G12.1 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Ms Kasturi Behari-Leak (Rhodes University, kasturi.behari-leak@uct.ac.za)

Overview of Symposium: Higher Education holds the promise of contributing to intellectual, cultural, social, economic and political development, and democracy and social justice. Institutions of higher learning have the potential to offer powerful opportunities for fostering the economic and social advancement of members of disadvantaged and marginalised social classes and groups, for promoting understanding of, and respect for, difference and diversity, and forging social cohesion. This promise only holds true, however, if the members of these social groups can both access and succeed in tertiary study. While we have, as a sector, had some limited success in ensuring equity of access to higher education, our success in ensuring equity of outcomes has been negligible. Attempts to understand and theorise this problem have largely comprised small-scale, qualitative studies. By comprising eight PhDs that share the same main research question, the project presented in this symposium allows a large-scale picture of social inclusion and exclusion to emerge. Issues of social inclusion are multiple, and this study does not endeavour to consider them all. Instead, it focuses on an oft-neglected aspect of teaching and learning: the role of the knowledge itself. All the scholars in this project ask the question: How do disciplinary knowledge/knower structures and their associated practices serve to include or exclude students? This symposium consists of six papers. Respondent: Kasturi Behari-Leak will manage questions and discussion.

G12.2 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Prof. Sioux McKenna (Rhodes University, s.mckenna@ru.ac.za) Prof. Chrissie Boughey (Rhodes University, c.boughey@ru.ac.za)

Higher education holds the promise of contributing to intellectual, cultural, social, economic and political development, and democracy and social justice. Institutions of higher learning have the potential to offer powerful opportunities for fostering the economic and social advancement of members of disadvantaged and marginalised social classes and groups, for promoting understanding of, and respect for, difference and diversity, and forging social cohesion. This promise only holds true, however, if the members of these social groups can both access and succeed in tertiary study. While we have, as a sector, had some limited success in ensuring equity of access to higher education, our success in ensuring equity of outcomes has been negligible. The first session presents an overview of the rationale for the study and an account of its realist position before moving on to sessions by five of the PhD scholars, showing how they have taken this central framework to their own context and called on their own substantive theory to do so. The realist ontology of the multiple studies ensures an exploration of underlying mechanisms at play in the emergence of events and experiences. The project moves beyond provisional and narrowly contextualised conclusions of a relativist nature and begins to identify systemic level mechanisms

related to knowledge structures that play a role in social inclusion and exclusion. This first session introduces this NRF-funded project and outlines its concern with the oft-neglected aspect of knowledge in our understanding of why some students succeed in higher education while many fail and drop out. The session then explains the aims of the project, and the ways in which the eight individual PhDs contribute to this aim.

G12.3 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Ms Thandeka Mkhize (Rhodes University, t.mkhize@ru.ac.za)

Social inclusion in higher education requires that fair opportunities are made available to all students to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. Failure by higher education institutions to strike a balance between equity of access and equity of outcomes for Africans leads to their exclusion in this system. This is evident in, amongst other things, some disciplines being predominantly White, racially skewed higher education participation rates, and the high dropout and failure rates of African students. Social justice in higher education remains a goal that South Africa has not yet been able to achieve. Maton (2007:87) states that "most approaches in the sociology of knowledge and education focus on relations to knowledge", that is, how knowledge interacts with social structures like class, race, and gender. There is not enough attention being paid to relations within knowledge, that is, how knowledge itself is political, powerful and has the capacity to shape relations. Therefore, Maton, building on the work of Bernstein and Bourdier, developed Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) in an attempt to contribute to research that focuses on relations within knowledge. It is important to understand how disciplines' knowledge structures and knower structures can lead to social exclusion. This paper discusses how Karl Maton's Legitimation Code Theory is the appropriate theory to use in order to understand how higher education and disciplines can be legitimatised in ways that can result in the social exclusion of some students. References: Maton, K. 2007. Knowledge-knower structures in intellectual and educational fields. In: Christie, F. & Martin, J. (eds.) Language, knowledge and pedagogy: functional linguistics and sociological perspectives. London: Continuum.

G12.4 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Ms Thabi Mtombeni (Rhodes University, t.mtombeni@ru.ac.za)

Emerging trends in curriculum development for social inclusion in higher education suggest a concern with the discursive practices of curriculum design and development for the purposes of redress, equitable access and participation in education specifically relevant to the South African context. The role curriculum plays in enabling or constraining social inclusion in higher education requires exploration into the sociology of knowledge and we argue that this needs to be from a realist position. Social realism

in education provides a language for theorising and exploring the different forms of knowledge, principles of structuring and their effect on practices in teaching and learning. This PhD study focuses on how disciplinary knowledge and knower structures influence curriculum practices in a first-year Science curriculum. The social realist perspective allows for the explication of events and experiences by providing tools for unearthing the underlying mechanisms and structures. Through examining the interplay between structures and mechanisms and the events and experiences that emerge from these, an attempt at understanding the how, why and what of current curriculum decisions can be made. Higher education holds the promise of contributing to intellectual, cultural, social, economic and political development, and democracy and social justice. Institutions of higher learning have the potential to offer powerful opportunities for fostering the economic and social advancement of members of disadvantaged and marginalised social classes and groups, for promoting understanding of, and respect for, difference and diversity, and forging social cohesion. This promise only holds true, however, if the members of these social groups can both access and succeed in tertiary study. While we have, as a sector, had some limited success in ensuring equity of access to higher education, our success in ensuring equity of outcomes has been negligible.

G12.5 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Mr Siya Sabata (Rhodes University, sabatas@cput.ac.za)

Higher education holds the promise of contributing to intellectual, cultural, social, economic and political development, and democracy and social justice. Institutions of higher learning have the potential to offer powerful opportunities for fostering the economic and social advancement of members of disadvantaged and marginalised social classes and groups, for promoting understanding of, and respect for, difference and diversity, and forging social cohesion. My study focuses on the pedagogic discourse of teacher education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Within the larger project, this study asks the following question: What structural, cultural and agential conditions and mechanisms related to the knowledge base give rise to the inclusion and exclusion of student teachers at CPUT, within the B Ed FET programmes? The study employs critical realism (CR) as developed by Roy Bhaskar (Bhaskar, 1978, 1998b) as a meta-theoretical framework and the Legitimation Code Theory (Maton, 2005) as a substantive theory. Through using critical realist depth ontology, this study is trying to explore the causal properties of the structure of knowledge, and their implications for the manner in which knowledge is produced, acquired and evaluated. LCT enables the knowledge base of teaching to be conceptualised as the empirical manifestation of underlying structural principles that govern the basis and measure the legitimacy in this field. These principles have effects on the agents within a field as they embody languages of legitimation. The languages of legitimation may be explicit or symbolic but

they serve to indicate what is viewed as legitimate and this can include or exclude students.

G12.6 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Ms Genevieve Haupt (Rhodes University, ghaupt@hsrc.ac.za)

Higher education holds the promise of contributing to intellectual, cultural, social, economic and political development, and democracy and social justice. Institutions of higher learning have the potential to offer powerful opportunities for fostering the economic and social advancement of members of disadvantaged and marginalised social classes and groups, for promoting understanding of, and respect for, difference and diversity, and forging social cohesion. This promise only holds true, however, if the members of these social groups can both access and succeed in tertiary study. The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) of 2001 set out goals for higher education in South Africa. The second goal stipulated in this plan was to "promote equity of access and fair chances for success to all who are seeking to realise their potential through higher education, while eradicating all forms of unfair discrimination and advancing redress for past inequalities". When evaluating the 2010 HPCSA statistics, especially with regard to race, it is clear that, within the discipline of Psychology, the aforementioned goal is not being met. In addition, very few students are accepted each year to complete the Master's Clinical/Counselling programme, which is a major concern, as it has been indicated that Clinical/Counselling Psychology is an important service required by the South African public. Therefore the rationale for this PhD study is twofold: to investigate at an institutional level why only a few students are accepted each year to complete the Master's Clinical/Counselling degree, and why only certain individuals or groups of individuals are accepted to complete the degree. The research question that has been identified for this study is as follows: how does the knowledge structure of the Master's Degree in Counselling/Clinical Psychology serve to include or exclude students?

G12.7 The Role of Knowledge in Social Inclusion

Ms Kasturi Behari-Leak (Rhodes University, kasturi.behari-leak@uct.ac.za)

While the previous sessions have all considered the structure of knowledge in various contexts and the ways in which this serves to include or exclude students, this moves to consider how the agency of academics might intersect with the constraints and enablements of the knowledge structures with which they work and their

broader contexts. This PhD study looks at how six new academics at a University of Technology, on a specific professional development programme for teaching in HE,

chose to shape their practices by using their personal powers (such as intentionality and the capacity to engage in deliberation) to conceive of and pursue courses of action that account for the emergence and exercise of their agency. Using Archer's (2000) social realist theory, framed by Bhaskar's (1979) critical realism theory, this study will show how new academics' pursuit of specific projects, driven by their individual concerns, ensured that they engaged with the constraints and enablements derived from the social and cultural contexts in which they were embedded, including the knowledge structures of their disciplines and programmes. New academics' individual concerns are linked to their sense of self-worth in their teaching contexts but also to performative achievement in terms of their expertise. The study further explores how new academics develop their projects from a sense of self (Archer, 2000). By analysing the reflexive deliberations of these agents, the researcher accounts for how the concrete courses of action of new academics are driven through their internal conversations and their concerns in relation to society (Archer, 2007). In understanding how new academics actually shape their professional lives, we get a glimpse into the conditions necessary for enabling the emergence and exercise of agency.