject or field of study to be specialised in. The second guideline is that a degree curriculum should emphasise the underlying principles of that particular field of study as identified in the basic core matter. Thirdly, the greater part of the degree curriculum should consist of subject matter that instils the principles underlying scientific thought and method. Fourthly, a curriculum should be structured around a major subject or subjects and may be supported by supplementary ones. Lastly there should be a balance between basic and less basic subjects.

Warren *et al* (1999: 59) see as a prerequisite that the framework for a curriculum should take into account the future of planning practice and planning for the future. Planning students should be encouraged to participate in the wider discourse about urban futures that are found in cultural theory, fiction, popular culture and critical theory.

Three decades ago, the SAITRP conference (1972) established some prerequisites for a planning curriculum that are still appropriate today. The conference made out a case for the framework in planning education to extend beyond the practical issue of devising a curriculum, incorporating all relevant subjects. A conceptual paradigm is needed in which all subjects are systematically ordered in terms of their content and intent, their levels of interdependency and relatedness, and their position in the total planning process. In order to be intellectually effective, the curriculum should attempt to meet the following prerequisites:

- It should be capable of accommodating the internal changes that will occur in the discipline in response to variation in the external environment.
- It should place all subjects, including those contributed by associated disciplines, in a definite context.
- It should provide a common and constant reference point for the study of all scales and fields of planning, at graduate and undergraduate level (SAITRP, 1972: 35).

There are many more views as to what a planning curriculum should entail. At a SAITRP conference in 1991, planners felt that the planning curriculum should include more aspects of Third World planning and development, and should concentrate on the philosophical, theoretical and research methodology aspects of planning (Africa, 1993: 63). Faludi (1978: 181-182) identifies the planning curriculum as including projects, case studies and courses dealing directly with aspects of planning and forming the backbone of the curriculum. Friedman (1996: 100-101) sees a neglect of methods and skills such as spatial analysis, negotiation and mediation, professional ethics, communication and rhetoric, and programme and project evaluation in the planning curriculum. Sandercock (1998b: 222) would like to see planning programmes articulate environmental and design aspects to better understand the problems of human settlements.

Differences in opinion as to the practical nature of the planning course, have been expressed earlier. The SAITRP in 1991 stated that the primary aim of planning should be academic and not practical. The planning programme should provide sufficient broad knowledge, allowing students to specialise at a later stage. However, others such as Baum (1997a) and Price and Kinghorn (1999), judge certain courses to be skewed inappropriately in the direction of training for traditional academic disciplines (specifically social research) and away from planning practice, so that new planners are not prepared for the complex relationships and interaction that face them in practice. Planning courses should teach more vocational and practical basics. Planning, therefore, needs to determine a more constructive relationship between planning practice, theory and education.

Friedman (1996: 101) argues that teaching the core may be substantially reorganised for greater pedagogical effectiveness, i.e.:

- Strictly limit the number of electives in the core
- Adopt a modular approach for more concentrated, effective learning
- Encourage small-group work from the beginning of degree studies
- Closely co-ordinate the core curriculum through a faculty designated each year for this purpose
- Round off the core with a rigorous written examination covering the full range of subject matter, with special reference to practice.

Others also vote for a more focused approach to the planning curriculum. Mann, in 'The Fuzzy Future of Planning Education' maintains: "*few things are more planless than planning education*" (1970: 249). The SAITRP (1972: 131), Kitchen (in Poxon, 1999:8), Ndzombane (1995:2) and Hague (1994, 20) argue to do away with absorbing masses of facts – with cramming more and more material into the curriculum, and inflicting on students the attendance of long hours of lectures. Graduates should be able to play a leading and integrative role at just about every aspect of the development process, according to Ndzombane (1995: 2). Quality and not quantity should determine the literature. More discussion periods should be enforced to develop students' knowledge, viewpoints, questioning and presentation skills. It would therefore not always be necessary to determine the student's knowledge by way of test or examination (as Friedman argues for).

Hague suggests that the core needs to be trimmed down and sharpened to be more demanding in terms of standards. The content of the core needs to be extended to rather concentrate on key skills and to include new skills and activities such as GIS and environmental issues.

Rodriguez (1993: 154) proposes the following observations to strengthen the planning programmes:

- Schools should maintain the concept of a core curriculum to graduate planning generalists, while developing specialisation responsive to the needs of an ever more complex society.
- Keep in mind who the clients would be for planning schools' products. The curriculum should cater for public and private sector planning.
- Planning curricula should be fashioned to respond better to the practice of planning, by implementing a collaborative planning curriculum.
- Practitioners' diversity and experience should be tapped in planning education.
- Multicultural faculty should be recruited to establish role models for students and junior faculty and prepare students for a multicultural society.
- Rethink the length of the planning programmes and standards for granting degrees.

In designing a curriculum, Sandercock (1998b, 222) asks questions about 'knowledge': how it is constituted, by whom, for whom and for what purpose? What kind of knowledge do planners need in a post-modern age in which nothing is certain save for uncertainty itself? How does one avoid the reduction of 'knowledge' to a set of measurable (and marketable) skills; the ossifying of programmes around a 'core' whose main purpose is indoctrination into the professional culture of state planning, and which perpetuates the outdated modernist paradigm; the loss of focus on questions of meaning, of value, of the spirit, which has resulted from an over-reliance on positivist social science; and the tendency to draw tight boundaries around professional identity, which prevents a truly interdisciplinary understanding and practice from emerging?

#### **3.4.2.3 What subjects should the core curriculum entail?**

Perloff (1957: 38), regarded as the father of planning education by many, insisted that the core curriculum in planning should consist of three elements: a basic knowledge in planning, basic methods and techniques of planning, and problem-solving experiences that include case studies and workshops (theory, methodology and practice).

There are many opinions on the exact subjects to be included in the core curriculum, but it should be realised that there will never be agreement as to what those subjects are.

Hague (1994: 20) suggests an understanding of markets, management and politics, knowledge and understanding of the built environment and the nature of land, the operation of land and property markets and the financing of development, and how bureaucracies and processes work in relation to conflicts over development. Add to this: planning law and environmental history. Healey (1991) argues that the core is to be found in environmentalism and management of the environment and that students therefore need to be skilled in scientific social analysis, future thinking, negotiating and communicative skills, and project and programme management.

In 1999, PLANET (an electronic network linking planning educators across North America and beyond) called for a list of core curriculum subjects presented at universities in the U.S. (This excluded GIS and statistical subjects.) The list made it quite clear that there are as many opinions to what should be included in the curriculum as there are subjects. The following subjects were included in the curriculum of planners:

Table 3.2 - List of core subjects presented in American planning schools

Area	Topic	Subject
Advanced planning methods	Evaluation	Alternatives
		Cost benefit
		Cost effectiveness
		Decision trees
		Delphi and nominal group
		Discounting
		Economic
		Establishing criteria
		Matrices
		Multi-criteria
		Overview
		Plans
		Policy
		Problem definition
	Impacts	Economic
		Environmental
		Fiscal
		Indicators
		Social
	Implementation	Budgeting
		Institutions
		Management
		Monitoring
		Organisation
		Plans
		Project planning
	Models	Econometric
		Financial
		Gravity
		Markov
		Monte Carlo
		Optimisation
		Queuing
Site selection		
Spatial		
Spatial interaction		
Transportation land-use		
Transportation		
Applications	Environmental	Climate
		Environmental justice
		Habitats
		History
		Life cycle analysis
		NEPA
		Regulations
		Waste management
		Wetlands
		Land-use
	Comprehensive planning	
	Land classification	
	Needs assessment	
	Overview	
	Plan evaluation	
	Plan monitoring	
	Plan making	
	Transport – land-use relation	
	Real estate	Appraisal
		Equilibrium
Highest and best use		
Historic preservation		

		Housing
		Market analysis
		Office
		Pro forma
		Process
		Public private partnership
		Retail
		Supply
Basic planning methods	Employment	Assumptions
		Economic base
		Income expenditure
		Input/output
		Labour market
		Location quotients
		Minimum requirements
	Population	Multipliers
		Projections
		Cohort survival
		Concentration
		Extrapolation
		Projections
		Ratio
Communication	Dispute	Facilitation
		Mediation
		Negotiation
	Group	Citizen participation
		Consensus building
		Objective setting
	Presentation	Community meeting
		How to
		In class
Other planning methods	Information systems	Techniques
		GIS
	Statistics	PSS
		ANOVA
		Basic
		Regression
		SPSS
Research	Conceptualisation	Approaches to science
		Conceptual framework
		Dimensions of research
		Formulating research questions
	Methods	Data reduction
		Experimental
		Funding
		Historical-comparative
		Literature review procedures
		Operationalisation
		Qualitative overview
		Quantitative overview
		Research project management
		Primary data
	Content analysis	
	Field research	
	Focus groups	
	Interviews	
	Observation	
	Sampling	
	Secondary data	Surveys
		Census
		Economic
Policy		

		Urban
Theory	Planning theories	Communicative
		Creativity
		Ethics
		History
		Normative
		Planning theory
		Positive
		Rational
		Strategic
		Sustainability

Friedman (1996: 96) and Sandercock (1998b: 223-224) try to encompass all the knowledge required by planners into six macro-social processes that constitute and define the urban habitat in their interaction as a part of the core curriculum. These six processes generate most of the problems planners need to address and also generate our life space:

- **Urbanisation:** Processes that produce the form and structure of two-dimensional urban space. Includes literature on urban geography, urban economics, urban sociology, urban anthropology, urban history, comparative urban and regional studies and planning on topics such as migration, mobility, settlement patterns, urban land values, suburbanisation, etc.
- **Regional and economic growth and change processes:** Economic explanation has been given primacy of the many factors determining the formation of urban space. Regional economics and regional planning have a long history dating back to the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- **City-building processes:** A new field of research into the political-economy of buildings, decline, and rebuilding of city-building ensembles. Ensembles are aggregates of physical structures that typify a particular urban landscape.
- **Cultural differentiation and change:** This under-studied process in urban planning is of particular importance in high-immigrant cities. Among the urban sociology topics are spatial segmentation and culturally specific forms of life among immigrant groups that structure city neighbourhoods, territorially based communities, ethnic identity formation, inter-ethnic and race conflict, formation of youth subcultures and segmented labour-markets. New hybrid forms of politics and urban living are emerging in the 'borderlands' where cultures meet, also resulting in new forms of intolerance and exclusion.
- **Transformation of nature:** Human settlements use resources on a massive scale. Urbanisation changes the natural landscape characteristics, produces huge amounts of residuals, and renders much of the natural environment unfit for further use. This transformation of nature is now one of the most basic and critical processes shaping the urban habitat.
- **Urban politics and empowerment:** It is the process of mobilised communities that guides, prods, resists and stake out claims in the evolving fortunes of the city and its regions. It includes rallies, political activism, empowerment of the disadvantaged, and advancement of interest groups – the rise of civil society.

Friedman (1996: 99-100) suggests a set of generic planning courses that could encompass the six macro-social processes as mentioned above. They are:

- **The history, theory and contemporary practice of planning:** An introduction to planning as a profession, the history of the profession, the present controversies and modes of contemporary practice. Students should discover the different modalities of planning, from policy analysis and social engineering to communicative action and emancipatory practice.

- **Quantitative methods:** Learning the language of statistical analysis would appear to be a basic requirement for aspiring planners. Descriptive statistics, statistical inference, urban data source, problems of spatial statistics, estimation and forecasting procedures and survey methods should be part of the curriculum.
- **Spatial analysis and GIS:** Socio-spatial processes are central to analysis of the urban habitat. A basic understanding of the significance of space and spatial theories at all relevant scales is necessary, as well as the skills of geographical representation through computerised information systems (GIS).
- **Communication, group work, and rhetoric:** Planners' effectiveness in communicating ideas through writing, graphics, and the spoken word is fundamental to their work. Planners also work in community groups and other participatory settings and should therefore have some skills in group dynamics and running meetings, listening and encouraging active group discussions. Planners should learn to think on their feet, make clear and persuasive public presentations and reply to difficult and confrontational questions.
- **Negotiation and mediation:** Good negotiation skills are often necessary for carrying out a project successfully. Planners can no longer claim the high moral ground of public interest. Planners now have to negotiate with a number of role-players to resolve inter-group conflict.
- **Programme and project evaluation:** Planners often have to assess projects or entire programmes – before, during or after implementation. It has become a sophisticated set of methodologies that we are only beginning to understand.
- **Professional ethics:** Planners come up continuously against ethical and moral dilemmas in their work. A sensitivity to ethical and moral issues in planning can be taught, although the burden of decision-making cannot be lifted from the individual conscience.

Zetter (1996: 63) suggests an indicative knowledge base for planners in the developing world of which the main components of a curriculum include the following:

- **Urbanisation processes:** Economic development and urbanisation, globalisation; migrations and spatial transformation; who builds the city?; cities as resources; informal sector; social differentiation.
- **Land issues:** Market dynamics, cultural contexts and political economy; administrative and institutional instruments; fiscal tools; infrastructure and land development; land-use codes and regulation; public supply and funding.
- **Planning and management:** Planning and resource allocation; planning and co-ordination; implementation and enablement.

With this suggested curriculum, Zetter is trying to demonstrate how the fundamental shift in the knowledge base which planners require impacts on the structure of planning education for the developing world.

*“The goal of education is not how to stuff the most facts, techniques, methods and information into students' minds, but how to raise the most basic questions of value”* (Sandercock, 1998b: 230).

### 3.4.3 Summary and conclusion

*“What is needed today, is a new synthesis of skills that includes all of the lessons of the modern era – political relevance, public inclusiveness, quantitative techniques, narrative, openness of communication, and more – while recovering lost emphases from the past”* (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000: 231).

From the various opinions as to what skills and competencies planners require, the following conclusion can be drawn. It would seem as if the skills and competencies mostly in demand with the planning profession are the following:

Managerial and communication skills:

- Being a good team player
- Having interactive talent (negotiating, community liaison, partnering)
- Showing good judgement (understanding community needs, moral and ethical issues and the complexity of planning environments)
- Writing skills
- Initiative and creativity
- Leadership
- Political awareness
- Flexibility and adaptability.

Analytical skills:

- Critical way of thinking
- Application of theoretical and contextual knowledge
- Proactive and integrated problem-solving ability
- Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies
- Financial analysis
- IT skills and technical ability.

Knowledge of specific subject matter:

- Land-use control/statutory planning
- Planning law
- Planning theory
- Neighbourhood/community/urban design
- Municipal infrastructure
- Public administration and finance
- Environmental management.

It would seem that some technical abilities, such as competency in modelling, forecasting and systems analysis, and the use of scenario techniques for design are less in demand in the U.S. Specific subject matter also less in demand in other countries are: landscape design, tourism planning, urban/regional research techniques and micro-economics.

It is necessary to know what skills and competencies are needed, in order to ensure the planning curriculum is relevant for the planning environment and planners are able to compete with other professionals in the same market. The core curriculum should keep pace with the changing context in terms of the subjects presented as well as the way it is being presented.

Curricula development is therefore an ongoing activity, and academics should continue to grapple with the following questions as put forward by Africa (1993: 99) in order to assess the aim of their curricula:

- What is the present nature of planning practice?
- What is the foreseeable nature of planning practice?
- What kind of planning profession should planning education promote in South Africa?
- What are passing fads and what are paradigm shifts in planning theory and practice?
- What skills are needed by planners to fulfil the needs of planning practice?



### 3.5 Conclusion

*“Many professionals are ill prepared in their education to deal with the realities confronting the low income majority, and see much of what is going on as being outside of their professional and disciplinary boundaries.”* (Hamdi, 1996: 1).

Planning education is the key to the survival and the relevance of the planning profession. Planning education therefore needs to be relevant by addressing the right skills and competencies in its curricula, and by constantly exposing the limitations and strengths of the curriculum in the light of international trends, the South African context and the envisaged future of the planning profession. Taught skills and knowledge should simultaneously have universal value and local relevance, because we should never forget that we are living in a developing country where so little benefit is being felt by those to whom all the efforts and expertise are purportedly directed. Unless these skills and knowledge are used to the service of others, it is of little relevance.

A relevant curriculum will however not ensure job opportunities for graduates. The whole educational framework needs to be relevant for the South African context. This means planning schools should consider their approach to practical experience during course work, their approach to teaching a speciality, providing continued professional development, diversifying their curricula to reflect the realities of South Africa, and reflect on the future of planning to position themselves for the challenges of a globalised new economy in a local context.

The local context is that tertiary trends are changing in South Africa, and planning is one of the slower growing professions in the country, compared to commerce and information technology. Planning schools should therefore consider to merge and to combine resources.

Planning education should provide leadership and direction to the profession at large. To do this planners have to develop wisdom and that combination of skills, abilities and attitudes which will enable them to operate successfully in a messy and unequal world. Planning schools should therefore teach a broad knowledge base in order for planners to understand complex, dynamic systems of settlements and yet to be more ably specialised in applying that knowledge.

## CHAPTER 4: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITIES' PLANNING PROGRAMMES

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South Africa has experienced immense social and political changes during the past decade. These changes have had a vast impact on the nature and direction of town planning education. This has been disorienting but also stimulating for academics (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 1). Universities are trying to grasp the implications of these changes, and the broader shifts in tertiary education, for the future training of planners, and they are continuously assessing their educational frameworks and curricula.

The crucial questions are: are the planning programmes of universities relevant for the South African planning profession within a globalised context? Do planning schools teach the right skills?

The aim of this chapter is to serve as background to the above question and the empirical research in the next chapter, in which professionals from the planning community assess the relevance of planning education. Four universities were included in the research. The criterium for selection was to choose one historically Afrikaans and one English-speaking university that present planning at an undergraduate level, and one historically Afrikaans and one English-speaking university, presenting planning at master's degree level. Availability of respondents was also taken into account; thus it was decided to choose universities in metropolitan areas. With Pretoria University being the only historically Afrikaans university within a metropole, it was decided to also select Stellenbosch as representative of the Cape Town metropolitan area. The other two institutions chosen were the universities of the Witwatersrand and Natal.

Chapter 4 commences with some historical information as to the establishment of a town planning course at these four universities. It further probes the attitude of each of them towards the planning profession, planning education, the future of planning, and how it manifests in the curriculum; how their planning programmes cope with declining student numbers and quality of students, core skills and competencies deemed necessary, and the promotion thereof in their respective courses through fieldwork and continued professional development. Some Third World concerns are discussed in this chapter, but is has not been assessed as a topic per se.

The information gathered from the respective planning schools has been synthesised and is presented as the view of planning schools, unless otherwise stated. This was possible due to the commonalities in planning programmes and philosophies towards planning education.

Information was gathered from marketing brochures, web sites, course outlines, yearbooks and other documentation, as well as from interviews with the heads of the planning departments at Wits and Pretoria, a senior lecturer at Stellenbosch, as the head of that department has retired, a programme director at Natal University, and study leader for this thesis. Many of the opinions are therefore personal views expressed by these academics.

The second chapter of the findings, chapter 5, analyses the relevance of planning education from the planning profession's point of view. Planners from the public and private sectors in the metropolitan areas of South Africa in which these four universities are located, participated in the research.

## 4.1 Introducing the four universities

### 4.1.1 University of Natal

The University of Natal (UND) is a historically English-speaking university that introduced a diploma course in town planning in 1957, and a master's degree in 1976. The urban and regional planning programme falls within the Faculty of Community and Development Disciplines, under the auspices of the School of Architecture, Planning and Housing. The planning courses draw on linkages from other programmes and areas of strength within the school, the faculty and the university, enabling students to access a variety of specialised modules available within the university.

The School of Architecture, Planning and Housing has a dormant relationship with the Built Environment Support Group (BESG), an advocacy planning organisation established within the school. BESG provides architectural and planning services to democratically constituted communities unable to afford these services. It is also active in the policy area.

#### Planning degrees offered by the school

The nature of the planning programme is post-graduate study, offering three coursework master's degrees in planning:

- The Master of Town and Regional Planning, which is a 2-year professional qualification, equipping planners to operate as generalist planners across a wide range of aspects within planning.
- The Master of Development Planning, run in conjunction with the School of Development Studies, which focuses on economic and social development aspects and intersectoral coordination, with limited attention to spatial and physical planning.
- The Master of Environment and Planning, run in conjunction with the School of Environmental and Life Sciences, which focuses on physical planning, with a stronger emphasis on environmental dimensions and methods of assessment.

In addition to coursework master's degrees the planning programme offers degrees by thesis:

- The Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning is open to students who wish to undertake a master's degree in planning by thesis.
- The PhD in Urban and Regional Planning is open to master's graduates who wish to undertake a doctoral thesis in planning.

The School of Architecture, Planning and Housing has also developed a Housing Master's programme, and modules are available to planning students who wish to develop a specialism in this area (Todes, 2002a; School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, 2002a; Harrison & Todes: 2001b, 4).

### 4.1.2 University of Pretoria

The University of Pretoria (UP) is a historically Afrikaans-speaking university. It introduced a diploma course in 1959 and a post-graduate programme in the then Department of Land Surveying, in 1969. An undergraduate bachelor's degree in 1976 was added. Town and Regional Planning gained full-fledged status as an academic department in 1991 in the Faculty of Science.

Presently, the Town and Regional Planning Department is part of the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology. Each of the faculties at the university

consists of a number of separate schools. The Town and Regional Planning Department forms part of the School for the Built Environment.

### **Planning degrees offered by the school**

Three coursework degrees in planning are offered:

- Bachelor's degree in Town and Regional Planning over not less than four years of full-time study.
- Post-graduate (Honours) course in Town and Regional Planning.
- Master of Town and Regional Planning.

In addition to coursework, the planning programme offers degrees by thesis:

- The Master of Town and Regional Planning is open to students who wish to undertake a master's degree in planning by thesis.
- The PhD in Town and Regional Planning is open to master's graduates who wish to undertake a doctoral thesis in planning (Oranje, 2001; School for the Built Environment, 2002a; Harrison & Todes: 2001b, 4).

### **4.1.3 University of Stellenbosch**

The University of Stellenbosch (US), a historically Afrikaans-speaking university, introduced a post-graduate planning degree in 1966. In 2001 planning amalgamated with the Department of Public Management to form the School for Public Management and Planning. A master's programme in Development Planning was introduced in 2001.

### **Planning degrees offered by the school**

Two coursework master's degrees in planning are offered:

- Master of Town and Regional Planning is a taught, two-year, full-time master's programme aimed at developing a holistic approach to urbanisation and social and economic development. The course is primarily concerned with the creation and management of the physical context in which development, aimed at enhancing the opportunities for social and economic growth of communities, may take place. This is the traditional route followed to gain professional recognition as a town and regional planner.
- Master of Philosophy in Development Planning (as from 2001). Whilst town and regional planning is concerned with development processes and the spatial requirements necessary for development to take place, it is not normally directly involved in the social upliftment process or its management; this is rather the area of concern of a number of other professionals such as the development planner. Development planning can be seen as a way of promoting the social and economic advancement of communities.

In addition to coursework master's degrees, the planning programme offers degrees by thesis:

- Master of Town and Regional Planning for candidates with a bachelor's degree in Town and Regional Planning.
- Master of Town and Regional Planning (Urban Design) for candidates with a bachelor's degree in Town and Regional Planning or Architecture.

- PhD in Town and Regional Planning (Muller, 2001; School of Public Management and Planning, 2002; Harrison & Todes: 2001b, 4).

#### 4.1.4 University of the Witwatersrand

A historically English-speaking university, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) introduced a diploma course in town planning in 1946. Wits was the first to present a full-time bachelor's degree in town planning in 1962, and a master's degree in development planning in the early 1980s. Wits has recently undergone curricula restructuring, allowing for specialisation in fields such as environmental management, municipal planning and tourism.

The School of Architecture and Planning falls within the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment and offers undergraduate and post-graduate degrees in architecture, town and regional planning, development planning and housing.

##### Planning degrees offered by the school

Three coursework degrees in planning are offered:

- A Bachelor of Science in Town and Regional Planning over not less than four years of full-time study.
- A Master of Science in Development Planning presented over not less than two years full-time study or three years part-time study, provided that applicants with a four-year degree in town and regional planning may complete the degree in a period of one year full-time and two years part-time.
- A Master of Science in Town and Regional Planning in the field of housing, presented over not less than one year full-time study, or two years part-time study.

In addition to coursework, the planning programme offers degrees by thesis:

- The Master of Town and Regional Planning is open to students who wish to undertake a master's degree in planning by thesis.
- The PhD in Town and Regional Planning is open to master's graduates who wish to undertake a doctoral thesis in planning (Harrison, 2001b; School of Architecture and Planning, 2002; 2001b: 15-18, 31-34, 44-46; Harrison & Todes: 2001b, 4).

## 4.2 The nature of planning

### 4.2.1 The nature of town and regional planning

In its marketing brochure, the School of Architecture and Planning (Wits) defines town and regional planning as "*a profession concerned with the management and development of human settlement, within urban and rural settings. It is about organising human activity in a way that will help realise our hopes and dreams for the future.*"

Planning activities are said to be wide-ranging and varying in "*scale and content from the design of development on an individual site to the preparation of policies and strategies for the future development of a country, and even a continent. ... Some professional planners focus on the physical design, whilst others deal more with issues such as environmental management, local economic development, regional development, property development or transportation.*" The brochure adds that planners work for national, provincial and local government, as

consultants in private firms for large corporations, or even for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs).

The tools used in planning are: integrated development plans, land-use zoning, environmental impact assessment, techniques of community participation and technologies such as geographical information systems (GIS) and computer aided design (CAD) (School of Architecture and Planning, 2001a).

The School for the Built Environment (UP) describes town and regional planning on their homepage as being primarily about the *“planning, design, implementation and management of public interventions in the development and use of land from site to supranational level. The intentions of these interventions are to widen choice, promote equity and ensure sustainable development. The guiding motive of the profession is the generation of viable alternatives to present settlement types. At the current juncture in South Africa's history, town and regional planning is a key profession in the rectification of the spatial and other imbalances in both urban and rural areas, as well as the improvement of inefficient and under-performing living environments”* (School for the Built Environment, 2002a).

According to the School of Architecture, Planning and Housing (UNN), *“town and regional planning emerged in nineteenth century Europe as an attempt to solve problems arising out of rapid urbanisation and public health. Planning has changed and developed over the years, reflecting both contextual changes and the development of a more sophisticated conceptual understanding of the field. While town and regional planning is generally concerned with the development of policies, plans, programmes and projects which have a distinct spatial aspect, the work which planners undertake have gone far beyond the purely spatial and physical and management of land-use change. Current planning practice internationally and in South Africa is deeply involved in the social, economic, environmental and political aspects of urban and regional development; embracing proactive future-oriented planning; and playing significant roles in the broader development and management of human settlements”* (School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, 2002a, 2002c).

It seems as if Pretoria has a very narrowly-focussed definition of planning, concentrating on the public interventionist nature of planning in terms of land use, whereas Wits and Natal concentrate more on the wide range of activities and aspects involved in planning, including not only land-use, but also social, economic, political, economic and environmental aspects. They all seem to have the best interest of the community at heart, while ensuring sustainable development, but Wits is the most idealistic in wanting to ensure people realise their dreams and hopes for the future. The other two definitions are more practical in nature.

#### **4.2.2 Changes in the planning profession in South Africa**

The four universities are in agreement with Harrison and Todes (2001a: 65-67) that under apartheid, policies served a minority of people and created unequal spatial patterns throughout the country. After 1994, a major challenge was to reintegrate the peripheral black areas into the existing urban infrastructure, to achieve coordinated development and to provide services, infrastructure and housing to many disadvantaged communities.

In South Africa a new form of spatial planning has arisen from the need to correct these dichotomies and distorted spatial patterns associated with apartheid. There has been a resurgence of interest in subnational and regional development, and therefore a renewed acceptance of the value of spatial framework strategies (which is incorporated to a large extent in the integrated development plans). This is due to a growing concern with the consequences of ad hoc, fragmented development and concerns about environmental and land-use management

issues. It has also been linked to the recognition of the role of regional development strategies in economic development and growing competitiveness.

There are also many new and emerging themes in planning. New and emerging areas to be linked to planning, as identified by planning schools, include local economic development (LED); integrated development planning as an important tool of government – but not a very competitive field; developing planning policies and legislation; city regeneration; municipal management; development planning; institutional planning; community participation; environmental planning, which has become important to the private sector but is unfortunately developing parallel to planning and not integrated with planning; property development; public management (which was always more prevalent at traditional Afrikaans and black universities, but less so at traditional English universities); rural development and project management. A blurring of boundaries between planning and other professions is also on the increase, opening up the planning field to others, but also enlarging the playing field for planners.

Planning schools see planning as becoming more diverse, and more integrative with other activities (or at least starting to think in terms of integration); as shifting away from a control-oriented approach, to one concerned with the facilitation of development, and with highly participatory approaches to development. It is placing greater direct emphasis on economic and social development, whereas physical planning focuses sharper on sustainable development. Planning is also becoming more involved in governance, although it is still not comfortable with politics.

Planning schools are now aware that the nature of planning has changed to a great extent due to the need for the profession to adjust to the new political league, new legislation and policies, and the changing context. Many companies still specialise in the 'old' planning activities such as land-use applications, but new environmental legislation has changed the way traditional planning is being conducted. Traditional forms of planning such as physical planning, layout design and housing, are however on the decline and many companies are training themselves in new concepts such as LED, development planning, environmental planning and low-cost housing.

These changes in the profession, according to Wits, and the context in which the profession functions, have brought much uncertainty for planners. Growth in the town planning industry is significantly less than expected. There are very few big companies left, as many of them were dissolved into one-man bands, linking into consortiums in order to access government tenders and other projects. Initially there were considerable expectations for planning after the 1994 elections in South Africa, but the outcome of the RDP and other socio-economic strategies proved disappointing. The public sector was expected to become the main driving force of these strategies, but capacity in the public sector was eroded and public sector planning became more facilitative and managerial in nature, doing rather little physical planning at all. The private sector therefore came under tremendous pressure to deliver what the public sector could not. However, although there was restructuring in the mid 1990s, the organised profession is very disappointed in itself as it failed to provide the support needed by government. Another problem is the legislative processes that took a very long time to be finalised and implemented – one such is the Planning Bill.

Harrison and Kahn (2001: 22) identified more changes in the planning profession:

- An increase in the number of very small firms (such as one-man bands)
- The increasing use of contract workers
- Greater use of consortia/partnerships/alliances in handling bigger contracts
- Alliances with black-owned companies
- Increasing partnerships with firms in allied disciplines
- Increase in the amount of planning work undertaken by non-planning firms

- A shift away from the purely spatial to institutional, economic and budgetary planning, as well as land-use management, with firms becoming specialists in particular fields.

Harrison of Wits points out as problematic, planning's lack of a clear identity. Planning still gets associated with the old guard of the apartheid era whereas the progressive planners and universities – who used to have a progressive image while fighting for the cause – are at a loss. An example of the declining image of planning is that a few years ago, there were 1 200 professionals registered with the South African Planning Institute. Today there are only 300 registered planners with the Institute. Planning suffers from an inadequate image, and although planning by nature does not have a clear definition, the profession needs to market itself and create a new branding – for planning does add value in the contemporary world.

According to Stellenbosch, the role of NGOs has also changed. Before 1994, NGOs were in the thick of things as they mostly opposed the government and received funding from overseas. After 1994 they faded away, to a large extent, and are only now starting to regain some importance in negotiating on behalf of communities and becoming involved in different types of planning activities.

### 4.2.3 The changing role of planners

The changing nature of planning as described above, has forced new roles upon planners. South African planners have experienced a prolonged period of accelerated social change, especially since the 1990s with the unbanning of the ANC. The changes have affected individual planners as well as the community of planners. Harrison (with the University of Natal at the time) and Kahn studied these effects in KwaZulu Natal. They found that planners welcomed the political transformation and expected a rejuvenation of the planning profession. However, the outcomes of the change have been more ambiguous and complex for the profession than anticipated.

Up to the early 1980s planning attempted to establish an identity for the profession and to secure support from the state. The 1990s saw attempts to renew the legitimacy of planning and renegotiate a relationship with the new democratic government. Some planners struggled to adapt to the changing realities of planning and found the effects of change to be unexpectedly vague and perplexing for the profession (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 2-3).

The relationship with the state came back onto the professional agenda in the 1990s, but this time the state had international support and credible principles. Planners were eager to be seen as supporters of the new order and to establish their anti-apartheid credentials. But the relationship with the state was complicated by institutional fragmentation. Planning functions were dispersed between various national departments, creating confusion and uncertainty within the profession. There was also confusion between national and provincial government planning functions (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 6-7).

According to Harrison and Kahn (2001: 10), the planning profession in KwaZulu Natal has long been considered more progressive than in the rest of South Africa – although not outspoken, and avoiding direct political involvement until the late 1980s. Planners in Natal were divided, but those with similar political objectives shared a sense of community. After the scrapping of the apartheid laws, planners in Natal played a huge role in commenting on new legislation and policies. Still, the changes of the 1990s had a disorienting effect on many planners and the professional community declined into a poor state of organisation and morale.

The negative impacts were cited as confusion over new procedures, increased pressures and reduced institutional capacity, time problems and delays owing to bureaucracy. The causes of stress in the profession included: bureaucracy, affirmative action, the low status of planners, poor financial rewards, increasing workloads, the time consuming and complex nature of



community participation and negative attitudes towards consultants (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 15-17).

However, a majority of planners indicated that the overall impact of change in the country was positive for their practice as a planner. These positive impacts included new forms of planning, new opportunities for holistic/integrated planning, a sense of a changing environment, planning outcomes more readily accepted by the community, and the opportunity to work with a wider range of people (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 14-15).

Another characteristic of planners is a continued dominance of white males in the profession, but at present the younger cohorts are showing some demographic change regarding females and black people. Regrettably, black leadership is lacking and the available pool of black professionals to fulfil affirmative action requirements is very small. Most black graduates are recent graduates with little experience. They are often placed in senior positions without mentorship and support. In KwaZulu Natal many people are working in the field of planning, but less than half of these 'planners' have planning qualifications (Harrison & Kahn, 2001: 8, 13).

Other areas in the country probably experience the same trends and changes in the role of planners and the accompanying uncertainty. According to both Pretoria and Stellenbosch, the role of planners has changed so as to reflect more responsibility on a socio-political level and to do less technical and design work. They are becoming the negotiators, facilitators or mediators of communities, forcing themselves to do more research before coming to a decision. Many planners have branched into entrepreneurship extending beyond planning activities.

The ideal town planner for these changing times is described on Pretoria's web site as: "... a creative person who is able to put forward innovative solutions to complex problems, a mediator who is able to reconcile diverse points of view, a strategic thinker and a good manager. Given the enormous backlog in the fields of housing and social services and the poverty in which many South Africans live, planners also need a strongly developed sense of social and environmental justice and be committed to human development" (School of the Built Environment, 2002a).

#### **4.2.4 The need for planners in South Africa**

All four planning schools are positive about the need for planners in South Africa. For Wits, the pragmatic response would be that planners are needed to reflect on how the future is going to unfold. It makes practical sense to try and plan for the future because, if left to the market forces and politicians to decide on the future, the best outcomes may not be attained.

Planning schools agree on the need for planning, now more than ever, but planning should be distinguished from planners. Planning has a critical role to play in the current era of reconstruction in South Africa. Still waiting to be dealt with are big development projects; backlog issues in housing, services and infrastructure; restructuring of cities following the fragmentation of urban areas; the marginalisation of rural settlements; and the inequitable distribution of resources through apartheid. By addressing planning issues, the Wits marketing brochure states, "... planners can influence development in a direction that is beneficial to the public interest and is sustainable in future generations." Planning as an activity is therefore not threatened, but the profession is nevertheless threatened, for planners are not the only people who are able to do planning, in fact, one does not need a formal education to be able to plan.

Exacerbating the threat is the planning profession being neither elitist nor high-profile in South Africa – which concerns the planning schools. Planners should have entered numerous emerging areas, for example housing, but they never optimised the opportunities. It is felt that

planning should start creating its own identity in the context of other forces, and make use of all the possibilities in fields such as environmental planning, development planning, integrated development planning, spatial planning, housing, community planning, project management, development control and generally creating a better environment for all. An yet, when it comes to fields such as spatial planning, integrated development and development planning, planners have the ideal generalist education to take up leadership roles and top positions in government departments.

Furthermore, planning is embracing the growing emphasis on sustainable development on the one hand, and the need to promote local economic development on the other hand. Concerns to redress race, class and gender inequalities, to plan in a democratic way, and empowering communities, are increasingly shared by society.

Natal spelt out some of the major tasks for which planners are needed:

- Integrated development planning for municipalities
- The upgrading of informal settlements
- The design and development of new areas, particularly for housing
- Planning to facilitate economic development, and improve service and living conditions in low-income areas
- Local economic development strategies
- Policies and strategies to redevelop/reposition declining areas (such as certain central business districts, as well as small towns)
- Spatial planning to facilitate rural development and promote rural livelihoods
- Land reform
- Proactive spatial planning to guide growth and change in towns, cities and regions, through giving direction to public investment and private developments
- Reconsideration of planning and land-use management systems to embrace a diverse and changing society
- Big development projects
- Capacity building in all levels of government
- Management of land-use change (establishment of offices, shopping centres, tourism areas, industrial areas, residential areas, mixed developments, protection of sensitive environment areas, changes in the nature of areas e.g. through increasing density, enabling greater mix, etc.) (School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, 2002a).

Planning schools foresee that planners could still play a role in fulfilling traditional planning functions, and many could still in the future, as at present, make constructive contributions to fields outside of planning, such as information technology. There are also a number of fallow issues to be investigated: for example, few planners have as yet started to consider the implications of Aids for our cities.

#### 4.2.5 Summary and conclusion

Planning schools agree on the changing nature of planning and the new approaches that are emerging in South Africa to address the contextual challenges and to keep pace with the global trends. These include integrated development planning, sustainable planning, regional planning, local economic development, and new styles to planning – such as community participation and communicative forms of planning. Planning is seen by all as an important tool in the reconstruction of cities and regions in terms of government policies. They also agree that older forms of planning, such as land-use management and layout, have become less important, although they are still some planners' bread and butter.

The planning field has broadened with emerging linked fields becoming more important – presenting new demands on planning education. These include environmental management, municipal management, housing, development planning, property development, policy development, project management and local economic development.

The changing nature of planning and the corresponding changes in the role of planners are international trends. However, due to the accompanying political and social changes, planners in South Africa feel rather uncertain and disorientated about planning.

Planning does not have a satisfactory image. Moreover, the public knows very little about planning and planners' activities. Universities agree that planners should start creating their own identity and work towards improving the image of planning. Politicians should be made aware of the merits of planning and be persuaded to involve planners in decision-making.

Universities believe there is a continuing need for planning, as neither the market forces nor political decisions would lead to the best outcomes – whereas planners have a wide variety of skills to be utilised, to ensure overall integrated development. The threat to the profession is that a formal education is not imperative for planning, and planners are not optimising all the potential opportunities open to them, for example, environmental management.

### **4.3 The characteristics of planning students**

#### **4.3.1 Why do students choose a career in urban planning?**

*“Many planning students come to university with vaguely articulated motives, only the most general substantive interests, and a featureless view of planning practice”* (Baum, 1997b: 179).

According to Pretoria and Wits, Baum's statement is quite true for the South African scenario. However, there is a significant difference between under- and post-graduates' reason for studying planning.

Undergraduate students choose a career in planning for a number of different reasons but not necessarily as their first option, as planning is not a childhood dream coming true in the sense that these students have always wanted to become planners. They often opt for planning after failing to get selected for their preferred, mainly high-order, professional discipline such as engineering or architecture, yet still wishing to obtain a professional qualification. Other reasons may be that they know somebody who is a planner, who motivates them to enter this study, or they are encouraged by their guidance or geography teacher to study planning if they happen to like geography.

Post-graduate students are more likely to select planning as their first career choice. However, if they do not have any practical experience in planning, post-graduates are also unaware of what planning really entail, as it is a profession not very much in the public eye. Students often regard planning as a better post-graduate qualification to have than geography or another related social sciences degree. Other students have been working in the planning field and want to upgrade their skills and knowledge, often with the perception that the qualification would contribute to their job security and income.

These perceptions among university staff were confirmed with research conducted by Harrison and Todes on students at Wits, Pretoria, Natal and ML Sultan Technikon (2001b: 20). Their survey shows that idealism is still a reason prompting some students to study planning. Natal finds that, especially black students, often choose planning because they want to be in a field where they can contribute to social change. Universities would however, like to attract more

idealistic planning students, as the missionary type of students are now rather studying environmental and development degrees.

Harrison & Todes (2001b: 19) furthermore found in their research into planning education the reasons why students enter the planning field, other than job security and the want of a professional qualification, to include:

- Personal interest
- The practical application of the disciplines
- The potential contributions toward human development and the quality of the physical environment
- The ideals of the various disciplines.

Harrison & Todes (2001b: 18) summarise the student profiles of the following degrees at the four universities:

**Table 4.1 - Profiles of South African planning students**

University	Type of student
Wits: M.Sc (Development Planning)	All black South African students, with an arts and social sciences background. Students are mostly female from an urban or working class background. Very diverse in home language with few English speaking students.
Wits: B.Sc	Majority of students are black South Africans, from an urban lower-middle class income group. All official languages are represented and there is an even gender distribution with females slightly in the majority. A recent trend is towards greater diversity as the first-year intake in 2002 was rather mixed in terms of race.
Natal: MTRP	Half the number of students is black, a quarter white and a quarter Indian, with one third coming from a working-class background, and two-thirds from an urban background. Most are South Africans, with a few people from Lesotho. Students are mainly female and English or Zulu speaking.
Pretoria: B.TRP	Majority of students are white South Africans from a middle-class background, with a more urban background. Students are mostly Afrikaans speaking, and genders are presented relatively equally.

### 4.3.2 Student numbers in urban planning courses

Research by Harrison and Todes (2001b: 11, 27-30) found that during the mid-1990s, almost all the planning schools experienced a decline in student numbers, followed by an upturn in numbers at some schools, although not equalling the previous levels. The following trends in student numbers were identified at the four universities under consideration:

**Table 4.2 - Trends in student numbers at four South African planning schools**

Year	Total number of students: UND <sup>1,5</sup>	First year intake: US <sup>2</sup>	First year intake: Wits <sup>3</sup>	First year intake: UP <sup>4</sup>
1995	41	15	37	35
1996	42	12	24	26
1997	32	11	27	25
1998	35	10	28	28
1999	34	11	25	18
2000	37	10	22	9
2001	36	9	26	9

<sup>1</sup> Master of Town and Regional Planning

<sup>2</sup> Master of Town and Regional Planning

<sup>3</sup> Bachelor of Town and Regional Planning

<sup>4</sup> Bachelor of Town and Regional Planning

<sup>5</sup> First year intake numbers are not available for Natal, whereas total number of students is not available for other universities

Although Wits experienced a decline in student numbers over the last few years, forcing them to accept lesser-quality students, in 2002 there was a significant upswing in both the quality and quantity of the intake in the first-year undergraduate and post-graduate programmes.

Stellenbosch and Pretoria also experienced a decline during the 1990s in the number of applications received per year, to the extent that Stellenbosch has decided not to take on new planning students but to close down their planning department within a few years. Pretoria now has more women than men studying undergraduate planning, and although the majority is still white, black students are on the increase. The number of post-graduate students at Pretoria is growing. More men than women are studying towards master's degrees, and almost all course-work master's students are black.

Natal has experienced declines in student numbers, although it has become more constant in the last few years. Their applications are mostly from black students.

### **4.3.3 Problems graduates face in finding work in the planning field**

Planning is one of the slow growing professions in the country. A study by the HSRC indicated that town and regional planning is expected to grow by 5% in the period 1998-2003, in comparison with the expected 40% growth in employment for information technologists and chartered accountants, and between 15% and 40% for chemical and electrical engineers, actuaries, mathematicians, accountants and in finance and related professions (Harrison & Todes, 2001b: 8).

Besides planning being a slow growing profession, planning schools list a number of other reasons why some graduates cannot find work. One of these is that government on all levels has frozen planning posts due to restructuring efforts. Local government is especially hard hit by restructuring due to the transformation of numerous municipalities to unities. This means the problem is cyclical, as the opportunities available within government will only become available once governments are restructured. Whether graduates find work seems to depend upon the restructuring cycle of government at the time when candidates enter the labour market.

Due to affirmative action in specifically government departments, most white graduates have to find work in the private sector at a time when the economy is in a down-turn stage. Some graduates therefore have difficulty finding work in both the public and private sectors, whereas in 2001, despite the job market being very slow in the private and public sectors specifically in KwaZulu Natal, black graduates managed to find work.

Another reason why some graduates are not finding work is that they are unwilling to work in other, less desirable parts of the country. For example, students in the Western Cape are not prepared to use every possible opportunity to work in the planning field and so venture outside their province to work, say, in the Eastern Cape.

Then there are those who do not want to work as planners. Some, having worked very hard during their studies, are not content doing the menial work such as rezonings – after philosophising on a very high level only the previous year. They often turn to other sectors such as management consulting, information technology or transport engineering for work.

### **4.3.4 Summary and conclusion**

There are no long waiting lists for students wanting to study planning. Many undergraduate students choose a career in planning because they were not selected for another, more prestigious, professional course. A guidance teacher or another planner motivated others to

study planning, but planning is probably not something they have wanted to become since childhood. Universities find the quality of students quite disappointing as they are under-prepared and often lack motivation. Post-graduate students are more likely to study planning as a first choice because they want a career in planning, higher salaries or more job security.

All four universities are faced with declining student numbers – Stellenbosch probably the hardest hit – as they struggle to attract especially black and coloured students to their programmes. This results in planning schools having to accept students of lesser quality, or otherwise face being closed down by the university (as has been decided in the case of Stellenbosch). Planning schools struggle to attract the top students, but it seems that 2002 has been a better year for most of them in terms of quality and quantity of students. It has to be seen if the upturn continues.

The biggest reason for graduates not finding work is that many planning positions in government have been frozen due to transformation processes. Another reason is that planning is one of the slower growing professions in the country and with a tight economy at present, work is not readily available. Other graduates are limiting their own opportunities to find work in planning. Universities should develop a monitoring system of their graduates, in order to determine the problems candidates have in finding work and to understand the dynamics in the market. Wits is already considering this.

## **4.4 The nature of planning education**

### **4.4.1 The specialist versus generalist debate**

Asked whether they supported a generalist or a specialist approach to planning education, all the planning schools replied generalist – for the reason that planning is an integrated activity, with some form of specialisation. The role of the planner is to be a middleman in various situations and to play a co-ordinating role, which could be a very demanding job. A planner therefore needs to be a generalist on a very high level, and in a wide spectrum of subjects, so as to be able to think laterally. Pretoria calls this a specialist-generalist, in other words a very good generalist. Natal also makes the point that the market cannot afford specialists, because there is not enough money to pay them, the fraternity is too small and the range of work is too wide.

However, in the past graduates left the university without the feeling of having a speciality. Planning schools therefore try to provide students with a speciality in certain areas, which is different for every school (see next section). One concern of planning schools is that students at present are generally under-prepared and need more training and mentoring than ever. It is therefore more of a challenge to teach students the enormous range of information needed for a generalist education, and still teach them a speciality.

### **4.4.2 Planning schools' specialities**

Each planning school has speciality areas. Pretoria sees its speciality as integrated development planning, local government and urban restructuring. Natal sees theirs as strengths, and not necessarily specialties, in regional planning, integrative development planning, planning theory, metropolitan planning, socio-economic processes in planning, policy-related issues, and contextual understanding.

Wits used to have an identity of specialising in procedural rationality, which resulted in less attention being given to context and substance. At present, Wits is more focused on the city and on the context, and is trying to find commonalities with architecture in areas such as urban design. They are marketing their course as providing a sound general knowledge of planning

and a specialisation in one of the following streams: urban environmental design, environmental management or development planning.

In January 2001 the Department of Town and Regional Planning at Stellenbosch amalgamated with the university's School of Public Management to form a new School of Public Management and Planning. This has had an effect on the specialisation areas of the planning school, in that more emphasis is being placed on local government aspects, development studies, legislation and legal aspects, environmental aspects, organisational aspects and facilitation within the context of state and private sector involvement.

#### 4.4.3 Undergraduate versus post-graduate planning education

Schools were asked about their philosophy on undergraduate versus post-graduate planning. The feeling amongst planning schools is that there are strengths to both. Pretoria is of the opinion that some people will naturally make better planners than others, no matter how long the duration of their education: empathy for others seems to be inborn rather than acquired through teaching.

The strength to undergraduate planning education is that it presents an opportunity to spend more time with students and going into much more detail during these four years. Due to the demographic changes among students, they are lately less well-prepared, and planning schools need to spend more time with them to turn out good planners. Undergraduate classes are usually larger than post-graduate classes, resulting in more opportunities for debate and class participation.

A negative point to post-graduate education is that some students work and study simultaneously. They often experience a conflict of interest, having to prioritise between the two. The work experience is to their benefit no doubt, as some students studying towards a post-graduate qualification already have diverse planning experience, and therefore need less time to master the subjects. Advantages of getting people from various undergraduate backgrounds and perspectives to study planning, are that they provide greater intellectual depth to the course, and are often more critical and responsive towards the subject matter of tuition than undergraduates. Planning is mostly the first choice of post-graduate students, and they often work harder towards obtaining their degree.

Natal and Stellenbosch have historically only offered post-graduate planning education, but can see the benefits in undergraduate planning education for weaker students. Because of the small size of their departments and the proximity of technikons also presenting an undergraduate education, they have decided not to pursue undergraduate planning education. These two planning schools get many applications from technikon graduates who want to upgrade their skills and theoretical knowledge by way of a post-graduate degree in planning.

Pretoria is convinced however, that the knowledge and skills gained during a six-year combined bachelor's and master's degree go far beyond the two-year master's degree other universities are presenting.

Ozawa and Seltzer (1999: 257) found that most graduate programmes in the U.S. are designed around a two-year course of study. They concluded that the scope is too broad to ensure that the education will provide opportunities for the acquisition of all skills and competencies needed throughout the course of a planning career. Consequently, creating a link between planning practice and education is essential for prioritising the core curriculum, and to ensure the transition between graduate school and practice is part of life-long learning.

#### 4.4.4 Internships

When asked if they thought students should do an internship while studying, most universities were positive about investigating the idea – realising that students many understand a number of concepts better if they have some practical experience. On the other hand they feel that, however valuable real-life experience may be, young planners have the rest of their lives ahead of them to gain this experience.

From this year onwards, Stellenbosch expects its students to participate in an internship of at least 30 days and write a dissertation in their final semester, before they can go overseas under the auspices of the Department for Public Administration. Natal organises work for students with no experience during their six-week midyear break. It also requires the B Tech graduates to have some experience before allowing them on the master's course. Wits and Pretoria believe their students get a lot of practical experience during their training. Wits presents service learning as part of its course in which the projects are related to real-life situations.

A logistical problem foreseen, is whether the number of planning practices and departments would be sufficient to house all the students from all the universities doing an 'internship'. Pretoria thinks it is a better idea that students gain practical experience during holidays, as students often find it distracting if they have to work during the academic semester.

#### 4.4.5 Community and voluntary work

Planning schools were asked if they encouraged their students to participate in community or voluntary work. Wits responded that its curriculum places a new emphasis on service learning, with planning projects being undertaken in Hillbrow and the inner city which link directly to current community-based urban regeneration initiatives. Students not only present their projects to the lecturers, but also to social and community workers.

Stellenbosch and Natal have not for a long time, encouraged their students to do voluntary or community work, but would like to further explore service learning. Natal recognises the value of this experience, but is concerned about the quality of the education students obtain during voluntary or community work. Natal does inform its students about BESG (Built Environment Support Group), but no real relationship with the organisation exists at present. A number of past students have been employed in BESG.

Pretoria expects its students to do a lot of fieldwork, to the extent that students actually tire of this. Voluntary services are offered to the community, however, considerably more could be done.

#### 4.4.6 Continued professional development

The majority of the universities are presenting or have presented training courses that could be labelled as continued professional development (CPD). At present Pretoria is the only one offering SAQA interchangeable courses as part of a continued professional development programme. Several of these courses are part of the university's master's programme.

At Stellenbosch, the consulting division within the school presents courses in IDP, public participation and housing. They are 1-2-week courses at the end of which attendees receive a certificate – which they would like to turn into a diploma in the long-term. These courses do not necessarily cater to or target planners.



Natal has presented courses on integrative planning and capacity building in housing. The sentiment there is that universities should combine efforts in presenting CPD courses, in order to present the best possible courses and to optimise the capacity of lecturers. Wits is starting to think in that direction – the capacity to do so is certainly available.

#### 4.4.7 Summary and conclusion

After 1965 the generalist-with-a-specialty approach became the norm in deciding on a core planning curriculum in Britain – a general education being required with the emphasis on learning and thinking and problem-solving processes, but with room for specialisation beyond this core. The same approach has been followed in developing curricula in South Africa. A student may even find thrust upon him/herself a growing list of courses and is in danger of becoming a Jack-of-all-trades and master-of-none.

The conclusion was drawn from the literature study that planning should become the mastery of a speciality resting on the solid foundation of what is the domain as well as the skills, methods and approaches that are common to all urban planning professionals. Planners should therefore have a speciality – a grounding knowledge about the socio-spatial processes that, in interaction with each other, produce the urban and rural, or regional, habitat.

Planning schools believe in a generalist education, but do try and provide their students with some form of speciality. Specialities targeted by universities are integrated development planning, local economic development, housing, urban restructuring, regional planning, planning theory, metropolitan planning, urban environmental design, environmental management, development planning, and legislation and legal aspects. This is in line with the international and national trends in the planning profession as mentioned earlier in the chapter.

In terms of undergraduate and post-graduate education, universities see strengths to both. The strength in post-graduate education is that it is the first choice of students studying the course, whereas undergraduate students often study planning as a second or third choice. Other positive aspects are that students often have experience in planning, and they have obtained a 3-year undergraduate degree in which they have learnt a wide variety of courses, skills and ideas. The negative side of post-graduate planning education is that universities try to teach too much in the time span of two years.

Some planning schools agree that an undergraduate education is more relevant for the South African context in which students are generally rather under-prepared and need more time to grasp the concepts and understand the full meaning of planning. In undergraduate classes, students have more time to learn from each other, debate and participate in discussions, and stimulate each other intellectually than during two years of post-graduate study. It also allows for enough time to lay a generalist foundation, yet teach some form of speciality.

All four planning schools researched are positively inclined towards an internship as well as community and voluntary work as part of the curriculum, although Wits and Pretoria feel their students are gaining enough practical experience at present. Universities do, however, also see a downside to service learning, in that students could become burdensome to the employer, or else they could be burdened with work that adds very little value to their education.

Universities realise that the planning fraternity stand to benefit from continued professional development courses. It is suggested that they combine their resources to offer this kind of training to the planning profession at large.

## 4.5 Planning curriculum

### 4.5.1 Core skills and competencies needed in the planning profession

All four universities were part of a planning schools meeting in Bloemfontein in September 2000, at which a list of skills and competencies were identified as needed by South African planners (not necessarily entry-level planners).

According to a consensus reached among planning schools on the core competencies of planners, a qualified person should therefore be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- Orientation to social justice and equal opportunity
- An appreciation of the diversity of cultures and views
- A people-centred approach
- Promotion of efficiency in resource use
- An orientation towards sustainable development
- Respect for professional ethics.

2. Demonstration of a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge, and ability to apply this in action. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an understanding of:

- The nature, purpose and methods of planning
- The histories, philosophies and theories of planning and of development
- The theories relating to the natural, social, economic, developmental and political environments
- The theories and principles relating to the design of urban environments
- The theories relating to urban, metropolitan, rural and regional development, and to these contexts and processes
- The South African context and its particular challenges
- An application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements.

3. Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an aptitude to:

- Collect, analyse and organise information to determine planning processes
- Use technologies to assist these processes
- Apply appropriate knowledge pertaining to political, policy and institutional contexts, and of planning legislation and procedures
- Prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales
- Undertake planning with due appreciation of aesthetic dimensions, and with sensitivity to the links between human settlement and the natural environment
- Interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving
- Apply knowledge to the implementation of plans and to land management and development processes.

4. Linking and synthesising, programmes and projects from various sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- ❑ An integrative understanding of development issues and processes
- ❑ An understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes
- ❑ An ability to think creatively and synoptically
- ❑ An understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occurs
- ❑ An understanding of key issues in relation to development in South Africa including local economic development, land reform, and urban restructuring and the development of integrated settlements.

5. Conducting academic research in order to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- ❑ An understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements
- ❑ An ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information
- ❑ An ability to apply generated knowledge to planning problems, in a creative way.

6. Application of the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- ❑ An understanding of social dynamics and power relations
- ❑ An understanding of political processes and governance
- ❑ Strategic thinking and management
- ❑ Financial management
- ❑ Organisational management
- ❑ Project management
- ❑ Decision-making skills
- ❑ Organisational skills
- ❑ An ability to relate to and work with people
- ❑ An ability to work in teams as well as individually
- ❑ An understanding of approaches, processes and techniques associated with participatory and collaborative forms of planning
- ❑ Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills
- ❑ An ability to communicate effectively verbally, graphically and by electronic means.

Planning schools feel the most important competencies qualified planners should be able to demonstrate are the following:

- ❑ A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical issues in the public domain.
- ❑ Demonstrating a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge, and the ability to apply this in action.
- ❑ The ability to link knowledge to spatial plans and policies.
- ❑ Linking and synthesising programmes and projects from various sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development.
- ❑ Conducting academic research in order to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- ❑ The application of managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors.

Although being part of the above process, the Stellenbosch planning school has also compiled a document on specific outcomes regarding skills for planning students. According to these, students should display the following skills:

- To know and be able to apply research techniques.
- To be able to utilise information sources such as the library, internet, legislation and policy (also zoning schemes) as well as geographical information systems (GIS).
- To be able to formulate goals for any task being undertaken.
- To be able to identify, analyse and investigate planning problems.
- To be able to demonstrate creative thought through the generation of alternative solutions to planning problems.
- To be able to demonstrate analytical thought by evaluating alternative proposals and different policy options.
- To be able to relate planning theory to practice and to translate knowledge into action.
- To be able to manage conflict through negotiation and consensus building.
- To be able to help build capacity and empower communities.
- To be able to translate proposals into action and to monitor implementation thereof.
- To be able to utilise drawing and design techniques such as terrain analysis, 3D spatial interpretation and computer aided design (CAD).
- To be able to communicate and present proposals graphically, orally and in written form (this includes presentation skills, writing of reports, motivation reports, legislation and summaries, etc.).
- To have knowledge of self management and general management skills (meeting techniques, project management, management of change, budgets and financial management, time and stress management, etc.) and to be able to apply these skills.
- To be able to apply the principles of good professional practise in one's own career.

Furthermore, planning students should also develop the following values, according to Stellenbosch:

- To take responsibility for own life-long professional development and management of career through the preparation and use of personal professional development plan.
- To develop empathy for those for and with whom one is planning and to be able to work with them.
- To demonstrate political sensitivity around the diversity of concerns, cultures and views of different role players.
- To understand the positive worth and use of community and conflict in the development situation.
- To understand and apply ethical principles in the profession and in own professional life
- To realise the importance of the protection of the environment (School of Public Management and Planning, 1999; 2001a).

#### 4.5.2 Planning curricula

Do planning curricula respond to these required skills and competencies?

With some reservations by Stellenbosch, the planning schools generally believe that to a large extent their curricula respond to the needs, thereby not implying that they are unaware of the limitations of their curricula. Schools are therefore constantly reassessing their curricula in order to improve on them and address the changing nature of planning.

Wits is confident that the new curriculum they are teaching as from this year is especially relevant for South African planning. The new curriculum addresses development planning as well as town and regional planning, placing more emphasis on the South African context by including new forms of planning such as integrated planning. Wits wants to collapse the courses into thematic courses covering both practice and theory in one, as part of the core curriculum. At present that school still follows a traditional model of town and regional planning theory and

practical courses, where students get a general understanding of planning in the core subjects and a depth in the other courses.

Pretoria believes the structure of its curriculum equips the planner with the necessary knowledge and skills to present interventions into manifold problems in cities and metropolitan areas, rural settlements and districts, as well as for provincial and national regions. The course in town and regional planning focuses on the following themes:

- Planning theory and history
- Land-use management and land development
- Settlement planning and design
- Strategic and integrated development planning for cities and regions.

Town and regional planners are required to provide appropriate solutions for complex urban and rural problems. In order to contribute to the multi-disciplinary perspective and knowledge-base, a number of courses in related fields are also prescribed.

The following table compares the curricula of Pretoria and Wits in terms of their four-year bachelor's degree in town in regional planning.

**Table 4.3 - Comparing bachelor's town and regional planning curricula**

Wits	University of Pretoria
<b>Baccalaureus in town in regional planning</b>	
<b>1st year</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Applied mathematics* <input type="checkbox"/> Geography I* <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement through history <input type="checkbox"/> The South African city through history <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to environmental interpretation <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to settlement form and design <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to sociology a: identity and society* <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to sociology b: South Africa and globalisation*	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Economics <input type="checkbox"/> Language skills <input type="checkbox"/> Cartographic skills <input type="checkbox"/> Remote sensing <input type="checkbox"/> Statistics <input type="checkbox"/> Planning and settlement histories before the Industrial Revolution <input type="checkbox"/> Planning and settlement histories since the Industrial Revolution <input type="checkbox"/> Site analysis and assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement analysis and assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Principles of settlement design <input type="checkbox"/> Physical geography of South Africa
<b>2nd year</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to land management and environmental planning <input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary design and environmental issues in South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Civil engineering and infrastructure in relation to planning* <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for housing, services and transport <input type="checkbox"/> Economics concepts Ia* <input type="checkbox"/> Economics concepts Ib* <input type="checkbox"/> Development policy and processes in South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated development planning <input type="checkbox"/> Histories and futures of planning <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophies, theories and methodologies of planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Introductory GIS <input type="checkbox"/> Plan and policy analysis and assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Development planning <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement design concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Land-use management theory <input type="checkbox"/> Urban social morphology <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal administration <input type="checkbox"/> Theory of strategic and integrated development planning <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement establishment and housing delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Urban land development economics <input type="checkbox"/> Land-use management practice
<b>3rd year</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Comparative African cities <input type="checkbox"/> Johannesburg as a city in South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Planning at regional, national and transnational scales <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Property financial management <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal services provision <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory planning <input type="checkbox"/> Research methodologies for planning <input type="checkbox"/> Spatial concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional and legal structures for planning

<p>In addition, learners are required to choose one of three possible streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban sustainability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrated environmental management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</li> </ul> <p>And a selection from the following with minimum 30 credits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Savannah ecology fieldwork*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Principles of aquatic ecology*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Biological sciences Ia*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Biological sciences Ib*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introductory life sciences I*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complementary life sciences*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evolution, adaptation and ecology*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Animal biodiversity*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Geomorphology II*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Soils and sustainable development II*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> General earth science*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Earth science Ia*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Earth science Ib*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comparative approaches to urban environmental design</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban environmental design with African cities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary issues in architecture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Two- and three-dimensional computer design</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development theory and economics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local economic development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to politics*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Governance and institutions</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above, students may take electives from other disciplines worth at least 30 credits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to property law</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Natural resource management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demography</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transport planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local economic development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan, local and district spatial planning</li> </ul> <p>And electives of at least 26 credits from the following modules during the 2nd and 3rd year of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Geographic information systems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Municipal administration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advanced demographic research</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social theory</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spatial analysis</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban modelling</li> </ul>
<b>4th year</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Professional practice and ethics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning law</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advanced planning thought</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comparative planning systems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrated planning project</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research methodology and proposal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feasibility studies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Professional practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transport engineering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Essay</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning interventions: Urban areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning interventions: Peri-urban and rural areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning interventions: Metropolitan areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning interventions: Supra national, national and regional scale</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cities and regions of the future</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning futures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practical development feasibility</li> </ul>

\*Courses presented by other Schools, other than the School for Architecture and Planning

Comparing the undergraduate curricula of Wits and Pretoria, the following differences and similarities were found:

- Pretoria has four core streams for all four years of study. They are: planning theory and history; land-use management and land development; settlement planning and design; and strategic and integrated development planning for cities and regions.
- Wits presents two core subjects in all four years, namely planning practice and planning theory.
- Both universities present practical courses in all four years.
- The specialisation courses, such as economics, statistics or sociology at Pretoria are not specifically modified for planners, as in the case of other universities.
- The most popular specialisation courses are economics and geography.

- Some subjects are common in both curricula, but in different years. Pretoria presents economics as a first year subject, and Wits from the second year. Wits presents municipal infrastructure in the second year, and Pretoria in the third. Research methodology and planning law are presented in the third year at Pretoria and in the fourth at Wits. Wits presents planning futures in the second year and Pretoria in the final year.
- Wits emphasises environmental planning much more than Pretoria does. Pretoria, on the other hand, presents specific courses in GIS, while at Wits GIS is integrated with project work from second year onwards.
- Geography and settlement planning seem to be the only two subjects the two universities have in common in their respective first year courses.
- In the second year the two universities have land-use management, development planning and integrated development planning in common.
- In their third year Wits students have a choice of 21 electives, whereas Pretoria's second and third year students have a choice of seven electives. These electives are included to promote a broad education and intellectual development. In choosing electives, students can take as many or as few subjects as they want, as long as they have a minimum credit for these subjects.
- Students have no possibility of substitution or choice of electives in the other years.
- In the final year both teach professional practice, and both require students to write a dissertation as part of the course.

Wits and Pretoria present curricula that have much in common. It is clear that they offer a very broad education. It seems that Wits' curriculum specialises in environmental management and focuses a lot on the city and the context. Pretoria specialises in integrated development planning and settlement planning.

The following table compares the curricula of universities' post-graduate programmes in town in regional planning:

**Table 4.4 - Comparing master's town and regional planning curricula**

University of Pretoria	University of Natal	University of Stellenbosch
<p><b>Master of town and regional planning</b></p> <p>□ Treatise</p> <p>For students with an undergraduate qualification in town and regional planning, modules to the value of at least 80 credits need to be taken from the following core modules:</p> <p>For students without an undergraduate qualification in town and regional planning, modules to the value of at least 120 credits need to be taken from the following core modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Land-use management and land development</li> <li>□ Sustainable settlement planning and design</li> <li>□ Design for safety</li> <li>□ Integrated development planning</li> <li>□ Urban restructuring</li> <li>□ Rural restructuring</li> </ul> <p>Modules of at least 60 credits must</p>	<p><b>Master of town and regional planning</b></p> <p><b>First year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Planning law</li> <li>□ Planning history and history of design</li> <li>□ Urban theory and development theory</li> <li>□ Project work: local</li> <li>□ Techniques in planning</li> <li>□ Integrated development planning: theory and practice</li> <li>□ Integrated development planning: project</li> <li>□ Planning theory and public policy</li> <li>□ Urban and regional development processes and planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Second year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Compulsory courses in the second year are:</li> <li>□ Dissertation</li> <li>□ Professional practice</li> <li>□ Dissertation proposal</li> </ul> <p>Students are also required to take</p>	<p><b>Master of town and regional planning*</b></p> <p><b>First year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Town and regional planning theory</li> <li>□ Town and regional planning practice</li> <li>□ Planning legislation and implementation</li> <li>□ Planning and environmental analysis</li> <li>□ History of town planning and urban design</li> <li>□ Draughtsmanship</li> <li>□ Public information management</li> <li>□ Infrastructure provision</li> <li>□ Geographic information systems for planners</li> <li>□ Applied economics for planners</li> </ul> <p><b>Second year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Town and regional planning theory</li> <li>□ Town and regional planning practice</li> <li>□ Planning assignment</li> </ul>

<p>be taken from the above list and/or modules from the master's and honours degree programmes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Civil and transportation engineering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environment and society</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Public management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rural development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modules in research methodology</li> </ul> <p>Students could study almost any other module as approved by the head of the department.</p>	<p>2-4 electives from the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Layout and subdivision</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing policy and finance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan planning and development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local economic development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation in integrated development planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development and planning of cities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project packaging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economics of development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> South African development problems and policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comparative international development problems and policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental impact assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Choice of one of the following streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Public policy analysis</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applied development management and strategy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local government</li> </ul> <p>One of the following 7 modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Public policy analysis for planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applied development management for planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban design</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advanced environmental impact assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rural development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Property evaluation for planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban management for planners</li> </ul>
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\* Programme for 2000

In comparing the post-graduate courses in town and regional planning of Pretoria, Natal and Stellenbosch, the following commonalities and differences were found:

- Pretoria recommends certain subject combinations to their students in order to specialise in specific fields. These fields include municipal planning, housing and settlement planning and design, and local development planning.
- Natal specialises in regional planning, socio-economic processes in planning and integrative development planning and emphasises contextual understanding.
- Stellenbosch specialises in development studies, legislation and legal aspects and public management.
- Pretoria offers electives to students from various other faculties, such as economics, transportation engineering and public administration. Students choose subjects according to a credit system.
- Natal offers 13 electives in the second year, of which students have to choose between two and four.
- Stellenbosch offers a choice of seven electives to students in the second year, of which they could choose one.
- All three universities expect students to write a dissertation during the course of their master's degree.

The curricula followed at Natal and Stellenbosch seem to encompass a large number of subjects whereas Pretoria presents only a few. This may be due to the fact that UP students have already obtained a four-year undergraduate planning degree.

The following table compares the curricula of universities' master's degrees in development planning programme:

Table 4.5 - Comparing master's development planning curricula

University of Stellenbosch	Wits	University of Natal
<p>Master of philosophy in development planning**</p>	<p>Master of science in development planning</p>	<p>Master of science in development planning</p>
<p>First year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Orientation to development and development planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Orientation to political science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development economics*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Technology and techniques in development planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Philosophies, theories and methodologies of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comparative International Development Problems and Policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economics of Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning History and Law</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applied economics for planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development planning practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning and environment techniques and analysis</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to infrastructure provision</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development organisations, law and policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Second year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development theory and strategy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development planning practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project management for development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Programme management for development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research methods and writing skills for managers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 20% project assignment linked to internship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>development planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spatial concepts and processes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Government and governance*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Policy analysis and integration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social issues and processes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Professional practice and ethics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Law for development planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental planning and sustainable development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research report</li> </ul> <p>In addition, students would be able to choose between project management* or settlement planning</p> <p>Students are also required to select one of the following two specialist streams: tourism planning, or municipal planning and local economic development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Development Planning: Project</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Development Planning: Theory and Practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning Theory and Public Policy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban and Regional Development Processes and Planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development and Planning of Cities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research Methods</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dissertation</li> </ul> <p>Students choose an additional 2-4 options from the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and rural development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social Policy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Poverty and Policy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> South African Development Problems and Policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> States Institutions and Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to Population Studies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local Economic Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan Planning and Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation in Integrated Development Planning</li> </ul>
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\* Courses presented by other Schools, other than the School for Architecture and Planning

\*\* Draft programme for 2001

The University of Natal also presents a masters course in environment and planning.

(School of Public Management and Planning, 2001b; School for the Built Environment, 2002b; 2002c; School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, 2002a, 2002b; School of Architecture and Planning, 2001c; 2001d; 2001e).

In comparing the post-graduate courses in development planning of Wits, Natal and Stellenbosch, the following commonalities and differences were found:

- More than in any of the other degree courses, the curricula for development planning at the three universities present similar subjects. These include development economics, development planning, and integrative development planning.
- All three expect their students to write a dissertation as part of their course.
- All three universities offer electives to students in their second year. Wits expects students to choose between tourism planning, or municipal planning and local economic development; Natal offers nine electives, from which students have to choose between two and four subjects, and Stellenbosch offers four electives in the final year.

#### 4.5.3 Limitations of planning curricula

Universities were asked what they perceived to be the limitations of their curricula. Pretoria, offering a four-year undergraduate degree, still feels that some of the subjects presented lack depth and that one semester is often too short to present the full extent of a course. Stellenbosch has been criticised by external examiners that its students cannot design, and that the school is

very slow in introducing computer programmes – although a basic short course in GIS is presented. The planning school itself admits to the need to use more relevant methods of presenting courses, whilst its courses should be more practical – teaching more technical abilities and computer literacy.

Natal sees its limitations in teaching environmental issues, organisational and financial skills. In order to enable students to gain a wide range of skills that are in demand in the field, Natal allows students to do options in several areas. The course as it stands is extremely demanding, thus the decision to offer options both provides a way of dealing with the need for greater depth in some areas, but also requires a trade-off in the 'general' areas of tuition.

Wits has introduced a new curriculum from this year, so time is needed to test the curriculum before addressing possible shortcomings.

Planning schools experience that students have difficulty to synthesise the information presented in loose standing, seemingly unrelated subjects. It is therefore being considered to present specific courses in themes, rather than subjects to help students synthesise the huge load of information. Certain themes will have to be more prevalent in the curriculum, for example local economic development and integrated development planning.

Planning schools are not always happy with the results obtained by their students, but this may be ascribed to the poorer quality of students rather than the limitations of curricula.

#### **4.5.4 The relevance of planning education for the planning profession**

The four planning schools were asked if they supposed the planning profession thought planning education was relevant, and whether there was a gap between the skills taught and the skills demanded by the planning profession.

Planning schools believe there will always be a degree of mismatch between the skills taught and the skills demanded, as there is a mismatch between planning practice and academic trends. Universities are to some extent far ahead of the planning profession in terms of international practices and trends. In other cases universities try to address the needs of the planning sector, but the needs change so fast that there is a resulting lag in addressing them. It also takes time to develop a new curriculum, especially if it needs approval from other parties. Planning practice is often misinformed because they think planning students are still doing the same subjects they themselves did, where in fact the curriculum has changed to a very large extent. They may even be bitter, realising their own qualification is not adequate any more.

Planners sometimes complain that graduates do not have all the necessary skills, thereby implying that planning education is not properly attuned to market needs. University education is however not skills-based, for that is not the purpose of planning education. Students have to learn to think for themselves and understand planning. Planning schools regard a critical and creative mind as more important than the right practical skills. Moreover, during recent years, a decline in the general quality of students became apparent. This makes it difficult to turn out quality planners, yet schools still have a good basis on which the planning profession can build.

The planning schools see their task as having to train potential planners, who will require mentoring into the practical demands of planning for some time before they can perform as planners independently. Universities therefore see the public and private sector as having to play a role in mentoring graduates. Regrettably the private sector does not at present have capacity to take on or mentor new students, due to tight economic circumstances. The public sector is also more stretched than it used to be, due to the growing demands on planning departments.

### 4.5.5 Improving curricula

Universities were questioned about their past and proposed future changes to curricula in order to improve on their planning programmes. All four planning schools are constantly assessing their curricula and trying to improve on them, for planning is always evolving – specifically so in South Africa, where many changes have come about in the planning environment. This, for one, explains why universities still have a lot of overseas-induced sources and ideas.

Pretoria has moved away from theory, methodology, and practice as their three major subjects, and is trying to present subjects more in line with the new SAQA credit system where theory and practice are rolled into one. In terms of the minor subjects, economics has become a choice subject, with geography and governance again included as subjects. In effect, Pretoria is trying to package the core skills and competencies better into one course.

Stellenbosch has established a new link with public management and Wits with architecture, creating new possibilities and new opportunities for cooperation. Planning schools have also created linkages to fields outside their schools, where there is a certain amount of overlap, and are linking up and networking with other universities as well.

According to Drake at Wits (2001), the Wits syllabus was based upon the RTPPI requirements up to about the 1980s. As planning changed and the free market or neo-liberalism of Thatcher took hold, planning in Britain was discredited, because it was seen as state intervention, not allowing the free market forces to prevail. So the Wits course was altered to accommodate the new conditions (or 'crisis', as some called it). Mathematical modelling was dropped. Spatial economics was given more emphasis, especially at the national and regional level, and greater emphasis was also placed upon new planning theory.

The apartheid government's insistence upon 'Blue Print Planning' or the 'Master Plan Approach' more and more resulted in problems for the practical application of planning theory and public participation. Increasingly the department at Wits was forced to look outside South Africa for relevant projects. National and regional projects were placed outside of South Africa in multi-racial economies like Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, and later Zimbabwe. After 1994 these tended to revert back to South Africa.

The RTPPI tradition is one of pragmatism. It tends to do the practical and then derive theory from the experience. The integration of theory and practice was undertaken at Wits in line with the RTPPI requirements. Theory had to be taught before it was put into practice through a project, which had to be accompanied by a fieldtrip and include public meetings or presentations as well as interviews with officials and civil servants. Various techniques developed in the first world had to be altered to suit local conditions. A course in this field was developed in conjunction with experimentation and experience gained by the staff. Every course and/or semester had to have a project and fieldtrip to ensure that the theory was being applied.

Wits has introduced a new curriculum in 2002 in their undergraduate planning course and their master's course in development planning, in response to:

- Recent trends within the planning and development planning fields, including other fields that are becoming more important to planners such as environmental planning and management, integrated development planning and tourism planning.
- A need to overcome the separation between theory and practice.
- The need to put more emphasis on the core areas of development planning, such as spatial and institutional integration and economic development, as well as some opportunity for specialisation.

- New possibilities arising from the amalgamation of the Departments of Architecture and Town and Regional Planning, such as the area of urban environmental design.
- The need for better articulation between the Master of Science in Development Planning, and degrees offered in related fields such the Master of Arts in Development Studies and the post-graduate diplomas and degrees in the field of Public and Development Management.
- The need for a higher level of specialisation without compromising the broadly generalist nature of undergraduate planning education.
- The need for stronger conceptualisation and substantive emphasis to the programme with regards to the African City, specifically Johannesburg.

The new Wits curriculum for 2002 is also based on a credit system that is compliant with the requirements of SAQA (School of Architecture and Planning, 2001c: 1-15; 2001d: 1-9).

Stellenbosch, too has changed its curriculum substantially, on becoming part of the university's School for Public Management and Planning. New minor subjects have been introduced and course contents have also changed. Stellenbosch states the reasons for the changes as being:

- New legislation on the professional role of the planner.
- Political and legal changes over the last number of years.
- New educational policies.
- Some themes were not adequately or not at all addressed in their curriculum. These included squatter legislation, flexible zoning, basic planning theory, land reform, development planning, integrated planning, planning law (not planning legislation, but the interpretation of laws, court cases and common law) and research methodologies.
- Other themes were duplicated in the first and second year.

According to Africa (1993: 71-72, 75), the University of Natal has been very progressive since the 1980s. It introduced progressive material into the curriculum, and great emphasis was placed upon the theoretical, conceptual and socio-political and economic aspects of planning. The UND was the first South African university to produce a black planner.

Africa (1993: 72) found a strong Marxist element to have existed in the planning school, accompanied by a reduction in the physical and design components of planning. This lack of hard skills and the political involvement of staff concerned both students and some planners. A massive gap developed between planning theory and planning practice within the UND, as little attempt was made to relate planning theory to the technical and practical work of planning practice.

In the late 1980s, the UND planning school developed a new planning curriculum. It was instituted in 1991. This was due to concerns about fragmentation in the curriculum, too many lectures with not enough time to read, too little research done by students, and an unrelatedness to planning practice. The new course was post-Marxist, had a more defined core, had a stronger link between theory and practice and introduced specialisation into the course. Although an improvement, some lecturers were uncertain whether the students were able to make the links that the core course intended to facilitate or whether they had strong enough conceptualisation skills. There was however, a stronger link between planning theory and practice and a sensitivity about what is taught, how it is taught and why (Africa, 1993: 72-74).

University of Natal was the first to present a post-graduate course in housing. In recent years the number of students entering this course have declined, due to government's turn to neo-liberal policies and bureaucratic failures (Harrison & Todes: 2001b: 7).

Since its 1991 change to the curriculum, Natal has been adapting the curriculum, and from the mid-1990s they have modularised the course and introduced IDP as part of the curriculum.

Natal has also introduced degrees in development and environmental planning around 1999 as new fields in planning. In terms of future changes to the curriculum, Natal is assessing the inclusion of more hard skills, and concretising their implementation, financial analysis, and environmental planning.

#### 4.5.6 Educating planners for the future

When asked if they thought they were educating planners for the future South Africa, planning schools responded that they are certainly trying to do exactly that – however difficult. The answer to the question depends on how one sees the future of planning and planning's ability to plan for the future. In the 1960s the future seemed predictable, with various models and analyses. The future is not that predictable anymore, and planners are nervous about forecasting the future because they have often been wrong. For instance, in the past people assumed that cities would keep on growing fast – which, due to economic decline and Aids, has not materialised.

Sometimes changes happen faster in practice than in an academic environment. That is why universities should not bind themselves too tightly to the present needs requirements of the profession. Planning schools rather look to the future to try and teach students to think critically. And rightly so: by understanding planning practice, planning students can determine for themselves what the future may have in store. Unfortunately the type of student studying planning at present is perceived, generally, to be neither very creative nor critical. More effort should be poured into teaching creativity and critical thought, which then, hopefully, will not be suppressed by a rigid curriculum.

Harrison (2001a: 76) stresses this in *Romance and tragedy in (post) modern planning: a pragmatist's perspective*: the romance of planning can be seen in its creative and emotional side, in its visionary impulses. It is sad that planning was stripped of much of its romance when it was seen as sterilely scientific, more concerned with reason than with imaginative power. Planning tends to negate the importance of individual creativity.

#### 4.5.7 Summary and conclusion

The overarching competencies identified by all the planning schools as that a qualified person should be able to demonstrate were the following:

- Knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical issues in the public domain.
- Demonstrating a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge and ability to apply this in action.
- Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies.
- Linking and synthesising, programmes and projects from various sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development.
- Ability to conduct academic research, to develop critical thinking and problem-solving qualities.
- Ability to apply the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors.

The ability to think critically and independently is, however, acknowledged by planning schools as *the* single most important skill.

Universities generally admit that their curricula do not address all the skills and competencies needed in a qualified planner. Academic personnel also regret that they do not have the time to go into sufficient depth for certain subjects (whether undergraduate or post-graduate). A

limitation to their lecturing is students' perception of subjects as being unrelated, loose standing items, and their inability to synthesise the knowledge. Planning schools are also considering more alternative teaching methods to encourage participation, critical thinking, practical experience and intellectual stimulation.

Do these curricula hold any relevance for the planning profession?

The four universities suppose that there will always be a discrepancy between the skills taught and the skills demanded by the planning profession. In some cases universities are far ahead of planning practice, and sometimes it is the other way round. Planning practice expects students to walk out of university into practice, fully competent. University education is however, not skills-driven. Instead, it tries to encourage creative and critical minds, and stimulate independent thought. However, the quality of students seems to have declined in the last number of years, and universities struggle to make good planners out of them – even though they may present a relevant curriculum. Still, universities constantly assess their curricula to try and improve on them. They are also responding to trends in the planning and development fields, trying to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

They are therefore trying to educate planners for the future, by teaching students to think critically, so that they can decide for themselves what the future is likely to bring. They should not allow themselves to be restricted by the present need requirements of the profession because these are changing fast.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

Although there are limitations to the planning programmes of the four universities, South African institutions are closely following world trends – but they have their own contextual challenges. Presently, disciplinary boundaries are shifting as new fields of training are developing outside of planning, and other disciplines are training individuals for planning related positions. These include environmental planning, economic development, public management and housing.

In response, the field of planning education has also broadened and emerging linked disciplines, such as environmental management, municipal management, housing, development planning, property development, policy development, project management and local economic development, are becoming more important in planning courses. Universities have often responded to these fields ahead of the profession, but perhaps not with sufficient vigour, resulting in them developing outside the planning discipline. One such field is *environmental management*.

All four universities believe in a generalist education, but they try to provide their students with some form of speciality. In line with the international and national trends in the planning profession, these specialities include integrated development planning, local government, urban restructuring, regional planning, planning theory, metropolitan planning, socio-economic processes in planning, political theory, contextual understanding, urban environmental design, environmental management, development planning, and legislation and legal aspects.

Although universities try to teach skills and competencies required by planning practice, they prioritise the encouragement of creative and critical minds, instead of catering for every need in planning practice. Still, universities constantly assess their curricula to try and improve on them, and to educate planners for the future South Africa. Universities are therefore responding to trends in the planning and development fields, trying to overcome the separation between theory and practice – also investigating new legislation and policies.

Planning schools realise they have not done enough to bolster the image of the planning profession and planning education. Planners compete with other professionals in the same arena and therefore need to redefine themselves, create their own identity and work towards improving the image of planning.

Resulting from this poor image of planning is that planning programmes in South Africa are competing for the relatively small pool of existing and potential students against each other, but also against new and emerging disciplines. Planning is not attracting the top students, and has to be satisfied with teaching the discipline to students who may have no passion for the subject.

Some factors are beyond the control of planning schools. One has been the shift in tertiary education in South Africa: the decline in the number of enrolments in tertiary education, low throughput rates, a shift towards commerce, a decline in the number of white students, a significant drop in the number of matriculants with exemption rates and satisfactory entry requirement to study planning. Planning schools are forced to admit students of lower quality onto their courses, and this brings along a very peculiar set of challenges for planning education.

## **CHAPTER 5: PLANNING PROFESSION'S VIEWS ON THE RELEVANCE OF PLANNING EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

This chapter analyses perceptions on the relevance of planning education from the planning profession's point of view. It also determines the skills and competencies regarded by the planning profession as the most critical requirements for graduates. People from both the public and private sectors in four metropolitan areas of South Africa participated in the empirical research. The areas included Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Stellenbosch, and Cape Town. Except for Pretoria, where the researcher knows most of the planners, staff of the planning schools at Wits, Stellenbosch and UND assisted by identifying at least ten respondents in the respective area, as they know best which companies or institutions employ planning graduates.

Respondents were questioned about their views on the relevance of planning education at South African universities; the relevance of planning education for the type of work directed to planners; whether planning education does prepare graduates for the future; skills and competency shortages that have been noticed; sufficiency/insufficiency of practical experience during the period of university study; graduate and/or undergraduate education; specialist versus generalist education; and post-university continued professional development. Finally, respondents completed a skills and competency matrix to indicate their preference as to skills and competencies required of graduates in the planning profession, and their opinion on whether graduates indeed possess these skills and competencies and are at home in the required areas of knowledge when they enter the planning profession. (The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.)

In conclusion, the planners' responses are compared with what universities are delivering to align planning curricula with the requirements of the profession, as described in chapter 4. The response by the planning profession is also measured against international trends in planning, as described in chapters 2 and 3 of the thesis, to understand where the planning profession in South Africa fits into the global frame of reference for planning.

### **5.1 Analysis of the respondents**

In total, 40 respondents from both the public and the private sector in South African metropolitan areas participated in the study. Respondents were mainly based in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Pietermaritzburg.

**Table 5.1 - Number of public and private sector respondents per area**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Private sector</b>	<b>Public sector</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Johannesburg</b>	5	5	10
<b>KwaZulu Natal</b>	4	6	10
<b>Pretoria</b>	6	4	10
<b>Western Cape</b>	6	4	10
<b>Total</b>	21	19	40

Respondents from the private sector are typically involved in the following fields:

Most often mentioned:

- Integrated development planning
- Strategic and policy planning
- Urban design



- Urban development
- Housing
- Social and economic development.

Other areas:

- Inner-city development
- Social infrastructure
- Engineering infrastructure
- Spatial frameworks
- Economic development
- Land-use planning
- Transport planning
- Project management
- Business management
- Airport planning
- Solid waste management
- Regional planning.

Respondents from the public sector are employees of, respectively, the Stellenbosch Municipality, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, the Ethekwini (Durban) Metropolitan Council, the Cape Town Metropolitan Council, the KwaZulu Natal Department of Traditional and Provincial Government, the Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government, the Gauteng Department of Housing and Land Affairs, the Western Cape Department of Planning, Local Government and Housing, and the national departments of Land Affairs, Local and Provincial Government, Environmental Affairs, Public Works and Housing.

The planning departments within national government have specified tasks relating to the department's vision. Planners in the Department of Land Affairs, for example, are tasked with state land management, whereas planners in the Department of Housing are tasked with human settlement policies.

Planners in the metropolitan and local councils mostly deal with spatial frameworks, integrated development planning, inner-city development, development planning and local economic development. At the same time, they are still occupied by the restructuring of unincorporated areas and recently constituted municipalities and the accompanying challenges posed to planners.

Government departments together with metropolitan and local councils employ, on average, more planning graduates per planning division, than private sector companies. Private sector companies that participated in the research employ on average five planners, compared with the public sector's 11. Private companies in Johannesburg are larger than elsewhere in South Africa. This then supports the findings by Harrison and Todes (2001a: 7) that the market for the private sector, specifically in KwaZulu Natal, has become tighter. Large planning firms disappearing and being replaced by small firms seems to be a trend throughout the country.

Respondents employ graduates from the universities of Natal, Wits, Pretoria and Stellenbosch. Some of them have also employed graduates from the universities of Potchefstroom and Cape Town, and the ML Sultan Technikon. The respondents' answers were therefore based on their observations of graduates from these schools.

## 5.2 The relevance of planning education

### 5.2.1 Preparedness of graduates for the planning profession

The first question to practitioners probed their feeling on the adequacy of planning education towards preparing graduates for the profession.

**Table 5.2 - Preparedness of graduates for the planning profession**

Area	Yes		No		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	3	3	2	2	10
KwaZulu Natal	4	3		3	10
Pretoria	1	3	5	1	10
Western Cape	4	3	2	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>40</b>

In total, twelve private sector planners and twelve public sector planners replied positively. This gives a 60% positive answer to the preparedness of planning graduates. Respondents' answers could not be differentiated along the line of the work they do, but Afrikaans-speaking planners appear to feel more negative about the preparedness of planning graduates than English-speaking planners, who mostly answered in the positive.

Planners feeling positive about the preparedness of graduates, believe these graduates were given a solid theoretical foundation on which to build a professional career. Their education is seen as being sufficiently wide in content to equip them with the basic skills required to both perform their functions as recently qualified planners and contribute meaningfully to the planning profession. These professional planners mostly charge the university with the task to equip planning students with life-long skills to do their work and to think and reason independently – not necessarily to fully equip them for the day-to-day functioning of planning practice.

Graduates are found to have on average a passable knowledge of various political, social and development issues, and are able to view problems within the broader context. Planners are also positive that graduates are able to function in a multi-disciplinary environment.

The responding planners find the curriculum to be adaptive to the changes in planning practice, saying that basic and relevant subject matter is taught, in spite of planning education arguably being too theoretical. They are positive about the broad education, graduates' ability to think analytically and, to an extent, write reports.

Planners have however noticed a growing inability among graduates to apply the knowledge they have acquired to practical situations, and a declining ability to write reports and communicate their recommendations. It appears that there has been a lowering of standards to some degree. They are also concerned about graduates' own disillusionment when first entering the planning profession.

Planners feeling negative about the preparedness of graduates point out that very few training courses in any occupation would ever prepare students 'adequately for work'. These planners see the problem as too much theoretical training and too little practical experience gained while studying.

They believe graduates lack skills in lateral and integrative thinking, the ability to negotiate with the community and other stakeholders, technical application skills, policy writing skills and

multi-tasking abilities. Graduates also lack contextual understanding and have limited knowledge about development planning.

Almost 65% of the planners suggest that more practical courses in the curriculum would ease graduates' way into the planning profession, and a constant, critical assessment of the curriculum would avoid irrelevance.

### 5.2.2 The relevance of the planning curriculum

Practitioners were asked for their view on the planning curriculum's relevance for the type of work they are doing in planning practice.

Table 5.3 - The relevance of the planning curriculum

Area	Yes		No		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	5	3		2	10
KwaZulu Natal	4	4		1	9
Pretoria	5	2	1	2	10
Western Cape	6	3		1	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>32</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>39</b>

In total, 20 private and 12 public sector planners replied positively. This amounts to 82% of all the respondents being positive about the relevance of the planning curriculum.

The main reason given by the positively-inclined planners is the same as for the first question, namely the education received, provides students with an academic, well-rounded, theoretical background as a base upon which to build their practical experience. These planners feel that given the planning and development needs in the country, there is a definite need for persons with planning skills.

They also view it positive that universities increasingly engage planning professionals to lecture students on current town planning issues, as this exposes students to the planning environment. They are positive about planning education teaching research and analytical skills, the general principles of planning, and a broad and balanced perspective on development issues. They are pleased to see that technological tools such as GIS and other applications are being taught, and that planning education teaches students a variety of roles as required under new planning procedures.

Four planners in the KwaZulu Natal and Western Cape districts employing master's planning graduates, believe the relevance of the planning education is determined by the undergraduate foundation – a planner cannot be produced in two years without at least a geography or natural science foundation.

Almost 100% of the respondents believe planning education lacks relevance by being too theoretical and not teaching enough practical skills. This includes technical skills, skills in applying theory in practice, quantitative analytical skills, business, financial and project management skills. Private sector planners in Pretoria, specifically, think students should have a better knowledge of various applications when walking into the planning profession. Five respondents feel that planning education lacks contextuality in the South African planning environment.

Two respondents hold the opinion that although planning education is highly relevant, it is not essential, as good planners have emerged without a tertiary education.

### 5.2.3 Educating planners for the future

Practitioners were asked if they thought that planning education was preparing graduates for the future.

**Table 5.4 - Educating planners for the future**

Area	Yes		No		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	5	3		2	10
KwaZulu Natal	3	4	1	1	9
Pretoria	3	2	2	2	9
Western Cape	6	3		1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>38</b>

In total, 17 private and 12 public sector planners replied positively, amounting to 76% of the respondents being positive about the future-oriented nature of planning.

Planners sounding positive about the ability of planning education to educate planners for the future, say that planning is by definition orientated towards the future and is keeping pace with the changing demands made on planners. Planners find the future extremely unpredictable and therefore appreciate the difficulty universities experience in anticipating what the future would require. Yet they like to believe that universities are stimulating independent reasoning in students, in order for them to respond to a changing future. Planners consider students to have realistic expectations about the future.

With planning being a dynamic discipline and the environment changing all the time, planners have to keep adapting to new circumstances. Many professional planners see a broad, diverse education as the right recipe to make students marketable in several fields other than planning – fields probably yet not known or not considered important to planners.

Planners feel that graduates who are encouraged to adopt an attitude of life-long learning will be the planners of the future. Most planners thus believe the best way to educate planners for the future is not to pre-empt, trying to teach them everything about the future now, but to make available refresher courses and continued professional development courses to the planning profession. It is therefore important for university departments to keep abreast with changing trends in planning and legislation.

Those who are negative about planning education's ability to teach planners for the future, believe planning education focuses too much on first-world conditions and becomes irrelevant for the developing world conditions in South Africa. They also feel planning education is obsessed with historic planning theory and not with the future of planning at all. These planners think that whereas planning in South Africa is constantly changing, planning education is not responding.

Some planners see universities' failure to provide continued professional development as the reason why they are not educating planners for the future. Others feel that the profession needs to turn to a new generation of people who may not be planners but urban development managers, to plan for the future.

### 5.2.4 Summary and conclusion

Planners are overall positive about the preparedness of graduates, the relevance of planning education for the planning profession and planning education's ability to educate planners for the future. They are the planners that still see a need for planners in this country.

Planners agree that graduates receive a solid, broad, theoretical foundation on which to build a professional career. They are mostly satisfied with the way curricula have been changed to reflect the changes in the planning environment. A negative evaluation, is that the curricula, although relevant, are often too theoretical and do not teach enough practical skills. Some planners are concerned about planning education not being contextual, teaching too much of the developed world.

Planning professionals also feel uneasy about the decline in the quality of graduates, observing in graduates a growing inability to apply acquired knowledge to practical situations as well as a diminishing ability to write reports and communicate their recommendations.

Planners do not necessarily feel that universities should prepare planners for the future by trying to predict the future, but rather by teaching students the skills to critically think about the future and to respond to this future. Planners' broad education will allow them to assume roles in future that are not, as yet, identified as important tasks in the planning field – hence their strong feeling about life-long learning and continued professional development. This is seen as the only way to keep abreast with the changes in the planning environment and being able to respond to these changes.

## 5.3 The nature of planning education

### 5.3.1 Practical experience

Practitioners were asked if they thought that practical experience, gained during the study period, would enhance planning students' skills and competencies.

Table 5.5 - Gaining practical experience while studying

Area	Yes		No		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	5	4		1	10
KwaZulu Natal	4	6			10
Pretoria	6	4			10
Western Cape	5	3		1	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>39</b>

There were almost no negative answers to this question, as 95% of all respondents felt that students should gain practical experience while studying. Only two persons from the public sector thought students did not need to get practical experience before entering the job market, because this kind of experience often turns out to be irrelevant or too limited to be of any practical use for the job market.

Professional planners in favour of practical experience see it as essential in all professions that students gain exposure to the real world – in this case, of planning practice, as hands-on learning is very different from academic learning. These planners are convinced that students would better understand and relate to the theory they are learning if they see it in practice. At present it is unfortunate that students cannot go back to the classroom to reassess the theory they have learnt, after experiencing the planning profession. Students should stretch their minds, be able to

challenge a theory, be exposed to the real issues and develop practical skills and competencies. A well-balanced education, that includes practical experience, would expose students to the range of skills needed and provide them with a better understanding of why all components of the course are important.

Students also learn to co-operate with other disciplines such as land surveyors, engineers, architects, etc. in the initial phases of any development – knowledge that could serve them well while still at university, by having the opportunity and motivation to learn more from other disciplines.

Graduates would furthermore benefit from practical experience by being able to add it to their CVs. They would get a better clue of the role-players in the planning environment, by having had the opportunity to network in the planning industry. This could point them to which sector and with whom to apply for work.

Planners in the public sector expressed the wish to see new planners hit the ground – if not running, then at least walking – as councils and departments have huge capacity constraints. Considerable time and cost have to be expended to get a new planner up to speed.

Suggestions were made that undergraduate students should work two days a week during a normal year and to work a full year in government and private sector during year three or four of the course, lengthening the course duration to five years. During this period students should do small tasks for planning firms, while learning about planning procedures. Others feel this practical experience should not take up a full year of the student's time. It should rather take on the form of visits to practitioners, local authorities, and projects, as well as a two or three weeks' visit in a planning office during a vacation. Students should at least try to secure employment during their vacations. Some planners think voluntary work at NGOs or councils for a period of six months should suffice as practical experience.

Reservations about practical experience during their time of study are mostly logistical, such as the capacity required to accommodate all planning students in planning practices, and allowing sufficient time for this exposure to planning practice to ensure it adds value for the student and, hopefully, the planning practice/department.

### 5.3.2 Specialist versus generalist foundation

Practitioners were asked their opinion on whether planning students should be educated as specialists or generalists.

Table 5.6 - Specialists versus generalists education

Area	Specialists		Generalists		Both		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	2		1	3	1	2	9
KZN	1	1	3	4			9
Pretoria	2		3		1	3	9
Western Cape	1	1	3	2	2	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>19</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>37</b>

The response to this question showed a sharply divided view on specialist/generalist – with a noticeable preference towards training generalist planners coming through. Six people from the private sector and two from the public sector preferred planners to be trained as specialists. Ten people from the private sector and nine from the public sector preferred students to be trained as

generalists – at 51%, this was the opinion of just more than half of the respondents. Four people from the private sector and six from the public sector expressed the view that planners should be both – at first a generalist, becoming a specialist.

A motivation provided by planners for their generalist view on planning, was town planning was in essence a generalist profession involving various aspects that cannot be studied or used in isolation from each other. Planners may be concentrating on a particular facet of planning through choice or circumstances, but planning is co-determined by other aspects such as the environment, education, health, in fact everything that contributes towards the creation of sustainable livelihoods, and is therefore generalist in nature. Planners should, however, have sufficient knowledge regarding specialist fields to be good diagnosticians and to realise when and which specialists to involve. Their generalist background would stand them in good stead when interacting with other professions (e.g. engineers, environmentalists, sociologists, project managers, geologists, etc.), in order to achieve a good spatial outcome.

Other planners hold the view that planners cannot afford to be specialists due to the fast-changing planning environment. Town planners should therefore be 'specialist generalists'. This also affords planners the opportunity to work in various fields.

Planning education, especially undergraduate education, should therefore be of a generalist nature, but should provide the possibility of specialising in certain areas, such as strategic planning, layout planning and integrated development planning. The latter specialisation could be provided on a post-graduate level or as part of continued professional development.

The advantage of being a generalist is that one could manage a number of projects with a planner's sense of integration and the ability to see them from a holistic point of view (which could become a speciality). With their generalist backgrounds, planners are able to see the interrelatedness of various factors, and plan for it.

The advocates for a specialist education believe that the field is too wide to stay a generalist. One has to qualify oneself as some sort of specialist in order to be able to sell an expertise to clients. Specialisation is necessary for the survival of the profession. By specialising, it is believed, planners are able to provide better services to the client – seeing that some clients, especially government, demand specialisation.

These advocates would like to see planning establish a niche market for itself. At present there are specialists for everything in life, which leaves no space for a generalist. They see generalists as able to do the work, but specialists as changing the way we think.

They challenge the view among planners that used to see a generalist education as a suitable qualification to co-ordinate development. Although true to an extent, planners still failed to achieve excellence whilst project and programme managers tend to be better at project management than planners. So, a generalist it is easy to end up knowing a little about everything but not enough to make a constructive contribution to projects.

The supporters of seeing planners as both specialists and generalists feel that graduates should have a broad knowledge of all socio-economic and technical issues but should also possess in-depth knowledge. Be both generalist and specialist – not either the one or the other, is their verdict. Generalist skills are needed to manage a project, yet specialist skills are required to consult clients in professional advisory services.

Thirteen respondents (35%) expressed the view that graduates should start as generalists, and qualify as specialists a few years later in areas they enjoy and are good at. By then planners have been afforded the opportunity to specialise in accordance to likes and skills. One planner,

however, aptly formulated his opinion in this way: graduates should be trained as specialists, and then become generalists – as being a true generalist is quite specialised.

### 5.3.3 Undergraduate versus post-graduate education

Practitioners were questioned about their philosophy with regard to planning education presented as either undergraduate or post-graduate training course. (There were no yes or no answers to this question, but most respondents described the benefits and disadvantages of both.)

More than 80% of the respondents see the benefits of both types of qualifications, and agree that both levels of education have its own place in the profession. If a person knows from an early stage that he/she wants to become a planner, then undergraduate education is ideal. If a person becomes interested while studying in a related field, then post-graduate training allows him/her to enter the field after obtaining a basic education. In the end it is the character of the person that makes him or her a good planner, rather than the planning education having been undergraduate or post-graduate.

Planners do, however, prefer students to study an undergraduate planning education – rather than any other undergraduate degree – before embarking upon a post-graduate planning course. A large number of planners – approximately 80% of the respondents – felt that a generalist undergraduate planning education should provide the basis upon which to build a planning career, allowing relatively more time to cover all necessary course work. A post-graduate degree should provide the expertise or specialisation when a person has reached some level of maturity. Three respondents stated that students should first gain practical experience before embarking on a post-graduate education.

Four of them indicated there should be better alignment between undergraduate and post-graduate courses. Post-graduate education should be more specialised instead of covering the basic principles of planning – which the undergraduate planning education would have dealt with. A master's degree should be about mastering a subject, not learning it from scratch.

Those in favour of planning as a post-graduate qualification feel that students need to be more mature intellectually and personally in order to study planning. A negative aspect of post-graduate courses is that students may lack basic skills in statistics, map reading, etc., if their undergraduate courses did not cover this ground.

Three respondents had very strong feelings in favour of planning as an undergraduate qualification. One of the arguments was that planning education is multi-faceted and too complex to be presented in only two years' time. During four years students should be able to master the philosophical, practical and theoretical knowledge of this multi-faceted field. If planners want to compete with other professionals such as engineers, architects and land surveyors, they need a very thorough understanding of planning. In the professions mentioned, and others, students obtain their specific qualification during undergraduate education. People with an undergraduate degree in another field (be it architect, engineer, land surveyor, economist, sociologist, or even a person who majored in languages) cannot be turned into planners in a two-year post-graduate course. One respondent argued that post-graduate education should not be permitted unless a person has registered with the Council.

### 5.3.4 Continued professional development

Practitioners were asked if, in their view, planners would gain value from continued professional development after obtaining a planning degree.



Table 5.7 - Continued professional development

Area	Yes		No		Total
	Private sector	Public sector	Private sector	Public sector	
Johannesburg	5	5			10
KwaZulu Natal	4	6			10
Pretoria	6	4			10
Western Cape	6	4			10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>40</b>

All respondents answered positively. Everyone realises that education is ongoing and at no time can any professional know all there is to know about any or all areas. By continually learning, the planner can strive for continual improvement in delivering a service to the client.

Planners were asked in which areas of knowledge they thought continued professional development should be presented. The following general areas were listed by planning professionals:

- Emerging areas of concern
- General refresher courses
- International and national planning trends
- Specialised courses.

Respondents mentioned the following specific areas requiring continued professional development:

- Business management skills
- Communication skills
- Environmental issues and impact assessments
- Financial management
- IDP training
- Information technologies
- New planning legislation and policies
- New technologies such as GIS and CAD enhancements
- Project management
- Rural planning and development
- Social housing
- Strategic planning
- Urban design
- Urban development.

### 5.3.5 Summary and conclusion

One aspect of general consensus among professional planners is the one about students gaining practical experience while studying. Planners believe that students would better understand, relate to and assess planning theory if they also see it in practice. This would enhance their critical thinking skills, their understanding of the real planning issues and even their ability to negotiate for work once they have graduated. Students could also learn from other disciplines and be able to test their ideas against those of their peers in related professional fields.

Planners differ on the duration and format of practical experience, but chapter 3 makes some suggestions. The important thing is that planners in both the public and private sector are in

favour of practical experience in voluntary or community work and involvement in real-life projects.

The majority of planners feel that education should be generalist in nature as planning is an integrative activity and cannot be practised in isolation from other disciplines. Planners should have a holistic view on planning because, although through choice or circumstances planning practices or departments may be concentrating on specific aspects of planning, it is co-determined by many other aspects. Planners should be 'specialist generalists' and have sufficient knowledge about specialist fields to know when and which specialists to involve.

A number of planners feel, however, that planning education should be specialised because the field is too wide to stay a generalist and one has to be able to sell some sort of expertise to clients. Seeing that there are specialists for every aspect in life no room is left for being a generalist. They regret that planners have failed to be specialist generalists. As a mere generalist, it is easy to end up knowing a little about everything but not enough to make a constructive contribution to projects.

Many planners also feel that graduates should start out as generalists and thereafter specialise. Planning education, especially undergraduate education, should therefore be of a generalist nature, providing the basis upon which a planning career can be built. Yet it should provide the potential for specialising in specific areas at a post-graduate level or as part of continued professional development. Some planners, however, feel that planning education must be at undergraduate level in order to be comparable to and competitive with other professions.

#### 5.4 Skills and competency matrix

Respondents were given a list of skills and competencies to indicate which ones they regarded as essential for qualified planners. They were also asked to judge whether graduates indeed possess these skills and competencies when they come out of planning school. (The survey did not, however, take into account what skills graduates could be expected to develop in practice.)

The skills and competencies were divided into the following categories:

- A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice.
- Demonstrating a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge and applying this in action.
- Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies.
- Linking information technology to planning activities.
- Linking and synthesising, programmes and projects of different sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development.
- Capacity to conduct research and demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- Applying the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors.
- Commanding areas of knowledge important for planners in the profession.

These were the categories formulated at a planning schools' workshop in Bloemfontein in 2000, but the sub-outcomes were extended to include more skills and competencies mentioned in the international literature. (The planning schools' list can be found in Appendix 3.) In each case the skills and competencies that were added to the Bloemfontein list is indicated.

Not all the respondents completed the skills matrix, as many complained it was too lengthy. Besides, initially it was only available for completion on a website, which many respondents did not bother to visit. Later, when it was added to the questionnaire, the response rate increased.

**Table 5.8 - Number of respondents of the skills matrix**

Area	Private sector	Public sector	Total
Johannesburg	3	3	6
KwaZulu Natal	1	4	5
Pretoria	5	3	8
Western Cape	2	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>25</b>

Respondents from the public sector were employees of the Ethekwini Metropolitan Council, the Stellenbosch Municipality, the Cape Town Metropolitan Council, the Western Cape Department of Planning, the Gauteng Department of Housing, the Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government, the KwaZulu Natal Department of Traditional and Local Government, and the national departments of Land Affairs, Environmental Affairs and Public Works.

The private sector respondents were mostly involved in activities such as town planning consulting, development planning, integrated development planning, urban design, statutory planning, community participation, environmental assessments, property development and spatial frameworks.

The results for all four areas were aggregated. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of the skills and competencies by ranking them between 0 and 3, where:

- 0 = Not needed
- 1 = Needed
- 2 = Important
- 3 = Very important

Respondents' assessments as to whether graduates possess these skills and competencies on finishing their planning school education, are indicated in the last column of every table.

#### 5.4.1 Knowledge of moral and ethical dimensions

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the required knowledge and understanding of moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice:

**Table 5.9 - Knowledge of moral and ethical dimensions**

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. Orientation to social justice and equal opportunity	33.3	25	41.7	0	70
b. An appreciation of the diversity of cultures and views	50	41.7	8.3	0	72.7
c. A people-centred approach	52	28	20	0	81.8
d. Promotion of efficiency in resource use	68	24	8	0	72.7
e. An orientation towards sustainable development	87.5	8.3	4.2	0	63.6
f. Respect for professional ethics	79.2	20.8	0	0	27.3

All these skills were part of the planning schools' list of skills and competencies.

Emerging as the most valued core competency was an orientation towards sustainable development, assessed as being very important by 87.5% of respondents, of whom 63.6% regarded graduates to in fact possess the skill. There is a gap of almost 25% in the demand, versus the perceived competence of graduates in this skill.

An orientation towards sustainable development was followed by respect for professional ethics (79.2%), which only 27.3% of the respondents attributed to graduates, and thirdly promotion of efficiency in resource use (68%), which 72.7% of respondents ascribed to graduates.

The planning schools' list of competencies seems to match the skills and competencies required by planning practice, to a large extent. None of these skills were indicated as 'not needed' by any of the respondents, therefore all the skills are deemed needed to some extent. The least important skill, indicated by 41.7% only as 'needed' is an orientation to social justice and equal opportunity, although 33.3% judged the skill 'very important'. The competency which 81.8% of respondents attributed to graduates when they enter the planning profession, is a people-centred approach.

#### 5.4.2 Sound theoretical and contextual knowledge

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the demonstration of a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge and applying this in action:

**Table 5.10 - Sound theoretical and contextual knowledge**

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. The histories, philosophies, and theories of planning and development	20	40	36	4	85.7
b. The nature, purpose and methods of planning	52	40	8	0	85.7
c. The South African context and its particular challenges	75	25	0	0	57.1
d. The theories and principles relating to the design of urban environments	25	50	25	0	57.1
e. The theories relating to the natural, social, economic, developmental and political environments	52	36	12	0	64.3
f. The theories relating to urban, metropolitan, rural and regional development, and to these contexts and processes	41.7	50	8.3	0	71.4
g. An application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements	58.3	25	16.7	0	14.3
h. Understanding of law, legal institutions, ordinances, etc.	54.2	25	20.8	0	28.6

A skill that was added to the above list, that did not originally form part of the planning schools' list of skills and competencies, is number h: 'an understanding of the law, legal institutions, ordinances, etc.'

Seventy five percent of all respondents indicated that a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge of the South African environment and its particular challenges was very important. According to 57.1% of the respondents, graduates possess this competency when entering the

job market. The second and third most valued skills are, respectively, the application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements (58.3%), and an understanding of law, legal institutions, ordinances, etc. (54.2%). Only 14.3% of respondents indicated that graduates commanded the former skill and 28.6% the latter.

The histories, philosophies and theories of planning and development were specified by 4% of respondents as 'not needed', and by 36% as 'needed', although 20% said this skill was 'very important' and 40% termed it 'important'. Compared to other skills, this one is not highly valued by the planning profession. It was, however, indicated by 85.7% of the respondents as a competency that graduates possess on entering the planning profession. Another competency that 85.7% of respondents ascribed to new graduates was an understanding of the nature, purpose and methods of planning.

### 5.4.3 Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the ability to link spatial plans and policies:

**Table 5.11 - Linking spatial plans and policies**

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. Apply knowledge of the political, policy and institutional context, and of planning legislation and procedures	65.2	26.1	8.7	0	28.6
b. Apply knowledge to the implementation of plans and to land management, development process and physical planning activities	66.7	33.3	0	0	42.9
c. Interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving	70.8	29.2	0	0	50
d. Prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales	70.8	25	4.2	0	64.3
e. Undertake planning with an appreciation of urban structure and spatial dynamics	80	20	0	0	71.4
f. Undertake planning with an appreciation of aesthetic dimensions and sensitivity to the cultural heritage	56	44	0	0	42.9
g. Undertake planning with an appreciation of the natural environment	68	28	4	0	57.1
h. Broad understanding of the uses and limitations of planning forecasts and models	41.7	29.2	29.2	0	35.7

Skills that were added to the above list of core competencies – not originally part of the planning schools' list – are numbers e, g and h. Number b was changed to include 'physical planning activities'. Two competencies from the planning schools' list were excluded, namely 'the ability to collect, analyse and organise information to inform planning processes', and 'using technologies to assist in this processes'. These two skills were included under two different tables.

The skill that 80% of respondents indicated as being very important for all planners is to undertake planning with an appreciation of urban structure and spatial dynamics – with 71.4% of respondents ascribing the skill to graduates. This is followed by the ability to interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving (70.8% of respondents indicating

it as a necessary skill for planners, and 50% indicating that graduates do command the skill), and to prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales (70.8% of respondents indicating it as a needed skill for all planners, and 64.3% indicating that graduates do command the skill).

Respondents regarded all the skills as needed, to a certain extent, in the profession. However, the least appreciated skill was shown to be a broad understanding of the uses and limitations of planning forecasts and models. This skill was not on the list of core competencies identified by the planning schools.

The skill least controlled by graduates, according to respondents, was the application of knowledge of the political, policy and institutional context, and of planning legislation and procedures. It should be noted that graduates do not perform well in several skills areas required by the planning profession.

#### 5.4.4 Linking information technology to planning activities

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the ability to link technology to planning activities:

Table 5.12 - Linking technology to planning activities

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. An ability to use technology such as computers, printers, scanners, etc., in daily work	76	20	4	0	78.6
b. Competency in basic computer programmes such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint or similar	72	20	8	0	78.6
c. Competency in specialised computer programmes such as CAD, SPSS, etc.	41.7	16.7	41.7	0	21.4
d. Basic understanding of GIS	45.8	25	29.2	0	57.1
e. Competency in GIS	21.7	30.4	39.1	8.7	35.7
f. Competency in Internet applications	41.7	37.5	20.8	0	69.2

This table was not part of the planning schools' list of skills and competencies.

Here, the most valued skill and competency turned out to be an ability to use technology such as computers, printers, scanners, etc., in daily work, which 76% of planners indicated as very important, and 78.6% of respondents attributed to graduates. This was followed by competency in basic computer programmes such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint or similar (72%), a skill which 78.6% of respondents ascribed to graduates. Thirdly, a basic understanding of GIS is seen as important by 45.7% of respondents, and considered by 57.1% of them to be part of their planning equipment when graduates enter the profession.

Competency in GIS was indicated by 8.7% of respondents as not needed and by 39.1% of the respondents only as needed. Competency in specialised computer programmes such as CAD, SPSS, etc., was regarded by 41.7% of the respondents as needed. These skills are therefore not regarded as important as other technological skills. Notably only 21.4% indicated that graduates possess this skill.

The skill judged by respondents as forming part of most graduates' basic equipment on entering the planning profession, was an ability to use technology in their daily work, as well as specific Microsoft computer programmes.

### 5.4.5 Working within an integrative development framework

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the ability to link and synthesise programmes and projects of different sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development:

**Table 5.13 - Working within a framework of integrative development**

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. Ability to think creatively and synoptically	91.7	8.3	0	0	42.9
b. An integrative understanding of development issues and processes	72	20	8	0	42.9
c. Understanding of key issues in relation to development in South Africa including local economic development, land reform, institutional politics, and urban restructuring and the development of integrated settlements	64	36	0	0	50
d. Understanding of the key sectors around which integration needs to occur, such as infrastructure, services, environment and the economy	66.7	20.8	12.5	0	57.1
e. Understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occur	70.8	16.7	12.5	0	50
f. Understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes and issues	68	20	12	0	21.4

An added skill to the planning schools' list of skills and competencies is number d: 'an understanding of the key sectors around which integration needs to occur, such as infrastructure, services, environment and the economy'.

Almost 92% of respondents rated the ability to think creatively and synoptically as very important, but only 42.9% of them credited graduates with possessing this competency when they enter the job market. The second and third most valued skills were, respectively, an integrative understanding of development issues and processes (72%), and an understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occur (70.8%). Approximately 43% of respondents saw graduates as possessing the former skill and 50% the latter.

The planning schools' list of competencies seems to match the skills and competencies required by planning practice, to a large extent. Not one skill was indicated by planners as not needed, but an understanding of the key sectors around which integration needs to occur, such as infrastructure, services, environment and the economy were specified by only 12.5% as needed. Still, 66.7% of respondents judged the skill as very important and 20.8% as important. Fifty seven percent credited graduates with commanding the competency.

An understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes and issues was indicated by respondents as the skill least represented among graduates when they enter the planning profession.

### 5.4.6 Research, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the ability to conduct research and to demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving:

Table 5.14 - Research, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. Understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements	40	32	28	0	92.9
b. Ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information from many and diverse sources	66.7	25	8.3	0	92.9
c. Ability to synthesise information	70.8	25	4.2	0	57.1
d. Ability to perform qualitative and quantitative reasoning	64	32	4	0	35.7
e. Ability to write research reports	83.3	12.5	4.2	0	42.9
f. Ability to apply the knowledge generated to planning problems in a creative way	76	16	8	0	42.9
g. Ability to critically analyse issues	83.3	16.7	0	0	50

Skills that were added to the above list of core competencies – not originally part of the planning schools' list – are numbers c, d, e and g. Number b was changed to include 'from many and diverse sources'.

The planning schools' list of competencies seems to match the skills and competencies required by planning practice, to a large extent. The two skills areas that 83.3% of respondents rated as very important in planning are the ability to critically analyse issues and the ability to write research reports – with 50% of respondents indicating that graduates possess the former and 42.9% the latter competency. This was followed by the ability to synthesise information – rated very important by 70.8% of respondents, with 57.1% of them indicating that graduates command this skill.

Planners rated none of the skills as unnecessary. The skill with the lowest rating was an understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements. However, in total 72% indicated the skills as either 'important' or 'very important'.

The skill least mastered by graduates is the ability to reason qualitatively and quantitatively – a competency that only 35.7% of respondents ascribed to graduates. On the contrary, the skills which 92.9% of respondents positively ascribed to new graduates are an understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements, and an ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information from many and diverse sources.

### 5.4.7 Managerial and communicative skills

The following table provides the sub-outcomes evaluating the ability to apply managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors:



Table 5.15 - Managerial and communicative skills

Core competency	% Very important	% Important	% Needed	% Not needed	% Possess
a. Understanding of political processes and governance	62.5	20.8	16.7	0	21.4
b. Understanding of social dynamics and power relations	50	33.3	16.7	0	57.1
c. Understanding multiculturalism	45.8	54.2	0	0	57.1
d. Understanding what the public/client wants	83.3	16.7	0	0	35.7
e. Ability to express the collective good	54.2	29.2	16.7	0	35.7
f. Ability to relate to and work with diverse communities	76	20	4	0	35.7
g. Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills	79.2	20.8	0	0	21.4
h. Speaking formally and informally with public and elected officials	78.3	21.7	0	0	35.7
i. Ability to communicate effectively by electronic means	75	20.8	4.2	0	50
j. Ability to communicate effectively graphically	83.3	8.3	4.2	4.2	57.1
k. Ability to communicate effectively verbally	76	20	4	0	50
l. Ability to think and respond on their feet	79.2	16.7	4.2	0	57.1
m. Ability to work in teams and individually	87.5	12.5	0	0	35.7
n. Co-ordinating a multi-disciplinary team	58.3	37.5	4.2	0	28.6
o. Ability to write informative, engaging, short pieces (e.g. brochures) for the general public	70.8	25	4.2	0	28.6
p. Decision-making skills	58.3	37.5	4.2	0	14.3
q. Financial management: Ability to develop and maintain budgets	62.5	29.2	8.3	0	14.3
r. Organisational management	75	20.8	4.2	0	21.4
s. Project management	76	20	4	0	21.4
t. Self-starter	58.3	33.3	8.3	0	42.9
u. Understanding of approaches, processes and techniques associated with participatory and collaborative forms of planning	62.5	37.5	0	0	40

Core competencies that were added to the planning schools' list in this table, are numbers c, d, e, f, h, l, n, o and t. Numbers i, j and k were one sub-outcome in the planning schools' list of competencies, broken down into three sub-outcomes. Strategic thinking and the ability to work with people – included in the planning schools' list – were excluded from this table, but included in another.

The skill that 87.5% of respondents rated as very important in planning, is to be able to work both individually and as a member of a team – 35.7% of respondents crediting graduates with the competency. This was followed by an understanding of the public/client's needs and the ability to communicate effectively graphically (83.3% of respondents rating these skills as very important to planners, where 35.7% for the former and 57.1% for the latter credited graduates as being in command of the skills).

Excepting the ability to communicate effectively graphically, respondents regarded all the skills as needed, to a certain extent, for professional planning.

According to respondents, the competencies least represented among graduates are, decision-making skills and financial management (ability to develop and maintain budgets), followed by an understanding of political processes and governance, project management, negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills and organisational skills. Also significant is that over 50% of

respondents judged graduates to be sufficiently competent in merely four of the competencies. Graduates in the planning profession were rated deficient in the rest of the managerial and communicative skills. Arguably, these specific skills are rather learnt when practicing planning.

#### 5.4.8 Important areas of knowledge for planners

Planners were asked to rate the importance of 22 areas of knowledge, by using the following indicators:

- 0 = Not important
- 1 = Specialised area for some planners
- 2 = Needed for all planners

The next table provides the feedback from the planning sector in terms of areas of knowledge important to planners:

**Table 5.16 - Areas of knowledge important to planners**

Areas of knowledge	% Needed by all	% Specialised for some	% Not Important	% Possess
a. Layout	52	44	0	50
b. Urban design	24	76	0	25
c. Spatial frameworks	80	16	0	66.7
d. Land-use planning	84	12	0	58.3
e. Metropolitan planning	72	28	0	33.3
f. Regional planning	56	40	0	50
g. Rural development	60	36	4	41.7
h. Local economic development	84	16	0	33.3
i. Urban management	64	32	4	41.7
j. Integrated development planning	64	32	4	33.3
k. Informal settlement upgrading	48	48	4	16.7
l. Housing	32	52	16	33.3
m. Architectural design	24	56	12	33.3
n. Environmental management and impact assessments	52	40	8	16.7
o. Heritage planning	16	72	12	16.7
p. Landscape design	44	40	8	33.3
q. Planning law	44	52	4	16.7
r. Real estate	28	60	12	25
s. Recreational/tourist planning	48	48	4	41.7
t. Social planning	48	52	0	41.7
u. Traffic/transport planning	44	52	0	50
v. Urban economics	40	52	8	33.3

This table was not part of the planning schools' list of skills and competencies.

The two areas of knowledge rated by 84% of respondents to be necessary for planners were land-use planning, (58.3% of them credited this to graduates), and local economic development (credited to graduates by 33.3% of respondents). Spatial frameworks was rated by 80% of respondents as a necessary area of knowledge, and 66.7% credited graduates with commanding this area of knowledge. Metropolitan planning was seen by 72% of respondents as needed in planning, and 33.3% perceived graduates to have command of this area of knowledge.

The areas of knowledge judged by respondents to be 'specialised areas only for some planners', were urban design (76% of the respondents), heritage planning (72%), and real estate (60%).

A minority of respondents assessed certain areas as 'not needed' for planners, namely:

- Housing – indicated by 16% of respondents
- Architectural design – indicated by 12% of respondents
- Real estate – indicated by 12% of respondents
- Heritage planning – indicated by 12% of respondents
- Urban economics – indicated by 8% of respondents
- Environmental management and impact assessments – indicated by 8% of respondents
- Landscape design – indicated by 8% of respondents.

The least-known areas of knowledge, according to respondents, were informal settlement upgrading, heritage planning, and environmental management and impact assessments – with only 16.7% of respondents crediting graduates with some knowledge. The area of knowledge which 66.7% of respondents perceived to be known to graduates was spatial frameworks.

#### 5.4.9 The most critical skills and competencies

As part of the skills and competency matrix respondents were asked to list the top three skills required of a graduate when entering the planning profession. Twenty-five respondents participated in the skills and competency matrix. The four skills most often mentioned were:

- Project management skills – mentioned by 60% of respondents
- Communication skills (verbally and written) – mentioned by 56% of respondents
- Ability to synthesise information – mentioned by 48% of respondents
- Ability to think critically – mentioned by 48% of respondents.

The following skills and competencies obtained relative priority:

- Ability to propose innovative solutions – mentioned by 22% of respondents
- Policy formulation and interpretation of planning procedure and legislation – mentioned by 20% of respondents
- Ability to think creatively – mentioned by 20% of respondents
- Technical knowledge and the ability to apply it – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Ability to think analytically – mentioned by 12% of respondents.

Other skills listed by only a few respondents are:

- Ability to think laterally
- An understanding of planning dynamics and issues
- Ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information from many and diverse sources
- Ability to work both in groups and individually
- Being people-centred
- Ability to make decisions
- Marketing skills
- Business management skills
- Financial management skills
- Self-development and improvement skills
- Adaptability to changing environments
- Ability to 'think on one's feet'
- Statistical analytical skills

- Ability to think philosophically
- Photographic skills.

#### 5.4.10 Gaps in skills and competencies, and areas of knowledge

Having indicated the most important skills and competencies for planners in the profession, practitioners were asked to name the missing skills and competencies or areas of knowledge noticed in the education of graduates.

In terms of missing skills and competencies in the planning curriculum, respondents identified the following gaps:

- Project management skills – mentioned by 32% of respondents
- Communication skills (verbal and written) – mentioned by 28% of respondents
- Business management skills – mentioned by 24% of respondents
- Financial management skills – mentioned by 16% of respondents
- Ability to apply theory in practice – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Ability to implement plans and policies – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Technical skills – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Negotiation and conflict resolution skills – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Public relations skills – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Ability to view planning holistically – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Analytical skills – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Problem-solving skills – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Marketing skills – mentioned by 4% of respondents
- Assertiveness – mentioned by 4% of respondents
- Ability to understand the context – mentioned by 4% of respondents.

Of these skills and competencies, project management skills, business management skills, financial management skills and communication skills were most often mentioned.

Specific areas of knowledge identified as gaps in the planning curricula, were the following:

- Business management – mentioned by 28% of respondents
- Financial management – mentioned by 24% of respondents
- Public administration and finance – mentioned by 24% of respondents
- Planning policies and legislation – mentioned by 24% of respondents
- Urban design and lay-out – mentioned by 16% of respondents
- Development planning – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Planning processes, town planning schemes and ordinances – mentioned by 12% of respondents
- Economic principles and market forces – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Environmental planning – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Information technology training, specifically GIS and CAD – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Urban management – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Professional ethics – mentioned by 8% of respondents
- Political processes – mentioned by 4% of respondents
- Property market and real estate – mentioned by 4% of respondents
- Traffic analysis – mentioned by 4% of respondents.

Most often mentioned among these areas of knowledge were planning policies and legislation; knowledge of public administration; and knowledge of financial and business management.

### 5.4.11 Summary and conclusion

Using the values derived from the empirical survey to establish which skills and competencies are most valued by planners, they are compared with ones planners mentioned at the end of the study as the three most critical skills for graduates. The following table compares the findings:

**Table 5.17 - Comparison between quantitative and qualitative findings**

Quantitative analysis	Qualitative analysis
<input type="checkbox"/> Ability to think critically and synoptically <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation towards sustainable development <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to work in teams and individually <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding what the client wants <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate effectively graphically <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to write research reports.	<input type="checkbox"/> Project management skills <input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills (verbal and written) <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to synthesise information <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to think critically.

It can be concluded that the two sets of findings concur to a very large extent. Both mention the ability to think critically and synoptically; and both mention verbal and written forms of communication skills. From the quantitative analysis, an orientation towards sustainable development and an ability to work both in a team and individually came out very strong, whereas project management skills were the most-mentioned skills in the qualitative question. Students are, however, generally under-prepared, and although universities' list of skills and competencies match those of the planning practice to a large extent, graduates do not achieve some of these competencies.

The values derived from the empirical survey indicating which skills and competencies are least commanded by planners, are compared to the ones planners mentioned at the end of the study as the gaps in skills and competencies. The skills and competencies that graduates are deficient in, are:

**Table 5.18 - Skills and competencies in which graduates are deficient**

Quantitative analysis	Qualitative analysis
<input type="checkbox"/> Decision-making skills <input type="checkbox"/> Financial management (ability to develop and maintain budgets) <input type="checkbox"/> The application of theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements <input type="checkbox"/> The understanding of political processes and governance <input type="checkbox"/> Project management <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational skills.	<input type="checkbox"/> Project management skills <input type="checkbox"/> The ability to apply theory in practice <input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills.

To synthesise, the skills and competencies most valued in the planning profession are the ability to think critically, communication skills (written and verbal), project management, the ability to work both in a team and individually, the ability to synthesise information and an orientation towards sustainable development. Assessing these, respondents judged graduates as not being adequately skilled in project management and verbal and written communication skills. It can therefore be concluded that universities need to address these skills.

From the empirical research the following skills were found to be the least important, although still needed: an orientation towards social justice and equal opportunity; competency in GIS; competency in specialised computer programmes such as CAD, SPSS, etc.; and the histories, philosophies and theories of planning and of development.

Respondents specified the best-mastered skills and competencies in graduates to be: an understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements; the ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information from many and diverse sources; an understanding of the nature, purpose and methods of planning; and histories, philosophies and theories of planning and development. Graduates were also found to be adequately skilled in using basic technology in their daily work. However, none of these were valued among the top six skills and competencies by the planning profession.

The most important areas of knowledge that respondents indicated as necessary for all planners are land-use planning, local economic development, spatial frameworks, metropolitan planning, planning policies and legislation, public administration and environmental planning. The areas of knowledge that respondents pointed out to be specialised areas only for some planners, are urban design, heritage planning, and real estate. Housing, architectural design, landscape design, real estate, urban economics, heritage planning and environmental planning were indicated by some respondents as areas of knowledge not needed in planning.

The areas least familiar to graduates are informal settlement upgrading, heritage planning and environmental management and impact assessments, whereas spatial frameworks is the area of knowledge most familiar to graduates.

## **5.5 Suggested changes for planning education**

### **5.5.1 Suggestions for enhancing the education framework**

Planners were asked how they would change, or what they would add to the planning framework and curriculum to ensure a relevant planning education – should they be involved in the development of the planning framework. The response rate to this question was very low, with only 14 of the 40 respondents answering the question. Most of the suggestions were only mentioned once or twice and results are therefore not expressed in percentages.

In terms of the broader educational framework planners suggested the following, with a view to improving planning education:

- Differentiate in specialities between planning schools
- Refine the selection process to allow less students, yet of higher quality to study planning
- Focus courses
- Raise the standard of academic training
- Develop internship programmes with planning practices and departments
- Include more case studies and practical projects in curricula
- Create the opportunity for students to criticise planning practice and real life projects
- Focus on current development trends, more than on historical happenings
- Focus on communication skills (verbal and written)
- Focus on implementation strategies
- Teach planners to take pride in their profession and to speak out for their contribution to a better future in South Africa
- Teach students to be the policy makers of tomorrow
- Include more training on legislation, policies and procedures
- Include updated computer training
- Keep abreast of the latest national and international developments in planning
- Maintain contact with the planning profession to ascertain the needs of the market
- Reassess and update curricula continually
- Involve planning practice in developing planning education curricula

- Implement a monitoring system of graduates to determine the challenges they experience in planning practice and their skills shortages
- Develop post-graduate diplomas to promote specialisation in certain areas
- Develop short courses for continued professional development
- Interact with students from other professions – architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, land surveyors, etc.
- Communicate with other planning schools and institutions, especially in Africa
- Develop exchange programmes with other universities
- Evaluate peer universities.

### **5.5.2 Summary and conclusion**

In terms of the broader educational framework, planners suggested that universities should offer different specialities instead of duplicating them, and they should select fewer students and raise the standard of training. Planning schools should have more links with planning practice to develop internships, to involve professionals in developing a curriculum, to allow students to express criticism of the profession, and to ascertain the needs of the market. Graduates should be monitored. Universities should have more linkages with each other as well as with other planning institutions and organisations globally, but specifically in Africa. They should interact with other professions, develop continued professional development courses, teach more practical skills, cultivate pride in their profession and constantly reassess and update their curricula.

## **5.6 Comparison between the planning profession and universities' views**

In the following section the views of the planning profession are compared with those of the four universities on aspects of planning education, skills and competencies and the relevance of planning education for the planning profession.

### **5.6.1 The relevance of planning education**

Planners are mostly positive about the relevance of planning education for the planning profession. They agree that graduates receive a solid, broad, theoretical foundation on which to build a professional career. Universities on the other hand realise that their curricula do not address all the skills and competencies needed by qualified planners, but that there will probably always be a gap between the skill supply and demand. In some cases universities feel they are ahead of the planning profession.

The planning profession is mostly satisfied with the changes to curricula, however, they feel curricula are still too theoretical and lack practical skills training. Universities are considering more alternative teaching methods to encourage participation, critical thinking, practical experience and intellectual stimulation.

A concern to both the universities and planning practice is the decline in the quality of planning graduates.

### **5.6.2 Educating planners for the future**

Planners and universities agree that the future is unpredictable and that universities should thus aim to teach students the skills that will enable them to take a critical, discerning view of the

challenges of the future. Planners' broad background will allow them to adopt new roles in the future. The profession does, however, expect universities to keep track of the changes in the planning profession and to respond accordingly.

It seems clear that universities are indeed keeping track of the changing nature of planning and the new approaches that are emerging in South Africa, such as integrated development planning, sustainable planning, regional planning, local economic development, and also new styles to planning such as community participation and communicative forms of planning. Planning schools in fact are trying to incorporate these changes into their curricula – perhaps not always with enough enthusiasm, yet often in advance of them becoming dominant in practice.

### **5.6.3 Gaining practical experience**

Like universities, the planning profession is positively inclined towards students gaining practical experience while studying. This may take the form of an internship, community work and/or voluntary work as part of the curriculum. Both universities and planning practice are concerned about the logistics of an internship, but nevertheless want to continue to explore the possibilities.

The planning profession is furthermore urging universities to include more practical courses in their curricula in order to teach more practical skills; to involve the planning profession to a larger extent in developing curricula; and to use the profession as a soundboard for their practical projects and case studies and vice versa. Certain universities feel, however, that they are doing their duty by presenting sufficient practical training.

### **5.6.4 Specialist versus generalist training**

Although the majority of planners propose a generalist planning education due to the integrative nature of planning, planners are divided on this matter. Universities, however, are confident that their generalist-with-the-opportunity-to-specialise approach provides graduates with the needed specialisation. Universities and planners-for-a-generalist-education agree that trained planners should be 'specialised generalists'.

Those in the planning profession in favour of a specialised education feel that graduates with a generalist training are not able to sell any expertise – the field being too wide for a mere generalist. The generalist can easily end up knowing a little about everything but not enough to make a constructive contribution to projects.

### **5.6.5 Continued professional development**

The planning profession is convinced that continued professional development (CPD) would be to the benefit of the profession as a way of staying abreast of the national and international trends in planning. They feel universities should also offer refresher courses and training in the basics of public administration and business management, planning policy and legislation, and emerging fields. University staff realise that the planning fraternity could benefit from CPD courses, but are not providing for the demand at present.



### 5.6.6 Undergraduate versus post-graduate education

Both the planning profession and planning schools appreciate the merits of undergraduate and post-graduate education. Most planners feel that graduates should start out as generalists and could thereafter specialise. Planning education, especially undergraduate training, should therefore be of a generalist nature, but should provide the possibility of specialising in certain areas at a post-graduate level or as part of continued professional development. Another benefit of a post-graduate education, as seen by both academic institutions and the planning profession, is that planning is often the first choice of a master's degree student, but only the second or even third choice of an undergraduate student. The negative aspect is that usually, too much is demanded during the two years' post-graduate study.

There are planners who insist on planning education to be undergraduate in order to compare and compete with other professions.

### 5.6.7 Most critical skills and competencies

The following table compares the critical skills and competencies, as identified by the planning profession, with the ones planning schools identified at a meeting in Bloemfontein:

**Table 5.19 - Comparing skills: planning schools versus planning practice**

Planning schools	Planning practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical issues in the public domain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge and apply this in action</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Link knowledge to spatial plans and policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Link and synthesise programmes and projects of different sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct academic research to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apply the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to think critically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project management skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to synthesise information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills (verbal and written)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to work in teams and individually</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Understanding what the client wants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Orientation towards sustainable development.</li> </ul>

The most important skills and competencies as identified by the universities' planning schools served as the categories for the survey of the planning profession. It is therefore difficult to compare the two. What can be concluded from the table is that the planning profession to a large extent emphasises the managerial and communicative skills category, as well as the category critical thinking and problem-solving ability. Thus there is much agreement between planning schools and the profession about the Bloemfontein list of skills and competencies – even though graduates do not always achieve these skills and competencies.

The most important areas of knowledge that the planning profession indicated as needed by all planners are land-use planning, local economic development, spatial frameworks, metropolitan planning, planning policies and legislation, public administration and environmental planning. The areas of knowledge that respondents indicated were specialised areas only for some planners, are urban design, heritage planning, and real estate.

The four planning schools teach all of the above subjects, perhaps not as loose standing subjects, but certainly integrated into specific courses. Planning schools see themselves as training potential planners, therefore some of the organisational and communicative skills may only be developed later in a planner's professional career.

### **5.6.8 Summary and conclusions**

The South African planning profession in general and the four academic institutions that were involved in this study, are in agreement on many issues regarding planning education. These are: the broad, generalist nature of planning education that provides a solid foundation on which to build a career; despite limitations to planning curricula, planning education being mostly relevant to both the changing nature of planning and the South African context; declining quality of students; the future being unpredictable, and thus not teachable – so the best way to educate planners for the future is to teach them to take a critical view of the challenges the future will bring; students' need for more practical experience while studying; a call for continued professional development courses to be offered at universities, especially in emerging areas of concern; an undergraduate degree course to be generalist in nature; critical thinking as one of the most important skills in a planning graduate's equipment, and communication skills. Finally, some mastering of emerging areas of knowledge such as environmental planning, planning policies and legislation, and local economic development, and are also regarded as important.

However, planning practitioners differ with planning staff of universities on a number of issues, or believe that academic institutions could improve on the educational framework. Curricula, it is said, are too theoretical; students do not get sufficient exposure to planning practice; universities are not doing enough towards continued professional development; and planners have to have an undergraduate planning education in order to be competitive with other professions.

It could be said that the list of skills and competencies as compiled by the planning schools in Bloemfontein in 2000, is considered to be almost adequate for the needs of planning practice. It is however worrying that graduates do not always demonstrate these skills and competencies when entering the profession. Some additions that could be made to the universities' list of skills and competencies are project, financial and business management skills and a breakdown of communication skills.

## **5.7 Comparison of planning practice with international views**

In the following section the views of the planning profession are compared with those of the international community on aspects of planning education, skills and competencies and the education of planners for the future.

### **5.7.1 Educating planners for the future**

The local and international planning communities agree that planners and academics cannot predict the future, or the future of planning. The future arrives too fast for education to keep up, therefore students have to be educated for a world that does not yet exist. Planning education should be aimed at guiding students towards the realisation of their full potential as human beings and to the full development of their talents. Planning education should widen a student's cultural and intellectual horizons enable critical, analytical thinking about the future. Life-long learning should be encouraged.

### 5.7.2 Gaining practical experience

Gaining practical experience while studying is an agreed aspect of planning education in the local and international communities – with no consensus as yet on either an internship or simply the inclusion of more practical projects in the curriculum. Most practising planners worldwide agree that students can only benefit from practical experience. They would be able to better understand and relate to planning theory, it would challenge their critical thinking skills and give them a sense of the real issues in planning. Community and voluntary work could also be encouraged.

### 5.7.3 Specialist versus generalist training

There will probably never be consensus on the issue of generalist versus specialist training – neither locally nor internationally. The general feeling is that planning education should be generalist in nature, allowing an option to specialise. Planners should be ‘specialised generalists’ or generalists with a speciality.

Other, locally as well as internationally, feel that as a generalist can easily end up knowing a little about everything but hardly enough to make a constructive contribution. They feel planners have failed as generalists, that planners have to be specialist in some way, in order to compete with other professions.

### 5.7.4 Continued professional development

The international and the local planning communities agree that continued professional development is the key to providing a competitive edge to planners in the profession. Courses should be presented in emerging trends in the planning field, management and communication skills, new legislation and information technology. Because planning is ever-evolving, students should be encouraged to keep a professional development plan to encourage life-long learning.

### 5.7.5 Most critical skills and competencies

The critical skills and competencies as identified by the planning profession are compared to the ones synthesised from the international community’s perspective, as per chapter 3, section 3.4.3 of this thesis:

**Table 5.20 - Comparing skills: international community versus planning practice**

International community	Planning practice
Managerial and communication skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Being a good team player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Having interactive talent (negotiating, community liaison, partnering)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Showing good judgement (understanding community needs, moral and ethical issues and the complexity of planning environments)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writing skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initiative and creativity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leadership</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Political awareness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility and adaptability</li> </ul> Analytical skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Critical way of thinking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Application of theoretical and contextual knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to think critically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project management skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to synthesise information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills (verbal and written)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to work in teams and individually</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Understanding what the client wants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Orientation towards sustainable development.</li> </ul>

<input type="checkbox"/> Proactive and integrated problem-solving ability <input type="checkbox"/> Financial analysis <input type="checkbox"/> IT skills and technical ability	
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A high degree of correspondence is found between the two sectors. Both mention the ability to think critically, being a good team player, communication skills, showing good judgement (understanding what the community wants), and being able to synthesise information. The local planning community places a stronger emphasis on project management skills, whereas the international planning community puts more emphasis on the application of learnt theory in practice, and on problem-solving skills.

Local economic development, spatial frameworks and metropolitan planning did not come out strongly in the international literature as areas of paramount importance to planners, yet they are among the most important areas of knowledge for local planners. On the other hand, municipal infrastructure, neighbourhood/community/urban design, and planning theory do not feature strongly under the most important areas of knowledge for local planners. Local and international planners do agree on land-use planning, planning legislation, environmental planning and public administration and finance as important areas to be mastered by the student of planning.

### 5.7.6 Enhancing the educational framework

Suggestions made by one or two planners from the international planning community for changes to the educational framework, that local planners have not considered, include: becoming part of a global planning programme in which planning students are taught to draw on a deeper and wider pool of values, knowledge and skills and to nurture cross-cultural sensitivity and skills; and serious consideration of the development of distance education by planning schools, to cater for the needs of future generations.

Local planners have suggested that planning schools should have more links with planning practice and other planning organisations, especially in Africa, that more practical skills should be taught and that planning academics should cultivate a pride amongst students in the planning profession.

Local and international planners agree that universities should present mid-career refresher courses (as part of continuing professional development); universities should accommodate any shift of emphasis within the planner's role as well as changing contexts; they should work towards greater diversity in the planning community by attracting students of different backgrounds.

Curriculum development is therefore an ongoing activity, and academics should continue to grapple with the following questions:

- What is the present nature of planning?
- What is the future of planning?
- What skills are needed by planners to fulfil the needs of planning practice?

### 5.7.7 Summary and conclusions

The planning communities, both local and international, agree on most aspects of planning education as discussed in this thesis. Included are: the need for more practical training or experience during the period of study; to intellectually challenge students in order to stimulate critical thinking – which is the skill most valued by all in the planning community; to encourage

an inclination towards life-long learning in planning students; the importance of continued professional development; the importance of contextuality in planning education; the importance of skills in communication, leadership, team-work, and understanding the needs of the community; and the importance of areas such as land-use management, planning legislation, environmental planning and public administration.

Diversity of opinion in the planning community hinges mostly on the generalist versus specialist nature of planning education – in addition to local and international communities regarding different areas of knowledge as important. However, the latter could be ascribed to the differences in contexts.

## 5.8 Conclusion

Is South African planning education relevant?

With specific reservations, it can be concluded that planning education is relevant for planning practice in South Africa and largely follows international trends in planning education.

The content of the planning programmes largely reflect the needs of the planning profession and the international trends in planning education. However, either due to students being generally under-prepared and/or inefficient teaching methods used in planning schools, graduates often do not achieve the required competencies. Also, some skills that are required by the planning profession might only be developed in practice – specifically organisational and communicative skills.

Other external factors, which cannot be attributed to inappropriateness of planning education in any way, should also be kept in mind in assessing the relevance of planning education. Professional planners are threatened in that other fields of training also educate people to do some of the work of planners competently. These fields include sociologists, environmentalists, architects, engineers, surveyors, public administrators, geographers, and other social disciplines. The challenges experienced by the planning profession in terms of job opportunities could also be attributed to the current economic and socio-political environment in South Africa, competition from related and emerging fields, and planning's poor public image and visibility.

Yet planning education could, by all means, provide graduates with a competitive edge to ensure the survival of the profession.

Universities need to include more practical training in their curricula but, most important of all – they need to challenge students to hone their critical thinking skills, their leadership and decision-making abilities and their ability to solve problems innovatively. With a broad education and a mastery of the latter skills, graduates should be armed to make a meaningful contribution to the planning profession.

Universities need to provide students with some speciality, even on an undergraduate level. Students would therefore still have a broad generalist, education, but they would be more marketable as they could sell some expertise, bolster their confidence and assertiveness and make them more competitive in the market.

Universities need to encourage life-long learning in students, and present continued professional development courses to harness the profession with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed by planners to stay ahead of the game, or even to invent the game. Academics should provide thought leadership and direction to the planning profession.

Universities should consider suggestions by the international community to become part of a global planning programme in which students would interact with other planning students, worldwide.

Universities should strengthen their links with planning practice to know what the market needs are in terms of skills, competencies and areas of knowledge; to monitor their graduate students' progress in the profession; to know what refresher courses are in demand; and to investigate internships, vacation work or practical projects in participation with the planning profession.

Finally, universities should coach students to take pride in their profession, teach professional ethics and encourage them to never lose sight of the purpose of planning – to create a better, more equitable environment for present and future generations!

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 6.1 Conclusion

Town and regional planning practice and education are said to have been in a state of crisis (a continual state of conflict between opposing and contradictory perspectives) throughout its history. Planning has indeed faced many challenges and demands and has been rigorously questioned over the decades. Planners have been at pains to establish their own disciplinary base and independence since 1909. This is still the case today, as planning as a profession in its own right is even now questioned.

However, the world needs planning, if not planners. More people are living in urban than in rural areas and the human suffering seen in cities of developing countries today is worse than ever before. Presently Southern Africa is threatened by drought and famine in several countries – the worst in 60 years. War is raging in a number of countries and political unrest is the order of the day. In South Africa unemployment is on the rise, crime is rampant, more and more people opt for living in security complexes, the ‘brain drain’ is continuing, Aids is killing economically active people every day, backlogs in housing and services continue, and the country seems unable to reach its economic and inflation targets.

Never before has planning been of such crucial importance than it is today. Although town and regional planners cannot stop wars, prevent Aids or achieve inflation targets, planning could make a difference in people’s lives. Planners could plan a residential environment for people with Aids, design urban areas to combat crime, assist in eliminating the backlog in housing and services, help develop rural areas, and even create employment opportunities through their endeavours. Planners should be able to do what they are tasked to do, namely to be the advocates for a better life for all – which is bound to narrow inequalities among people and improve their quality of life.

Planning should ensure integrated development planning, local economic development, development control, environmental planning, strategic planning, land restitution, and community participation. Planners should aim for equitable, efficient and sustainable use of resources in the intervention, development and improvement of the environment. They should be the advocates for the powerless and for disadvantaged communities, advisors to politicians, as well as facilitators, negotiators and mediators between various stakeholders.

However, these functions are not the exclusive domain of the planner. Planners are in fact competing with architects, engineers, surveyors, sociologists, economists, geographers and other professionals for opportunities in the same fields. Moreover, planners made many mistakes in the past and are struggling to establish a credible image in post-apartheid South Africa. They need to reclaim their role in the planning process by raising the image of the profession and proving themselves as skilled voices-in-the-flow. Planning has obtained a definite window of opportunity with the present reformist fervour at government level. Indeed, which profession is better equipped than planning to contribute towards realising government’s vision for the country – by creating and improving the physical, economic and social framework for human settlements?

Town and regional planning education has therefore become more important than ever before. It should nurture a love and passion for planning and what it stands for. It needs to educate well-balanced, confident, innovative and opportunity-orientated, life-long learners who see themselves as the architects, not the victims, of their destinies. They should look at themselves as people who harness opportunities, rather than ‘look for jobs’ (Spellbound, 2001a). Planning schools need to produce planners who are able and willing to fill niches that are no longer

clearly defined and should be able to create their own niches in an environment that no longer has clearly defined boundaries.

Planning education is the key to the survival of the planning profession. The relevance of planning education has never been more critical, so it needs to constantly expose the limitations and strengths of the curriculum in the light of international trends, the South African context and the envisaged future of the planning profession. Planning education must identify the relevant skills, qualities and traits required in professional planning, and which simultaneously possess both universal value and local relevance.

The competencies with important local relevance were identified by planning professionals as being critical thinking, written and verbal communication skills, project management skills, business and financial management skills, synthesising of information, showing good judgement, ability to work both individually and in teams, problem solving skills and applying theory to real-life situations. Assessing these, practitioners judged graduates to be inadequately skilled in project management and verbal and written communication skills. The most important areas of knowledge identified by research respondents as essential know-how for all planners, are land-use planning, local economic development, spatial frameworks, metropolitan planning, planning policies and legislation, public administration and environmental planning.

The planning schools' list of skills and competencies – compiled at the Bloemfontein workshop – to a major extent matches that of the planning practitioners and is thus quite relevant in the South African context. However, the research revealed that students are assessed as being generally under-prepared and not achieving some of the competencies. On the other hand, admittedly, certain skills required in the planning profession are generally only developed in practice.

In South Africa, external factors also affect planning education. Fewer students have recently been enrolling for tertiary education. Owing to a shift in study preference, the trend is towards studying commerce and technology, whilst a significant drop in the number of matriculants with exemption rates and satisfactory entry levels to study planning has become apparent. Planning schools are therefore competing for the relatively small pool of existing and potential students, not only against each other but also against new and emerging disciplines. This forces them to admit students of lesser quality into their courses, creating yet more challenges for planning education.

To ensure relevance in planning education, universities have to seriously consider certain aspects of planning education, such as teaching a speciality, practical experience for students during course work, providing for continued professional development afterwards, diversifying curricula to reflect the realities of South Africa, and reflecting on the future in order to position the planning profession as a mental leader in the country.

To provide the desired calibre of leadership and direction to the profession at large, planning education will have to develop both wisdom and a specific combination of skills, abilities and attitudes that will enable graduates to operate successfully in a competitive world. Planning schools should therefore teach a broad knowledge base, for candidates to understand complex, dynamic systems of settlements, and yet to be more ably specialised in applying that knowledge.

The excellence of their education should empower planning graduates to take pride in their profession and, most of all, ensure them a future in planning – having acquired and developed the right skills and competencies during training.

The future of the planning profession lies with planning education. Planning education should ensure its relevance in the context of the realities of the existing profession. This final section of the thesis hopes to make worthwhile recommendations for South African planning education to



adapt successfully to the challenges of the present global economy and the current requirements of planning practice.

## 6.2 Recommendations

### 6.2.1 Introduction

Over the past few decades several calls were made for change to the town and regional planning curriculum, but many suggestions did not indicate how they could be implemented. Oranje (1997: 7-8) makes the point that recommending changes to the planning programme does not change the programme. *“Proposing changes surely deserves a very thorough analysis of the reasons for the change, the implications of such changes and what can be hoped to be achieved by the changes.”* However, change should hold a clear promise and the principles should be understood – as well as that they may pave the way for alternatives over and above the wished results. Proposed changes to a planning programme must be framed in the context of the realities of the existing profession.

### 6.2.2 Philosophy for teaching planning education

Planning schools should clearly set out their philosophy for teaching town and regional planning. The following outcomes should be strived for:

- Learning options that are relevant for the future world and cater for individuals' relationship with that world
- Methods that ensure the highest levels of real, practical learning
- Graduates who are life-long learners possessing the confidence and qualities for personal and professional success.

Planning education's mission should be to have a profound impact on students and society by providing an integrated, educationally sound and customised learning experience, and by visibly contributing to solutions for South Africa's urban and regional problems.

### 6.2.3 Skills development

There are three main components to an education approach: knowledge, skills and mindsets. Most education systems concentrate on teaching knowledge in order to develop skills – and do preciously little to address the mindset (attitude) of the student. Added to the fact that students are under-prepared, this may be the reason why graduates often do not achieve the skills highly regarded by the planning profession.

Probably no education system is able to teach everyone the knowledge required to be successful in a world where knowledge doubles every 18 months. Education systems should attempt to go beyond mere 'content dumping', so that graduates will leave the classroom, motivated to fill existing gaps by continuing to learn for the rest of their lives. Planning education should provide graduates with the skills they need in order to obtain the knowledge that will support their future.

Planning schools should constantly reassess their curricula to determine whether they are teaching the right skills. The findings of this thesis could be used as a benchmark to adjust planning curricula in order to teach more skills with local relevance. Graduates were found to be

inadequately skilled in project management and verbal and written communication skills. Universities should address these shortcomings.

A point at issue is whether planning schools are able, or can realistically be expected to teach students all the skills required in the planning profession – seeing that certain skills appear to only become developed during a planner's professional career. This is an area for future research.

Also to be determined is whether graduates in fact achieve the required skills during their course of study. If not, planning schools should investigate the reasons for students not achieving them and accordingly amend their planning programmes.

#### 6.2.4 Practical forms of planning education

Students need to be exposed to the diverse nature of planning tasks and the various planning roles that are emerging in South Africa. They should familiarise themselves with contemporary planning concerns by experiencing planning practice while studying. Planning schools should invite planning practitioners to contribute to curriculum development and get regular input from planning practice to add value to students' practical experience. This opportunity also gives practising planners a glimpse of the quality and relevance of planning education. Academics and planning practitioners should work together to produce better-qualified and more competent planners, by being more involved with each other and valuing the other's input. Both should provide leadership and direction to the profession at large.

Forms of 'practice' in planning education, as identified by Minnery (date unknown: 20), that could be considered as part of the curriculum are the following:

External:

- Internships or periods of paid employment for students
- Community service
- Student exchanges (to other universities and/or work places)
- Staff-led field trips and excursions
- Projects for 'real' clients, such as community groups, councils and developers
- Workshops with external clients
- Case study seminars and discussions with practitioners
- Inviting external practitioners to share experiences.

Internal:

- Role-playing exercises
- Hypothetical projects
- Studio-based teaching with internal or external staff
- Using detailed case studies of particular real life developments.

Universities already present several of the above internal and external forms of practical planning education. Internship is, however, one aspect deserving more serious consideration by university departments as part of their planning programmes. Planning schools should facilitate internships with the public and private sectors and with NGOs. Students should be purposefully placed in a variety of planning roles during the course of their study and should preferably be exposed to working in the public, private and NGO sectors during this time. Universities could also exchange students with other countries, should the planning industry in South Africa lack the capacity to accommodate all candidates. This could simultaneously serve as an exchange programme between universities or with planning practices.

Considering that planning practice is crying out for more practical skills, creative ways should be used to solve the logistical problems with regard to internships. A relevant issue is remuneration for students during an internship, as most students cannot afford to work without being paid. Fact is, the added value of internships to both students and planning schools, and ultimately to planning practice, can never be denied. Practical experience will provide students with a first-hand opportunity to critically reflect on planning practice when they report back to their study leaders.

If universities do not want to implement internships, then aspects of the Canadian Nova Scotia School of Art and Design (NSCAD) approach to teaching practice are recommended. At the NSCAD, students spend half of their time working on studio projects formulated to assist them in acquiring knowledge, developing skills and applying their insights to practice. Most of the projects they pursue involve a community client or contact presenting a real problem to the class, giving students essential experience in dealing with clients, organisations and the public. Students are taught to manage while instructors set the problems, define initial tasks, guide group dynamics, and direct activities for new students. Instructors encourage students to learn from each other across generations within the programme, by working on a series of related projects for several studios.

### 6.2.5 Generalist versus specialist education

Planning will never have a single overarching, discipline-defining paradigm. It has to celebrate the diversity and flexibility of the profession. Planning needs its analysts, front-counter service providers, creative people, skilled political actors and negotiators, yet one planner cannot be the sum total of all these agents, nor possess all these skills. Nevertheless, planners need to be trained for all the roles they have to fulfil – and these will change over time. Thus, a specialised generalist education is ideally required.

In South Africa, the planning fraternity noticeably prefer a generalist education, as planning is in essence a generalist profession involving various aspects that cannot be studied or used in isolation from each other. Planners' generalist background is seen to stand them in good stead when they interact with other professions.

There seems to be consensus that graduates need to be specialist generalist. In South Africa, planning has entrenched itself in the integrated development planning field of municipal governance, which at the moment is a field of speciality that generates a considerable volume of work – although not exclusively for planners. Planners also have a comparative advantage in fields with a strong spatial/physical dimension necessitating a broad understanding of the urban processes. Planners indeed have some competitive advantage in the following fields:

- Integrated development planning
- Land-use management and control
- Local economic development
- Developing spatial frameworks
- Rural development and land restitution
- Informal settlement upgrading
- Urban politics and empowerment
- Managing urban change
- Environmental management and impact assessments
- Housing
- Public administration – in specific areas
- Training and capacity building – in specific areas
- Urban design

- Township establishment
- Integrated strategic development planning.
- Ability to relate to and work with diverse communities
- Understanding urban economics.

Tertiary curricula should therefore include these areas of knowledge. To further ensure the survival of planning, education should be innovative and create links to emerging fields that have a sure future in the globalised world. One such emerging field of study is environmental science.

### 6.2.6 Globalised learning

In the light of global changes as discussed in chapter 2, a globalised planning programme has been suggested, seeing that it prepares planners more adequately for a world in which global issues influence local context. Interaction with planners and planning students in other parts of the world will enable graduates, taught in this way, to draw on a deeper and wider pool of values, knowledge and skills, and nurture cross-cultural sensitivity and the know-how to address an increasingly diverse constituency. Learning will be internationalised, students will share knowledge with people from different contexts, and will even become able to respect people, ideas and practice differing vastly from themselves and their own culture.

### 6.2.7 Contextualising and diversifying planning education

Planning in South Africa differs considerably from planning in the First World, or developed countries. Of course, planning anywhere is challenged by aspects of globalisation such as new technologies, environmental issues, accelerated information flows, new forms of governance, progress made by social movements, societies becoming increasingly multicultural, and new economic structures.

In teaching planning, universities should not lose sight of the context of the developing world we are planning for. In a developing country such as South Africa, many of the urban activities are informal, illegal and statistically unaccounted for. This makes it difficult to intervene or to plan for urban environments. Large numbers of urban dwellers have to create shelter, find work, and feed their families outside formal structures, without help from government and owing little to planning, or plans and maps in the planning office. Students should be fully aware of the challenges facing town and regional planners in the South African context.

Curricula and planning schools should *diversify even more to reflect, within planning education*, the growing pluralism of race, ethnicity, culture and gender. Planning schools should manifest the social realities of South Africa. Black lecturers and administrative personnel at planning schools are still few and far between, and some schools are attended by a mere handful of black students.

By developing effective models of diversity in planning schools and curricula, students would be better prepared to work in multicultural environments and appreciate different interpretations and interests. Planning schools should therefore transform their teaching approaches by adopting inclusive teaching methods; recruit more students from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds; teach students to appreciate multicultural differences and value their own diversity; diversify administrative and academic personnel; and diversify curricula and academic programmes to reflect multicultural knowledge about urban society and planning practice.

### 6.2.8 Duration of study

Urban planners face tough competition from other disciplines ranging from law and engineering to development, architecture, economics and the environment – some of them requiring a longer period of professional study than town and regional planning. Extending the period of planning studies would therefore strengthen students' abilities to advance professionally, especially since students are perceived to be more under-prepared than previously. A four-year duration course will allow under-prepared students more time to learn from each other, to debate and participate in the class and be intellectually stimulated, than during only two years' training. This would also allow time for lecturers to lay a generalist foundation but teach some form of speciality as well.

When the town and regional planning domain is entered for the first time at post-graduate level the mental and intellectual quality of the student becomes crucial – since students now have to learn the basics of planning and master the subject field in two years' time. This requires students to be mature, both intellectually and personality-wise. The advantages of getting graduates from various (or related) disciplines and perspectives to study planning are that these students provide greater intellectual depth to the course and also bring a diversity of influences and insights to their planning education.

### 6.2.9 Teaching planners for the future

In order to prosper in the third millennium graduates need to be able to use technology, not to be swamped by it. They have to find new ways of adding value to planning processes instead of sticking to outdated ways. Planners have to become part of the knowledge economy, they have to be wired and above all, keep on learning.

Planning education does not include prediction of the future. What it should teach its students is the ability to identify opportunities in a fast changing world, preferably ahead of others doing the same job. Planning students should be keenly aware that securing their future is primarily their own responsibility and they should therefore actively investigate and harness opportunities. Planners should become the visionaries, leaders, champions, strategic thinkers, social inventors and entrepreneurs of the South African urban environment. This will require critical minds, leadership, creativity, innovation, and good judgement.

### 6.2.10 Continued professional development

There is a huge demand, *within the planning profession, for continued professional development* courses. To be presented by planning schools, these courses should address emerging areas of concern, international and national planning trends, general refresher courses, and specialised courses in the following areas:

- Business management skills
- Communication skills
- Environmental issues and impact assessments
- Financial management
- IDP training
- New planning legislation and policies
- New technologies such as GIS and CAD enhancements
- Project management
- Rural planning and development
- Social housing
- Strategic planning

- Urban design
- Urban development.

Planning schools should encourage life-long learning in students. Every graduate should be motivated, when entering professional planning, to develop and stick to a professional development plan that sets out personal goals and ways of reaching these goals, keeping track of new trends, and monitoring job opportunities. Students should realise that continuance of learning and adjustment to new needs in planning will largely determine their future.

### **6.2.11 Leadership and image of the profession**

The progress and status of the planning profession depend on the leadership and the advancement of the profession expected to emanate from planning education. Yet planning educators worldwide are criticised by practitioners for failing to provide thought leadership or direction to the profession.

South African educators should take heed and, together with leaders in the planning profession, academics should spearhead the thought leadership of the profession in directing it in this fast changing world. Educators should make continued professional development their business. Together with practitioners they should arrange workshops to brainstorm prevalent issues, exhibit their thought leadership and network with the profession at large. They should write press articles on urban issues, launch country-wide competitions for innovative projects among school children and students, and publish articles under joint authorship to manifest some unity within planning education.

The planning profession should combine efforts with planning schools to market planning and to improve the image of planning with politicians, the public and potential students. Planners should imprint the need for planning on the national mindset by popularising the idea of planning as well as the benefits derived from it.

Recruitment for planning education should start at school level, by informing the geography and career guidance teachers about town and regional planning. It should be marketed as a 'degree plus' that develops a range of skills and aptitudes that are in demand with a wide range of employers.

Planning institutions should aim to nurture among students a love, pride and passion for planning and what it stands for. In South Africa it definitely offers a window of opportunity.

### **6.2.12 Combining resources**

Due to the changing context of tertiary education, planning schools should combine their efforts and resources in many aspects of planning education. It may imply that some of the planning schools (especially those situated outside metropolitan areas) would close down in order to consolidate resources, and that planning would attract fewer, but higher-quality students.

Combining the resources of planning schools can also be beneficial in other respects: the development and presentation of continued professional development courses; presenting international planning conferences in South Africa; formation, together with leaders in the South African planning profession, of a strategic leadership team to provide direction and leadership to the profession at large; and launching a marketing campaign to enhance the public profile of the planning profession and attract higher-quality students.

### 6.3 The last word

I have most probably transgressed into the field of lynx-eyed experts who would delight in telling me that in actual fact, Napoleon chewed liquorice after dinner, not mint. And to quote from Oranje's thesis (1997: 17): "*Nor is it my intention to say: This is IT, here is THE manifesto for South African planning.*" This thesis should be seen as one voice-in-the-flow in the debate on planning education in South African planning schools.

What follows from this study? Certain sections of it need more investigation:

- The skills and competencies that the planning profession expects to see in a recent graduate, versus a junior planner with some experience.
- The reasons why students do not achieve the skills and competencies planning schools set out to teach – because students are under-prepared, because of inefficient teaching methods, or for other reasons?
- The experiences of planning graduates – dealing with their perception of the relevance of planning education and the problems they encounter in finding work.
- The role of Third World aspects in the South African planning profession, and the incorporation thereof in planning education.
- The view and role of the Council and the Institute in planning education.
- Extending the research to also include technikons and other academic institutions and NGOs offering training in town and regional planning.
- Further research into aspects of practical planning education, such as the form, duration and logistics of internships and community service.
- The respective merits of and differences between undergraduate and post-graduate planning education – whether either of the two kinds of education makes for better equipped planners when they enter the labour market and are matched with other urban professionals.
- Links between planning and other emerging fields, even as unlikely as information technology, telecommunications and biotechnology – the fields of the future.

Obviously this cannot be the last word on the relevance of planning education in South Africa. Hopefully the thesis will encourage further investigation and debate on how planning programmes and curricula should be adjusted to teach relevant skills and competencies, for town and regional planners to survive in a highly competitive world.

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## **APPENDIX 1 - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNIVERSITIES**

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Good day Sir/Madam

I am a Masters student at the University of Natal. I am currently conducting research to assess the relevance that South African Town and Regional Planning curricula have for planning practice and the future of planning.

I would appreciate your taking some of your time to answer a number of questions with regard to your institution's planning curricula. The three crucial questions are:

- What core competencies are absolutely essential for being a town and regional planner?
- What specific skills are absolutely essential for being a town and regional planner?
- Does your curriculum provide for the attainment of these competencies and skills?

Would you also be so kind as to supply me with a copy of the following documents if possible:

- Your department's Business/Strategic Plan
- The curricula of all the courses presented in your department.

I undertake to make an electronic copy of my thesis available to your university upon finishing my research, trusting you would find at least some of the information from this study to be useful and applicable.

If you have any questions you could either phone my supervisor at the University of Natal, prof. Alison Todes at (031) 260-1343 or myself at 082 922 7796, or e-mail me at [willi@forgeahead.co.za](mailto:willi@forgeahead.co.za).

Thank you  
Kind regards

Willi Faling

### **Planning practice**

1. How has planning practice changed in South Africa over the past ten years?
2. Do you think there is still a need for planners in South Africa?
3. How has the role of planners changed?
4. What linked fields have emerged and what are their relationship with planning?
5. What is the perception of planning – amongst potential students, politicians, developers, officials, and the public?
6. What do practicing town and regional planners say about the relevance of planning education?
7. Do you think there is a mismatch between curricula and the skills and competencies demanded by employers?
8. What future possibilities do you see for town planners in South Africa?
9. Do universities educate planners for the future?

### **Planning education**

10. How do you go about marketing your town planning course (if at all)? Has your strategy changed over the past 5 years?
11. Who do you think should be targeted for studying town and regional planning? How has your perception changed over the past 5 years?
12. What are the minimum requirements for studying town and regional planning at your university? To what extent has your requirements changed over the past 6 years?
13. Why do you think students choose a career in town planning? How has their perception of planning changed over the past 5 years?
14. How many applications on average do you receive per year for the planning course/s you present?
15. What trends were observed in planning student numbers and demographic composition of the corps of students over the last 5 years?
16. How many students on average have dropped out of the course per year for the last 5 years?
17. What core competencies are absolutely essential for a town and regional planner? How have the competency requirements changed over the past 5 years?
18. What specific skills are absolutely essential for a town and regional planner? How have the skills requirements changed over the past 5 years?
19. Does your curriculum address these competencies and skills?
20. Do you think a town planner should be a specialist or a generalist? Why do you say so?
21. Does your department have a speciality?
22. What is your department's philosophy on graduate versus undergraduate planning education?
23. Do you think planning students should have an internship while studying?
24. Are students at your institution encouraged to participate in community/voluntary work? At which organisations?
25. What is your policy regarding fieldwork during course work?
26. Do you have exchange programmes with international universities?
27. Do you have a mentor/tutor programme?
28. Do you present courses allow for the continued professional development of planning graduates?

### **Planning curriculum**

29. What general courses do you think should be part of a town and regional planning education?
30. What specific courses do you think should be part of a town and regional planning education?

31. Does your curriculum make provision for a diversity of students and does it reflect the social realities of South Africa?
32. What are the limitations of your planning curriculum?
33. How could your curriculum be improved to be more relevant for the South African circumstances?
34. To what extent has your curriculum changed over the last 5 years?

**University-specific information**

35. In what projects in the private/public sector is the personnel of your department involved? Other research?

**Student support**

36. Does the university provide financial support to town planning students?
37. What kind of financial support, and to what extent?
38. What is the registration fee per year?
39. What is the cost for the total course?
40. Are students informed about all the possibilities available to them in the labour market?
41. Does your department monitor your students, after graduation?
42. Does your department help students find work?
43. What percentage of students finishing their degree at your university finds works in the planning field?
44. To what would you attribute students' problems to find work in the planning field?

Thank you very much for your input!

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## **APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PLANNING PROFESSION**

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I am a Masters student at the University of Natal. I am currently conducting research to assess the relevance of Town and Regional Planning curricula for planning practice. I shall also make some suggestions what would hopefully contribute towards a more relevant planning education at South African universities. In order to evaluate the relevance of planning education, I need your input as an employer.

Would you be so kind as to complete the attached questionnaire in Word format? Please either complete it electronically and e-mail it back to me, or print and then fax it for my attention to (011) 803-7840.

Kindly answer these questions from the perspective of an employer of graduate planning students and not from the perspective of the relevance of your own education. (Also note that the questionnaire only refers to university graduates and not technicians or technikon graduates.)

If you have any questions you could either phone my supervisor at the University of Natal, prof. Alison Todes at (031) 260-1343 or myself at 082 922 7796. I trust that the information you provide would prove useful to assess the relevance of town and regional planning at South African universities.

Thank you  
Kind regards

Willi Faling

**Organisation information**

Your name:	
Name of practice/ organisation/ department:	
Number of town and regional planners employed:	
At which universities did these town and regional planners study?	
Please describe the nature of your practice/organisation/department's work:	

**Your views on planning education**

1. Do you think planning education prepares graduates adequately for work?

Yes	
No	

2. Please explain.

--

3. Do you think planning education at universities is relevant to the work you are doing?

Yes	
No	

4. Please explain.

--

5. Do universities educate planners for the future?

Yes	
No	

6. Please explain.

--

7. What gaps do you notice in the education of graduates?

--

8. What are the missing skills and competencies or areas of knowledge?

--

9. Are these gaps common to all planning schools, or are there differences between schools?

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10. Do you think gaining practical experience while studying would enhance planning students' skills and competencies?

Yes	
No	

11. Please explain.

--

12. Do you think a town planner should be a specialist or a generalist?

<b>Specialist</b>	
<b>Generalist</b>	

13. Please explain.

--

14. What is your philosophy on graduate versus undergraduate planning education?

--

15. Do you think planners will gain value from continued professional development after obtaining a planning degree?

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>No</b>	

16. In what areas?

--

17. Do you have any suggestions for universities to ensure relevant planning education?

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18. Any other comments?

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**This part of the questionnaire can also be completed on the website at:**  
[www.pctraining.co.za/willi](http://www.pctraining.co.za/willi)

Could you please indicate the skills and competencies you consider essential for being a town and regional planner by ranking the competencies in the 2<sup>nd</sup> column from 0 to 3, where:

- 0 = Not needed
- 1 = Needed
- 2 = Important
- 3 = Very important

Could you also indicate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column which of these skills and competencies planning graduates do possess when coming out of planning school?

A qualified person should be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

19. A knowledge and understanding of **the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain**, and applying this in planning practice. The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

Core competency	Ranked	Possess
a. An orientation towards social justice and equal opportunity		
b. An appreciation of the diversity of cultures and views		
c. A people-centred approach		
d. Promotion of efficiency in resource use		
e. An orientation towards sustainable development		
f. Respect for professional ethics		

20. **Demonstrate a sound theoretical and contextual knowledge** and apply this in action. The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include an understanding of:

<b>Core competency</b>	<b>Ranked</b>	<b>Possess</b>
a. The histories, philosophies and theories of planning, and of development		
b. The nature, purpose and methods of planning		
c. The South African context and its particular challenges		
d. The theories and principles relating to the design of urban environments		
<b>Core competency</b>	<b>Ranked</b>	<b>Possess</b>
e. The theories relating to the natural, social, economic, developmental and political environments		
f. The theories relating to urban, metropolitan, rural and regional development, and to these contexts and processes		
g. An application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements		
h. An understanding of law, legal institutions, ordinances, etc.		

21. **Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies.** The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

<b>Core competency</b>	<b>Ranked</b>	<b>Possess</b>
a. Apply knowledge of the political, policy and institutional context, and of planning legislation and procedures		
b. Apply knowledge to the implementation of plans and to land management, development process and physical planning activities		
c. Interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving		
d. Prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales		
e. Undertake planning with an appreciation of urban structure and spatial dynamics		
f. Undertake planning with an appreciation of aesthetic dimensions and sensitivity to the cultural heritage		
g. Undertake planning with an appreciation of the natural environment		
h. Broad understanding of the uses and limitations of planning forecasts and models		

22. **Linking information technology to research, spatial planning and other planning activities.** The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

<b>Core competency</b>	<b>Ranked</b>	<b>Possess</b>
a. An ability to use technology such as computers, printers, scanners, etc., in daily work		
b. Competency in basic computer programmes such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint or similar		
c. Competency in specialised computer programmes such as CAD, SPSS, etc.		
d. Basic understanding of GIS		
e. Competency in GIS		
f. Competency in Internet applications		

23. **Linking and synthesising of programmes and projects** from different sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development. The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

Core competency	Ranked	Possess
a. Ability to think creatively and synoptically		
b. An integrative understanding of development issues and processes		
c. Understanding of key issues in relation to development in South Africa including local economic development, land reform, institutional politics, and urban restructuring and the development of integrated settlements		
d. Understanding of the key sectors around which integration needs to occur, such as infrastructure, services, environment and the economy		
e. Understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occurs		
f. Understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes and issues		

24. To conduct **research and to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving abilities**. The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

Core competency	Ranked	Possess
a. Understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements		
b. Ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information from many and diverse sources		
c. Ability to synthesise information		
d. Ability to perform qualitative and quantitative reasoning		
e. Ability to write research reports		
f. Ability to apply the knowledge generated to planning problems in a creative way		
g. Ability to critically think about issues		

25. To apply the **managerial and communicative skills** necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors. The sub-outcomes which show evidence of this include:

Core competency	Ranked	Possess
a. Understanding of political processes and governance		
b. Understanding of social dynamics and power relations		
c. Understanding multiculturalism		
d. Understanding what the public/client wants		
e. Ability to express the collective good		
f. Ability to relate to and work with diverse communities		
g. Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills		
h. Speaking formally and informally with public and elected officials		
i. Ability to communicate effectively by electronic means		
j. Ability to communicate effectively graphically		
k. Ability to communicate effectively verbally		
l. Ability to think and respond on their feet		
m. Ability to work in teams and individually		
n. Co-ordinating a multi-disciplinary team		



Core competency	Ranked	Possess
o. Ability to write informative, engaging short pieces (e.g. brochures, etc.) for the general public		
p. Decision-making skills		
q. Financial management: Ability to develop and maintain budgets		
r. Organisational management		
s. Project management		
t. Being a self-starter		
u. Understanding of approaches, processes and techniques associated with participatory and collaborative forms of planning		

26. Could you please indicate the importance of the following areas of knowledge for planners in the profession?

- 0 = Not important
- 1 = Specialised area for some planners
- 2 = Needed for all planners

Areas of knowledge	Ranked	Possess
a. Layout		
b. Urban design		
c. Spatial frameworks		
d. Land use planning		
e. Metropolitan planning		
f. Regional planning		
g. Rural development		
h. Local economic development		
i. Urban management		
j. Integrated development planning		
k. Informal settlement upgrading		
l. Housing		
m. Architectural design		
n. Environmental management and impact assessments		
o. Heritage planning		
p. Landscape design		
q. Planning law		
r. Real estate		
s. Recreational/tourist planning		
t. Social planning		
u. Traffic/transport planning		
v. Urban economics		
w. Other areas		

27. What do you think are the top three critical competencies a graduate should have?

28. What other skills and competencies not listed here do you think town and regional planning students should attain at university?

Thank you very much for participating. It is much appreciated!

## APPENDIX 3 – SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES AS IDENTIFIED BY PLANNING SCHOOLS IN BLOEMFONTEIN

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### Introduction

Various South African planning schools gathered in Bloemfontein in 2000 to discuss the core competencies needed by South African planners (not necessarily entry-level planners). The planning schools of South Africa (September 2000) agreed that a qualified urban and regional planner should be able to *“plan, design, manage and implement the development of human settlement in an integrated and creative way, responding to the critical challenges facing South African society to promote the equitable and sustainable development of people and places.”*

### Skills and competencies

According to a consensus reached by planning schools on the core competencies of planners, a qualified person should therefore be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. A knowledge and understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of acting in the public domain, and applying this in planning practice. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- Orientation to social justice and equal opportunity
- An appreciation of the diversity of cultures and views
- A people-centred approach
- Promotion of efficiency in resource use
- An orientation towards sustainable development
- Respect for professional ethics.

2. A sound theoretical and contextual knowledge, and ability to apply this in action. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an understanding of:

- The nature, purpose and methods of planning
- The histories, philosophies and theories of planning, and of development
- The theories relating to the natural, social, economic, developmental and political environments
- The theories and principles relating to the design of urban environments
- The theories relating to urban, metropolitan, rural and regional development, and to these contexts and processes
- The South African context and its particular challenges
- An application of these theories to the design, management and implementation of planning interventions to bring about positive change and societal benefits within human settlements.

3. Linking knowledge to spatial plans and policies. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include an aptitude to:

- Collect, analyse and organise information to support planning processes
- Use technologies to assist these processes
- Apply appropriate knowledge pertaining to political, policy and institutional contexts, and of planning legislation and procedures
- Prepare plans and formulate policies with spatial orientation at different scales
- Undertake planning with due appreciation of aesthetic dimensions, and with sensitivity to the links between human settlement and the natural environment

- Interpret and apply plans to ongoing decision-making and problem-solving
- Apply knowledge to the implementation of plans and to land management and development processes.

4. Linking and synthesising, programmes and projects from different sectors and institutions within a framework of integrative development. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An integrative understanding of development issues and processes
- An understanding of the management requirements of integrative development processes
- An ability to think creatively and synoptically
- An understanding of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks within which such planning and development occurs
- An understanding of key issues in relation to development in South Africa including local economic development, land reform, and urban restructuring and the development of integrated settlements.

5. To conduct academic research in order to develop critical thinking and problem solving abilities. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements
- An ability to collect, analyse and evaluate information
- An ability to apply generated knowledge to planning problems, in a creative way.

6. To apply the managerial and communicative skills necessary for managing planning and development processes in the public and private sectors. The sub-outcomes showing evidence of this include:

- An understanding of social dynamics and power relations
- An understanding of political processes and governance
- Strategic thinking and management
- Financial management
- Organisational management
- Project management
- Decision-making skills
- Organisational skills
- An ability to relate to and work with people
- An ability to work in teams as well as individually
- An understanding of approaches, processes and techniques associated with participatory and collaborative forms of planning
- Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills
- An ability to communicate effectively verbally, graphically and by electronic means.