



## College Quarterly

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### Degrees Of Freedom: The Applied Degree As The Pedagogy Of Praxis, Dialectics Of Discipline And The Primacy Of Partnerships

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It is as much an honour as a delight to be invited to address you on this timely and yet quintessential topic – the applied degree. As recently announced by Mary Anne Chambers, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the province will review Ontario's postsecondary education system in terms of the problems facing colleges and universities. Equally significant is Chamber's cogent statement regarding her vision:

I have a vision for Ontario's postsecondary system. I have a system-wide vision. It's a vision that contemplates specialization. A vision that contemplates collaboration. A vision that contemplates cooperation. That gives a student the ability to move from one school to another. College to university or university to college. Giving value for what they've learned at each level. My vision hopes for more partnerships between institutions, between colleges and universities, and universities and colleges. **So that no institution feels threatened by the existence of another. And no institution feels it has to compete for students.** So that the focus remains on the quality of the program (OCUFA, 2004, 16).

Likewise her predecessor, Dianne Cunningham, noted that with the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000:

"We're taking the next step in our strategy to ensure students of all ages have the full range of educational choices they will need to compete and succeed in today's rapidly changing workforce. Our goal is to make our postsecondary system more responsive to the changing needs of students and working adults".

#### A. Introduction

"To vision is to transform... come let us share our visions, to create a greater Circle of Interconnectedness" (Graveline, 1998).

I am here speaking not as a former Dean of the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest faculty at York, a faculty larger than 23 Canadian universities, not as a consultant to a number of North American Universities re applied degrees, and not spokesperson for universities but I am here as an analyst to share some thoughts on the basis of my research in post secondary education. The corpus of existing curricular practices relating to the applied degree provides some opportunity to re-visit the Mission of CAATS and transcend local and situated boundaries to consider the relatedness of what we do well as CAATS, what new

activities we should be considering and how we face the challenges.

Obviously no one presentation can hope to do justice to the enormous breadth and depth of the applied degrees. Even to catalogue salient directions is an ambitious enterprise that suffers from the dangers of trying to do too much while accomplishing relatively little. The search for a comprehensive understanding of the applied degree has long eluded administrators, academics and policy makers. The inadequacy of any sustained analysis of the conditions and consequences of the applied degree is not due to the often attributed phlegmatic unwillingness of mainstream thinking to grapple with fundamental implications, financial or otherwise, but rather to a perniciously cemented resistance to any knowledge that challenges the privileged ethos of institutionalized hierarchies of power. Acknowledging the intellectual limits of orthodox thinking, a more critical analysis however seeks to make sense of the often ignored relationship between colleges and universities from various vantage points notably the pedagogy of praxis, dialectics of discipline and the primacy of partnerships. By pursuing the nature of this relationship we examine a priori conditions, forms of ideological struggles and identifiable institutional trends. A troubling feature in conventional approaches is the glaring absence of a conceptual grasp of **the intersection** of colleges and universities, that is, the cojoint elements in the ideological- institutional nexus, the absence of which will erode any promise, let alone prospect of partnerships. Moreover there is even less work on determining **what conditions the constitution of the ideology-institution connections** despite the proliferation of studies in education on the manner in which ideology facilitates institutional discrimination.

#### **Purposes: Scope and Optics**

"The splinter in your eye is the best magnifying glass" (Adorno, 1978, 50)

Typically, contemporary scholarship and administrative practices fail to locate institutions strategically within the broader context of ideologies. Likewise, studies on ideologies rarely implicate the detailed operations of institutions. The incredible absence of the ideoinstitutional dimensions of post secondary education is a serious concern that needs to be addressed given the proliferation of applied degrees. The main burden of this argument will be that an adequate analysis of the two fields may best be attained by conceptualising them as interlocking spaces within a broader framework of the applied degrees. This presentation asks a range of interrelated questions about this relationship; that is, the applied degree is not simply a contest or competition where the scales are tipped in favour of one over the other. First, a word of caution, this talk is a difficult journey that brings us more closely to pivotal concepts, debates and questions that have been hitherto ignored -- ideas that serve to organize the understanding, production and reproduction of the applied degree.

The aim herein is threefold: first, to provide elements of a toolkit necessary to understand the degree; second, to present some of contemporary debates regarding ownership and partnership; and third, to demonstrate the impact of ideologies on institutionalizing imbalance.

"Judge a man (sic) by his questions rather than by his answers" (Voltaire, 1694-1778).

Clearly, the following question provides thematic coherence to this ambitious project.

**1. What conditions the constitution of the colleges-universities nexus?**

It is argued the nature of this nexus forms and informs the content of the applied degree, that is, the so-called gravitational field in encoding itself as appropriate.

**2. What is the differential impact of universities on colleges?**

The university, as a set of institutional cultures and practices, is a complex system of ordering "certain" stratified values that accommodates conveniently to the economics and instrumental rationalities of applied degrees.

**3. What is the differential impact of colleges on universities?**

Given the ubiquity of the applied, the ontological character of community colleges and its attendant articulation of historical mandates and justificatory ideas, how do universities juxtapose their applied offerings with those of the Colleges?

**4. What are the roles of ideologies and institutions in enhancing the applied degrees?**

How do ideologies and institutions function to mediate meanings and transform sentiments into significant inducements to action or inaction? What is the respective capacity to understand the manifold and ever-changing ways in which colleges and universities communicate and thereby breathe meaning into local sites of partnerships? How do governmentalities mediate these social relations? How do measures of accountability and independence prevent "free for all" dictated by market conditions in a time of neoliberal downsizing and downloading?

**5. Given the pervasive presence of ideologies and institutions, what are the prospects for partnerships?**

Forever promoting simplistic binaries: public or private, college or university, to what extent is the government inhibiting the transcendent possibilities of the applied degrees by fixating on a disciplinary cadence rather than confronting systemic challenges

## B. Pedagogy of Praxis as Opportunities

Let me congratulate you for your successes in mounting the applied degrees. But simultaneously we would do well to be admonished that: **If one rests on one's laurels, they tend to become wreaths.** The applied degree is an incremental concretization of all that which you do well. As you well know, the pedagogical framework of applied degrees is "action-oriented", representing a world-view that focuses on how "concrete", "real" social phenomena. In relation to the process of teaching and learning, the applied degree begins with unmasking the privilege of conventional curriculum. The notion of participation or involvement in education is not new. When Dewey (1963:67) wrote about "progressive education", he noted that participatory, active learning was essential for individuals to gain knowledge and develop as citizens. Today, learning through involvement reflects a commitment to a pedagogy that is "engaged" (Hooks, 1994), "transformative" or "critical" (Wink, 2000, 123; Shor, 1992, 189-190), and "community-based" (Mooney and Edwards 2001). For Dewey (1916, 51), "the inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling." Dewey believed that the best way to do this is to integrate the working world with education curriculum. The learner-centred and real-life experiences integrate academic, career and technical education (Copa & Wolff, 2002). Work-based skills, both tangible and intangible, are transferable to other types of employment (Wentz & Trapido-Lurie, 2001).

Coupled with critical thinking (Eyler & Giles, 1999, 171), the applied degree is a commitment to authenticity. This authenticity moves beyond extant thinking to begin the work of constructing alternate social realities (Trotman, 1993). The applied degree provides practical knowledge for living life dynamically and creatively but is also an opportunity for more critical thinking, flexibility and emancipatory, providing an historical consciousness (Brookfield, 1987, 12-13). As Corrigan (1979, 16) adds: Whether [teaching] is a science, a craft, or a philosophy, it is nothing if it fails to discuss the experienced problems of ordinary people; and it is nothing if it fails to do this in a way that people can understand.

The applied degree builds on the distinctiveness and the proven strengths of the Colleges to support and promote programs that attract new cohorts while retaining academic excellence. By preserving the College tradition the degree provides opportunities to forge new directions, to proceed without abandoning the principles/distinctive missions that are the benchmarks of credibility. The applied is not just an ideological and institutional by-product rather an integral

part of the college tradition, clarified and well ensconced in its foundations and cannot be solely attributable to government priorities. Interestingly, this applied mission is non negotiable, uncompromising, and inviolable despite the welter of change.

Ideological and institutional synergies that contribute to the conscience of College system (credibility and trust) and not the characteristics of convenience fuel the enterprise of this programmatic innovation. Clearly, applied degrees are not threats but enabling catalysts in confronting both the inertia and the reluctance of universities to respond to structural changes. Some would argue that applied degrees are responses to the ethnocentricity of the university logo centrism.

To fully develop this critical understanding of the applied, it is imperative to appreciate the fundamentals of tradition and their corresponding justifications without which the salience of colleges cannot be understood. The applied degree is a significant reflection of the way in which colleges analyze themselves and project their image to the world. The content and morphology of this degree are both ideological and institutional; the degrees are imbricated structures and processes, constituted recently within more global ideological processes that become institutionally concretized in the local spheres. An ontological completeness therefore requires that we consider both ideologies and institutions and their concomitant relationships. Only by examining ontology as essence and not existence alone, can we fully realize the constituent elements of applied degrees

The occasion of the applied degrees enhances the opportunity for promoting the occupational culture of colleges. Values provide a symbolic framework for the development and maintenance of a collective identity as well as the individual self esteem. Respecting collegial influence in perpetuating a sense of professionalism replete with norms, roles and attitudes further contributes to this collective wisdom in serving and validating perspectives and activities. Despite its various permutations, the degree remains a resolute expression of culture, a steadfast manifestation of its direction that condition daily life and invoke normative presuppositions and objectives.

The applied degree also provides an opportunity to avoid the dangers inherent in arrogance and selective amnesia in misappropriating a moral language that celebrates possessive individualism, leaving behind only mirrors and windows through which knowledge is framed. Within this orientation, collegial and administrative cultures together contribute to the success of collaboration, a unity of purpose, inclusive paradigms and taxonomies of thought that should overshadow the frenetic ad hoc responses to externalities.

### **C. The Challenges of the dialectics of discipline and the primacy of partnerships**

To the threatened, the following message will be easily discarded as rancorously polemical and controversially provocative; forever beating on rhetorical drums. According to Skolnik's (2004:3) insightful observations, it is helpful to stand back from the trenches and look at the big picture. Some of the important changes in the environment of higher education in recent decades that ought to have implications for the appropriate structure of higher education are: the development of a technologically oriented, knowledge society; globalization; commercialization of teaching and research; advances in information technology and virtual education, and changes in skill and knowledge requirements that have increased the educational needs in most occupations (ibid).

#### **1. The impact of the market mentality: partnerships (lost, saved or liberated)**

There has been a decline in most of our humanities and social science programs. Internally, there are numerous challenges facing universities. I am not in any way suggesting that when universities sneeze the Colleges catch a cold. In other words, the levels of health of the Universities affect Colleges directly and indirectly, short term and long term. The universities are quick to realize how applied and quasi-applied programmes buffer the impact of their own volatilities and therefore are adept in adjusting their own strategic priorities. Added to this pressing reality is the phenomenal competition among universities -- all of which impact on the colleges as both opportunities and challenges.

##### **a. Technical know how and the new global economy**

The market demand for technical skills has transformed education. The basic logic for schooling, therefore, prepares students for a market mentality. Underneath this rubric of a market logic lies the imported needs of students to be extrinsically motivated to specialize.

##### **b. Privatization, corporatization and academic entrepreneurship**

According to Chomsky: as decision-making is shifted even more into the hands of unaccountable private power, the public must be indoctrinated in the virtues of subordination and discipline, and taught to regard government as an enemy to be feared, not an instrument they might use for public purposes in a democratic community...An unspoken premise is that the role of government is not to be lessened, but rather shifted, away from public participation and service to public needs, toward private control and service concentrated private power (Siddiqui, 2000:A13).

As market ideology became dominant in the 1980's, universities and colleges have become more corporate, adopting a 'market' model of governance. An actuarial logic of 'the bottom line', guided by enrolment numbers and market place language, govern curriculum and planning. Purpel (1989: 48- 49) notes:

Schools have been captured by the concept of accountability, which has been transformed from a notion that schools need to be responsive and responsible to community concerns to one in which numbers are used to demonstrate that schools have met their minimal requirements ... metaphors like **efficiency, cost-effectiveness, quality control, production** ... obsession with control also gets expressed in school policy (emphasis added).

An authorial market language steeped in an omniscient neo liberal vocabulary promotes private market driven solutions to university financial problems (Livingstone, 1999; Currie & Newson, 1998). Harvard University's former president Derek Bok argued that the university had a civic duty to ally itself closely with industry to improve productivity. At university after university, new research centres were designed to attract corporate funding, and technology transfer offices were started to commercialize academic breakthroughs. Universities have been naively viewed as 'engines' of innovation that pump out new ideas that can be translated into commercial innovations and regional growth (Florida, 1999).

But this commodification of teaching is not new (Veblen, 1918; Noble, 1977; Buchbinder, 1993, 340; Shumar, 1997; Atkinson-Grosjean, 1998). Knowledge in the so-called corporate university is defined as a commodity to be bought and sold (Tudiver, 1999, 155; Fisher, 2000, 6) and only knowledge with commercial values is rewarded. Regardless of the claims of industry, the encouragement of government and the credulity of university administrators, private interests use universities and community colleges as sites to market their ideologies and promote their product names which range from corporate goods and services, family names on Research Centers, to the obvious advertisements in hallways and washroom walls.

#### c. Government funding and the impact of market economies

By articulating the boundaries of state practices within the legal framework of education, one can more fully understand how colleges and universities are leveraged / brokered and how prevailing ideologies institutionalize a calculated compliance, if not a consuming complacency. Recent shifts in government policies have forced universities and colleges to compete for private sector funding. The lack of funding has become a justification for universities to pursue even more open partnerships with the private sector as a solution to their respective budget woes. Accordingly, universities are seeking alternate sources of revenue to preserve projects that would otherwise collapse. Similarly, universities have increased their general tuition fees and promoted full cost recovery programs. Also in evidence is a decline in college and university faculty members, a reduction in research capacity, and reduced spending on infrastructures such as libraries and laboratories (Farr 2000:24). As Skolnik notes there have been some recent examples in Canada of provincial governments attempting to make their higher education systems more responsive to the needs of globalization and the

knowledge society through increased institutional differentiation (2004). This cultural commodification has become a 'melting down of all values in a giant crucible' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979, xv) leading to a new poverty of culture which intentionally integrates its multiple manifestations.

### **Major Challenge: Vulnerability of Community Colleges**

The scramble for fundraising is ubiquitous and invites a 'divide and conquer' mentality wherein troubled universities are tripping over each other to seek alliances. But with whom? Rarely with each other but with community colleges. Why? Historically community colleges have been viewed as the poor siblings that have provided for the less privileged (Levine & White, 1961; Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Add to this conviction, the market driven ethos that valorises competition according to Darwinistic epistemologies that do not encourage imaginative solutions nor challenge the encrusted hierarchies of power, isn't it curious that with government encouragement, universities are extremely busy "making deals" in an effort to curry favour from the colleges who like the universities are also encouraged by government to partner. In this regard one is reminded of Martin Luther King Jr's saying that we should judge not where people (in this case institutions) stand in times of convenience but in times of controversy. Newer universities and especially the more progressive are disadvantaged. The older universities have tradition and more clout with their well established and respected alumni. A worrisome culture that divides and creates further solitudes based on deluding fetishistic and jingoistic moments emerges. Stereotypic classifications and mental images corroborate beliefs in the superiority of institution over another. This righteous consciousness prevails whenever the construction of identity, as a repository of distinct collective experiences, is normalized as a construction which in turn establishes opposites and "others". The self-identity that colleges and universities construct for themselves must be congruent with the possible identities that are afforded them past, present, and future. Witness for example the reactions of Universities to the creation of UOIT. Academic particularism and eventual tiering perpetuate a differentiation in which some institutions move very aggressively to take advantage of new commercial opportunities. The challenge is not to seek a banal accommodation to bureaucratic propaganda - image building, remedial palliatives that invite shallow gestures and bankrupt slogans. Lamentably, traditional perspectives have long maintained a binary code of identities and relations presented as **either** university or college. This bifurcation, however, conceals differential/ preferential rates of participation. Compare and contrast for example the commands or more euphemistically the rules which govern the applied degrees, the procedures, labour intensive application process – a series of infantilizing steps to which universities are never required to adhere. Even a cursory examination of the **Handbook for Ontario Colleges Applying for Ministerial Consent Under the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000**, (Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board, April 2004)



create much frustration let alone many bureaucratic hurdles in the name of standards to which universities are not as regularly subjected. Once approval has been granted and only in competition with other Colleges, Colleges suffer from further restrictions. Both curricular content, duration (four years) and funding of the degree clearly serve to differentiate it from that which is offered in Universities. This environment runs the risk of dismantling core premises which guide the traditions of Colleges in order to promote the misguided utility of bureaucratic control and the structural maintenance of inequitable resources.

Transparency is crucial, otherwise secretiveness easily becomes a valuable ingredient for inaction. Education cannot and should not be artificially inserted, bits and pieces, into everything and anything in the guise of satisfying the bottom lines, bureaucratic or financial. For the purposes of revenue generation, collaboration has been reduced to the simplest theatre. Institutions, neatly divided and stratified into 'colleges and universities' spend considerable time, money and energy in lining up, marching and parading. But as Adorno and Horkheimer noted the "stronger the positions of the culture industry become, the more summarily it can deal with consumers' needs, producing them, controlling them, disciplining them..." (1989, 181). In the interim there is a tendency to opt for the costly proliferation of state-sponsored commissions of inquiries, token gestures by ill-informed politicians, and reports to "buy" time; create the impression that "something" is being done to ameliorate problems and distract the discontent and focus on well orchestrated public relations campaigns. The government screens the participation of Canadians and invites proposals (by "request only") at these events to filter the level of tolerable criticisms, to minimize creativity and to protect the hegemonic shield. Consequently, alien criteria guide this intellectual colonialism. For example, more recently in Ontario there is a flurry of government activity to 'look into' post secondary education once again. Despite dozens of expensive reports written since the 1980's with scores of ignored recommendations, 'here we go again'. The stereotypic response of creating more dialogue attendant with commissions when the problems were long identified. The sluggish bureaucracies of government and self-serving interests of senior consultants remain inimical to the long- overdue social changes.

#### **D. Ideologies – Institutions Nexus**

The most fundamental challenge is to understand the basis of these problems. It is too easy to criticize the government, the universities or the prevailing market conditions. In theorizing about the colleges and universities partnerships this paper highlights the contexts and consequences of prevailing ideologies that reproduce an insidious hegemony of privilege. First, this analysis sketches a method for constructing an appreciation of the applied degree that enables a forthright excavation of ethnocentric biases and cultural contradictions and common sense assumptions about post secondary education.

One gains an appreciation of what constitutes education by recognizing that education consists of conceptual (ideological) and concrete (institutional) components, products of pre-given structures. Any understanding of education requires an analysis of institutional practices as ideological accomplishments. As noted earlier, ideological-institutional relations are the driving forces such that ideology structures the conditions of institutional contexts thereby connecting education to socio-political trends and other historically developed legitimation principles. The pursuit of applied degrees, therefore, requires an appreciation of the depth and breadth of ideological developments that seek to "absorb" or regulate the contradictions and conceal the closures inherent in contemporary institutions.

Ideologies validate both the revealed and the concealed institutional activities. The world of appearance is a landscape of alienating images, reified semblances wherein ideologies and institutions are interchangeable. Ideologies resemble institutions and vice versa. Ideologies obfuscate by redefining the parameters of institutions that rely on ambiguities to transcend moments of injustice, flirting with equivocation and well-schooled in the logic of necessity and denial. Institutional vulnerability becomes attenuated with the fine-tuning of instrumental logics furnished by ideological encroachments. Consequently, ideological liquidity as an enabling context provides incredible institutional autonomy. Efforts to circumscribe institutional mandates become untenable precisely because of the overwhelming ideological institutional interdependence. Ideologies sustain institutions and institutions, as determining ideologies, interact with one another. These concatenations are more than facile accommodations but are reciprocal ideological and institutional hegemonies that mystify, enrich and impoverish.

Ideologies are polytextures, a panoply of convenient discourses and competing values which are segmented and articulated within abstract, mystifying and decontextualizing narratives that are located within a marketplace of rhetoric, jargon and clichés. Ideologies are not solely designed to discipline participation but more importantly to preempt criticism and discourage much-needed critical dialogue. Although the ideological-institutional nexus is replete with contradictions, ideology smooths over, harmonizes, pacifies and justifies. Following Gramsci and Foucault, one could argue that the dominant ideology cultivates helplessness by acting more locally through the consenting and docile institutions, and is inscribed as an homogenized common-sense to which public institutions are expected to "consent. Processes of **interpellation, reification and alienation, common sense and naturalized beliefs** invert the relations between institutions. As Habermas (1974) indicates, the meanings and symbols of the dominant ideology prevent critical thinking by penetrating social processes, language and individual consciousness. We tend to view the dynamics of education as a "disembodied spectacle" (O'Neill, 1985), remaining unresponsive to its larger social foundations.

Simply stated, the three interrelated ideologies of **modernity** with its emphases on the concept of reason and its application in the division of labour; **liberalism** with its emphases on the concept of individual rights (especially property) and its application in contract; and **capitalism** with its emphasis on the accumulation of private wealth and its application in the free market are central to any understanding of current practices but serve as a criteria by which to appraise the sustainability or viability of incentives. Briefly, modernity as an ideology is "the progressive economic and administrative rationalization and differentiation of the social world," (Sarup, 1993). The division of labour is consistent with a rationalist methodology that incorporates the following characteristics:

- a. hierarchy
- b. impersonality
- c. written rules of conduct, bounded rules set out specialized tasks
- d. specialized division of technocratic knowledge is value-free; it can be applied to any goals.
- e. efficiency - Bureaucracies are oriented towards formal rationality; the purposively rational performances of standardized and routine functions

For Habermas this scientific technology or rationality of domination (1968, 85) "can also become a background ideology that penetrates into the consciousness of the depoliticized mass of the population, where it can take on legitimizing power" (1968, 105). For **Classical liberalism** and **neo liberalism** ideas "individualism" privatizes freedom (Rawls 1996:155-6) and places great value on maximizing the freedom and self-determination, rights to choose and pursue self interests freely. This distorted sense of social responsibility vitiates more moral, communal or collective projects of redistribution and recognition. By privileging individual choice, liberty, and rights (Strong 1999) the sanctity of the individual is preserved and held as rational, enlightened self-interest. According to the ideology of **Capitalism**, the economy holds society together. For Adam Smith the 'invisible hand' guided the universal as it emerged from the actions of self-interested private citizens. According to Adam Smith (1723-90), individuals are held together by the economic advantages of the division of labour. We associate because, by each playing different parts in the production of economic goods, we produce more. Capitalism's emphasis on the market structures socio-economic institutions including colleges and universities. It is within this framework that these relationships between colleges and universities become controversial. Despite its rich literature, only recently has the discussion shifted to address the connections between institutions and ideologies by exploring the **limits of partnerships**. Typically, the concept of post secondary education has been covered by many scholars from relatively similar vantage points, rehearsing and equivocating the relative banal benefits of partnerships in familiar and as always comfortable contexts. Accordingly, mainstream or normative approaches focus on what are merely the reductivist

consequences of the development of particularized applied programmes while woefully failing to confront the fundamental character of post secondary education. Specifically, by adopting a dialectical way of thinking, one can more fully appreciate the importance of ideologies in all phases of institutional life. They are not simply objects which are routinely acted upon. Rather, as they are "embedded" in each other, playing a crucial role in all dimensions of social transformation. Institutional so-called real-life experiences constitute moments in a continuous process of ideological development and change. Partnerships are mediated by modernity, liberalism and capitalism. As Einstein noted, no problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it.

#### E. Conclusions: 'DEGREES OF FREEDOM'

The problems of deference and difference are the central issue confronting contemporary debates on applied degrees. College identities are constructed, within and upon the interplay of normative strategies which govern the applied and notions of community hood. The struggle for change, therefore, is a challenge, a process that cannot be left to the "benevolence" of a handful of state sponsored actors bent on doing more good than concentrating on doing less harm (Rothman, 1980). Conscience extends "a hand up" rather than "a handout. It is a far more prudent policy for colleges to create a benefit than cope with a problem.

#### Series of Action Plans

Colleges need to pull together as a collectivity. What is it that we want to pull together in responding to the challenges?

1. **structural** (funding for colleges and competition with the universities)
2. **institutional** (cultures of the Colleges, discipline-oriented foci); and,
3. **interactional** (student priorities, staff concerns).

Colleges must hold steadfast to their well founded vision that restores the vibrancy and tenacity of applied education, fosters collaboration, builds effective programs, and creates an inclusive climate for all (staff, students, alumni, and faculty). **Strategic thinking** is long overdue. More imaginative experiments with a program emphasis, repair enrolments in extant structures, create new structures for allocating resources, enhance student presence, to name only a few. What kinds of directions are Colleges, not the government prepared to pursue? By delineating the goals ultimate and immediate as well as the means, ultimate and immediate Colleges will develop their strengths politically and pedagogically. The priority and hierarchy of principles suggest that a **strategic goal** is to provide a balanced, accessible and equitable applied education. Specifically, a number of operational measures may include" a province wide open debate on college and university partners, a re-examination of

programme/discipline specialization, and enhanced enrolment management which effectively balances budgetary with curricular considerations. Formal structures and informal cultures influence governance which encourage widespread participation and consultation, initiatives **from below/bottom up** within inter-related, multi-tiered and long-term solutions. They include:

- a. Restoration of Confidence: image and imagination;
- b. Institutional Building: provide a strong and coherent planning and administrative process; a strong and coherent voice on and off campus;
- c. Enrolments: strategic enrolment management, recruitment, planning and advancement;
- d. Governance and collegiality: active leadership roles in the province wide college system;
- e. Maintenance of the College spirit and curricular strengths.

The solution rests with consciousness, knowing yourselves and your location. Critical self consciousness is not an illusion but a connection; it is created in "social" relationships which link levels of awareness. An awareness of being different and seeing differences inspires manoeuvres that remove cultural closures and facilitate intersubjectivities. It is not simply a matter of 'moving over' and making room for universities but a response from within the communities that challenge fundamental system inequalities bent on intra College and inter post secondary tiering. The second step is to connect with each other. Colleges with community support represent a formidable force. A strident coalition, not just token gestures, of state or industry sponsored partnerships is required strategically. That is, **Colleges need to move outside the box in order to transform and authenticate their applied degrees**. A more critical interrogation of power warrants an examination of advocacy and empowerment in order to provide a conceptually more comprehensive appreciation of praxis. **"Communities - in - action" not community inaction** invites a commitment to immediate and meaningful action. The notion of "communities - in - action" does not suffer from the vagueness inherent in the currently fashionable neo liberal discourses of 'civil society' nor is it vulnerable to corporate or state -sponsored "community" constructions. Changes in legislation, administrative rules and regulations albeit long overdue are limiting.

**Vigilance on the part of the Colleges and their respective community groups is needed in reclaiming that which more appropriately belongs to them.** Action- based initiatives, however, routinely confront numerous barriers that include, for example:

- the denial of a problem;
- the refusal to recognize the significance of community input;
- a self-arrogated sense of intellectual arrogance from other sectors that fears change and remains suspicious of the degrees;

a lack of commitment to change;  
 a dysfunctional public accountability, and  
 a displacement of responsibility.

**Mobilization of outside support, therefore, is necessary.** But, efforts to mobilize a large number of people to bring about change (Visano, 1998) are determined by several contingencies. Mobilization is shaped by ideology, an able leadership, and channels of communication or networks of cooperative relationships (ibid). Ideology sustains participation by providing a litany of invaluable rationalizations. This set of inter-related values re-socializes volunteers or activists to become receptive to new competing definitions. The potential for mobilization is determined by the cohesiveness of the group, strengths of opposing control agents and the resources available. For Tilly (1978), mobilization is the process of creating commitments that generate a willingness to contribute in collaborative acts. Since power does not negotiate its own demise, multi-tiered, long-term and immediate approaches are required which are oriented towards coalition building with local and more global movements. Incremental or sudden change is enhanced with the assistance of other more existing and newly created power blocs working within and outside extant structures.

Develop an understanding of community interests that moves beyond:

- Trite public statements;
- Increase the flow of information;
- Encourage the proactive consultation
- Utilize community resources;
- Invite participation in the programme planning and development stages;
- Develop a capacity for inter-organizational collaboration not just with industry alone but a wider representation of community perspectives;
- Organize resources so that they have the maximum impact to volunteers;
- Evaluate the services and adjust policies to accommodate to the community rather than strictly to the governmental requirements
- Develop and implement explicit policies to improve community participation with appropriate protections against unilateral pronouncements;
- Encourage joint ventures with other voluntary organizations;

Access is not just the enjoyment of a few opportunities made available by the government; access refers to the ownership of the agenda that to date has been exclusively controlled by external panels.

#### **Private Sectors Involved in Process**

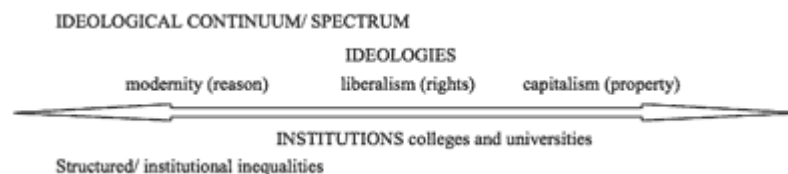
Community involvement involves the development of alliances with the community agencies (Gujarathi & McQuade, 2002). Within the marketplace of rhetoric, jargon and clichés, the concept of community cohesion has become a negotiable commodity the value of which is conveniently determined by the others. The community concept provides more than ideological legitimacy. Rather as currently manipulated by sophisticated cadres of well intentioned state bureaucrats committed to public relations campaigns, the community concept is designed to discipline "outside " participation, pre-empt criticism and discourage much needed critical dialogue.

In conclusion, the above measures suggest that Colleges would do well to work together in a host of different College and University partnerships according to aspects of the dominant ideologies that have been well buried in institutional practices. For instance a more enlightened reason rather than crass instrumental rationalities (modernity); equality rather than a mindless predisposition to individualized freedoms governed by self interest (liberalism); and, innovation and measured regulations of market mentalities (capitalism).

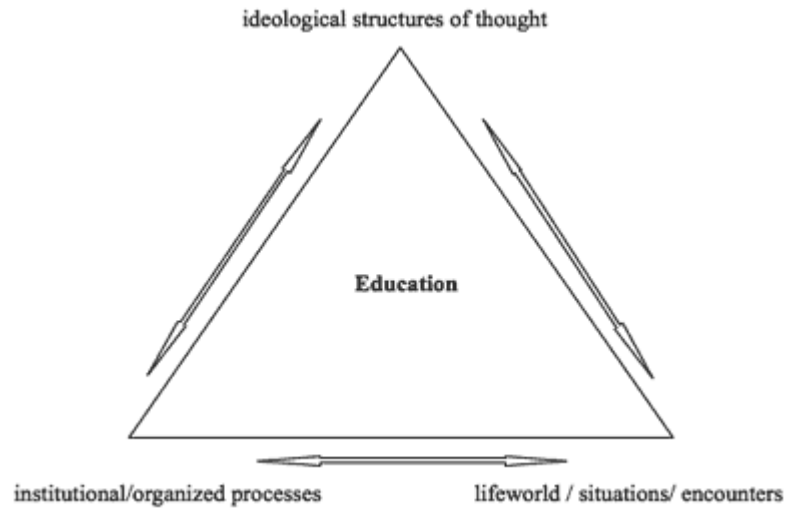
African axiom: "Rain does not fall on one roof and Neither does the sun shine on one house alone" (G. Dei, 1994, 1, "Anti-Racist Education," Orbit 25, 2).

"The search for a scapegoat is the easiest of all hunting expeditions" (D. Eisenhower).

**Figure One**



**Figure Two**



Ideologically grounded institutions, e.g., modernity reason; capitalism property

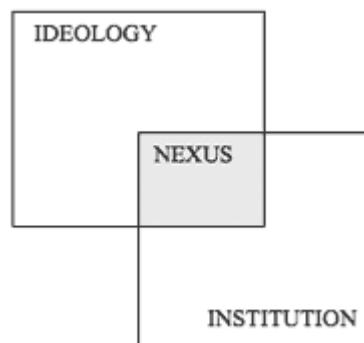
Education = Ideology + Institutions

Ideology + Institutions = Injustice

Within the ideologies (end) - institutions (means) typologies, education appeals to order and ideologies of education are shaped by defined the following contextualizing ideologies of:

- a. modernity: institutionalization: rational, bureaucratic and rules
- b. liberalism: individualism, freedom
- c. capitalism: possessiveness, property, inequality, adversarial

**Figure Three**



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