Peaceful Academic Revolution to Help Humanity Resolve our Global Crises

Introduction
The purpose of this document is to outline why and how universities must both transform and mobilise to avert the worst impacts of the global crises faced by humanity. The first section will address the justification for transformation and how academia can and must transform. In the second section, the document will highlight the need for a peaceful mobilisation of student and staff bodies to make effective the transformation advocated for. The document will then outline a blueprint as to action that must be taken in order to initiate the required transformation and mobilisation.

Aims
The aims of the document are as follows:

●   To transform the whole academic enterprise so that university's become rationally devoted to helping humanity resolve global problems in effective, intelligent and humane ways.
●   University, College and Institutes of technology staff and students, both here and around the world, can be mobilised for a peaceful revolution against unjust and unsustainable societal mechanisms. Student and staff bodies can be encouraged to engage in outreach and activism until proportionate action is taken by their state and institution.
●   Universities, Colleges and Institutes of Technology (ITs) globally will be the seedlings that flourish outwards, spreading learnings into their local communities and beyond. This will help us to better understand, and in turn evolve, our current destructive ways of living. We seek transformation from the heart of every participant country, so that we can each imagine and build a feasible and thriving alternative.
●   Through the 'Great Transition', we work towards universality. We support each other, and others, in confronting and addressing the scientific reality of climate breakdown and ecological crisis. We will work towards the best and equal interests of all species, races, classes and creeds.

The Global Crisis
   The world is in crisis.
   This is glaringly apparent in the climate crisis. CO_2 in the atmosphere continues to rise, the temperature of the earth rises as a result, storms intensify, ice at the poles melts, sea levels rise and, as we write, forests in Australia, Brazil and elsewhere are engulfed by fire. If present trends continue, whole areas of the earth's surface will become uninhabitable, and millions of people will die.[1]
   The climate crisis is the worst of our global problems, but there are others too that threaten our future. There is the destruction of natural habitats, the rapid loss of animals in the wild, and the devastating extinction of species. There is massive and, in some respects, growing inequality in wealth and power around the globe. According to Oxfam, the wealthiest 28 people – yes, a mere 28 people – own as much as the poorest half of the world's population.[2] There is the lethal character of modern war. Whereas around 12 million people died in wars in the 19th century, over 100 million died as a result of war in the 20th century, and we are

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[1] For an excellent history of the discovery of climate change, see Weart, S., 2003, *The Discovery of Global Warming*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
[2] See https://www.oxfam.org/en/5-shocking-facts-about-extreme-global-inequality-and-how-even-it

not doing too well in the 21st century so far. There is the spread of modern armaments around the world, conventional, chemical, and possibly biological. There is the menace of nuclear weapons ready to be unleashed at the touch of a button. On several occasions in the past a flock of geese, the moon, or malfunctioning equipment has signalled incoming missiles; all-out nuclear war has only been averted because key officials have disobeyed orders. As long as nuclear weapons are ready to be unleashed at a moment's notice, sooner or later they will be unleashed, whether because of rising tension, war, accident, malfunctioning equipment, or hacking. The mere existence of nuclear weapons threatens our future. There is the problem of pollution of earth, sea and air: plastic and acidity in the oceans devastates ocean life; pollution of air kills millions of people. There is the problem of growing resistance of bacteria to drugs as a result of the misuse of antibiotics. We face the dreadful possibility that we may return to the state of affairs in the 19th century, when trivial infections would lead to death, and diseases such as TB had no effective treatment. There is the explosive rise in the world's population. In the middle of the 19th century there were one billion people; there are now 7.8 billion. It is estimated that there will be as many as 11 billion people by the end of the century.

   What makes these threats to our future all the more serious is that they interact with and intensify one another. At a time when the world's population goes up, and more food is required to keep hunger at bay, the capacity of the world to produce food may well go down because of loss of land fit for agriculture due to climate change. Again, as the population increases, the area of the earth's surface capable of supporting human life goes down, due to adverse weather conditions and rising sea levels. Millions of people, in north Africa, parts of Asia and elsewhere, living in areas that increasingly fail to support any kind of human life, will seek to move into neighbouring areas, also degraded and under threat, and so incapable of accommodating refugees. These are circumstances all too likely to provoke war. As global problems intensify, it becomes all the more important that the nations of the earth find ways to cooperate with one another to discover how best to resolve these crises. But as the crises intensify, conditions likely to provoke violent conflict proliferate, and cooperation becomes all the more difficult to achieve. It is possible that we now have only a decade or so to put in place measures capable of coming to grips with these grave problems. If we do not do now what needs to be done, the world may descend into even greater anarchy and chaos than what we have at present.

The Role of the University
   If we are to resolve these immense global problems that confront us, we need to *learn* how to do it. And that in turn means that our institutions of learning - our universities and schools - are well-designed and devoted to the task. What we require, in order to tackle in increasingly effective ways the global problems we face, is community learning, social, economic, institutional and political learning.[3] It is not enough that individuals learn what needs to be done. Communities need to learn. In a sense, the world's population needs to learn - although, because of massive inequalities in wealth and power, some of us carry far heavier responsibility for the world's problems than others, and some of us are in a far better position to do something about these problems than others are. Only our institutions of learning - our universities and schools - can help promote the kind of community, social, institutional learning that we require. Of course the media, NGOs, charities, pressure groups,

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[3] See Maxwell N., 2019, How Wisdom Can Help Solve Global Problems, in *Applying Wisdom to Contemporary World Problems*, eds., R. Sternberg, H. Nusbaum and J. Glück, Palgrave Macmillan, London, chapter 13, pp. 337-380.

can all help. But we need our universities and schools to galvanize the world's population into discovering how to come to grips, effectively, intelligently and humanely, with the world's problems.

Are universities at present organized for and devoted to the task in hand? The answer to this question is deeply shocking. Far from being devoted to helping humanity learn how to tackle our grave global problems, universities are, if anything, in part *responsible* for the creation of these problems. They are not helping to make things better; on the contrary, they are, in part, responsible for making things worse.

What, we need to ask, is responsible for the genesis of our global problems? Ultimately it is the astonishing intellectual success of modern science and technology. This has, of course, led to much that is of immense benefit. Science and technology have made the modern world possible. But there is a downside. Modern medicine and hygiene have led to population growth. Modern technology has led to modern industry and agriculture which, in turn, have led to destruction of natural habitats, extinction of species, pollution, and the climate crisis. Scientific and technological advancements have led to modern armaments, conventional, chemical, biological and nuclear, and so to the lethal character of modern war.

If by the "cause" of an event we mean that prior change which led to the occurrence of the event, and without which the event would not have occurred then, without any doubt, it is the astonishing success of modern science and technology that is the cause of all the global problems indicated above. It is not that we have become more wicked, more stupid, or more selfish. Nor can capitalism be said to be the cause, as some would have it. The old Soviet Union after all was, if anything, even better at creating environmental and other problems as capitalist countries. And capitalism without modern science and technology would have been relatively impotent. In the context of the history of humanity of the last one or two thousand years, what is new, what has dramatically changed, is the advent, and immense intellectual and technical success, of modern science and technology. It is that which has made possible modern industry, agriculture, transport, armaments and medicine, which in turn have led to our current, menacing global problems.

And it is universities that have, by and large, created, nurtured and promoted the science and technology that have, in turn, led to the crises we now face. Universities, instead of helping us learn how to resolve our global problems, are actually a major part of the *cause* of these problems.

What on earth has gone wrong? It is after all a major part of the *raison d'être* of the university that it should help enhance the quality of human life by intellectual, cultural, educational, technological and practical means. But we have just discovered that the university has been behind the *genesis* of our most serious current global problems - so serious that the future of civilization may even be in doubt.

The problem is this. Universities as at present organized are, when judged from the vital standpoint of helping to promote human welfare, disastrously and damagingly irrational, in a wholesale, structural way, and it is this gross institutional/intellectual irrationality that is responsible for the havoc that universities have caused.

Knowledge-Inquiry

From the past we have inherited the idea that the proper way for academic inquiry to help promote human welfare is, in the first instance, to acquire knowledge. First, knowledge is to be acquired; then, secondarily, it can be applied to help solve social problems. The *intellectual* aim of inquiry, of acquiring knowledge is to be sharply distinguished from the *social* or *humanitarian* aim of promoting human welfare. In the first instance, academic

inquiry seeks to solve problems of knowledge, not social problems of living.[4] Values, politics, expressions of feelings and desires, political philosophies and philosophies of life must all be excluded from the intellectual domain of inquiry to ensure that the pursuit of objective, factual knowledge does not degenerate into mere ideology or propaganda. In order to produce what is of real human value – genuine, objective factual knowledge – inquiry must, paradoxically, exclude from the intellectual domain of inquiry all expressions of human problems, suffering and values (although of course factual *knowledge* about these things can be developed).

   At the centre of knowledge-inquiry there is an even more restrictive conception of *science*. According to this orthodox view, claims to scientific knowledge must be assessed impartially with respect to the evidence, with respect to empirical success and failure. Metaphysical theses – theses which are neither empirically verifiable nor falsifiable, are to be excluded from science. (One form of this idea is Karl Popper's famous demarcation criterion: a theory, in order to be scientific, must be *falsifiable*.[5])

   We may call this traditional conception (and kind) of inquiry *knowledge-inquiry*.[6] By no means everything that goes on in the university today conforms to these edicts of knowledge-inquiry, and by no means all academics support knowledge-inquiry. Nevertheless it exercises a massive influence over a multitude of aspects of academia: publications, research, funding, education, careers, promotions, interactions with the public. It is the only conception of rational academic inquiry that is currently well-known.

   Knowledge-inquiry is, however, profoundly and damagingly irrational. What is so damaging is that knowledge-inquiry is both massively influential and profoundly irrational.

   What should we mean by rationality in this context? The relevant notion is this: there is some, probably rather ill-defined set of rules, strategies or methods which, if put into practice in solving problems or pursuing aims, give us our best chances of success, other things being equal. These rules of reason don't guarantee success. They don't tell you precisely what to do; rather, they indicate what to attempt. They are meta-rules in the sense that they assume that you can already solve many problems, successfully pursue many aims, in the real world (implementing a wide range of methods); the rules of reason tell you how to marshal these past successes so as to give yourself the best chance of solving new problems, of achieving new aims.[7]

   Here are four elementary, utterly uncontroversial rules of reason.

   (1) Articulate and seek to improve the articulation of the basic problem(s) to be solved.
   (2) Propose and critically assess alternative possible solutions.
   (3) When necessary, break up the basic problem to be solved into a number of *specialized* problems – preliminary, simpler, analogous, subordinate problems – (to be tackled in accordance with rules (1) and (2)), in an attempt to work gradually toward a solution to the basic problem to be solved.

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[4] What is the difference between problems of knowledge and living? A problem of knowledge is solved by a fact or truth, whereas a problem of living is solved by what we do, or refrain from doing – or a succession of actions, a way of life.

[5] See Popper, K.R., 1963, *Conjectures and Refutations*, Routledge, London, ch. 3.

[6] For a much more detailed exposition of knowledge-inquiry (there called "the philosophy of knowledge") see Maxwell, N., 1984, *From Knowledge to Wisdom: A Revolution for Science and the Humanities* (Blackwell; 2nd ed., Pentire Press, 2007), ch. 2.

[7] See Popper, K.R., 1962, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Routledge and Kagan Paul, London, ch. 24; Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations;* Maxwell, *From Knowledge to Wisdom*, chs. 4 and 5.

(4) Inter-connect attempts to solve the basic problem and specialized problems, so that basic problem solving may guide, and be guided by, specialized problem solving.[8]

No problem-solving enterprise which persistently violates any one of (1) to (4) can be judged rational. If academia is to contribute to the aim of promoting human welfare, the quality of human life, by intellectual means, in a rational way, in a way that gives the best chances of success, then (1) to (4) must be built into the whole institutional/intellectual structure of academic inquiry.

But knowledge-inquiry violates *three* of these four most basic rules of reason.

The first point to note is that, granted that academic inquiry has, as its fundamental aim, to help promote human welfare by intellectual and educational means,[9] then the *problems* that inquiry fundamentally ought to try to help solve are problems of living, problems of action – personal and social problems we encounter as we live. From the standpoint of achieving what is of value in life, it is what we *do*, or refrain from doing, that ultimately matters. Even where new knowledge and technological know-how are relevant to the achievement of what is of value – as they are in medicine or agriculture, for example – it is always what this new knowledge or technological know-how enables us to *do* that matters. All the global problems discussed above require, for their resolution, not merely new knowledge, but rather new *actions*, new policies, new political programmes, new institutions, new ways of living. Scientific knowledge, and associated technological know-how have, if anything, as we have seen, contributed to the creation of these problems in the first place. Thus problems of living – problems of poverty, ill-health, injustice, deprivation, avoidable death – are solved by what we do, or refrain from doing; they are not solved by the mere provision of some item of knowledge.

Second, in order to achieve what is of value in life more successfully than we do at present, we need to discover how to resolve conflicts and problems of living in more *cooperatively rational* ways than we do at present. There is a spectrum of ways in which conflicts can be resolved, from murder or all-out war at the violent end of the spectrum, via enslavement, threat of murder or war, threats of a less extreme kind, manipulation, bargaining, voting, to cooperative rationality at the other end of the spectrum, those involved seeking, by rational means, to arrive at that course of action which does the best justice to the interests of all those involved. A basic task for a kind of academic inquiry that seeks to help promote human welfare must be to discover how conflict resolution can be moved away from the violent end of the spectrum towards the cooperatively rational end.

Granted all this, and granted that the above four rules of reason are put into practice then, at the most fundamental level, academic inquiry needs to:

(1) Articulate, and seek to improve the articulation of, personal, social and global problems of living that need to be solved if the quality of human life is to be enhanced (including those indicated above);

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[8] Popper upheld the first two of these four rules of reason; he declared "the one method of all *rational discussion* … is that of stating one's problem clearly and of examining its various proposed solutions *critically*": Popper, 1959, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Hutchinson, London, p. 16. Popper was, however, too opposed to specialization to appreciate how necessary it can be, its drawbacks countered by the implementation of rules (3) and (4).

[9] This assumption may be challenged. Does not academic inquiry seek knowledge for its own sake – it may be asked – whether it helps promote human welfare or not? Elsewhere it has been shown that the kind of inquiry being argued for here – wisdom-inquiry (see text) – does better justice to *both* aspects of inquiry, pure and applied, than does knowledge-inquiry: see Maxwell, *From Knowledge to Wisdom*, chs. 4 and 5.

(2) Propose and critically assess alternative possible solutions – alternative possible *actions*, *policies*, *political programmes*, *legislative proposals*, *ideologies*, *ways of living, philosophies of life*.

In addition, of course, academic inquiry must:

(3) Break up the basic problems of living into subordinate, specialized problems – in particular, specialized problems of knowledge and technology.
(4) Inter-connect basic and specialized problem solving.

Academic inquiry as it mostly exists at present can be regarded as putting (3) into practice to splendid effect. The intricate maze of specialized disciplines devoted to improving knowledge and technological know-how that go to make up current academic inquiry is the result. But, disastrously, what we have at present, academic inquiry devoted primarily to improving knowledge, fails to put (1), (2) and (4) into practice. In pursuing knowledge, academic inquiry may articulate problems of knowledge, and propose and critically assess possible solutions, possible claims to knowledge – factual theses, observational and experimental results, theories. But, as we have seen, problems of *knowledge* are not (in general) problems of *living*; and solutions to problems of *knowledge* are not (in general) solutions to problems of *living*. Insofar as academia does at present put (1) and (2) into practice, in departments of social science and policy studies, it does so only at the periphery, and not as its central, fundamental intellectual task.

In short, academic inquiry devoted primarily to the pursuit of knowledge, when construed as having the basic humanitarian aim of helping to enhance the quality of human life by intellectual means, fails to put the two most elementary rules of reason into practice (rules (1) and (2)). Academic inquiry fails to do (at a fundamental level) what it most needs to do, namely (1) articulate problems of living, and (2) propose and critically assess possible solutions. And furthermore, as a result of failing to explore the basic problems that need to be solved, academic inquiry cannot put the fourth rule of rational problem solving into practice either, namely (4) inter-connect basic and specialized problem solving. As we have remarked, *three* of the four most elementary rules of rational problem-solving are violated.[10]

This gross structural irrationality of contemporary academic inquiry, of knowledge-inquiry, is no mere formal matter. It has profoundly damaging consequences for humanity. As we have pointed out above, granted that our aim is to contribute to human welfare by intellectual means, the basic problems we need to discover how to solve are problems of living, problems of action, not problems of knowledge. In failing to give intellectual priority to problems of living, knowledge-inquiry fails to tackle what most needs to be tackled in order to contribute to human welfare. Universities fail to give absolute priority to the task of helping humanity learn what our global problems are and, above all, *what we need to do to resolve them in effective, intelligent and humane ways*. As a result of implementing knowledge-inquiry, *universities at present fail to do what they most need to do to help resolve global crises, and*

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[10] For more detailed developments of this argument see Maxwell: 1980, Science, Reason, Knowledge, and Wisdom: A Critique of Specialism, *Inquiry*, 23, pp. 19-81; *From Knowledge to Wisdom*; 2004, *Is Science Neurotic?*, Imperial College Press, London; 2014, *How Universities Can Help Create a Wiser World: The Urgent Need for an Academia Revolution,* Imprint Academic, Exeter. For summaries that provide more detail than can be given here, see Maxwell: 2000, Can Humanity Learn to become Civilized? The Crisis of Science without Civilization, *Journal of Applied Philosophy 17*, pp. 29-44; 2017, Can Universities Save Us From Disaster?, *On The Horizon*, 25 (2), pp.115-130; 2019, How Wisdom Can Help Solve Global Problems, in *Applying Wisdom to Contemporary World Problems*, eds., R. Sternberg, H. Nusbaum and J. Glück, Palgrave Macmillan, London, chapter 13, pp. 337-380.

thus help promote human welfare. Furthermore, scientific and technological research seeks knowledge in a way that is unrelated to sustained concern about what humanity's most urgent problems are, as a result of the failure to put rules (1), (2) and (4) into academic practice. There is, as a result, the danger that scientific and technological research will respond to the interests of the powerful and the wealthy, rather than to the interests of the poor, of those most in need. Scientists, officially seeking knowledge of truth *per se*, have no official grounds for objecting if those who fund research – governments and industry – decide that the truth to be sought will reflect their interests, rather than the interests of the world's poor. And priorities of scientific research, globally, do indeed reflect the interests of the first world, rather than those of the underdeveloped world.[11]

Knowledge and technology successfully pursued in a way that is not rationally subordinated to the tackling of more fundamental problems of living, through the failure to put (1), (2) and (4) into practice, is bound to lead to the kind of global problems discussed above, problems that arise as a result of newly acquired powers to act being divorced from the ability to act wisely. The creation of our current global problems, and our inability to respond adequately to these problems, has much to do, in other words, with the long-standing, rarely noticed, structural *irrationality* of our institutions and traditions of learning, devoted as they are to acquiring knowledge dissociated from learning how to tackle our problems of living in more cooperatively rational ways. Academia, as it exists at present, betrays reason and, as a result, betrays humanity. Knowledge-inquiry, because of its irrationality, is designed to *intensify*, not help *solve*, our current global problems.[12]

Wisdom-Inquiry

Inquiry devoted primarily to the pursuit of knowledge is, then, grossly and damagingly irrational when judged from the standpoint of contributing to human welfare by intellectual means. At once the question arises: What would a kind of inquiry be like that is devoted, in a genuinely rational way, to promote human welfare by intellectual means? We shall call such a hypothetical kind of inquiry *wisdom-inquiry*,[13] to stand in contrast to knowledge-inquiry.

As a first step at characterizing wisdom-inquiry, we may take knowledge-inquiry (at its best) and modify it just sufficiently to ensure that all four elementary rules of rational problem-solving, indicated above, are built into its intellectual and institutional structure: see Figure.

The primary change that needs to be made is to ensure that academic inquiry implements rules (1) and (2). It becomes the fundamental task of social inquiry and the humanities (1) to articulate, and seek to improve the articulation of, our problems of living, and (2) to propose and critically assess possible solutions, from the standpoint of their practicality and desirability. In particular, social inquiry has the task of discovering how conflicts may be resolved in less violent, more cooperatively rational ways. It also has the task of promoting such tackling of problems of living in the social world beyond academe. Social inquiry is, thus, not primarily social *science*, nor, primarily, concerned to acquire knowledge of the social world; its primary task is to promote more cooperatively rational tackling of problems

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[11] Funds devoted, in the USA, UK and some other wealthy countries, to military research are especially disturbing: see Langley, C., 2005, *Soldiers in the Laboratory*, Scientists for Global Responsibility, Folkstone; and Smith, D., 2003, *The Atlas of War and Peace*, Earthscan, London.

[12] See Maxwell *From Knowledge to Wisdom*, ch. 3, for a much more detailed discussion of the damaging social repercussions of knowledge-inquiry.
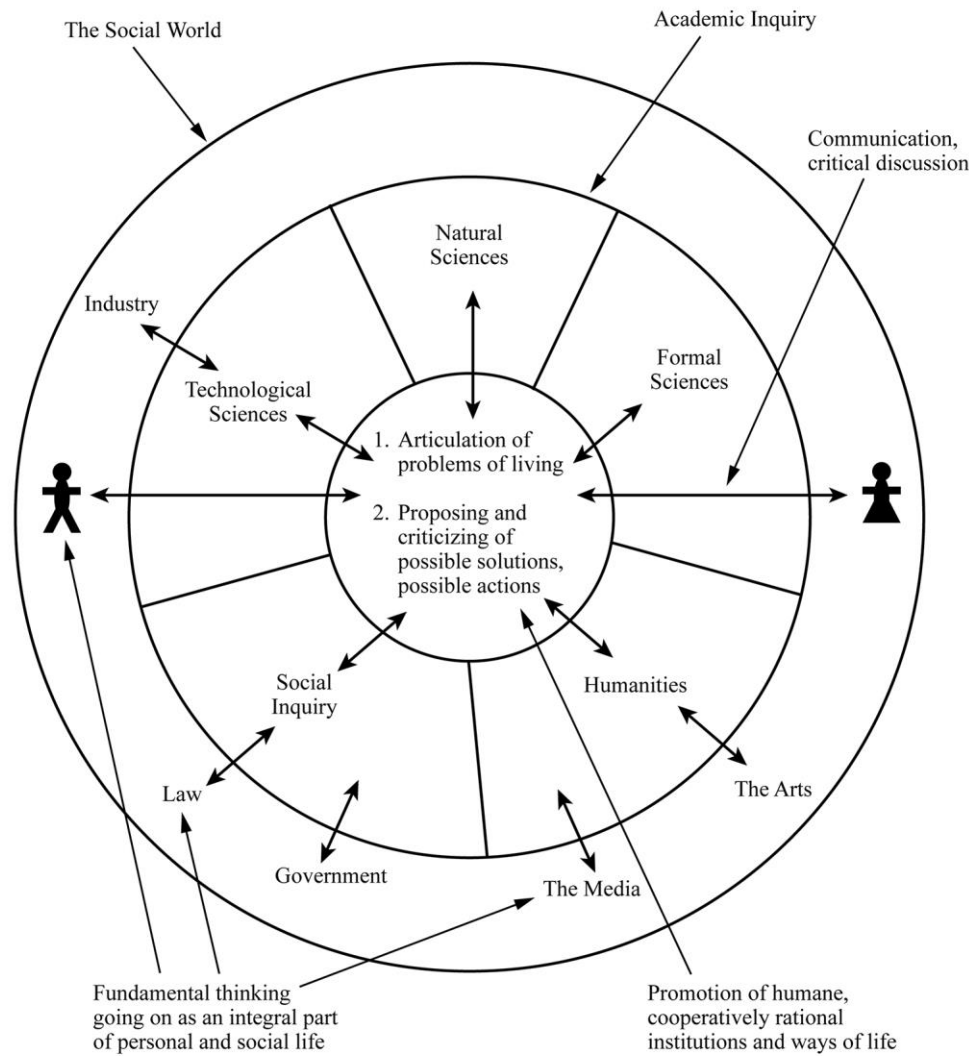
[13] Whereas the basic intellectual aim of knowledge-inquiry is to acquire knowledge, that of wisdom-inquiry is to seek and promote wisdom. "Wisdom", here, means "the capacity, active endeavour, and desire to discover and achieve what is of value in life for oneself and others – wisdom, in this sense, thus including knowledge, understanding and technological know-how, but much more.

of living in the social world. Pursued in this way, social inquiry is intellectually more fundamental than the natural and technological sciences, which tackle subordinate problems of knowledge, understanding and technology, in accordance with rule (3). In the Figure, implementation of rule (3) is represented by the specialized problem solving of the natural, technological and formal sciences, and more specialized aspects of social inquiry and the humanities. Rule (4) is represented by the two-way arrows linking fundamental and specialized problem solving, each influencing the other.

   We can go further. According to this view, the thinking that we engage in as we live, in seeking to realize what is of value to us, is intellectually more fundamental than the whole of academic inquiry (which has, as its basic purpose, to help cooperatively rational thinking and problem solving in life to flourish). Academic thought emerges as a kind of specialization of personal and social thinking in life, the result of implementing rule (3); this means there needs to be a two-way interplay of ideas, arguments and experiences between the social world and academia, in accordance with rule (4). This is represented in the Figure, by the two-way arrows linking academic inquiry and the social world.

   The natural and technological sciences need to recognize three domains of discussion: evidence, theory, and aims. Discussion of aims seeks to identify that highly problematic region of overlap between that which is discoverable, and that which it is of value to discover. Discussion of what it is of value to discover interacts with social inquiry, in accordance with rule (4).

The Social World · Academic Inquiry

Communication,
critical discussion

Natural
Sciences

Industry

Formal
Sciences

Technological
Sciences

1. Articulation of
problems of living

2. Proposing and
criticizing of
possible solutions,
possible actions

Social
Inquiry

Humanities

Law

The Arts

Government

The Media

Fundamental thinking
going on as an integral part
of personal and social life

Promotion of humane,
cooperatively rational
institutions and ways of life

Figure 1: Wisdom-Inquiry Implementing Problem-Solving Rationality

Thus, in transforming knowledge-inquiry so that it becomes wisdom-inquiry, we need to transform the social sciences so that their primary intellectual task becomes to help resolve conflicts and problems of living in the social world in increasingly effective, sustainable, just, peaceful and cooperatively rational ways – thus helping humanity make social progress towards as good and wise a world as possible. We need to transform the whole way in which universities are related to the social world, so that they cease merely to *study* the social world, and instead actively engage with the social world, seeking both to learn from and educate the public by means of discussion and debate. Almost every discipline and aspect of the academic enterprise needs to change to become rationally organized and devoted to helping humanity solve problems of living, and thus make progress towards a better, wiser world. Academia needs to become a sort of people's civil service, doing openly for the public what actual civil services are supposed to do in secret for governments. The primary task of the university becomes to help people discover, create and achieve what is genuinely of value in life. The university becomes a resource open for the public to use to help them solve those problems inherent in life that need to be solved so that what is genuinely of value in life may be realized.

What Do We Need to Do?

   Our primary task is to bring CO_2 emissions down to zero. We need to leave coal, oil and gas underground. We need to change the way we create and use electric power. We need to change what we eat, and how we travel. Governments, corporations, industry and agriculture all need to change. We need to stop destroying the natural world, and we need to start helping the natural world to recover from the havoc that we have inflicted upon it. We need a much more just, equitable distribution of wealth. We must discover how to resolve conflicts in ways that are just and peaceful. We need enlightened democracy to flourish.

   What can be done to transform universities so that they become actively and effectively engaged in helping people accomplish these tasks? How can those responsible for governing universities be got to pay attention, and bring about the changes we require? Here are some suggestions.

   1. Every university needs to create a Symposium, open to everyone at the university, that meets regularly, and explores by means of discussion and debate, what our fundamental problems are, and how they are to be solved – including problems of how the university needs to change.[14] Students and academic staff should cooperate in creating this Symposium, but if academics are reluctant to be involved, students should do it themselves.

   2. Economists, sociologists, political scientists, and other social scientists, should set about transforming their disciplines along the lines indicated. Students of these disciplines should use every educational opportunity to make out the case for the need for disciplinary change.

   3. Physicists, chemists, biologists and other natural scientists need to transform the nature of science so that *problematic aims of science* receive sustained imaginative and critical discussion, along with *theory* and *evidence*. Questions concerning the aims of science need to be thrown open to public discussion.

   4. Philosophy needs to change so that it becomes devoted to keeping alive in the public domain our fundamental problem: How can our human world, the world as it appears to us, the world we live in and see, touch, hear and smell, the world of living things, people, consciousness, free will, meaning and value - how can all of this exist and best flourish embedded as it is in the physical universe? The Symposium of point 1 needs to tackle this problem, imaginatively and critically; and it needs to tackle how it interacts with all more particular and specialized problems of life and thought.

   5. History needs to continue to transport us, intellectually and in imagination, into the past; but it also needs to bring the past into the present so that, in tackling our problems today, we may learn from past successes and failures, when relevant.

   6. Mathematicians need to stop trying to understand pure mathematics as a branch of knowledge (as it is conceived within knowledge-inquiry). Mathematics is rather the development, systematization and unification of problem-solving methods, the exploration of problematic possibilities.

   7. Literature needs to be put close to the heart of rational inquiry, in that it explores imaginatively our most profound problems of living and aids personalistic understanding in life by enhancing our ability to enter imaginatively into the problems and lives of others.

   8. Futurology needs to be revived as a discipline – the imaginative and critical exploration of possible futures. The central task would be to discover how we may avoid likely bad futures, and increase our chances of achieving good futures.

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[14] This is strongly argued for in Maxwell, 2020, *Our Fundamental Problem: A Revolutionary Approach to Philosophy*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal – a book dedicated to Extinction Rebellion!

9. Every national university system needs to include a national shadow government, seeking to do, virtually, free of the constraints of power, what the actual national government ought to be doing. The hope would be that virtual and actual governments would learn from each other.

10. The world's universities need to include a virtual world government which seeks to do what an actual elected world government ought to do, if it existed. The virtual world government would also have the task of working out how an actual democratically elected world government might be created.[15]

Mobilisation

UN agreements centre around a 2050 target deadline before which countries must achieve net zero emissions. Methane hydrates escape from the East Siberian Arctic shelf at most alarming rates, suggesting that 2050 targets appear woefully inadequate even for the world's most privileged humans.

As some of the world's most powerful countries and continents tighten their borders, these 2050 targets destine the losers of the geographical lottery to a gruesome end. In a most cruel twist of fate many of those hailing from countries with historically lowest-per-capita emissions are being made to feel the most immediate wrath of environmental breakdown. There are currently 45 million people in southern Africa experiencing the worst drought in a century and are in need of urgent help. These droughts will become more intense, more prolonged and more likely due to global heating. Yet some of the worlds most influential governments and big-business trundle onwards with either a blind faith in an emerging panacea or a willful ignorance of the consequences of their actions. The recent disaster that was the UN COP25 made this all most glaringly apparent.

Rooted in a high percentage of the world's most populous cities, universities are bestowed with unique opportunities for positive and far reaching change. They can and must exert their profound influence for the greater public/global good. With each nurturing thousands of young, curious and ambitious minds every year we cannot underplay their significance in this movement of movements.

Social unrest is growing worldwide. Impassioned and determined protest groups are coming to the fore and vieing in different directions. Fascist and authoritarian regimes are emerging and/or becoming more apparent in powerful countries across the world. Numerous governments, corporate juggernauts, media outlets, and systems of law are failing to safeguard their peoples. Universities, therefore present the conscious, humane and able a final stronghold to gather their minds and energies in one last concerted effort for life.

It is increasingly clear that our environmental and humanitarian crises will not be overcome by thought exercise alone. Solutions have existed for decades. The solutions have only grown more drastic and desperate in the wake of prolonged international inaction. Rational and moral argument have repeatedly failed to persuade global kingpins to enact the changes needed in a humane and timely manner. A sustained peaceful mobilisation of universities and

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[15] All these changes, and many more, are argued for in Maxwell, *From Knowledge to* Wisdom; *Is Science Neurotic?*; *How Universities Can Help Create a Wiser World*; and *Our Fundamental Problem: A Revolutionary Approach to Philosophy*.

their staff and students thus appears to be the only viable option remaining to us.[16,17 17]. This must couple the transformation outlined in the previous sections.

As part of the sustained mobilisation student and staff bodies will most likely need to engage in weekly coordinated peaceful activism, public awareness campaigns, outreach, state and local planning and action, and peaceful civil disobedience (where necessary) until proportionate action is taken. Universities will likely need to provide students and staff with the time and space they need for this.

Entire student bodies, for example, could be rostered in shifts to physically block oil imports until national emergency fuel rationing plans are introduced. Entire student bodies will need training in peaceful civil disobedience. There could be a sophistication of existing student and staff lobby groups. In many places an expansion of the university press may be needed to reach out to the general public and circumvent corrupted or disproportionate media coverage of environmental and humanitarian crises. Students could hand out weekly informative emergency leaflets in their neighbourhoods. University career guidance counsellors could offer guidance to students so that our best and brightest are not wooed or corrupted into neglectful/less pressing employment. Universities could reach out to and activate their alumni to encourage and expand participation in this peaceful mobilisation. University lecturers could create a recording of an emergency presentation and send it to every primary and secondary school in their region or country. That way those schools can hold emergency presentations (from a reliable source) to: educate the parents of those children of the true severity of our crises, and mobilise those parents to taking proportionate action.

The initial mobilisation event
There are many people at work in academia who entirely endorse what extinction rebellion seeks to do. Some will endorse the proposal for the transformation and mobilisation of the university put forward in this document. But it is all too likely that the power structure of a university, and many working within it, will oppose the proposals outlined here. Some may even be convinced they are right to mount such opposition. For this reason, action will be needed to overcome this anticipated opposition. In what follows, we make some suggestions as to what students and academic staff, sympathetic to the urgently needed academic

revolution, might do. We indicate five stages of escalating action that may be undertaken to get a hearing for the argument for academic change.

Given that we have one year or so to save those who and what can still be saved there is a moral and strategic objective for universities - to go into rebellion against their governments committing crimes against humanity. e.g refuse bureaucratic and financial co-operation - of course this is unlikely to be agreed but the point is to widen the overton window to the one thing which is moral and strategically rational given the extremity of the crisis.

There may be a chance of mass mobilisation without - ie before - high level sacrifice - never say never - but it is unlikely even in the present situation. The more likely scenario which will

[16] Engler, M., & Engler, P. 2016. *This is an uprising: How nonviolent revolt is shaping the twenty-first century.*
[17] Hallam, R., 2019, *Common Sense for the 21st century.*

work is the disruption/sacrifice of the few creating a backfiring effect and thus creating a mass mobilisation - this is the industry average model of uprisings in the literature.[18,19,20]

So in the present context you have the following scenarios (there maybe more)-

i) University staff and students participate in a day on day strike/occupation AKA 'Reach out'(see below) to pressurise swift and proportionate institutional alignment with the 'necessities' outlined in the next section. It is important to have lecturer's/a lecturer involved in this 'reach out' so that lectures stop thereby forcing the institution to engage. As the lecturer/s refuse to teach (greta variety on the theme routine) - they get suspended and this triggers more lecturers to do it - and then off it goes - colleagues and students stand in solidarity and the mobilisation takes off. Lectures should be encouraged that this would not be the first time a successful peaceful revolution has begun or taken place in a university setting.[18] Only now the stakes are much higher. Moral and rational justification for peaceful revolution are on our side. If you are to find the hero inside of you, we believe that here is the place to do so and that now is the time for action.

ii) Mass disruption -e.g. staff or students paint all over most sacred part of the university and get suspended - This has to be totally "outrageous" to work.

There are other actions which historically have proven effective in effecting successful mobilisations but the above are those which we are willing to stand behind. The general design principles are hopefully clear. So a lot of your energy should be put into finding these people willing to participate (and or you do it - no pressure of course!).

- **Stage 1**
  - Gather a group of academics and/or student representatives and approach your university executive management (provost/vice provost). Come with academics from your schools of natural science and humanities if possible. Go alone if necessary.
  - Be super nice in your dealings with them but immovably firm, explaining that this is an emergency meeting and that it simply cannot and will not wait.
  - Here you can present to the management present the need for emergency action.
  - Bring an edited copy of this document to the meeting which excludes this specific section so that the institution cannot prepare against plans for peaceful escalation (if necessary). This

[18] https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/the-legacy-of-ucd-s-gentle-revolution-1.3673191
[19] Chenoweth, E., & Stephan, M. 2011. *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. Columbia University Press. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/chen15682,
[20] Popovic, S., & Miller, M. I. 2015. *Blueprint for revolution: How to use rice pudding, Lego men, and other nonviolent techniques to galvanize communities, overthrow dictators, or simply change the world.*

- document will provide for them a clear pathway for what needs to be done and how to do it.
- Alert them to the necessary institutional action required, the aims for this movement, and the necessities (see below) to be provided for by the university. Give them 72 hours to respond with a yes or no answer. If without representatives at this meeting advise management to call an emergency meeting with humanitarian and natural science academics in the interim who can confirm the severity of our global crises.
- If they refuse the meeting, or decline to provide for the necessities, move to stage 2

- **Stage 2**
  - Rally your:
    - Students
    - Students union
    - Environmental societies
    - Human rights societies
    - University extinction rebellion group if you support them or feel comfortable affiliating yourself with them. If choosing this option and no extinction rebellion group exists in your university,
    - reach out to your local extinction rebellion group and request the support of their members current working in or studying in extinction rebellion
    - Academic peers
    - Teachers unions
    - University/IT paper/radio/social media
    - Institutional faith leaders (eg. chaplains)
    - Staff sustainability network representatives
    - Green Campus Committee
    - Lecturers in natural sciences and humanities
    - Local media
    - Public groups, (including environmental groups human rights NGOs) must also be included. They too are affected by the action and inaction of universities. Their presence and added numbers will add weight to the case and justification for transformation and mobilisation.
    - For students: call upon all of your lecturers to join. Encourage your lecturers during lecturers to get involved.
  - Mark your communication to them as Critically Urgent/Emergency. Disseminate this blueprint for university transformation and mobilisation in your communication to the people listed above. Ask them to familiarise themselves with it and share as much as possible.
  - Establish a radical group in your institution for collaboration on this peaceful revolution.

- **Stage 3**

  - Begin the 'Reach out' where lecturers will refrain from giving normal lectures in the typical lecture hall setting. Lecturers will instead host open public discussions (in the hallways, courtyards, cantines, outside the offices of the executive) to their students and anyone else there and willing to listen. These discussions will instead

focus on the environmental and humanitarian crises, what is to be done about them and what the university should do about it. Lecturers should continue to do this until the institution satisfies the necessities outlined below

- This reach out could also take the shape of a joined staff/student occupation
- While the support of a broad range of stakeholder/activist groups is most encouraged and most welcome, this we suggest would best be carried out as a bannerless, movement of movement type event
- Make sure participants are clear on the 'necessities' (see necessities section) of this action
- Ideally tenured/secure professors should be leading this mobilization event.
- Students must stand in solidarity with lecturers in fear of institutional reproach. If staff students or lecturers are reprimanded or given warnings. Peacefully escalate. Stage 4 offers suggestions on to how you could do so.
- If the executive management call a meeting, the delegation of representatives you send must be nice but very firm on the necessities below.
- All members should actively encourage greater participation by continuing to rally the above mentioned stakeholders throughout the reach out. Ramp up the urgency of your communication day on day but maintain a peaceful and cooperative tone. Remain super nice but super firm.
- If the university does not formally agree to all necessities, resume the reach out and move to stage 4

- **Stage 4** (Alternatively, this stage could precede Stage 2)
  - Graffiti/paint some of the most revered parts of the university with messages such as 'Please help us' and 'you are our only hope', 'Africa is dying', 'environmental emergency', 'peacefully mobilise'. The more people you have willing to do this the greater the impact.
  - Address the people present to inform them of the reasoning for your actions

- **Stage 5**

  - Students and or staff further ramp up the pressure eg.
    - Students and lecturers attack the pockets of the university by campaigning to prospective students of the reasons why they should not attend this university due to obsolete, myopic and or futile education for a future which does not currently exist. To quote Greta Thunberg what is the point in learning in a world where facts don't matter. Open days would provide a great opportunity to do so effectively. As it would be preferable not to have to escalate this far (preferable to have as many as possible engaging in quality higher education), universities should be given advance warning of your willingness to take such drastic action in order to give them an opportunity to accede to necessities outlined below.
    - Students en masse require fee refunds due to the provision of obsolete/myopic higher education and irresponsible institutional practices eg. destructive investment portfolios
    - Hold a screening/presentation in your main square outlining the true scale and urgency of our environmental and humanitarian emergencies and the transformation and mobilisation required. Go from lecture hall

> to lecture hall calling students out to watch this emergency presentation. Ideally this presentation will be given by university academics for credence and reliability purposes. Then hold a referendum on student and staff support for transformation and mobilisation for those attendees of this presentation.
>   - Collect signatures student and staff for the support of this transformation and mobilisation

It is critical that the initial mobilisation event inspires and achieves collegiality and collaboration of all university stakeholders. This we propose, should be a beautiful action that will instigate bonding rather than division. We need to get everyone on the same page, both radicals and reformists. In order to avoid creating conflict, division, or an us/them narrative with/within the university, the 'demands' must instead be presented as 'necessities'.

In that same light, the refusal to teach will in many ways function as would a strike/occupation but should instead be referred to as a 'reach out' to the university. Thereby we can join hands and efforts to confront this greatest of challenges.

Necessities
The necessities outlined herein are designed for the initial mobilisation event to overcome institutional inertia in your university. The aim here is to set in action the sustained mobilisation and transformation of your university to confront our global environmental and humanitarian crises.

1. That the university declares an environmental and humanitarian emergency (every unit, school, department). This must be paired with action as per subsequent necessities.

2. That an emergency presentation and staff assembly be held where all university staff and academics are shown the true scale and urgency of our environmental and humanitarian emergencies, and how the university must transform and mobilise. Here academics can offer their inputs to the plan for educational transformation. This must be held the day after the reach-out or we will simply have to continue to refrain from teaching.

3. That an emergency address be given to the entire student body to lay bare the true scale and urgency of our environmental and humanitarian emergencies. This must be held the day after the protest or we will simply have to continue the 'reach out'. Students must be trained in peaceful civil disobedience.

4. That the university both commits to and initiates an immediate transformation and mobilisation to confront our environmental and humanitarian crises. The university will thereby put the above structural changes (listed in the transformation and mobilisation sections of this blueprint) into academic practice

5. That the university divests from environmentally unsound business eg. fossil fuels, industrial livestock agriculture, industrial fishing, single use-plastics, airline and car manufacturers, fast fashion, banks with unethical portfolios. They must donate/invest finances into green initiatives eg. environmental regeneration, transition funds.

As much as is possible work to include, inspire and activate other universities around the world to replicate this initiative. We hope and encourage you to share this blueprint with your student/academic contacts and networks for ease of replication and to maximise global impact. Alternatively, you could collaborate with your contacts for simultaneous mobilization events to be held in other universities in your own country and/or beyond. An international initial mobilisation event is in the works. We aim for this to take place early 2020s. However we encourage that you do not wait around for us to take the lead, if you and your inspired colleagues are ready for action then just run with it. Be the face that launches 1000 ships. As time is very much against us, we would hope that you initiate this initial mobilisation event as early in the semester as possible. The earlier it takes place the greater the time at the disposal of university students and staff to transform and mobilise. As every day is now so precious it would seem a strategic disaster to postpone transformation until September 2020.

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¹Please note that we call for a declaration of environmental emergency. Not just a climate emergency or biodiversity. We are currently in breach of 4 of the 9 recognized planetary boundaries [3]. Climate and biodiversity comprise of just 2 of these crises. We must be clear in our understanding of this within and across institutes of higher education

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