

# **Shifting Landscapes in the Academy: Career Development as a Strategic Priority**

**by  
Natasha Mrkic-Subotic**

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# Approval

**Name:** **Natasha Mrkic-Subotic**

**Degree:** **Doctor of Education**

**Title:** **Shifting Landscapes in Academy: Career Development as a Strategic Priority**

**Examining Committee:** **Chair: Dr. Pooja Dharamshi**  
Assistant Professor

**Dr. Allan MacKinnon**  
Senior Supervisor  
Associate Professor

**Dr. Daniel Laitsch**  
Committee Member  
Associate Professor

**Dr. Nancy Johnston**  
Committee Member  
Adjunct Professor

**Dr. David Zandvliet**  
Internal Examiner  
Associate Professor

**Dr. Amy Metcalfe**  
External Examiner  
Associate Professor, Higher Education  
Faculty of Education  
The University of British Columbia

**Date Defended/Approved:** April 4, 2018

## Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

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or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

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## Abstract

Higher education institutions may find it is challenging to deliver educational programming in the global environment. In the face of declining government support, this Canadian Institution has struggled to re-invent itself by operating in a business-oriented way. With a new guiding document, the Strategic Plan, new terms appeared, such as *sense of urgency*, *strategic priorities*, and other rhetoric that revolves around the mission to be *entrepreneurial*.

This study used descriptive qualitative research to look at the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrators' perceptions about the role of career development and its role in educational programming. The development of dedicated educational programming that has an increasing focus on career development and/or work-integrated education was driven by predominantly economic motivations, immigration policy, and students' needs.

The research reported on the effects of academic capitalism, entrepreneurialism, and strategic priorities in college discourse by uncovering perceptions about the role of career development that is increasingly embedded in the curriculum. Career development is a lifelong process of balancing learning, work, and personal goals and it has demonstrated a growing role within this Institution. The research draws from the theoretical framework of academic capitalism and is further informed by entrepreneurialism and resource dependency theory.

The study found that research participants defined career development in different ways for themselves as opposed to students. When referring to their own career development, participants emphasized professional development, and when referring to students, career development had the same meaning as work-integrated education. Further, participants thought that career development and/or work-integrated education were essential components that met students' needs and created financial resources for the college. Participants believed career development should be threaded throughout all curriculum in subject-specific ways.

Six emergent themes were identified in the data and these influenced the creation of the implications for policy and practice, and recommendations that followed.

**Keywords:** Academic Capitalism; Career Development; Entrepreneurialism;  
Internationalization; Resource Dependency; Strategic Plan

## **Dedication**

To my parents and my family members. Thank you for your encouragement and love.

To my loving husband, Bojan, my greatest support throughout this journey. You keep me grounded and I'm grateful for everything that we have built together.

To my children, Filip and Luka: you motivate me, make me laugh, and make me proud to be your mother. I love you so much!

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## List of Acronyms

BCIT	British Columbia Institute of Technology
CCDC	Co-op and Career Development Centre
COOP	Co-operative Education
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
LFA	Langara Faculty Association
LSM	Langara School of Management
LSU	Langara Student Union
PDD	Post Degree Diploma
SFU	Simon Fraser University
UBC	University of British Columbia

# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the effects of marketization and institutional branding on the working lives of people in a comprehensive community college. It is a case study of the perceptions of faculty and administrators about the role of career development within the curriculum in a time of transition and reform within the Institution.

Langara College opened in 1965 and was part of Vancouver City College. In 1994, Langara College became an independent public college under the Provincial College and Institute Act. The College has been named ‘the house of teachings,’ a name given by the people of the Musqueam First Nation, on whose traditional territory the college is situated. “Langara is one of BC’s leading undergraduate institutions providing University Studies, Career Studies, and Continuing Studies programs and courses to more than 21,000 students annually” (Langara College Website, 2016). Throughout this thesis, I refer to Langara College as Langara College, Langara, the College and the Institution.

Langara College is a post-secondary institution adapting to a new strategic plan in which the direction of the Institution has an increasing focus on work-integrated education and career development. Within the Institution, the rhetoric is challenging workers to be entrepreneurial, think ‘outside of the box,’ and ‘be innovative.’ This rhetoric emphasizes the ‘job market’ mentality, which some educators at the institution would argue flattens and reduces educational discourse and diminishes our understanding and appreciation of the intrinsic benefits of education – for example, that education is an opening up to the world or the idea that education is good in its own right as a passage to self-discovery.

This new direction has arguably created a state of confusion in the College with respect to the nature of programs and practices, and how we might gather together and create our future, especially when it comes to developing a new administrative department in the College designed to assist in bringing this new vision to life. The post-secondary educational system has academic, industrial, and governmental influences that increasingly reflect a global society. The rhetoric of entrepreneurialism can be found in Langara’s strategic plan, policy documents, and in the discourse of faculty and

administrators, yet there is little documentation or analysis of what it means to people who work at the College. This study could also have been about the perceptions of discourse in the strategic plan, however, I decided to focus on the career development element in this discourse.

To understand more fully this process of transition and reform, I explore what I perceived as institutional entrepreneurialism through faculty and administrator perceptions of career development. The reason for this focus was that people around the college had been influenced by the strategic plan to think about ways of integrating some form of career development programming and at the same time prioritize financial sustainability. I studied the ways in which people came together in the College around various tensions relating to neoliberal agendas, programming, and strategic goals of the Institution.

The main reason why Langara College is not masked in this thesis is that I believed it to be a good example of how a public institution is affected by contextual changes. These contextual changes include political, social, and economic forces that have an effect on how the college operates. Through this research, my desire was to find evidence of forces for change and attempt to understand how people within the Institution perceived these forces, how they felt about them, and how they accommodated programming to meet the needs of the college. My hope was to determine the driving factors and whether entrepreneurialism played a role in the emphasis of career development programming.

## **1.1. New Patterns of Work**

Traditionally, collegiality was the way to make decisions and organize work around the College. With the introduction of the current strategic plan, there has been evidence of a preference for top-down management, and output reporting in terms of numbers. In some cases, the faculty has been required to report placement numbers to senior administrators on a weekly basis and the focus has shifted toward educational programming that includes a career development component.



### 1.1.1. Career Development

Most college students are under pressure to work while in college and plan their transition from college to career. "Career development is the total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic and chance factors that combine to shape the career of an individual over the lifespan" (Sears, 1982, p.139).

*...a definition of career has been chosen that goes beyond narrow occupational limits to encompass the person's total life space, emphasizing the central role that self-management and personal identity play in defining and shaping one's life direction. Career in this sense is defined as the self-mediated progress through time and space of transactions between the person and his or her environment. (Wolfe and Kolb, 1980, p.240).*

This definition of career encompasses the unique student circumstance, individual growth, environment, and change. Due to changes in industry and government, the Institution has highlighted an ongoing relationship between studies, work, and life, and tied this to College strategic performance goals. Career development services exist to provide quality support by engaging students to become active in their own career development journeys, and later productive participants in the labour market. Types of career development services include job preparatory courses, workshops, co-operative education, work experiences, volunteer opportunities, and other experiential and work-integrated learning opportunities such as lab time or practicum. Langara's Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC) additionally provides career counselling, mentoring, job search strategies, career information, programming, and organizes career events.

In a time when it may be thought that the skills students learn at college quickly become obsolete and it seems increasingly difficult for colleges to provide up-to-date training that employers require, colleges can be reluctant to support career service programs. It is also challenging to purchase and use the latest technologies or train faculty to teach new skills (Grubb, 2002). "Having specific, long-range job-related goals encourages students to pursue their academic endeavors, particularly when a relationship between these endeavors and a designed future career is highlighted" (Hull-Banks, Kurpius, Befort, Sollenberger, Nicpon, & Huser, 2005, p.27).

### **1.1.2. Langara Long Term Workforce and Institutional Context**

Langara is a comprehensive college that is organized into various departments that specialize in different areas of educational expertise. These departments have traditionally worked independently of each other. Employee turnover is low and there are many employees that have worked at Langara for over 15 or 20 years and have developed a set way of doing things. “We have a talented and diverse workforce of over 740 full-time and 480 part-time employees. Our longest-serving employee has worked with us for over 48 years” (Langara College Strategic Plan, 2015). The campus is relatively small and in the past employees used to find ways to socialize often with each other. Presently, employees voice concerns over lack of time to connect with each other. The Langara workforce consists of a combination of regularized permanent employees and shorter term hires on somewhat continuing contracts. To demonstrate this more mature workforce of permanent employees, latest union bargaining efforts centred on better hearing aid benefit coverage, rather than maternity/paternity leave benefit provisions.

Being a higher education institution is challenging in our global environment where there are “increasingly powerful discourses and policies of neo-liberalism concerning privatisation, marketisation, performativity, and the enterprising individual” (Apple, 2001, pg.409). In the face of declining government support, the Institution has struggled to re-invent itself by operating in a more business-oriented way. A top-down managerial approach to decision making is replacing the collegial way decisions were made with new terms appearing, such as “sense of urgency,” “strategic plans,” “re-branding,” and rhetoric that revolves around the mission to be “entrepreneurial.” There exists a need to invest in out-dated technology and overall facilities infrastructure to support strategic goals.

### **1.1.3. Different Programming Priorities that Impact the Area of Study**

In 2015, Langara announced the creation of a new career centre that was added to the existing 35-year-old co-operative education department. The new Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC) launched in the fall of 2015. In January 2015, the first Post Degree Diploma (PDD) programs rolled out with an international student target market, successfully bringing in increased revenues. The strategic plan (Langara 2020

Strategic Plan, 2015) states that 75% of college revenues need to be “independently generated” (p. 5), and by January 2018 the number of PDD programs had increased from two to six, with more PDD programs being in development stages.

At a ‘Meet the Provost & VP Academic and Students’ session conducted in February 2016, faculty members were introduced to the only candidate, who had already held the influential position of VP of Enrolment & Business Development. While his candidacy came as a surprise to many Langara employees, the future focus did not. He stated that he intended to bring the same passion and creativity to his new role to meet four major challenges: politics, technology, declining domestic enrolment, and increasing support to international students. When asked what he would do differently than in his current role, he said:

*I have brought creativity to enrolment; now I want to shine a light on the academic side.... 18 months ago there was a different budget, and now with a lower budget the process of new programs that appeal to new students must be initiated. Although the government sympathizes with us, they are unable to do anything and have mandated us to up international education by 50% (February 2016).*

At this session, the VP identified a number of key issues:

- The need to address growth and type of education for international students.
- The fact that two departments; Langara School of Management (LSM) and Computer Science each already had a 38% international student population, which he thought created a need for an appropriate advising structure to distribute these students into other programs across the College.
- The need for more cohort-based approach to programming.
- The need to develop new programs, where government set tuitions of 2% do not apply.

A college strategic plan serves a number of purposes: it clarifies what outcomes the College wishes to achieve, it selects the broad strategies that will guide college employees to achieve outcomes, and it identifies ways that success and progress are measured. Strategic planning is the institution’s process of outlining its strategy, developing a blueprint and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue the

chosen strategy (Mintzberg and Quinn, 1996). Langara's first strategic plan was created in 2009, and this led to the development of Langara's newest academic plan and the introduction of an updated strategic plan in 2015 that would guide the institution from 2016-2020. Career development was initially identified as one of the institution's strategic priorities, and this continues to be a focus in the current strategic plan. As the editing of this thesis is nearing completion (January 2018), and although the strategic plan previously identified career development as a priority, an external review has just been confirmed. Outside consultants will perform an external review of the institutions work-integrated education with the first working group meeting yet to take place. The review is expected to conclude mid 2019 with recommendations for a new work-integrated learning (WIL) framework and strategic plan for WIL implementation at the institution.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

According to Langara College's newest strategic plan, independent new programs needed to generate 75% of revenues. Transition and reform are a necessity in order to achieve this target. A previous VP and Provost, who was no longer with the college, drove the creation of an Academic Plan to supplement Langara's previous strategic plan from 2009. He had helped expedite the creation of the Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC) in 2015 and establish it as key in the future role of providing ongoing career development to students.

There may however be a gap between the strategic plan visioning, and the lived experiences of faculty and administrators who create educational programming and enact a 'new direction' for the Institution that hinges on the rhetoric of entrepreneurialism. Entrepreneurialism is the spirit or state of acting in an entrepreneurial manner, which is how staff is required to act to achieve the goals of the strategic plan in this case study. The problem addressed here is the gap between policies and processes surrounding attainment of strategic goals and the perceptions and experiences of faculty and administrators. These people follow policy or are guided by policy that prescribes the necessity to develop new programming that meets student academic and institutional revenue needs through the development of programs with a career development component.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

As early as 1994, Levin wrote about the changed conditions for community colleges and the way organizational structures were changing in Canadian higher education in response to globalization processes. Evidence of this change at Langara has been the creation of strategic and academic plans that aim to assist in meeting and responding to changes created by globalization processes. The history of BC Colleges also attests to the notion that they were created to meet skill development or workforce needs. Creating programming for skill development and workforce needs is still a priority at colleges, and yet lesser funding from the government has prioritized creation of programming that has an emphasis on achieving financial sustainability. The ways we talk and think about developing programming may have changed with this new focus but the need for Langara College to innovate and deliver relevant learning outcomes is still present. As the Provost and VP stated: “Since we cannot do anything about government cuts and corporatization, we must come together to make the strategic priorities work through dedicated educational programming”.

This thesis investigates how a written strategic plan, created to brand and provide direction, might significantly affect the lived experiences of those whom it influences and guides. The purpose of this research is to discover the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that could be framed as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming, rather than career development theories themselves. The research developed a case study to explore the role of career development, asking interview and focus group participants to discuss career development, which was one of the institution’s strategic priorities.

#### **My Role as Researcher and Practitioner**

In November 2014, Langara College was looking for an Instructor who would help develop and deliver the curriculum content of the career courses for a brand new program, the Post Degree Diploma (PDD) program in Business Administration or Marketing with a mandatory work experience component at the end of the program. I applied and was selected for this Instructor role.

I am interested in qualitative approaches to research as they allow for an open-ended questioning style to determine an interviewee's perceptions. I work for the College and have full access to the site. During my research I interviewed people who were at the same organizational level as me or higher in order to avoid a power imbalance or any possible pressure a participant may have felt about participating in my research.

In my work role as Instructor, I develop and deliver programming, and help students define and pursue their career goals. A large part of my work involves talking to employers and representing students and the College. I do not have responsibility for leadership or management of any of the people I have interviewed, and as such there was no conflict or pressure for participants to "have to" be interviewed by me. I selected Langara College as my research site based upon observations I had made as a staff member and due to what I in 2015 perceived as an entrepreneurial initiative taking place with the introduction of post degree diploma programs. By researching my own Institution, I was performing what Glesne & Peshkin called "Backyard Research" (Cresswell, 2014).

My past life and work experience have been fairly non-traditional. I have lived in eight different countries, where I either worked or studied, and I feel very much at home in five of these countries despite wide differences in culture and language. These experiences have aided in understanding international students in PDD programming and their particular needs. I was employed in the corporate environment where I identified an ability to innovate and this led me to start-up two small businesses. This has helped accept and welcome the need for visioning, innovation, strategic planning, and the importance of financial sustainability. I have been a business instructor for over fifteen years, and currently am a co-op and career instructor at Langara College and this aids in understanding the importance of academic planning and relevant curriculum development. These life experiences may have potentially shaped my interpretation of the findings by leaning towards certain themes such as my belief that some form of career development is essential in most types of educational programming. I was mindful of the potential of member bias throughout my research and analysis process, making sure to question my data and include participant views only, without an influence of my own view.

## **1.4. Research Questions**

I investigated the impact of market-oriented rhetoric (Apple, 2001; Gunter and Fintzgerald, 2015; Levin, 1994, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004; and others), or what might be referred to as 'academic capitalism' by examining faculty and administrator perceptions regarding the role of career development and its role in educational programming. This study uses the career development context and discourse as an area of strategic reform rather than as detached career development theories. The study is an example of academic capitalism and contributes to understanding how the role of career development is conceptualized at Langara College during a time of transition and reform. Three principal questions are investigated:

1. What are the understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming?
2. What do faculty and administrators perceive to be the most important components of a Career Development Centre?
3. How do faculty and administrators engage in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution?

Participants were chosen from areas where programming includes some form of career development. These included regular faculty and faculty with additional administrative responsibilities: the Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and Division Chair. Senior Administrators included individuals who were in positions of Dean and higher.

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

Through their participation in this study, faculty and administrators engaged in a form of curriculum deliberation about developing courses and programs to accommodate the new vision for the Institution. This is significant to this study, since it may be that stakeholders aimed to work towards this new vision for the Institution without an actual framework to follow. There is a literature in curriculum studies that is useful in thinking about curriculum deliberation (Schwab & Harper 1970) and a theoretical literature on

sociocultural representations and theories of communities of learning and communities of practice. In order to explore perceptions of faculty and administrators, or in other words a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), I held a focus group session that engaged participants in this deliberative process, hoping to obtain data needed for my research and also hoping that engagement of these two commonplaces (Schwab, 1983) or stakeholders would encourage people within the institution to think about career development within the context of academic learning. There was a need to research, analyze, and document how administrators and faculty members at Langara College, understood and responded to shifts in the visioning of this post-secondary educational institution. This need related specifically to how the role of career development was enacted, since the strategic plan vision placed great emphasis on providing students with an academic and experiential foundation. The updated 2020 Vision continues with this vision statement: “We provide students with the academic and experiential foundation to chart their course to further education, professional and personal development and career success” (Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan, 2015). The study reveals how people within the Institution made sense of the new direction and how they responded in terms of program development, ways of operating, and relationships with other areas of society.

What is often heard is that we need more qualified people entering our workforce, that we have an ageing population, and that there are declining enrolments of domestic students at Langara College (Langara Institutional Research, 2014-2016). Due to lower domestic enrolments, and increasing costs for Langara College, as well as diminishing dollars provided by the government to support programming, the Institution is faced with tough choices to thrive and survive. What we also understand is that government is encouraging immigration through study at our institutions by offering eligible international students a three-year work permit after completing a two-year program in one of our institutions. A three-year work permit may further lead to permanent residency (CIC website, 2017), which is what students cite as their main reason for enrolling in a Post Degree Diploma program (Langara College, CCDC student feedback, 2015-2016). These complex issues signify importance to a number of stakeholders and are explained in the next section.



### **1.5.1. Significance to Langara College as an Institution**

There are many external factors, such as government funding and government immigration strategy, that are outside of the Institutions' control. Planning is difficult in a changing environment. This study may help the Institution understand how its faculty and administrators perceive the transition that has happened over the last few years. Participants' involvement in the study is a form of curriculum deliberation and development in its own right - the findings and the processes involved in this study may contribute to the successful implementation of the strategic plan by the Institution.

#### **Significance to Faculty and Administrators at Langara College**

Prior to beginning this study, many colleagues around the Institution asked what my research was about. From talking to my colleagues prior to the interviews I knew that they wanted their voices to be heard. As I listened and observed participants during the interviews, I confirmed that they were eager to share their experiences over the last few years. Upon conducting interviews, it was obvious that the majority of faculty and administrator opinions were aligned with the strategic plan and that people were trying hard to manage their increasing workloads. Overall, this thesis may be a welcome document for all faculty and administrators as the findings will expose the creativeness and hard work that has taken place over the last few years, as well as some of the difficulties that may need to be addressed by the Institution.

### **1.5.2. Importance to Other Higher Education Institutions**

It has been said that higher education institutions in British Columbia, in Canada, and elsewhere in the world are facing a difficult transition period with lessened government support for funding. This study provides an example of a top-down approach to transition through the use of a guiding strategic plan that seeks to engage everyone within the Institution. Many people external to the College have commented on how remarkable it was that Langara College was able to make a positive financial turnaround in less than two years. My colleagues and I have had the opportunity to participate in various discussions with other institutions, and people are generally amazed at what the Langara Team has accomplished. I presented some of my initial findings at Simon Fraser University's Symposium of Teaching and Learning (May 2017),

and was surprised at how many people from various national educational institutions approached me to say they were “seriously struggling,” “were unable to make progress,” or plainly asked “how we did it?” Langara College serves as a unique and successful Canadian example of how to manage external influences that are completely outside the range of control of an institution, which is why I did not mask the Institution. This example demonstrates a response to a strategic plan, highlighting how in the process of strategic transition an entrepreneurial team emerges ready to problem-solve in order to respond to outside influences that instigate the necessity to change. My goal is to “tell the story” through presenting this case at conferences, and writing about it in publications, hoping that the Langara College example may motivate others that find themselves in a similar situation. This case study, as well as recommendations in Chapter 5, may inspire and help other post-secondary institutions.

### **1.5.3. Potential Importance to the Community**

The community demographic that Langara serves is constantly changing. For Langara it is important that it remains a public institution that is able to meet the needs of its diverse community (Langara College (2017), Accountability Plan & Report 2016/2017). The 2013-2014 threat of layoffs and the elimination of programming may explain the speed by which the College transitioned. The Institution is committed to creating “educational pathways for students of all ages, backgrounds, and life stages.” (Langara College (2017), Accountability Plan & Report 2016/2017, pg. 2). The relationship of Langara with its community is impacted by actions that the college’s staff engage in which is why it is important to understand their perceptions and the role these stakeholders play in creating educational pathways.

The Institution’s community is large, serving both domestic and international students. Langara student demographics have changed. There are students representing many age categories and at different stages in life. With the introduction of PDD programming and student-immigration incentives, there has been a substantial increase in international students. People at the College believe that it is essential that educational opportunities include incorporating an intercultural competencies education and career development opportunities. Langara’s 2016/2017 Provincial Accountability Plan & Report states:

*The College's primary demographic is 18-24 year old students (76% in 2016/17), but we also serve many who are entering or returning to school later in life, retraining for new careers or advancing their professional qualifications. Almost three quarters (71% in 2016/17) of our credit studies students are registered in University Transfer programs, and we successfully transfer more students to research and teaching-intensive universities than any other BC college or institute. However, Langara is not just a sending institution; of all BC colleges, we are also the second highest recipient of transfer students. In 2015/2016, we received over 1,800 transfer students from BC colleges, institutes, and universities<sup>1</sup>. (p. 4)*

Another large part of the community stakeholders are employers. While employers are not the focus of this study, it is in their benefit that the College provides career development and work-integrated education to “produce” employees that are able to think critically and perform well in their employment positions. Employer benefits are discussed in more detail in the next section.

#### **1.5.4. Potential Importance to British Columbia and Canada**

It has been said by various policy makers that one of the reasons Canada is encouraging immigration through post-secondary educational institutions is to better integrate immigrants into society.

*Canada's International Education Strategy, a key element of the Global Markets Action Plan, is our blueprint to attract talent and prepare our country for the 21st century. With the support of all the players in the research and education fields—provinces and territories, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector—we can make Canada a world leader in international education and ensure our future prosperity (Global Affairs Canada website, 2017).*

The population is ageing and the country is in need of skilled workers (The Boomer Shift, The Globe and Mail, 2017). By obtaining a local education and completing a two year program at a post-secondary institution, international students are learning how to fit in culturally, which is an essential skill in the local *tough to enter as an immigrant* employment market (Skilled Immigrants struggle to find jobs as government plans to welcome more, CBC, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> Most recent data available from the Student Transitions Project, Mobility Pivots, and Dashboards (2002/03 to 2015/2016)

Langara College intentionally created a final term mandatory work experience component in Post Degree Diploma (PDD) programs for international students. The intention was for students to learn about the local employment landscape by attending weekly *career* classes during the first year. These classes demonstrated ways of finding employment in Canada, and greatly helped students in securing a work experience at the end of the program. This type of educational programming is seen to be of benefit to:

- a) Students - helps obtain appropriate career employment rather than become life-long “pizza drivers” (Skilled Labour Migrants: Ticket to Nowhere, BC Business, 2016).
- b) Employers – allows for less perception of risk when choosing an international student as an employee. Based on my personal experience and the experience of people in the career or recruiting fields of work, employers often hesitate to provide employment to unfamiliar people and especially to immigrants as they fear that more paperwork or effort may be required. When a person speaks English with a foreign accent, others may presume they are unable to perform in their work role (Do You Sound Right for the Job? Monster, 2017).

International students manage their own work visa paperwork and later their own paperwork for immigration. This is a major benefit to employers as it does not require additional resources to hire these students. In my role, I attend many events, where I demonstrate to employers that there is no extra risk or work involved in hiring an international student and that often they may work harder and be more dedicated since these students have more at stake than a domestic student. A further advantage is the “try before you buy” effect since the only commitment an employer has is to provide a 300-hour work experience to the student. Career Instructors encourage permanent employment by saying “if there is a fit, wonderful, the student could become your employee” since all program requirements have previously been satisfied and this student is officially a grad at the end of the work experience. This relates to my study due to the exploration of faculty and administrator perceptions. Some faculty may not believe that it is appropriate to connect career development and work outcomes to academic teachings.

- c) Government – the Federal and Provincial governments are trying to encourage immigration through educational pathways so that immigrants are better integrated into society and are able to find meaningful jobs. This may connect to one essential strategy of economic importance - managing the workers-gap shortage (BC Jobs Plan, 2017).

## **1.6. Theoretical Lenses**

The research outlined in this thesis explores the possible impact of academic capitalism in a college context by revealing faculty and administrators' perceptions of career development and its connection to the strategic plan and vision. The research discovers how participants experienced the transition and reform taking place at the Institution. "Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future" (The Canadian Standards & Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, Glossary of Career Development Terms, 2012). It provides the student with focus on choosing a career to embark on before and after graduation. Langara College provides career courses and instructors to students in specialized programs to help students with their career development journeys. "New developments include a greater emphasis on active engagement, more holistic methods and expanded counselling focus, and an increased emphasis on counselling efficacy" (Amundson, 2005), which has been a major focus of this greater personalization of career development education through the new PDD programming at the institution.

The research draws significantly from the theoretical framework of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997, and Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004), and is further informed by entrepreneurialism and resource dependency theory. The research process explores the effects of academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism in college discourse and strategic priorities by uncovering perceptions about the role of career development that is increasingly embedded in the curriculum.

According to Slaughter and Leslie (1997, pg. 11), academic capitalism is defined as "market and market-like behaviours on the part of universities and faculty." Market refers to any for-profit activity by the higher education institution or any customer purchasing this activity, such as the student. Market-like behaviours are those

behaviours that encourage competition for resources. The concern with academic capitalism is that as colleges and universities become entrepreneurial, they focus on knowledge less as a public good and more as a commodity to be capitalized on in profit-oriented activities.

Students have become consumers and “the current higher education (HE) market discourse promotes a mode of existence, where students seek to ‘have a degree’ rather than ‘be learners’ ” (Molesworth, Nixon, and Scullion, 2009). Despite this concern, academic capitalism appears to be evident in higher education as dependency on governmental resourcing declines and the need to *market* to student-customers and obtain resources in different ways increases. Resource dependency looks at how the external resources of organizations affect the behaviour of these same organizations. Although resource dependency is a management term, it has been used by Slaughter and Leslie to explain the theory of academic capitalism. Academic capitalism is displayed differently in universities and colleges and there is a need for more empirical research on the impact of academic capitalism across different types of institutions in order to assess the implications (Mendoza and Berger, 2008). This research, in part, addresses the need for empirical research and explores the elements of academic capitalism in a comprehensive college context.

I searched for an entrepreneurship framework that would guide the study, and could not find one; hence academic capitalism theory provided the blueprint for this study. “A consistent universal theory does not exist in entrepreneurship, but rather it consists of several different approaches including psychology, sociology, anthropology, regional science and economics” (Virtanen, 1997). Entrepreneurship in higher education may be a key instrument of academic capitalism, which may be why being entrepreneurial becomes a key component of executing strategic plans. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) define entrepreneurship as discovering, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities to create future goods and services. BusinessDictionary.com, by WebFinance, Inc. defines entrepreneurship as:

*The capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. The most obvious example of entrepreneurship is the starting of new businesses. In economics, entrepreneurship combined with land, labor, natural resources and capital can produce profit. Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk-taking, and is an essential part of a*

*nation's ability to succeed in an ever changing and competitive global marketplace.*

The Langara College response demonstrated the entrepreneurial spirit of faculty and administrators that develop, organize, and manage the creation of innovative new programming. The topic is timely as institutions are said to be struggling to become entrepreneurial. Strategic priorities influence the imposition of neoliberal agenda's on colleges more so than on university settings where availability of diverse funding options such as research grants may exist.

*Neoliberalism...refers to the policies and processes whereby a relative handful of private interests are permitted to control as much as possible of social life in order to maximize their personal profit...neoliberalism has been the dominant global political trend adopted by political parties... These parties and the policies they enact represent the immediate interests of extremely wealthy investors and the less than one thousand large corporations (McChesney quote in Giroux, 2002).*

Neoliberalism describes market-oriented reform policies such as eliminating price controls, deregulating capital markets, lowering trade barriers, and reducing government influence on the economy through privatization (Boas and Gans-Morse, 2009). Higher education offers an example of this decreasing government influence and a switch to the dependency of external resources encourages educational institutions to seek other ways of obtaining resources.

By looking at the ways resources were obtained by the institution, in this case using one concept of academic capitalism, *career development as strategic priority reform*, I was trying to understand one area of the complex whole. This area embraced the faculty and administrator perceptions of career development as strategic priority reform and how this reform has changed the way that people work and live within the College and engage with the new Co-op and Career Development Centre. Career development is a lifelong process and it requires learning about oneself in relation to the world of work (Lent and Meniru, Chapter 8 in Patrick, Eliason, and Samide, 2011). Within its strategic plan, Langara College emphasizes the importance of career development and I decided to study how faculty are affected by this transition from what was to what is today, and to make recommendations for what could be tomorrow. There are a number of career development theories including Super's Life-Span Theory of Career Selection and Evolution (1980), Holland's Six-Factor Typology / Holland Codes (1997),

Parsons' Trait-and-Factor Theory (1909), Social Cognitive Career Theory (1994), and Savickas' Career Construction Theory (1995, 2005). It is important to emphasize that this thesis was concerned with looking at the impact of academic capitalism on a post-secondary institution by uncovering faculty and administrator perceptions regarding the role of career development in educational programming, rather than career development theories themselves. As mentioned earlier, I was looking at the ways resources were obtained by treating career development as an area of strategic priority reform in an attempt to understand how work integrated-learning is being used in educational programming to obtain resources and drive entrepreneurialism.

There were three main reasons for choosing academic capitalism as the main theoretical lens for the study. First, elements of resource dependency theory and entrepreneurialism were cited within the discourse at the Institution. Second, it was appropriate to choose a single relevant theoretical framework, although, in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5, I reference a number of additional theories that apply to the case, including organizational theories, career development theories, and curriculum deliberation theories to help interpret the data. Third, academic capitalism theory has contributed significantly to understanding changes happening in higher education institutions, and this theory provides a useful background for the role of career development and transition in this study.

## **1.7. Overview of the Methodological Approach**

In order to answer these questions I analyzed document data, observed how people acted, asked open-ended questions in interviews and developed a case study that brings together these elements of data. Observation helped provide a description of the setting, working behaviours, and significant events, while interviewing assisted in understanding the perspectives and goals of faculty and administrators (Maxwell, 2013). A conceptual framework guided this research and as Berman (2013) noted in her study:

*An evolving conceptual framework allowed a spotlight on specific aspects as they became the focus of the learning process. The focus moved from the key concepts and theoretical frameworks underpinning the professional context of the study, to the research themes and questions, to the methodology, to the implementation of the study, to the results and analysis, and finally to the conceptual and practical outcomes of the study.*



Miles and Huberman (1994) defined a conceptual framework as a visual or written product that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18).

An in-depth analysis of qualitative interview data explained a range of experiences and perceptions regarding the impacts of career development on the working lives of individuals employed by Langara College. Interviewing provided a description of what the interview participant *said*, and observation showed participant perspectives that they may have otherwise been reluctant to share (Maxwell, 2013). For example, observing how administrators responded to faculty questions in joint working situations enabled a much better understanding of actual views of working lives rather than what they sometimes said in interviews. This type of observation was not unique or planned, rather some of these observations happened due to circumstance or as part of my post-interview reflections.

By engaging people in this research, I believe that it offered them an avenue to voice their thoughts, which in turn increased motivation and could create a number of future possibilities at the Institution. These future possibilities might include the identification for more needed research, an opportunity to use this research to see how people can all gather together to envision a future in programming, as well as ways of working, and most importantly delivering good educational outcomes.

I believe that the above outlined methodological stance ensured that the research process was good for Langara College. This interpretive, qualitative study was dependent on the unique views from Langara participants which did not allow complete generalizability to wider populations, but it provided an example which others might find relevant to their own situations. Generalizability in this case is thought of as the ability to extend a context to other institutions (Maxwell, 1992).

Participant engagement in the research was voluntary. There has been tremendous change within the Institution and I believe that this research provided participants an avenue to voice their opinions. It enabled the start of a journey where participants may engage in the opportunity to continue to explore reform policies and programming priorities. This research took advantage of the potential to identify beliefs,

challenge mindsets, and develop ideas for moving forward. The methodology of this study is outlined in detail in Chapter 3.

## **1.8. Limitations**

It is important to recognize that this study was limited in its scope and examination of a single institution, and yet there was a large amount of collected data due to broad, open-ended questions, which were sorted, coded, and from which common themes emerged.

All of the interviewees responded as individuals, representing their own experience, and not as representatives of particular groups. These individuals represented a number of smaller communities of practice that came together dependant of the strategic goal they were trying to accomplish. A delimitation of my choosing was the number of interviewed participants. I interviewed thirteen research participants. Seven people were interviewed in individual sessions, and there was one focus group session in which I interviewed six participants. I transcribed, read, and analyzed findings as soon as I had new data. Very quickly it became clear that there were similar themes, and I interviewed the final few participants expecting to confirm themes that had emerged. Since it was similar to the previous data and no new data were emerging, I decided to conclude the research with a total of thirteen participants.

My intent was to develop a better understanding of my own institution. I did not think that there was a limitation for me being a practitioner and the researcher on site as I had acknowledged my own pre-existing thoughts and any potential threats to validity. I mitigated risks to participants by ensuring anonymity and any off-campus interviewing. Due to the minimal risk to participants of being part of this study and their desire to voice their thoughts, interviewees were keen to talk honestly about their experiences.

## **1.9. Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 situates the researcher, provides insight into the institutional context being studied and gives an introduction into the problem, purpose of the research, and its significance. It identifies some of the most pressing issues that this Institution faces. This chapter introduces the research

questions, provides a brief outline of reasoning in the choice of theoretical frameworks, and gives an overview of the methodological approach, with a brief explanation of limitations and delimitations.

Chapter Two starts with an overview of career development and the purpose of colleges and strategic priorities for higher education in British Columbia. This chapter looks at structural change, funding, and internationalization as primary areas of reform. The objective of the literature review in this chapter is to provide an academic critique of available information related to this case – the role of career development in educational programming at a time of transition and reform. Chapter Two provides insights on globalization and corporatization, as well as information on organizational theory, curriculum deliberation, entrepreneurialism, and academic capitalism.

Chapter Three explains the methodology employed in this study and describes the research design. This chapter starts off by examining the research paradigm, justifying the rationale for using qualitative methods. The highlight of this rationale was that voices wanted to be heard, and to explore participant perceptions, there needed to be an open qualitative inquiry. This chapter describes in detail why this site was chosen to be researched, how data was collected, who the participants were, and how accuracy of data was maintained. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of ethical considerations, and also lists opportunities and limitations of my conducting this research as a practitioner also working on site.

Chapter Four presents the findings derived from the interviews and focus group session. The findings are described through interviewee quotes and explain their views on a number of themes related to career development. These include participant experiences and attitudes towards the site; understanding of site culture, core values, and strategic & academic plans, perceptions of faculty and administrators regarding the role of career development; and career development and its role in educational programming. Through participant quotes about their perceptions, Chapter Four examines the bottom line objectives and how they relate to meeting student needs.

Chapter Five summarizes findings and provides an interpretation of the themes emerging from the study and relates them to relevant theoretical frameworks to support research outcomes. This chapter looks at various implications from the growing role of

career development, through using a corporate approach to reform and also discusses the entrepreneurial behaviour of those caught in this particular institutional system. Chapter Five concludes with implications for policy and practice and closes with recommendations for future practice and research.

## **Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The intent of this chapter is to summarize and critique research and scholarship specific to the concepts that the case identifies with and in relation to the role of career development that may be influenced by these concepts. First, this chapter starts with a review of career development, which helps understand its role in transition and curriculum deliberation for new program development, reflective practice, and the possible creation of a learning organization. Next, it provides an overview of the purpose of colleges and strategic priorities for higher education in British Columbia. It then reviews the concepts of globalization and corporatization to set the context as to why the need for transition and reform. The final aim of this review is to explore academic capitalism, and why entrepreneurialism and resource dependency theory may be particularly important in understanding reform objectives.

The purpose of this research was to explore faculty and administrator perceptions about career development discourse as an area of strategic reform rather than as detached career development theories. The study is an example of academic capitalism and contributes to understanding of how the role of career development is conceptualized at Langara College during a time of transition and reform. Three principal topics are investigated: (1) The understandings of faculty and administrator's about career development and its role in educational programming, (2) Faculty and administrator's perceptions of the most important components of a Career Development Centre, and, (3) Faculty and administrator's engagement in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution.

### **2.1. Career Development and Work-Integrated Learning in Higher Education**

Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future (Wikipedia, 2017). This Wikipedia definition is simple to understand and accurate for the case at hand since the Co-op and Career Development Centre was created with this definition in mind rather than with the use of counselling definitions (Super, 1980; Savickas, 2009). Super (1980) defined a career "as the combination and sequence of

roles played by a person during the course of a lifetime”, which then helps position career development as the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions. Career development theories focus on traits, vocational choice, assessment tools, and values guiding people in their career choices. Career development learning connects to life-long learning and higher education as a place to develop and grow (Dewey, 1916).

In higher education, career development provides the student with a focus for testing or selecting a career. Career development is not a new concept. Dewey (1916) talks about apprenticeship and the concept of learning-by-doing. Another form of learning-by doing is co-operative education (Co-op). Co-op has a 100-year old history of being embedded in the academy to allow students to learn-by-doing. Johnston (2007) proposes a co-op curriculum that comprises of three areas; the co-op academic curriculum, the co-op preparatory curriculum, and the co-op workplace curriculum. The career development initiative is not new to Langara and each of Johnston’s co-op curriculum proposals have existed at this institution for 35 years through co-op.

Career development learning supports students’ in making decisions about their careers and transitions into the labour market (McIlveen et al., 2011), and Langara College provides a great example of a new strategic direction that builds on an existing co-op model. The creation of the Coop and Career Development Centre is new and tied to the goals of the institution’s strategic plan. Along with offering existing co-op services, this expanded department now also provides Post Degree Diploma (PDD) work education and work experience placements based on the co-op model, and career services for the entire institution.

In British Columbia, career educators typically provide career development and support to the student through the concept of work-integrated education. There exists an acknowledgement of the blurring of definitions. The British Columbia Accountability Council for Co-operative Education (ACCE), which is part of the Association for Cooperative Education (ACE), has created the *Comparative Matrix of Co-operative Education with Other Forms of Work-Integrated Education and Work-Integrated Learning* (2016), in order to assist with creating a shared language. Below is a breakdown of types of work-integrated education and work-integrated learning, taken from this matrix.

**Table 2.1 Types of Work-Integrated Education and Work-Integrated Learning (ACCE, 2016)**

<b>Work Integrated Education</b>	<b>Work Integrated Learning</b>
Applied Research	Para-professional
Apprenticeship	Research Assistantships
Clinic	Post-Credential Internship
Curricular Community Service Learning	Teaching Assistantships
Co-op	Co-Curricular Community Service Learning
Internship	Volunteer
Field Placement	Work Study
Practicum / Clinical Placement	Externship
Work Experience	Students as Staff

Work-integrated learning (WIL) has its origins from Lave and Wenger’s (1991) concept of situated learning. They argue that learning “takes place in the same context where it is applied” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pg. 40.) and so students learn and develop their careers. Students undergo conventional academic learning with time spent in a work setting relevant to the program they are studying. For example, a marketing communications student may spend time working on a client proposal pitch at an advertising agency, as part of their academic course. In comparison, work-integrated education (Coll & Zegwaard, 2011) reflects a multitude of different terms, especially cooperative education (Co-op), where students take a term off during their academic programs, complete one or more terms working, and then return to their academic program. Both of these promote the concept of career development.

The college curriculum may aim to balance theory with practical application to prepare students for success by giving them access to tools necessary for employment, but in the changing occupational landscape, skills that employer’s demand can become obsolete overnight. Grubb (1996) argued that it is hard for colleges to provide up-to date training due to rapid change and an inability to keep up with expenses of purchasing the latest technology. He also thinks that “neglecting the more academic or higher-order competencies may not affect employability in the short run, but it is likely to be detrimental to the long-run prospects of the students” (p.136). Grubb is a proponent for colleges to become learning communities with a flexible programming and innovative pedagogy.

In *The Education Gospel*, Grubb and Lazerson (2005) discuss the idea that formal schooling can prepare individuals for employment and that this may resolve all

public and private dilemmas. This idea comes about due to global change and the size of education and it is a vision in many countries around the world, as schooling becomes focused on occupational preparation. Grubb and Lazerson (2005) quote Immerwahr and Foleno (2000), as saying that “in 2000, 87 percent of the general public believes that a college degree is as important as a high school degree used to be, and 77 percent of people believe that getting a college education was more important than 10 years ago”.

It may be said that community colleges are perceived to be at the top for career development, especially as it pertains to questions of whether they contribute to students’ employability needs and a strong workforce. Indeed, jobs are not regarded as jobs, but more like occupations or careers that provide meaning for the individual along with financial benefits. Further, careers develop over the course of one’s life, create status, and connections to community (Grubb & Lazerson, 2004).

Career development educators in higher education have the potential to become an important resource for students as they transition from the academy to careers. These educators design innovative ways to help students on their career development journey.

### **2.1.1. Changing Demographics and Multicultural Issues in Career Development**

Vancouver is experiencing the growth of a rapidly changing society, with an increasingly diverse demographic and high population growth derived through immigration. This diversity is increasingly noticeable at Langara College’s campus, and I have included a more detailed description of the institution’s demographics in Chapter 4. Cultural barriers that may exist within the College include language and cultural differences, prejudice, and cultural isolation (Zunker, 2002). Due to changes in society, the College is challenged with developing intercultural awareness, evaluating its own biases and perceptions, and appreciating the validity in others’ perspectives (Sue & Sue, 1990).

As the diversity of international and domestic student’s increases, there may be multicultural issues in career development that affect work-study motivation. “Embedded with the historic core of traditional theories of career choice and development is the notion of people having options and choices in their lives about the sorts of work that



they could pursue” (Blustein, 2006, pp. 116-117). Traditionally, this is the case, however, immigration and cultural adaptation issues may have an impact on career choice and motivation. The issues may include gender, religion, work visas, and employer discrimination.

For a large number of international students, work is a function of survival and not just career development for the sake of learning or education. “When the many purposes of work and career are considered, two significant reasons people engage in the career development process prevail: (1) to provide the goods and services necessary for their own survival and the well-being of their families and others, and (2) to enhance their social and socioeconomic status. People work because of the need to earn money; in turn, they exchange money for things that they need to survive” (Samide, Eliason, & Patrick, 2011).

Cultural competency issues are especially evident in international students’ career development education. Samide et al. (2011) explain cultural competence in reference to a student’s country of origin, language, religion, social and political setting. They suggest that it would be desirable to try and learn as much as possible about student’s cultural identities as they shape their expectations. The cultural identity factors they list are gender roles, family roles, cultural behavioural expectations and values, work roles, customs and traditions, power relationships and ideologies. All of these issues may make it more difficult for international students and create an uneven field in the workplace, even without the perfect English requirement employers frequently seek.

## **2.2. The Purpose of Colleges**

Determining the purpose of colleges is critical to understanding the important role they play in higher education. “In an era of rising tuition rates, burgeoning student loans and increasing calls for accountability, there is mounting pressure to enhance the “seamless flow of students through the educational system into the workforce” (Andres, 2001). One major purpose of colleges in British Columbia (B.C.) is to provide transfer credits to universities. British Columbia, Alberta, and Quebec are they only provinces in Canada that have adopted articulated models of inter-institutional transfer where university-equivalent courses are available at colleges. This allows students the

opportunity to transfer to a university to further complete their studies. Langara College is a pathways college and 75% of its students transfer to a university.

The second purpose of colleges is to meet the needs of students and prepare them for the workforce. The creation of British Columbia's provincial public colleges occurred in the 1960s in order to contribute to the province's economy and society. Through legislation in 1977, the provincial government claimed the role of the main influencer in B.C.'s colleges, and later in the 1980s, they maintained a community responsiveness philosophy focusing on students, open-access to education and training, and a comprehensive curriculum (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Levin, 1994). By the 90s it was clear that colleges played a vital role in preparing students for work and life, and in strengthening the provincial economy. The provincial government's 1996 strategic plan (Province of British Columbia, 1996) emphasized economic globalization threats and plans for public post-secondary institutions to meet international competition, keep pace with technological advances, and train a skilled workforce (Province of British Columbia).

Over the past 30 years community colleges have become an increasingly important resource in their communities contributing to the concept of life-long learning (Dennison, 1984) and applied education (Dennison, 2004; Levin 2017). Meanwhile, there has been an emphasis on moving towards market practices and a more market-style orientation to operation. In this "breaking of the monopoly" of public education (Dennison, 2004), private educational investors entered the market competing for paying students. In his work on community colleges, Levin (2017) described the government's encouragement in allowing higher education institutions to meet budget shortfalls through tuition fees, making international students a critical source of revenue.

### **2.3. Strategic Priorities for Higher Education in British Columbia**

The British Columbia government has launched two initiatives targeted toward post-secondary institutions, the B.C. Skills for Jobs Blueprint: Reengineering Education and Training, and the BCTECH Strategy (Province of British Columbia Strategic Plan, 2016/17-2019/20). The objective of these initiatives is to maximize the potential of the existing workforce and the workforce of the future. The government is "recognizing the importance of students integrating paid and relevant work experience into their program

of study” (BC Jobs Plan), and is encouraging cooperative education through partnerships with WorkBC and the Association of Cooperative Education. BC Colleges, a consortium of ten public, post-secondary colleges, including Langara College, further advocates with “government on matters of policy and funding and facilitate[s] collaboration between the colleges so they can effectively fulfill their mandate to prepare and educate a highly skilled, job-ready workforce for the province” (BC Colleges).

### **2.3.1. Structural Policy Change**

In order to prepare and educate a highly skilled, job-ready workforce, “colleges are increasingly oriented to the marketplace, more responsive to public demands and preferences, and increasingly more directed by provincial governments to serve both political and economic priorities” (Levin, 1999). Research that focuses specifically on college issues, outlines the effect of global forces, such as globalization, international economics, international politics, and global communication systems. This area of research explores how all of these influence the change of college behaviours, such as the creation of strategic plans, institutional missions, and organizational structures based on corporate principles (Levin, 1999; Levin 2001; Levin 2002; Levin 2003; Levin, Kater and Wagoner 2006). These authors argue that colleges organize themselves to respond to economic needs and employer demands. Structural policy then changes and these institutions begin to operate in a corporate way, implementing business-like practices.

Colleges in British Columbia are funded through two main streams, tuition fees, and government grants. Over the past few decades, the difference between the two has shifted. According to the British Columbia Tuition Limit Policy, higher education institutions may raise tuition fees for existing programs by up to 2% per year. In the meantime, income from government grants is substantially declining, while tuition fee income is substantially increasing, as seen in the table below. In 2013, the government grant to Langara College was \$46,337,373, while in 2016 this grant declined by \$7.5million to \$38,760,377. Meanwhile, the difference in income from tuition from 2013 to 2016 was almost \$23million, from being \$41,910,384 in 2013 to being \$64,753,786 in 2016.

**Table 2.2 Langara College Income from Government Grants and Tuition Fees (British Columbia Government website, Audited Financial Statements)**

Year	Government Grants	Tuition Fees
2013	\$46,337,373	\$41,910,384
2014	\$46,582,999	\$44,728,796
2015	\$45,226,115	\$50,723,958
2016	\$38,760,377	\$64,753,786

In British Columbia, public colleges are mandated by legislation. Langara College, in fulfilling its mandate must consider the government’s strategic priorities which for 2017/18 are:

- Develop and implement an updated Skills Gap Plan, in alignment with priorities of the BC Skills for Jobs Blueprint;
- Continue to deepen BC’s talent pool, in support of the #BCTECH strategy, ensuring opportunities for students in the technology sector;
- Work in partnership with the Government and Aboriginal communities, organizations and institutes to implement the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan to increase the participation and success of Aboriginal learners;
- Continue to deliver on provincial priorities for international education, including pursuing opportunities to advance the two-way flow of students, educators and ideas;
- Continue to actively encourage and promote the development and use of online resources and open textbooks to support post-secondary affordability for students;
- Continue to actively participate in the development and implementation of a common application system for all public post-secondary institutions in the province and develop a strategy to fully onboard to Education Planner BC application services at your institution;
- Promote safe campuses by developing policies and actions to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct and assault of all forms;
- Meet or exceed the financial targets identified in the Ministry’s three-year Service Plan as tabled under Budget 2017, including maintaining balanced or surplus financial results; and
- Continue to maximize the efficient use of public post-secondary administrative resources through participation in the Administrative Service Delivery Transformation initiative. (British Columbia Mandate Letter to Langara College, 2017).

To summarize, the structural policy has changed in favour of higher education institutions “earning” their own income, as government grant subsidies decline. As shown in Table 2.3, the Ministry full time enrolment (FTE) target for domestic students had remained the same since the 2013/2014 year, however the target percentage which was actually achieved had dropped year over year due to increases in international student enrolments and overall changing demographics.

**Table 2.3 Ministry Domestic Student Enrolment Targets and Percentage of Target Achieved (Langara College Enrolment Report)**

Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/2016	2016/2017
Ministry FTE Target (Domestic Only)	7,056	7,056	7,056	7,056
Percentage of Target Achieved	102.5%	100.0%	97.1%	94.5%

The 8% drop in domestic enrolment over four years may not seem significant yet as shown in Table 2.4, Langara College has experienced a loss of 563 full time domestic students over the same period. While there has been a loss in full time domestic enrolment, the Institution gained 2,314 international students that were enrolled full time.

**Table 2.4 Domestic and International Student Enrolment Comparison (Langara College Enrolment Report)**

Year	Domestic Student	International Student	Total
2013/14	7,232	1,148	8,380
2014/15	7,054	1,538	8,592
2015/16	6,854	2,333	9,187
2016/17	6,669	3,462	10,131

The figures in the above tables demonstrate the change in structural policy and show how by increasing the number of international students paying international student fees, the Institution increased revenue from tuition. Hyperlinks to these Enrolment Reports are located in Appendix G: Langara College FTE Enrolment Reports.

Below, in Table 2.5, we can see how instruction fees increased in order to service international students. During the same timeframe, professional development expenditures for people working in the college decreased. Student scholarships also decreased. Both of these facts contribute to understanding the financial sense of urgency to raise money that the Institution was facing due to structural changes. In 2017,

we see that there had been an effort by the college to invest slightly more into scholarships. The tiny investment in 2017 in employee professional development, however, does not reflect that fact that there has been a substantial growth in the number of people working at the College.

**Table 2.5 Langara College Annual Report Data Showing Expenditure Changes in Instruction, Professional Development, and Scholarship**

	Instruction	Professional Development and Travel	Scholarships and Bursaries
2013	94,746,994	2,138,580	734,186
2014	99,134,927	2,103,212	679,876
2015	101,625,594	2,040,234	510,388
2016	107,387,075	1,794,927	657,609
2017	116,738,113	2,255,967	984,825

In the Annual report for 2013, the heading for “Professional Development and Travel” was “Meetings and Travel”, and the “Scholarship and Bursaries” heading was “Student Awards”. Hyperlinks to Annual Reports are located in Appendix H: Langara College Financial Statements.

### **2.3.2. Institutional Approach to B.C. Strategic Priorities**

In response to government mandate, the case study institution has created the Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan, with four key vision priorities:

1. Organizational Sustainability (pg.5)
  - 1.1. Integrate and improve key business processes and infrastructure
  - 1.2. Robust, highly available, and effective IT systems
  - 1.3. Respond to the need for greater financial independence within the public post-secondary sector funding framework
  - 1.4. Implement a program that supports succession and retention of faculty and staff
2. People and Culture (pg. 8)
  - 2.1. Langara is the “College of Choice” for our students
  - 2.2. Students are at the centre of all we do and we continually strive to exceed their expectations

- 2.3. Provide an environment for faculty and staff that supports a culture of collegiality and respect
3. Communities (pg.10)
  - 3.1. Effective communications that support engagement with our community in the development of our education activities
  - 3.2. Enable community service learning opportunities for students
  - 3.3. Provide a broad spectrum of programs and courses to the community that support life-long learning through continuing studies (CS)
  - 3.4. Expand student financial assistance through increased engagement with donors and alumni
4. Relevant, Innovative, and High-Quality Programming (pg.12)
  - 4.1. Programs are relevant, innovative, and high quality
  - 4.2. Programs link seamlessly from school to work to further education

Due to declining government grants, the thematic priority for the first 24 months of the strategic plan was to support a “mission for academic excellence by prioritizing financial sustainability” (Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan). The way the College did this was by developing Post Degree Diploma (PDD) programs which proved attractive to international students. In the next section about internationalization, I will outline why this proved attractive to international students.

### **2.3.3. Marketization**

The policy vision demonstrates an increased reliance on international student fees and there may be a direct relationship between funding sources and the way program branding communicates. It has been questioned whether this policy vision is an example of disruptive innovation in a public sector institution. Christensen, Raynor, and McDonald (2015) found that until recently higher education has been successful in resisting disruption, however, in the past years’ new types of programs and institutions have been created to address the needs of different population segments. Disruptive innovation, as defined by Christensen et al. (2015), is a process where a smaller institution (Langara) with fewer resources is able to improve offerings (PDD program)

and exceed the needs of some segments (international students and government immigration needs) while ignoring the needs of others.

In *Democracy and Education*, John Dewey, who heavily influenced Schwab's work, viewed education as preparation for adult life. "What is to be prepared for, of course, is the responsibilities and privileges of adult life" (Dewey, 2004, pg. 51). Within this adult life lies the BC Jobs Plan (2016), and the mandate of preparing students for the workforce. To lessen the burden of education on government, higher education in British Columbia has been mandated to increase private sector participation through what Mackinnon (2013) calls marketization. Metcalfe (2010) found evidence of marketization through changes in postsecondary funding and emergence of new policy initiatives which prompted a suggestion that Canada was "no longer, or perhaps never was the "exception" to academic capitalism". Marketization and *Walmartization* are happening across higher education in Canada (Potter, 2015), with a serious roll-back on services. Marketization of higher education is often described as switching from being relatively autonomous to implementing structures that are more business and market-oriented. In a 2014 issue of the *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, an article titled, "UK higher education viewed through marketization and marketing lenses", Nedbalová, Greenacre and Shultz (2014), discussed how academics viewed marketization as an "evil practice" that was damaging education. In contrast, they also compiled research from a marketing management point of view, which showed that when marketing theories are used to, for example, strategically position an institution or determine student needs, they enable better decision making and better outcomes.

#### **2.3.4. Internationalization**

The reason why international students find the PDD programs attractive is due to Government of Canadian policy regarding immigration. Any student that completes a two-year degree such as the Post Degree Diploma program, may upon successful studies apply for a Canadian three-year work permit. Once this three-year work permit expires, these previous students may be eligible for permanent residency in Canada (Government of Canada, Canadian Immigration & Citizenship). International education is regarded as an industry according to British Columbia provincial government strategic rhetoric, and further reinforced by the federal government's International Education Strategy that promotes the doubling of international student recruitment by 2020



(Canada, 2017). According to latest reports, Langara has exceeded this target (BCIEE, 2018).

**Table 2.6 Number of International Students Studying at Langara College per Academic Year (Appendix G: Langara College Enrolment Reports)**

Academic Year (AY)	Total Number of International Students
AY 2017-2018 (partial)	6,301
AY 2016-2017	6,159
AY 2015-2016	4,188
AY 2014-2015	3,105
AY 2013-2014	2,189

For this College, internationalization has been a way to create financial resources and fulfill one of the mandates given to it by the government. There are growing concerns in the literature that internationalization is taking place merely for economic purposes (de Wit, 2002; Garson 2016) as many institutions focus on increasing international student recruitment. Garson (2016) suggests that there is need to go further and reframe internationalization to balance those economic purposes with social and academic outcomes needed for these students to effectively participate as citizens in increasingly multicultural and global settings, and case-specific suggestions for internationalization sustainability will be made in Chapter 5.

### **2.3.5. Globalization and Corporatization: Defining the Trend**

Globalization refers to the growing impact of world systems. These systems include economy, transportation, communications, language, networks, and a cross-global movement of people (Marginson & Considine, 2000). Higher education institutions increasingly demonstrate characteristics of globalizing, marker-driven behaviours (Marginson & Considine 2000; Levin 2002; Giroux 2008; Connell 2013) and they appear to be effectively responding to mandates by their governments to contribute to the economy through the training of a workforce.

When researching the effects of the “globalized community college” Levin (2002) determined that “community colleges in both Canada and the United States exhibited educational and work behaviours,” and that they were oriented to the marketplace by integrating the needs of industry into educational programming. As a consequence of these actions, community colleges have become globalized, that is they perform actions

in lines with what Apple, 2001; Connell, 2013; Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2015 refer to as neoliberalism, and what Bakan (2004) refers to as the rise of the corporation and corporation influences. Mills (2012) refers to corporatization in higher education as a “higher-education model that is both expensive to run and difficult to reform as a result of its focus on status, its view of students as customers, and its growing reliance on top-down administration” (pg. 6).

In *The enterprise university: power, governance, and reinvention in Australia* (Marginson & Considine, 2000) the corporatization trends were evident in their study of seventeen Australian Universities. The study described the rise of an “enterprise university” which authors noted was due to neo-liberal policy changes at the government level in Australia. In contrast, the shift towards a corporate approach in the US has been “fostered by a strong private sector and by transferring part of the government subsidy of public universities away from direct financing of the institutions” (pg.58). It has been said that we are seeing a similar trend in British Columbia as evidenced by the decreased funding available for higher education institutions in the form of government support.

## **2.4. Academic Capitalism**

A useful theory that looks at the relationship between funding sources and higher education is academic capitalism. Slaughter and Leslie (1997) argued that colleges (and universities) had become more profit-driven and dependent on external resources since the post-1970s neoliberal economic environment. Government spending on public goods such as education has decreased with an increased pressure to contribute towards domesticating international students, as well as an increased reliance on international student fees as a predominant funding source. It may be that this was demonstrated through Langara’s case. Slaughter and Leslie insisted that entrepreneurial behaviours and resource-seeking activities were encouraged due to the pattern of higher education resource-dependencies that needed to support markets better.

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) discussed academic capitalism as a theoretical framework to help understand the ongoing transformations in education. This has become an essential framework for identifying and exploring the organizational changes that occur in higher education. The academic capitalism framework may help explain how Langara is responding to increased market pressures and declining resources by

increasing international student enrolment through the development of international student programs, such as the PDDs. In scholarly discourse, academic capitalism is a regular topic of debate in the university space. There are scholars that argue that engaging in market-driven activities enables higher education institutions to contribute to the economic development of their communities (Shane, 2004; Rubins, 2007). Scholars that are critical of academic capitalism say that it has moved the public good of postsecondary education towards a model of corporatization and consumerism (Bakan, 2004; Kirp, 2003). In the college space, there has been less research specifically related to academic capitalism, although many have mentioned that colleges also use entrepreneurial strategies to better compete in the student marketplace. At the community college level, the focus of research is concentrated more on resource constraints and administrative organization (Levin, 2004, 2005; Roueche and Jones, 2005; Mars and Ginter, 2012).

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) use a theory of academic capitalism that focuses on networks as a guiding framework. It may be possible to explore the situation at Langara according to four theoretical constructs within this theory:

- Interstitial organizations;
- Intermediating organizations;
- New circuits of knowledge; and
- Enhanced managerial capacities.

Interstitial organizations are college or university departments that connect students, faculty, and external stakeholders. These external stakeholders could be employers or other community organizations that Langara cooperates with. The higher education entrepreneurship centers have been identified as interstitial organizations that connect academic entrepreneurs, who could be either faculty members or students. They connect them with private investors and entrepreneurs who may have a shared interest encouraging small business start-ups derived from a higher education environment (Mars et al., 2008). In my research study, the Coop and Career Development Centre is responsible for delivering a disruption of innovation in the form of an interstitial organization that helps expand Langara's institutional ability to engage in

the market through various market-like activities, such as branding, marketing, and networking with community and employers.

Intermediating organizations are stakeholders that promote collaboration between the college and themselves. Great examples of such stakeholders are BC Impact and City Studio, which are associations interested in social impact and community development, and that are looking at collaborating with Langara in a number of ways for the betterment of their shared communities. Individuals and organizations at these associations are outside of the academy and help develop and expand the social impact agenda. For example, Langara will explore how best to participate and perhaps be the funnel of such activity, through student projects, single courses, certificate programs, and events.

New circuits of knowledge appear when people within the college engage in market-like behaviours associated with academic capitalism. These behaviours include examples of marketing, sales, and networking and they assist in developing relationships with stakeholders beyond that of the Institution. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) attributed these market-like behaviours and new knowledge circuits directly to academic capitalism as the outcome of these new relationships and their collaborations. It would seem that faculty increasingly act as academic entrepreneurs (Mars and Rios-Aguilar 2010) investing effort into developing these circuits to advance funding opportunities, such as grants for social innovation or increasing the number of employers for international students. Transforming the college into an institution that can thrive in a global knowledge economy requires entrepreneurial solutions (Mars and Metcalfe, 2009) and people that are academic entrepreneurs who craft entrepreneurial stories within and beyond the institution. There may be a further need to explore these entrepreneurial knowledge circuits at Langara.

Lastly, the construct of enhanced managerial capacities is the by-product of new organizational structures developed as a response to managing the need for Langara to be more responsive and market-oriented, which is a leading feature of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Both administrators and faculty may need to develop managerial qualities to develop programs as well as satisfy student (customer) needs.

The above-outlined version of Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) academic capitalism four theoretical constructs model, aids in studying the situation at Langara in greater depth.

Researchers that support academic capitalism insist that entrepreneurship in higher education creates cost savings, increases efficiency and effectiveness, creates accountability for outcomes, and diversifies revenues. Marginson & Considine (2002) cite a “greater responsiveness” in institutions. College or university entrepreneurship increases an institution’s autonomy by reducing reliance on government grants, focusing instead on outcomes. They suggested that academic capitalism is needed to better serve the public by linking the Institution with its external constituents. Those that are in favour of academic capitalism may believe that institutions need to embrace the corporate model to support opportunities for reform and positive change.

There are those who are against academic capitalism, perceiving it as a threat to the production of knowledge in its own right. There is a concern that knowledge becomes a commodity to be manufactured, packaged and sold or put in a different way “the corporatization of the university may be good for the spreadsheet, but it augurs badly for education” (Aronowitz, 2000, pg.88).

In Slaughter and Rhoades’ (2004) book *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy, Markets, States, and Higher Education*, the authors do not feature resource dependency theory as in the 1997 book by Slaughter and Leslie, *Academic Capitalism*. They still define “academic capitalism as the pursuit of a market and market-like activities to generate external revenues” (pg. 11), however, they focus their newer analysis on the “blurring of boundaries among markets, states, and higher education” (pg.11).

#### **2.4.1. Organizational Theory**

Organizational theory helps show how faculty and administrators within the College are organized and supported to be entrepreneurial. An open systems theory of organization explains how entrepreneurial opportunity and change can impact the various systems within an institution. There are many systems and subsystems within the College, which is why systems thinking and complexity theory are important ways of

thinking about entrepreneurial change (Checkland, 1981; Getzels & Guba, 1957; Senge, 1990).

Institutional change happens where entrepreneurial opportunities have initiated a redesign of courses, programs, delivery, communities and industrial involvement. An important strategy in institutional transition and reform is changing mindsets, practices, and policies to encourage entrepreneurial action. Success in institutional entrepreneurialism involves a culture change since culture shapes both vision and strategy (Hrabowski, 2014; Mintzberg & Westley, 1982).

#### **2.4.2. Complexity Theory and Resource Dependency Theory**

“A complexity approach acknowledges that all levels of focus, whether this is the individual, class, school, national or international associations, reveal humans and human endeavour as complex and that focusing on one level will not reduce the multi-dimensionality, non-linearity, interconnectedness, or unpredictability encountered” (Kuhn, 2008, p. 1). Complexity theory emerged from network theory and is a theory of where ideas and structures come from, of how surprises occur, how failure occurs, and it provides guidance to leaders about how they can encourage new ideas and innovations. The theory also looks at how people can change their organizations for the better, and how they can build and maintain strong organizations (Marion, 2008). One of the first network theories in organizational analysis is resource dependency, which explains that institutions depend on others for resources, and if these resources diminish, then survival might be at stake. Resource dependency theory starts with the perspective of an organization or institution being dependent on external resources, which means that they are influenced by economics and changing environments. “Resource dependence theory holds that the internal behaviours of organizational members are understood clearly only by reference of external agents” (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997). If we were to think of international students as a resource, one might question what happens when international student numbers decline. Resource dependency theory suggests that higher education institutions may do whatever needed to maintain or grow revenue and to maximise prestige (Marginson and Considine, 2000). Resource dependency is predictable and controllable, whereas complexity theory is less predictable (Etzkowitz, 2003a; Levin, 1994). Since predictability may not be an option in our global, changing environments, there may be a strong case for encouraging entrepreneurialism through

the creation of a strategic plan at Langara in order to offset resource dependency on any single source.

Deeply connected to this notion of resource dependency, is the notion of neo-liberal markets. "There are *multiple* actors in the social field of power in which the means and ends of education are contested. It is exactly the differential relations of power that are currently moving education in particular directions in a number of nations..." (Apple, 2001). Over the years Apple has argued (Apple, 1996, 2000, 2002) that there are those committed to "neo-liberal marketised solutions to educational problems" and a "managerially oriented new middle class who are committed to the ideology and techniques of accountability, measurement, and the new managerialism" (Apple, 2001). Apple presents a view that may be shared by many academics, yet as Levin (2002, pg. 73) states, "In responding to this community and to pressures of government [declining grants and new mandates], community colleges have fulfilled part of their mission but perhaps at the expense of their social and educational function of serving the under-served". Being dependent on figuring out ways to obtain resources may be part of the new managerialism culture, and reductions of resources from government alter the nature of work performed promoting academic capitalism. This resource dependency directly pushes institutions into the market to compete for resources to compensate for the loss of government grants (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Marginson and Considine, 2000).

To conclude, resource dependency theory suggests that it is the organizational turbulence caused by stakeholders such as government and other partners that impacts how higher education institutions are now being run with strategic plans and other business-like tools. An institution will always depend on resources, and if these are pulled back, one may assume that in order to survive, the Institution will seek out other ways of obtaining resources. Seeking out new resources requires staff to think in new ways and develop a culture of entrepreneurialism since these novelties also change the nature of academic work and how academics allocate their time in order to obtain new resources (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997).

## 2.5. What Does 'Being Entrepreneurial' Mean?

The term entrepreneurship is a compilation of the French verb *entreprendre*, which means to do something differently, and the German word *unternehmen*, which means to undertake. Entrepreneurship includes invention, renewal, or innovation that occur within or outside of an institution or organization. Being entrepreneurial traditionally relates to creating a new business, but it also relates to creating new ideas and opportunities, improving conditions, taking risk, and producing new products or services (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001; Hornaday, 1992; Huber, 1991; Slaughter & Leslie, 2001; Sharma & Chrisman, 2007).

### 2.5.1. Academic Entrepreneurship

Academic entrepreneurship, a term specifically related to education, may be becoming increasingly important due to the changing roles of higher education. It has been said that the traditional definitions of entrepreneurship expand when talking about the academic entrepreneur, since money may not be the sole source of motivation. Academic entrepreneurs are individuals or groups of people in various roles within the academic institution that act independently or as part of an organizational system to instigate innovation (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Levin, 2004, 2006; Hrabowski, 2014; Cantaragiu, 2012). Research on entrepreneurship in higher education suggests that "faculty, staff, and students have pursued broad initiatives to redesign courses, build community, and support and engage students" (Hrabowski, 2014). Often when discussing academic entrepreneurship, academics such as Louis, Blumenthal, Gluck and Stoto, (1989), refer to perhaps older definitions that emphasize research, patents, and scientific commercialization, rather than the newer definitions explained above. Louis et al (1989) researched faculty in various universities and found five types of academic entrepreneurship:

- 1) Large-scale science research, funded externally;
- 2) Earning supplemental income;
- 3) Gaining industry support for research;
- 4) Patents; and



5) Commercialization of research, usually with private enterprise.

The definition of academic entrepreneurship includes any type of activity in the academy that generates innovation.

There is a lack of research on college entrepreneurship, and the majority of research on entrepreneurship conducted within university contexts uses a neoliberal lens (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In their writing about entrepreneurship, many researchers are guided by resource dependency theory and the theory of academic capitalism. This suggests that when institutional employees experience a lack of resources, human or financial, they will seek out new resources, making each decision guided by the bottom-line. Entrepreneurship, when discussed in the educational context, has been a strategy for overcoming resource barriers (De Silva, 2015; Levin, 2005; Mars, Slaughter, & Rhoades, 2008; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

A limitation of existing literature on entrepreneurship in educational settings is that most research has focused on teaching entrepreneurship, leaving other areas of entrepreneurialism mostly unexamined by scholars. This is especially evident in the college setting, where there is a lack of research. Literature has concentrated on the demand side of entrepreneurship programming, rather than the supply side which relates to the opportunities that drive academic entrepreneurship (Katz, 2003; Kuratko, 2005; Mars & Ginter, 2012; Thornton, 1999). Due to lack of scholarly consensus on the definition of entrepreneurship, and after explaining the various existing definitions ranging from a resource acquisition to creating social value and generating innovation, Mars and Metcalfe (2009) defined entrepreneurship as “those activities that combine *risk, innovation, and opportunity*, particularly in times of uncertain resources”.

Academic entrepreneurs may have different reasons for being entrepreneurial. Academic entrepreneurs are also what Slaughter and Leslie call academic capitalists. These individual faculty members engage in market-like activities, and are typically involved in contracting-out services, patenting, and spin-offs that generate revenue or provide students with a market-type benefit such as employment. Some Academic Entrepreneurs are pursuing the generation of revenue or as Kirp (2003) described, “The rise of business values and the belief that efficiency, immediate practical usefulness, and

marketplace triumph are the best measures of a university's success". Academic entrepreneurship may happen by chance when seizing opportunities that present themselves, such as developing PDD programs for incoming international students that want an educational work experience component. We live and work in a complex, chaotic system; hence there could be a relationship between being entrepreneurial, becoming a learning and reflective institution, developing shared visions, as well as motivating individual academic entrepreneurs (Kirp, 2003; Hayter, 2011; Mars, 2007; McGrath and MacMillan, 2000; Nejad, Seiid, Hassani and Berbousi, 2012; Pryor and Bright, 2011; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997).

## **2.6. Curriculum Deliberation for New Program Development**

Using theory to understand what is going on within the context of Langara and the development of new programs, researchers such as Schwab (1970) and Shulman (1984) emphasized curriculum deliberation and the creation of cross-disciplinary deliberation groups to develop educational programming. Schwab insisted that curriculum should be practical. This involves a collaborative and deliberate curriculum development, which Schwab thought included "commonplaces" of educational thinking. These deliberation groups consist of a curriculum specialist who would coordinate the expertise of teachers, the principle, a school board or business community member, and students (Schwab & Harper, 1983). Schwab thought that all five of these varied experiences of disciplines needed to be present for curriculum development or revision, as each brought to the table a unique learning perspective.

This curriculum deliberation process is incremental and should be ongoing, and what Schwab proposed is that institutions such as Langara must uncover their own issues and find resources, without dictation by governing bodies. While curriculum deliberation might offer a partial solution to Langara's problems, the formation of interdisciplinary groups for deliberation and collaboration is a difficult challenge (Shulman, 1984). With ongoing collegial deliberations, Langara could change a problematic curriculum situation, in this case, tied to a severe lack of financial resources and the possible need for career development, discovering solutions as well as unintended consequences that may create future challenges or opportunities.

Schwab noted that the person in charge of coordinating curriculum deliberations does so through the skillful use of rhetoric, which at the college level may be through the use of rhetoric such as entrepreneurialism. “Most efforts by college-university specialists to import their speciality into the schools are tainted in some degree by the wish to make jobs for their graduates hence to keep their own” (Schwab, 1983). Schwab believed educators should actively engage students in their education. He showed how the disappearing college communities could reinvent themselves. Schwab believed that any one theory alone was incomplete and required that five factors of discipline and experience, which he called “commonplaces”, be represented in a collaborative group environment when creating or revising curriculum. All five areas must work together since changes in any one of the five areas will have consequences for the four other areas. As these five commonplaces work together in actual deliberation, they turn the varied commonplaces into a unified place where problems and solutions, and their effects run alongside each other in a linear, constant manner. This process is incremental and ongoing and an institution can use this process to make gradual improvements. The deliberative process has continuous feedback loops and moves in a spiral rather than having a start and end. Learning involves the whole community, not just a couple of experts, in the solution of practical problems. Schwab believed that curriculum should involve practical things that for Langara students could mean career development. The next section will use the framework of Schwab’s five curriculum “commonplaces” (students, teachers, context, subject matter, and curriculum) to analyze the role of career development and the Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC).

### **2.6.1. A Learning Organization and Reflective Practice**

A learning organization is “an organization that continually develops and facilitates the learning and development of its members” (Senge, 1990). In his work, Donald Schön’s central argument for continued learning and development was that change was a fact of modern life and that institutions need to develop social systems that are capable of learning and adapting. The larger an institution grows, the staler it could become, and so there is a need for a learning organization to form. These types of organizations or institutions can continue to evolve, redevelop processes, think of innovative solutions. As an institution grows, thinking may become rigid, and a learning organization can help remain relevant in the field, gain knowledge faster, as well as

better understand external environments, helping faculty and administrators create innovative solutions. Organizational learning (a different term) focuses on the ways an institution learns in the interaction between people within the Institution. Finger and Brand (1999) stipulate that “organizational learning is the activity and process by which the organization eventually reaches the ideal learning organization”. You can view how an organization learns cognitively as a whole, or community based on specific networks within the system (Argyris & Schön, 1992; Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999; Finger & Brand, 1999; Senge, 1990; Tsang, 1997).

Argyris and Schön (1974, 1978) proposed that people unconsciously store theories in their brains which design their behaviour and impact their interactions with other people. These theories of action influence our patterns of behaviour and values. There are espoused theories that explain our behaviour; for example, many senior administrators at Langara espouse openness to ideas as in “be entrepreneurial; I’m here to listen to new ideas that will advance the strategic plan”. Theories-in-use prompt behaviour that is spontaneous and relates to knowing-in-action, since we are unsure of why we might use the tacit knowledge that exists from prior learning and experience. For the same example above, the administrator despite encouraging openness to ideas, may try to ignore ideas that others may respond to negatively.

Argyris and Schön (1974) were interested in learning systems and the concept of reflection-in-practice. They argued that the concept of organizational learning be adopted by individuals and organizations to merge their interests with lifelong learning. By using a feedback loop to reflect on one’s own experience, thinking, learning and practice, a person can become a reflective practitioner and continuously improve educational and other actions. Dewey referred to reflection as a process that involved “turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious consideration” (1933, p.3), however reflection for Dewey ends once the problem is solved. In Argyris and Schön’s (1974) Model 2, they suggest a continuous feedback loop and Schön in his later work emphasizes reflection-in-action as an “epistemology of practice” (Schön, 1983, p.49).

Communities of practice are groups of people who come together and share a passion or objective for something they do. They may learn how to do it better if they interact regularly, which was viewed as essential by my research participants, and yet most commented that there was no time to engage. Learning warranted positioning in

the context of lived experiences through regular interaction. This perspective of learning is similar to Dewey's (1916) perspective that learning is a social process, and that it needs to connect to the individual and their experience. A community of learning is a community of practice, where situated learning happens when there are social co-participation and engagement (Dewey, 1916; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

### ***The Student Commonplace***

The CCDC does a great job in recognizing the challenges that its students face and much of this may be attributable to the frequent interaction with students that this department experiences. It has been said that increasingly students work during their student lives both to support themselves, as well as gain experience needed to "enter the job market". Many entry-level positions state the need for two-three years of work experience. Not every student is the same though, and there are differences in ability, culture, and motivations. There has been a large increase in the number of international students studying at Langara. The majority of these students work the legally allowed twenty hours a week and their career aspirations may often be more important than their academic aspirations. It may be that there is a sense of urgency towards providing for oneself that a domestic student may not experience and the cultural gap is wide. The abilities of students also vary, especially in terms of written English output, which is essential for a Canadian job search. Due to frequent interaction, students are most comfortable approaching instructors in this department for any advice.

These college stakeholders have little understanding of the challenges in responding to policy vision, and yet they are the most important *customer* within the Institution. A challenge that Langara may face is the need to provide better integration support for the success of these students.

### ***The Sociocultural Milieus (Context) Commonplace***

The sociocultural context changes over time, and in the past two years, changes at Langara have been immense, creating a need to adapt the curriculum better. A great example of this has been changing the three-credit cooperative education (co-op) preparatory course to three PDD work preparatory courses that are worth one credit each. The student is required to take each of these three courses in sequence throughout their program. The logic for this design is to have more time to prepare

international students for their final work term. This final work experience term is worth an additional 3 credits, which is identical to a co-op work term. In the traditional co-op model, a student would take a co-op work term during their academic program and then return to school following completion of the co-op experience. In this co-op example, a student could take one or more terms leave from their academic program to pursue their co-op work experiences. The policy is that once the co-op is complete, the student returns to academic studies. With the new PDD work experience, the student completes their work term at the end of their academic program, and if the arrangement works out between the employer and the student and there is a skills match, the student may continue to work for the employer. This is the ultimate goal in the PDD work experience.

In response to its strategic vision, Langara is concerned with making sure students engage in work experiences since it is a major motivation for enrolment into Langara's programs. Relationships between students and instructors are respectful and students are motivated to do what it takes to obtain the work experience. A concern that faculty may have is the senior leaderships' desire for regular and quantifiable reporting since this adds to the increased faculty workload without extra resourcing. There may also be concern regarding type of measurement, for instance, currently there is no type of measurement for international students who chose to secure non-career type work placements rather than career-related work placements. Many students choose this route when their employer guarantees to create conditions that will enable application for permanent residency in Canada.

### ***The Teacher Commonplace***

Just like students, faculty have different backgrounds, strengths, and beliefs, delivering curriculum in different ways. At the College, some faculty sees themselves as educators, while others see themselves as applied experts responsible for preparing the students for the workforce. In the CCDC, the majority of work-related curriculum is predetermined and does not allow for adaptations for the differences in individual instruction. Lacking is also training on how to better understand and support especially international students, as there are no specific suggestions on how lesson plans might be adapted to better address instructors' and students' diverse needs, experiences and knowledge. The Langara teacher commonplace could be improved by adapting (or being

able to adapt) curriculum, which may require an investment into non-instructional duty time and professional development.

### ***The Subject Matter Commonplace***

Career education subject matter contains content that is collected and organized into a curriculum deemed necessary in a job search. Deliberations about subject matter within the CCDC include which job search tools are most important and how they are connected. The content connects by way of logical flow and each lesson ties into the previous lesson in order to create the bigger picture. Argument and examples have equal weight to that of content, although content refers to “the basics” which students should master before adding personalized matter. Overall, subject matter commonplace is strong and practical, and enhancement could happen with extra tools to help guide instructors in adapting and personalizing better for their students.

### ***The Curriculum Commonplace***

In his “Practical 4” paper, Schwab realized the ambiguity over the term curriculum and proposed the following definition:

*“Curriculum is what is successfully conveyed to differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skill, taste, and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students known to the decision makers” (Schwab, 1983, p. 240).*

Using Schwab’s notion of curriculum deliberation and commonplaces as a way to frame my study may help to develop an understanding of how various stakeholders understand the challenges that lie ahead for Langara in responding to the policy vision for the Institution. Schwab wanted schools to be learning communities, and at Langara groups that deliberate about curriculum are communities that deliberate what is going to happen to meet the learning needs of the students. Faculty will develop curriculum with student needs in mind since as a commonplace “it arises at home, seeded, watered, and cultivated by some or all of the teachers who might be involved in its institution” (Schwab, 1983, p. 258). As Langara pursues this notion of career development branding, it will mean more connections to the business and industrial sectors in the form of learning in practice through co-ops, work experience placements, prior learning

assessments, work-integrated learning, and capacity building. When Schwab's notion of the practical combines with his notion of commonplaces, then we see an outline of two things:

- The people (stakeholders) outlined above, who should be involved in curriculum deliberation around learning in practice.
- A roadmap of sources of data for my study, the faculty, the senior administrators, academic and strategic plans, as well as other documents.

Due to the commercialization of education, there is a constant tension between individual, private good, and collective, public good. Bakan (2004) wrote about the rising strength of corporations, which has influenced Canadian education. Due to a lack of resources, the British Columbia government is encouraging reform and private capital into the education system. The type of education that students and employers increasingly want is technological, with a demand for real-world training in order to obtain jobs. This has influenced the restructuring of curriculum and operational structures with little input from all five commonplaces and has focused on the individual and private good. Perhaps with more curriculum deliberation Langara can attend to the other purpose of education, the collective and public good, in order to provide knowledge to minds, so that the learners can also become contributing members of society.

## **2.7. Challenges and Gaps**

As mentioned in the problem statement, there may be a gap between the strategic visioning, and the lived experiences of faculty and administrators who create educational programming and need to enact a new direction for the Institution that hinges on the rhetoric of entrepreneurialism. There seems to be an opportunity to borrow bits from many theories, and empirical studies, and yet none of the theories in isolation provide a complete conceptual framework for research analysis. Part of the challenge is due to gaps in the literature as it is hard to find empirical research on what a new discourse in an educational setting means to people that are experiencing transition and reform. The literature does not capture the gaps between strategic visioning and the actual experience of faculty and administrators, and a significant challenge is that this type of research is not readily available. This challenge provides an opportunity to contribute to the literature.



## **2.8. Conclusion**

In this Chapter, I have reviewed concepts related to the role of career development at a time of transition. The review started with an explanation of career development and how it relates to work-integrated learning and/or education.

The chapter continued with explaining the purpose of colleges, including a short history of how and why colleges were created. Next, it explained strategic priorities for higher education in British Columbia, focusing on structural policy change and describing the institutional approach to BC strategic priorities, including defining issues such as marketization, internationalization, globalization, and corporatization.

A review of theories of academic capitalism and resource dependency (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004) provided a useful framework for understanding the research study's external environment and dependencies. Entrepreneurship and neoliberalism as concepts close to academic capitalism were explained and curriculum deliberation for new program development was described since it is an outcome of this newly found entrepreneurialism.

There is a brief mention of changing demographics and multicultural issues in career development and the chapter ends with describing some of the challenges and gaps in this literature review. The next Chapter will discuss the methodology used in this case study.

## **Chapter 3. METHODOLOGY**

This chapter lays out the research design used for this study. A methodology is the strategy, plan of action, or design that influences the choice and use of particular methods (Crotty, 2010). The methodology has to do with the use of particular tools and techniques of research. This chapter includes a description of the strategic qualitative research design and a discussion of the philosophical approach, research methods, data sources, data collection and data analysis. As a reminder, the research questions investigated the faculty and administrators' perceptions regarding career development and its role in educational programming. The three principal research questions were concerned with (1) The understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming, (2) What faculty and administrators' perceived to be the most important components of a Career Development Centre, and (3) How faculty and administrators engaged in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution.

### **3.1. Paradigm**

Paradigms inform particular theoretical perspectives, which then structure the choice of methodology (Broido and Manning, 2002). A paradigm is "a basic set of beliefs that guide action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry" (Guba, 1990, p.17). Theoretical perspectives are philosophical stances that inform the methodology and provide context for the process and a grounding for its logic and criteria (Crotty, 2010). My research incorporated a constructivist paradigm that assumed and built on multiple realities and perceptions. Through a constructivist view, the goal of this study was to rely on participants' lived experiences of new educational programming and strategic plan visioning. My researcher intent was to interpret and make sense of meanings others have about the world and inductively develop and connect to theory rather than start with a theory (Creswell, 2014). Questions were broad and general in order to capture multiple individual meanings and current social construction, with the end goal of establishing patterns of meaning. The hope was that common themes would emerge, and they did. The intent was to interpret the meanings that others have about the world, in this case, the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that was rationalized as academic

capitalism through revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming.

I engaged in practitioner-based research as the case is based out of the Institution where I am employed.

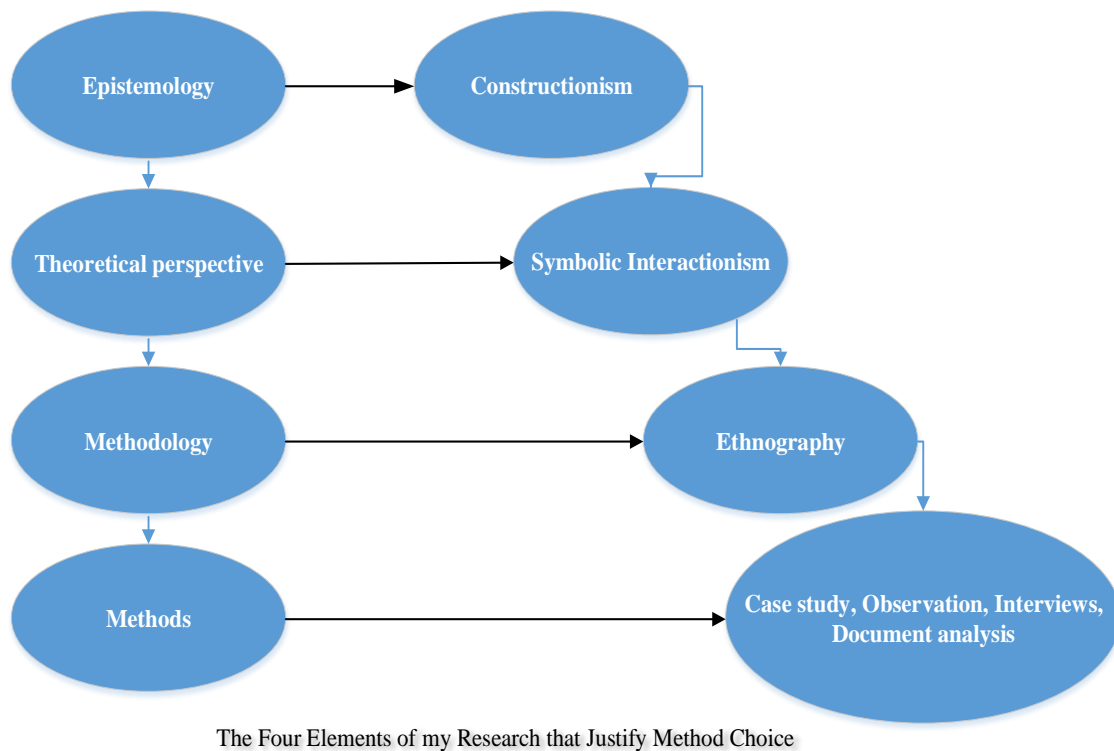
## **3.2. Qualitative Methodology**

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that is used in various academic disciplines to understand meanings. In the past it has been employed in the social sciences, in market research, and other further contexts (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). Qualitative research is employed in natural settings, where human behaviour and events occur and can be observed. The goal of this type of research is to understand the meaning of a particular social situation, event, experience, or interaction (Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman, 2013). Qualitative research encompasses using of an assortment of empirical methods such as interviews, case study, observation, focus groups, and personal experience that help describe meanings in individuals' lives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). Framing the methodology helped lead me throughout this study and develop an essential roadmap that guided towards the accomplishment of this mission. The way I have framed the methodology informed my work, and helped situate me as a researcher and practitioner. My interest in understanding the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that may have contributed to reform processes at Langara College through the perceptions and lived experiences of faculty and administrators directed me to the choice of qualitative research.

### **3.2.1. Justification of Method Choice**

The study sought to understand the perspective of participants. My justification for a constructionism epistemology has to do with my beliefs about how we might discover knowledge about the world. Constructionism rejects objective truth and emphasizes that meaning is constructed. Constructionism is the view that “all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of an interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (Crotty, 2010). I was actively immersed in the culture of this institution, which I believe allowed

for the methodology to derive from the line of inquiry (Creswell, 2007). Figure 3.1 shows an outline of the justification of method choice. I chose to use a case study to explain the context, observation, interviews, and document analysis to obtain information needed to answer my research questions. This ethnography or conceptual scheme for qualitative research originated from my own interpretations of how I understand things to be through past experiences, symbols, people, and settings through which I construct meaning which is defined as symbolic interactionism.



**Figure 3.1 Four Elements of my Research that Justify Method Choice, Adapted from Crotty (2010), Four Elements of Research**

This research used qualitative and emerging data that was obtained through the use of a case study, interviews, observation and document analysis.

### 3.3. Case Study

For Creswell (2007), the qualitative approach of using a case study is one “in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals”. Cases are bound by time and activity, and

the information is collected by using a mixture of data collection methods over a specific timeframe (Lapan, Quartaroli, Reimer, 2011; Tracy, 2012; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). If the group of people being analyzed in the case had been smaller, there would have been a risk of changing their behaviour by my presence; and if the group had been larger, it would have made it easier to be unobtrusive although managing the data would have been more challenging (Bogdan and Biklan, 2007). During this research, thirteen people were directly interviewed in this situational analysis case study, and there was an indirect observation of others during college planning or strategic planning consultation sessions.

A case study context was used to design the study (Creswell, 2007, 2013, 2014, and Maxwell, 1992, 2005, 2013), with all participants being recruited from the one case institution. All research participants are employed by Langara College, and the interviews occurred between December 2016 and March 2017. The interview participants held either a faculty or administrator position. All of the interview participants were at the same hierarchical level as myself or higher. The gender distribution was almost equal with seven female participants and six male participants. Qualitative data was collected using open-ended questions, and a total of thirteen people were interviewed, either one-on-one or in a focus group setting. Interview data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed as soon as a new interview was conducted. This enabled immediate learning of the data and provided information that confirmed when the data was saturated. Once the thirteenth interview was conducted it became clear that no new data was emerging.

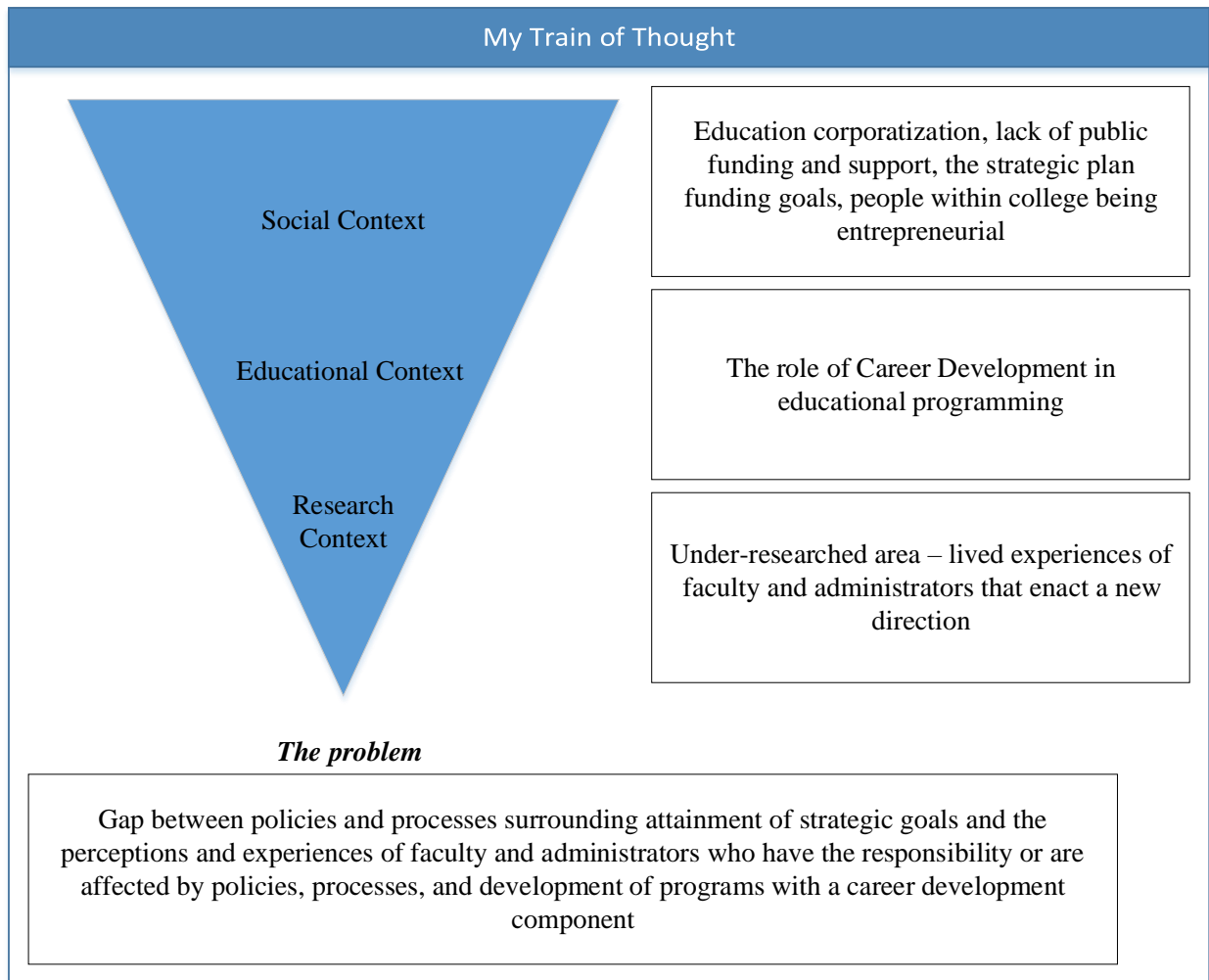
### **3.4. Site Selection and Sampling Procedures**

The research site was Langara College, which is a public medium-sized Western Canadian College, and where I work as a faculty member. Conducting my study within the Institution I work for enabled me to capture the experiences of both leadership and faculty as well as take part in the process as participant-observer (Creswell, 2014). The site was purposefully selected in the second year of my doctoral studies, due to the emerging opportunity to directly observe what I believed to be an entrepreneurial shift taking place at the College. My faculty position consists of one third curriculum development and teaching, one third industry relationship development, and one third program and college administration. Through my varied responsibilities, this site enabled

me to capture events from multiple pressures that exist to satisfy market demand, take advantage of government immigration policies, and maintain entrepreneurial, innovative programming that meets both educational requirements and strategic revenue generation goals.

### **3.5. The Setting**

There appears to be a gap between the strategic plan visioning, and the lived experiences of faculty and administrators who create educational programming and enact a “new direction” for the Institution, which hinges on the rhetoric of entrepreneurialism. The problem this study addressed is that gap between policies and processes surrounding the attainment of strategic goals and the perceptions and experiences of faculty and administrators who have the responsibility or are affected by policies, processes, and the development of programs with a career development component. I adapted Kilbourn’s (2006) Train of Thought to narrow down the research problem and explain the setting.



**Figure 3.2 My Train of Thought, adapted from Kilbourn (2006)**

### **3.6. Participants**

For the purpose of this research study, my participant criteria included interviewing a total of thirteen faculty members and administrators. I recruited faculty from areas where programming included a career development component. These faculty members were not part of the college administration and instead included regular faculty or faculty members with coordinator responsibilities, such as Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and Division Chair. The recruited administrators were individuals that held positions of Dean or higher and held formal responsibility for college administration. Participants were approached directly by approaching people in College settings and / or by sending out email invitations. Once the participants emailed back to

confirm their interest, they were sent a second email that included the consent form as well as interview protocol.

### **3.7. Data Collection**

My data collection started with a simple pilot test once research ethics was obtained. The pilot test involved asking four people the questions I had prepared and having them tell me whether they understood the questions. The interviewees tried answering most questions, however, their responses were not used as they did not fit my participant criteria. A number of combined questions were asked from both the interview and focus group instruments, and very few changes were made following the pilot test.

To understand the perceptions of faculty and administrators at Langara College, this research was comprised of individual interviews, and a focus group session with six participants. I immediately transcribed each interview and the focus group session and analyzed the data. Through this analysis, I was able to capture emergent themes and I continued with interviews until the point at which no new information or theme emerged. This thematic saturation is considered an important conclusion so as to ensure relevant information is not missed if data collection were to stop prematurely (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, Creswell, 2007, 2013, 2014, Crotty, 2010).

#### **3.7.1. Interviews**

An interview is a purposeful conversation between two or more people that is usually organized and managed by one person (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007; 2013; 2014; Crotty, 2010; Morgan, 1997). The main goal of my interviews was to understand how participants conceptualize the impact of the strategic priorities at Langara College that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing their perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming. The individual interviews were conducted in-person at the college site and lasted between 60-90 minutes. The in-person interview occurred at a time and location of the participant's choosing. Each interview was audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. This research project brought an opportunity for the Institution to engage in the process of curriculum deliberation (Hannay, 1989; Schwab, 1983). Interview questions



were open-ended, sometimes semi-structured and at other times unstructured. During the session, I would use probing questions as they came up, which Bogdan and Biklen (2007) called “probes”.

An interview protocol was used as a guide, however, it was important to allow the participants expression of thought which is why while listening to an interviewee, new probes appeared. I initially created columns in my notebook that served as an observational checklist but found that I did not use this very much during the actual interviews. Instead, I focused on maintaining eye contact with participants. All interviews were conducted and observed by me, and following these interviews I wrote post-interview reflections.

### **3.7.2. Focus Group**

All of my interview questions were of individualistic nature, yet I wanted to see whether participants in a group interview setting would have similar answers. This was one of the reasons I ran a focus group session. The other reason for the focus group session was to test whether the group had trust to convey information in front of each other, which is a valuable tool in the concept of learning-in-action. Generally, focus groups may develop “groupthink”, or start to agree on things only to keep the peace in the group. Groupthink did not happen, and the focus group was a way to crosscheck data obtained in the prior and later individual interviews.

The focus group session was conducted in a private location on-site in December 2016 and took place over a period of two hours. The focus group members were treated to a pre-ordered lunch, they felt comfortable, and as I wrote in my post-interview reflections “their desire to continue with discussion lingered following the completion of the focus group”. Both interview and focus group protocols focused on the key research inquiry and were developed as a semi-structured set of questions designed to be a guide that would encourage open communication. I began by asking questions which were of a general nature, and would then ask questions that related to themes that appeared during the interview. I would also ask interview protocol questions. I did not always stick to my sample questions, located in the Appendix, and attempted to let interviewees talk about what was on their mind if it related to my key research inquiry.

During the focus group session, it proved hard to control people that exerted personal or communication dominance. Due to not having experience with facilitating focus group sessions, I had not anticipated this issue prior to the session. My post-reflection notes indicate that everyone was eager to voice their opinion, however my ability to facilitate was affected on a number of occasions. I could not control two of the participants who would insert their opinions regardless of whether it was their turn to speak, or whether another person had finished with expressing their thoughts. Despite this, it was obvious that everyone wanted to voice their opinions and welcomed the opportunity to tell their side of the story. In hindsight, I did learn that it was a difficult task to manage the strong-willed group of people in this focus group, and what I would do in the future is dedicate more time and resources to having individual interviews right after the focus group session. In this way there would be immediate follow up with each participant.

### **3.7.3. Field Notes and Observations**

Observation is used to “describe settings, behaviour, and events, while interviewing is used to understand the perspectives and goals of actors” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 102). As a researcher-practitioner, I observed the participants within the college setting and sought out their reactions to college meetings, reactions to information exchanged during these meetings, reactions to interview questions and overall reactions that would enable understanding of their perceptions. The immediate result of the observation of participants was that it provided a description of what I noticed. At the same time interviewing gave me a description of what the participant said, but not a clear understanding (Maxwell, 2013). Together, data from interviews and observations helped generate an interpretation and aided to better understand interviewee perspectives. The observation was necessary as it confirmed interview findings generated by data. For example, interviewees emphasized how tired they were due to increasing workloads, however by listening to, recording, and observing this type of comment, I could identify their emotional perceptions as well as behavioural responses.

The majority of my observations were overt as I had told most people that my research was based on events that were happening in the Institution. I made notes, observed, and lived the experience of these interviewees. It was a process where I thought about the collected data and analyzed it in order to be able to identify and then

articulate most important findings. My research ethics approval was in place, and I had permission to interview people at Langara College.

### **3.7.4. Document Analysis**

A document refers to any material such as strategic plans, memos, letters, diaries, videos, photographs, brochures or any other supplemental material that is used as “part of the case study whose main data source is participant observation or interviewing” (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). An important aspect of document analysis is to understand the context under which the document exists. At Langara, documents are not produced for research purposes, and there have been issues with determining their accuracy, in which case only limited documents have been used in this research (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Despite these disadvantages, documents such as the strategic and academic plans helped discover insights significant to the research questions (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). In order to give voice and meaning to relevant topics at Langara, I used publicly available documents such as the Strategic Plan, the Academic Plan, and later the Accountability Plan & Report 2016/2017. Publicly available documents do not require consent since they are available to the entire public. I coded content from these documents according to the themes that arose in my interviews, and which were created when analyzing the transcripts.

## **3.8. Data Collection and Analysis**

All participants in this research work at Langara College and have experienced a connection to the CCDC during the research period between December 2016 and March 2017. To eliminate potential bias, I did not discuss any direct work issues during research sessions. There was no need to hire the help of a second researcher and I wanted to learn from my research process.

I read and analysed the data from my interviews and reoccurring information emerged. I took note of this reoccurring information, organizing it into chunks of similar data, and kept going back and forth until a set of themes emerged. The themes that emerged were: structural policy, academic capitalism and resource dependency, internationalization, growing role of career development, corporate approach to reform, and entrepreneurship through curriculum deliberation. “The key is to learn about the

issues from participants and to address the research to obtain that information” (Creswell, 2013, pg.186). This inductive coding meant analyzing and studying my data in order to identify themes which allowed me to see what would come out of the data. Data analysis and writing occurred simultaneously. This included the process of placing any newly acquired data into my thematic groupings and discarding data about the college that were not useful for this study.

### **3.8.1. Sampling Strategy**

Faculty and senior administrators were observed and interviewed over the course of four months. These interviewees were full-time employees of the Institution and were chosen based on their roles, access, and willingness to participate in the study. Two protocols were developed: (1) observational protocol, and (2) interview protocol. For observational parts of the interview, sheets were divided into two by a line in order to separate descriptive notes from reflective notes. The interview protocol listed questions that were used in the interview. The interviewees were sent copies of the interview protocol prior to the interview. At the start of the interview, participants were asked for permission to audio record. These standard procedures were followed for each interview.

As an interviewer, I am the instrument. This meant that I needed to guide the interview and encourage questions for conversation. If participants said anything that I did not understand, I asked them to clarify. I asked questions all the time and also maintained my silence so that the interviewee could think and not be perceived as being rushed (Weiss, 1994).

### **3.8.2. Acquired Information Accuracy and Information Interpretation without Bias**

Being a participant-observer, it was my responsibility to ensure that this study would produce a valid view of information accuracy and limit any potential bias. I consciously recognized a few types of bias that required me to take specific measures in order to ensure information was interpreted accurately.

### ***Selective memory***

In order to avoid not remembering, or only remembering select information, in addition to audio-recording the interviews, I also took notes.

### ***Telescoping***

Telescoping is when something is remembered as happening, but at a different time than when it actually happened. By taking notes this bias was minimized. Ways that I aimed to ensure that the information obtained was accurate and interpreted without bias was by identifying possible threats such my own researcher bias. I also performed a pilot study. My pilot study was the collection of informal data and was performed by asking the same type of interviewee pilot questions that mimic the actual research questions. The reason I chose to do a pilot study was that it was a chance to practice interview questions and interview skills. I piloted my interview questions late in November of 2016.

## **3.9. Trustworthiness**

In order to ensure trustworthiness, I implemented a number of specific strategies. Trustworthiness refers to the credibility of a description, interpretation, correctness, or conclusion (Eisenhardt and Howe, 1982; Lecompte and Goetz, 1982; Maxwell, 1992). The concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research is debated amongst researchers (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Maxwell, 1992; Creswell, 2014), and the biggest issue is the threat to validity.

Maxwell (1992) proposed a five-point validity checklist of the kinds of threats which I used as a framework for thinking about the nature of these threats and possible ways threats might be addressed. These five points are described below.

### **3.9.1. Descriptive & Interpretive Validity**

I was concerned about the factual accuracy of my research and this included not making things up, misinterpreting, or misremembering. The way I dealt with this was to try to use interpretive validity to record meaning as accurately as possible using precise language, and descriptive validity, such as making sure to record intangible things such as stress and pitch. Both descriptive and interpretive understanding pertains to the

researcher's accounts of the world and both types of accounts are the researcher's constructions (Maxwell, 1992). To ensure that the descriptions of participants were as accurate as possible, interviews were audio-recorded in addition to my note-taking.

### **3.9.2. Theoretical Validity**

Theoretical validity is an extension of the previous two types of validity in that it addresses the theoretical assumptions that I may have brought into this study.

“Theoretical validity thus refers to an account's validity as a theory of some phenomenon. Any theory has two components: the concepts or categories that the theory employs, and the relationships that are thought to exist among these concepts” (Maxwell, 1992, p.291). For example, a faculty member's or administrator's reluctance to suggest new career development programming was seen as an act of resistance, and I could connect this with a number of different reasons. Theoretical validity is concerned with the problems that do not disappear once there is an agreement on facts. Once I was immersed in the process of data analysis, it became clear that the academic capitalism framework provided sound theoretical validity.

### ***Generalizability***

It is worth noting that there are two types of generalizability: (1) Internal – within the Langara community with those that are involved in promoting career development programming and participating in the reform of the College, and (2) External – anybody not being directly observed. The implications of the above checklist are from Maxwell's realist perspective, yet I find it useful to think about my data trustworthiness through this lens. There are other strategies that I could have employed to maximize trustworthiness, that lean more towards a constructivist approach to validation. Interviews were audio-recorded to ensure the descriptions were as accurate as possible, and information was interpreted through the process of member checking. Creswell (2014) suggests that member checking is a valuable process used to protect interpretation of data from researcher bias and it occurs after the participant has concluded their interview. Some participants were offered the opportunity to review their transcript ensuring the accuracy of their statements, however, due to interviewees cited lack of time, I did not end up member-checking everyone's statements. I did keep notes during data collection, which

helped reduce my own researcher bias and enabled greater depth in exploring relationships within that data (Birks et al., 2008).

### ***Participant Protection***

Participation was voluntary and participants had the right to refuse to participate in this study at any time or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. With each type of participation, individual interview or focus group session, participants had the opportunity to read and sign a consent form prior to the session. Consent forms were either brought back to the session or I would bring copies that they could sign before the session. Prior to either session, a sample of interview questions was sent to each individual participant and the consent form included following wording "...you will have the opportunity to discuss anything you feel is relevant as part of your experience of career development and educational programming at Langara College. Some of the interview questions will centre on the implementation of the strategic plan".

At the beginning of each interview, participants were informed that confidentiality would be maintained and their identity would be protected by use of aliases. With their permission, I changed names and details in order to protect their identity, as well as added codes to documents, which were kept on my own secure server and protected by passwords. Interviews were held in meeting rooms on campus or in personal offices.

## **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

My study involved researching people, and Kilbourn (2006) emphasizes that this intention should

*"(1) not be naïve concerning issues of power and privilege, (2) thoroughly understand (not simply be familiar with) the implications of ethical concepts such as risk, no intent to harm, informed consent, and the right to withdraw, (3) adhere to formal ethical protocols of the university and, where warranted, the host institution at which the research will take be undertaken, and (4) most importantly, act ethically".*

Classification of the study was governed by the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2, which defines "a study to be minimal or low risk if potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability of possible harms implied by participation in the

research to be no greater than those encountered by the participants in those aspects of their everyday life.”

I applied for research ethics approval from Simon Fraser University and Langara College, under the category of minimal risk emphasizing especially to Langara that the study could improve the policy of career development. I also gave participants an informed consent form. The participant consent form is in the appendices section of this thesis.

In my role as a faculty member at Langara College, I do not have any managerial power over research participants, which is why I believe they did not feel intimidated or obligated to participate due to supervisor power dynamics.

### **3.11. Situating Myself / Positionality**

Maxwell (2005) suggested writing a researcher identity memo to identify my own prior experiences, beliefs, and goals that would affect the topic I was researching. I am a faculty member, working in the Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC) at Langara College. Prior to Langara, I have held various positions in marketing, have owned two smaller businesses, and have taught business courses at the British Columbia Institute of Technology. My education includes a Master of Business Administration degree. At Langara College, I am both the researcher and an employee. The similarities between my background and research interest is the understanding that we may live in times where change is constant, where resources are declining, and where the need for innovation is present. My hope is that through this research I have discovered the impact of a strategic priorities by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming. My practitioner goal for this applied research was to discover areas that exhibit strengths for the creation of best practices when creating new initiatives within the College and to help identify challenges that can be better anticipated in the future. These will be discussed in Chapter 5.

My goal was to study what is unseen, yet important in terms of meaning that it provides to people within the college setting. I grounded my abstract concerns of transition and reform into specific people, places, and situations (Bogdan and Biklen,



2007), hence looking at faculty and administrator experiences and perceptions only in this one particular situation – where it affects the lives of those somehow connected to career development within the Institution. My belief is that this research will benefit the Institution I work for since it seems like there is never enough time to step back and look at meanings attached to what we are doing. There may be a benefit of bringing people within the Institution together in dialogue to discuss their programming and curriculum goals. I believe that this type of deliberative inquiry (Schwab, 1983) may create those collegial connections where people feel unthreatened to express their ideas to one another and engage the entire institutional community.

### **3.12. Opportunities and Limitations to Conducting my Study at Langara College**

Working at Langara gave me access to the site, people, and documents. By being on site full-time there was an opportunity to observe more and less of a chance that data would be unavailable or unreliable. Further related opportunities for this study included the space and material to present and talk about the direction that Langara is taking at different education conferences. By conducting my research at this site and with this topic, where there is a lack of prior research, it enabled an opportunity to create relevant research. It may be that by using an exploratory rather than an explanatory stance, this process served as an opportunity to identify gaps in the literature.

Due to being involved in the operations of the College, there may have been potential for bias, which is when a person, place or event is shown in an inaccurate way (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). Throughout my research, I aimed to take off my reformer hat and put on my researcher hat, and implement measures to avoid bias. One of my interviewees had a concern whether I would obtain valid information because I work in the Co-op and Career Development Centre. I cannot guarantee that the information is 100% forthcoming, however, I could also not see a conflict of interest. People seemed more than eager to share their stories and perceptions of the impact that transition has had in their place of work. The themes I selected based on my analysis were repeated by all participants.

Initially, my fear was that there would be a challenge getting an adequate number of participants to honestly talk about their perceptions, but discovered participants were

happy for this opportunity to express their thoughts. Participants were eager to share their stories, ideas, and frustrations. One research participant said, “The journey over the past three years has been one big roller coaster ride,” and everyone wanted to tell their side of the story. Finally, there may be a risk of self-reported data since it could not be independently verified. This limitation is not specific to this particular site, but rather a common limitation to all sites.

### **3.13. Conclusion**

The research conducted for this thesis had the purpose of interviewing faculty and administrators regarding the impact of strategic priorities that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming at Langara College. A major advantage to conducting my study at Langara College is that it was familiar territory where I likely had better access to information than if I was an external researcher. With this comes the danger of being too close to the research participants or importing my own workplace bias into the study, and these issues were addressed in this chapter.

The methodology that informed my work was framed using Crotty’s Four Elements of Research, which was seen in the beginning of this chapter with a visual drawing of my constructionism epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, as well as the breakdown of the methods which I used: a case study, interviews, observation, and document analysis.

Finally, there was a discussion on methodological stance, and engagement in the ethical conduct of research where the focus was on how I protected participants throughout the research. This included a description of how I ensured confidentiality, trustworthiness, acquired information accuracy, as well as information interpretation without bias, detailing specific strategies I took to eliminate bias. I have also included the Participant Consent Form in the appendices section.

## Chapter 4. FINDINGS

The purpose of this thesis was to look at the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming. I used a case study approach to examine the impact of strategic priorities through the entrepreneurial role of career development. I asked interview participants to provide their opinions regarding career development and its role in educational programming at Langara College during time of transition and reform. Three principal research questions inquired about: (1) the understandings of faculty and administrators' about career development and its role in educational programming, (2) faculty and administrators' perceptions of the most important components of a Career Development Centre, (3) faculty and administrators' engagement in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution.

A qualitative study was conducted to better understand the faculty and administrator perceptions through an in-depth and descriptive examination of changes taking place at the College. It has been said that around the world, higher education institutions are experiencing change, and Langara is making efforts to respond to increasing market pressures, declining government support, and changing demographics. A large component of this change has been the implementation of career development efforts by the College for domestic students and also, increasingly, mandatory program work experience for international students.

Internationalization is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight, 2004, p.11). The federal government's International Education Strategy, supported by provincial strategies promote the doubling of international student recruitment by 2022 (Canada, 2014). The government has said that due to an increasingly turbulent global environment, many people intend to immigrate to Canada, and one of the quickest and most cost-efficient ways to achieve this is to study at a Canadian institution. Once international students complete their study programs they are eligible to apply for a three-year work permit in Canada, and this further leads to Canadian permanent residency (Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2017). A major

finding was that Langara College fully took advantage of situational factors by focusing on creating new forms of program delivery, integrating career development programming, and achieving growth through the recruitment of international students. As one of the interview participants commented, Langara's choice of strategy was one of growth rather than stagnation and a reduction in size.

Langara College's organizational structure is lean with substantially more faculty than administrators', and a very small senior administration team. A lean organizational structure may be considered to be one of the best performing types of structure, and it has yet to be seen whether this is considered best practice in higher education. The central research question that guided this study focused on discovering what the perceptions of faculty and administrators' were regarding the role of career development and its role in educational programming.

To ensure interpretation of material was trustworthy, I generated findings by reading my data, listening to recordings, and transcribing most of my data on my own so that I could learn them well. I chose one transcript which I felt had identified most themes of interest, then colour-coded it, and gave a name to each theme on the right-hand side of the page. Then I went back to each transcript and looked for data that could be grouped into earlier identified themes. Once I found this data, I colour-coded, highlighted, and wrote a few summary words on the right-hand side of the sheets. The lived reality emerged from my interviewees' responses. I took each colour coded topic and I grouped all responses to the same topic into one area which I later analyzed and am reporting on in this chapter.

Langara College was the research site where I conducted thirteen semi-structured interviews to explore perceptions. To reiterate, I conducted seven individual interviews and one focus group session with six participants. Originally, I had planned for more interviews, however as interviews progressed, the same information kept coming up. The four final interviews clarified questions I had, provided a data triangulation point, and confirmed initial findings. Interviewees consisted of five faculty members, five faculty administrators in positions such as department chair or division chair, and three senior-level administrators, that are part of the leadership team. In order to ensure a gender-balanced response, six of the interviewees were male, and seven were female, however,

the choice of pseudonym names does not reflect gender. The following table shows interviewees' pseudonym names as well as college work titles.

**Table 4.1 Interviewees' Pseudonym Names and Work Titles**

Interviewee Pseudonym Name	Interviewee Work Title
Catherine	Faculty – Administrator
Lori	Faculty – Administrator
Sue	Faculty – Administrator
Gary	Faculty – Administrator
Doug	Senior Administrator
Christine	Senior Administrator
Sergio	Faculty – Administrator
Ray	Faculty
Mike	Faculty
Karim	Faculty
Chelsey	Faculty
Christa	Faculty
Candy	Senior Administrator

#### **4.1. Experience and Attitudes towards Langara College**

The employment time span of the interviewees ranged from 1 year to 36 years. Most had been employed at the College over 6 years and at the time of their interview all participants expressed their desire to stay with the Institution, voicing views such as, “... *every year seems to be better than the previous one (Lori, pg.1)*”.

There seemed to be a consensus amongst participants about positive things in the College and these were that people were flexible, that they had the opportunity to create, and overall it was a good place to work. Two areas were identified as possible issues that needed attention. The first included concerns about quality commitment, especially as it related to the College's continued hiring of more adjunct faculty, and a perceived lower international student knowledge base. The second issue that was frequently mentioned was the increasing workload people were experiencing off the side of their desks. Each of these issues is described by the theory of academic capitalism.

This second issue, the increased workload off the side of people's desks, was acknowledged by every single participant, either in the form of them having this extra work or in the form of senior leadership recognizing that this may indeed be an issue. Gary, who was about to leave for vacation, emphasized this through the following quote: *"Fried [referring to himself], first real break in three years, ridiculously lean, need more people to do stuff, everything off the side of the desk, so many meetings (Pg.1)."*

Others offered similar observations when talking about their workload and how they determined what their priorities were. *"I'm stretched in too many ways...and this has had a big impact on the amount of time [spent on various duties]. Which of my children do I love the most? (Candy, pg. 22)."*

The experience of these interviewees seemed to be perceived in a similar manner. They felt that there just had not been the opportunity to slow down and plan, but as Christine mentions below, the running pace has consistently increased, and it was impossible to slow down.

*We have been running full speed now for two and a half years and an analogy that I would use is: we are running downhill, and each year so that we don't trip and fall, we have to run slightly faster. When you are running slightly faster downhill, there is a higher probability that we'll trip and fall (Pg.3)*

The participant is referring to the College's lack of resources and the way the wider system is structured, where the government grant is not enough to cover basic operating costs to deliver education to domestic students. As demonstrated in the tables and financial analysis discussion in section 2.3.1 Structural Policy Change, this is the main reason Langara continues to grow by developing programming to attract international students. Interviewees hinted that without this growth through new programming and new revenue streams, the College may not have been capable of serving the domestic student base and covering operating costs. Since January 2015 it was evident to long term employees that the campus had changed significantly due to growth in new programming that had, and continues to attract international students.

*When I first started it was a much smaller institution and we tended to know almost everybody. You would gather in the employee lounge, you would run into people on a regular basis...There was a lot of walking around and talking to different people, and I think there are people that still try to do*

*that but it is such a huge place that it's not always possible to do that now (Sue, pg. 4).*

An interesting finding was that even though there may have been a need to pursue resources in different ways in order for the Institution to become entrepreneurial, participants believed that the institutional core values had not changed. I will discuss these values more in the next section.

*Langara is a typical academic institution that is slow to change. I believe that in the last five years this institution has probably undergone more changes than it had in its previous thirty five year history...[the] institution has changed, but I'm not sure it shifted from its' core values (Doug, pg. 2).*

## **4.2. Culture, Core Values, Strategic and Academic Plan**

At Langara College, people seemed to demonstrate a sense of community within the Institution. This is evident in low employee turnover. I am reminded of this by remembering my first walk around the campus prior to becoming an employee. You could feel the sense of community on campus grounds. This *feeling* is what made me look at Langara's Careers Page, and this *feeling* is what many research participants indicated as unique to this small college. The '*this feeling*' is included the notion of culture, "...where it's different is culture..." (Christine, pg. 1).

Christine was implying that the collegial culture had stayed the same regardless of other organizational changes. What has changed, participants noted, is how the people within this culture respond to external threats, while at the same time keeping that collegial culture. A collegial culture is:

*"A culture that finds meaning primarily in the disciplines represented by faculty in the Institution; that values faculty research and scholarship and the quasi-political governance processes of the faculty; that holds assumptions about the dominance of rationality in the Institution; and that conceives of the Institution's enterprise as the generation, interpretation, and dissemination of knowledge and as the development of specific values and qualities of character among young men and women who are future leaders of our society" (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008, pg. 15).*

In their book, *Engaging the Six Cultures of the Academy* (2008), Bergquist and Pawlak quote Millett (1962, pg. 62) as having identified the strength of a collegial culture as relating directly to the basic mission of the post-secondary institution: "The goal of the academic community is to provide an environment of learning, not a product of learning.

Knowledge is acquired by the individual.” While Christine implied that the collegial culture had stayed the same, others argued that a managerial culture was taking over by virtue of the College creating a strategic plan and fiscal responsibility towards goals. One interviewee stated: “*People have to realize that we are in the business of education now...*” (Doug, pg. 14).

What he meant by the term *business of education* is articulated in the next section through perceptions of culture, core values, and how those notions tie into the academic and strategic plans of the Institution guiding the newly acquired entrepreneurial direction. This may directly relate to Bergquist and Pawlak’s (2008) explanation that many colleges shift cultures and may exhibit characteristics of a managerial culture. On page 43, they define managerial culture as:

*“A culture that finds meaning primarily in the organization, implementation, and evaluation of work that is directed toward specified goals and purposes; that values fiscal responsibility and effective supervisory skills; that holds assumptions about the capacity of the Institution to define and measure its goals and objectives clearly; and that conceives of the Institution’s enterprise as the inculcation of specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes in students so that they might become successful and responsible citizens”.*

#### **4.2.1. Culture**

In this case study, I am the researcher and practitioner and, based on both my research and experience working at Langara and being part of the culture, I too would argue that the culture may have transitioned from being perceived as collegial to being perceived as a managerial culture. Culture “provides a lens through which its members interpret and assign value to the various events and products of the world” (Bergquist and Pawlak, 2008, pg. 10). From observation of people in various situations, it seems to me that people at this institution pride themselves on being part of a collegial culture, and during meetings “collegial leadership” is often a reference. It may be said that by *referencing* a collegial culture, people are actually achieving an individual and collective sense of purpose or attempting to team build rather than *participating* in an actual collegial culture.

In practice, this college environment shows a culture where educational outcomes are planned and specified. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) refer to this as an



element of managerial culture along with clearly specified criteria for judging performance. “Community colleges...in Canada grew out of the elementary and secondary school systems and their communities. They were managed like other educational institutions in the local school system. Faculty members were trained as teachers rather than scholars or researchers” (Bergquist and Pawlak, 2008, pg. 44). Research scholarship holds a very low priority at Langara College, in comparison to typical collegial settings. In essence, these authors state that in higher education, community colleges have been the main source of managerial culture, especially with the delivery of vocational programs.

Identity is a component of culture, and researchers Mael and Ashforth (1995) focused on how people identified within organizations. They measured identification through the following points, where team members answered on a scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

- When someone criticizes my organization, it feels like a personal insult;
- I am very interested in what others think of my organization;
- When I talk about my organization, I usually say “we” rather than “they”;
- My organization’s successes are my successes; and
- When someone praises my organization, it feels like a personal compliment.

Participants in my study did not directly answer these questions, and yet through the quotes in this findings section (and throughout the study for that matter), it may be assumed that people at the Institution strongly agree with Mael and Ashforth’s points, and identify with Langara’s culture.

*I like being here. Like the culture. Like the people, I work with. I’ve worked in a toxic environment before. It’s a pleasure to work with smart people. We have lots of education, and we can actually talk about stuff intelligently. In the corporate world, people with more education are often seen as threats (Gary, pg. 7).*

Interview participants believe that the Langara culture is different than everywhere else. As a comprehensive pathways institution serving a large community of people, it was seen as a large university, yet small enough to ensure support and sense of community. Interview participants described this difference.

*[Different in] how it delivers programs as at Langara, it is very much a transfer institution...as a pathways institution, getting people where they want to go and that's primarily to one of the research universities to get a degree. What that means culturally is that the link – the pure academy experience – is more so at Langara than at [other BC colleges]. The pure academy experience means that Langara is more university-like... and that means that the feeling within the academy of being a broad-based institution is very much the underlying mantra here (Christine, pg.1).*

The culture at the Institution may be seen as entrepreneurial and people seem happy to stay here until retirement. Those people that have an interest in innovation gather support from different areas and the College is open to new initiatives. “At Langara, everything grows organically, that’s the way life is here” (Doug, pg. 13).

#### **4.2.2. Core Values and Strategic & Academic Plans**

Core values describe the fundamental beliefs of a person or organization. They guide and help people determine that they are on the right path and fulfilling their vision and goals. The Langara College 2020 Strategic Plan ([www.langara.ca/langara2020](http://www.langara.ca/langara2020)) outlines this guiding vision and values in the following way:

*Our values describe what we believe in and how we will act as we implement the Strategic Plan. These values are based in part on those identified during the development of our Academic Plan, and include:*

- *Excellence - We strive for excellence – for our students, in teaching and learning, and in all aspects of administering the College.*
- *Collegiality – We welcome and include diverse people and perspectives, collaborating together in mutual respect and dignity.*
- *Innovation – We act forward thinking and open to new ideas, approaches, and technologies.*
- *Integrity – We act in the interests of our students, with honesty and transparency, and are responsible stewards of public resources.*

The institutional vision statement:

*Langara College is Canada’s pathways college. We provide students with the academic and experiential foundation to chart their course to further education, professional and personal development, and career success (Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan).*

The mission, core purpose, and mandate:

*Langara College provides accessible, high-quality undergraduate, career, and continuing educational programs and services that meet the needs of our diverse learners and the communities we serve (Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan).*

When the plan was created, there existed a threat to the Institution in the form of declining government resources as well as declining enrollment due to shifts in demographics. This greatly influenced the prioritization of financial sustainability.

*While all outcomes in the plan are important, the thematic priority is an area of particular focus for the first two years: Supporting our mission for academic excellence by prioritizing financial sustainability (Langara College, 2020 Strategic Plan).*

Participants in this research study emphasized collegiality and a student-centric attitude, despite resource dependency and the need for resource attainment. Few people were not familiar with the academic and strategic plans, and the majority of interviewees, although recognizing the strategic plan, made clear that the academic plan was what they referred to when developing new programming.

*...6 years ago there was the threat of layoffs and some people jumped on board. It's a bit worrisome that some people do not know what our vision is...that came out in our engagement survey...the college strategic plan was done before [participant had no input]. If you ask me what's the vision of Langara College – I wouldn't refer to any metrics. "We've decided to be Canada's premier pathways institution and that means in and out, and that means that we have to help our students come from different parts of the world, different parts of life, different parts of society, and we've got to funnel them in and [help them to] open up a whole world of opportunities. We're going to help these students try and get through here to be able to ultimately get to where they need to get to. That's the value proposition that Langara has, and its' always had that value proposition (Doug, pg.12).*

Some faculty members did believe or align with the strategic plan. Below are a number of perceptions regarding the strategic and/or academic plan(s) and it was clear that interview participants were divided on thoughts about their commitment to the plan(s). A few interviewees did not feel any attachment to the strategic plan, "*I don't feel like I was part of the development of it*" (Catherine, pg.13). Other participants acknowledged partial commitment to the strategic plan, "*...current strategic plan, there are probably a number of faculty and staff that are committed to it, and there are a number of people that have never read it*" (Doug, pg.8).

Some interviewees felt that they were not part of the development of the strategic and academic plans. They used them when writing proposals in order to obtain more points for their proposals thereby creating a better chance of gaining approval.

*...the academic plan has no money behind it, the strategic plan has money behind it...so whenever I'm writing a proposal that's when I'll consult these things because I want to make sure this proposal "fits here and it fits here, and it fits here". That's when I look at it. And so the more points you get from the strategic and the academic plan into your proposal, the better (Catherine, pg. 13).*

Interviewees treated the strategic and academic plans as checklists. *"I've done this, oh look, I got points here, I got point 3, I got point 5, okay, we're good" (Catherine, pg. 13).*

Although people did not have a plan to refer to in the past, there were people that now appreciated having the plans and a guiding vision.

*We didn't know what the strategic plan was. There was no plan. The plan was you show up, you teach your courses, and you leave. All these new initiatives would have never happened without the strategic plan...[be]cause now you have the "vision-role" (Lori, pg.11).*

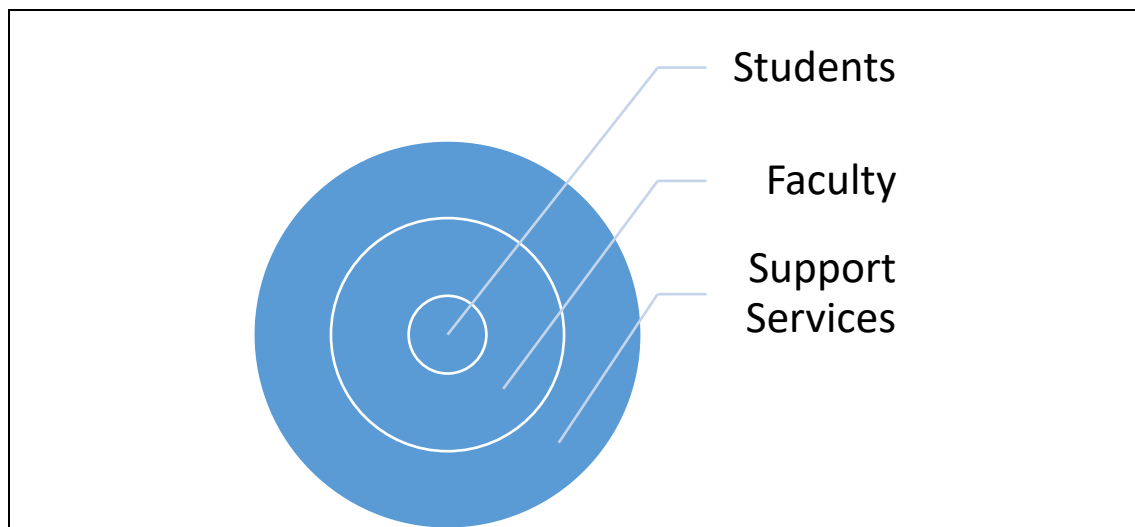
One of the research participants summed up the value of having both an academic and strategic plan.

*...the strategic plan says that we will be "Canada's Pathway College". I really like that because I think it reflects Langara's history as an institution. So what does pathway mean? Well, I think what a pathway means is that we provide a route not only to those that come to Langara but also to those who are leaving Langara... we provide opportunities...we serve the entire community – we are not elite (Christine, pg. 7).*

*The vision: "Langara is Canada's pathways college", is referenced in the academic plan. Our mission: "Langara provides accessible, quality, undergraduate career and continuing educational programs and services that meet the needs of our diverse learners and communities we serve." Our values: "excellence, collegiality, integrity, supporting our mission of excellence by prioritizing financial sustainability" (Christine, pg. 9).*

Langara may have achieved financial sustainability due to international student fees; yet many interviewees felt that there was a high future risk to this. The college depends on international student tuition for funding. Throughout the College, meetings had been taking place with an emphasis on the need for shifting from financial to

institutional sustainability. This may mean a continued emphasis on decreasing current resource dependencies and distributing obtained resources to better support faculty. As seen in the below diagram, interviewees believed that institutional sustainability meant that students are at the core as without the students there is no Institution, followed by faculty that teach the students, and finally all of the support services that help the students become successful.



**Figure 4.1** Langara’s core vision influenced by students placed at the centre, faculty next, and any support services coming into third place.

A few interviewees did not know what the institutional vision is. When asked whether they knew the vision, they said “no”. One participant offered the following explanation with obvious frustration:

*What we need is a strategy, what we need is a vision, what we need to know is what’s the vision, and who’s going to have input in that vision, let’s make a definition, what does internationalization mean? And nobody knows that. Nobody knows what our obligation to international students is, or what our obligation to domestic students and internationalization is. What’s our obligation to faculty? Do we want 100% classes with international students on? Does that make sense? What’s our obligation for language development? Nobody knows that. We have these standards, it doesn’t seem to be meeting the need. And so if someone comes and they have the prerequisites but their English is not good enough, what’s our [college’s] job? Where do we want this to go, what’s the goal? Is there an end or do we want 10% growth every year for the next 20 years? No, we can’t do that. But nobody knows that, nobody’s come out and said “this is where we’re going” (Catherine, pg.12).*

This participant stated that the academic plan was her go-to document, however in reality as a practitioner she had witnessed referencing of the strategic plan through quantitative outcome reporting.

*[The] strategic plan isn't necessarily my guiding document on a daily basis. I mean, the overall strategy around pathways, absolutely. The academic plan I would say is much more influential for me. A lot of what to me is in the strategic plan is very much around the business operations of the College as opposed to the academic operations of the College. So the academic plan to me is much more influential...I'm not opposed to the strategic plan...but when I think in terms of programming and in terms of academics my go-to document would be much more the academic plan (Candy, pg. 5).*

### **4.3. Central Research Question: Impact of a Trend in Post-secondary Education that Might be Rationalized as Academic Capitalism**

The central research question looked at answering the impact of a trend that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming. The research examined academic capitalism through the entrepreneurial role of career development and by asking interview participants to provide opinions regarding the role of career development at Langara College at a time of transition and reform. This central question was broken down into three principle research questions:

- Q1: What are the understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming?
- Q2: What do faculty and administrators perceive to be the most important components of a Career Development Centre?
- Q3: How do faculty and administrators engage in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution?

The next section will look at findings that answer these questions. It is important to mention that when I asked people how they perceived career development, I intentionally inquired vaguely in order to determine what first came to their minds. The majority answered with a question: "career development for me or for the student?" I found it interesting that they would differentiate between the two, and what I also found is that the Institution lacked in creating career development opportunities for people that

worked at the College. Career development for the student was clearly an area of reform that interviewees did think about, likely due to the strategic goals.

*We've never had to think of career development...they come to Langara, they know where they're going to go, and they look at courses [university] needs me to take. These are the courses that I'm going to take at Langara. At Langara, we are all very skilled and teach hands-on skills that universities don't...I lot of our students that go to university very often snatch up the research jobs...And now I see that [career development] is very important, and you can't deny it when sometimes people are paying a lot of money for a 4-year education which sometimes spans over six or seven years. Yeah, they are entitled to have skills that are going to make them employable. Both hands-on skills and skills up here [points to head] (Lori, pg. 7).*

An especially important finding was the career development definition that interview participants offered. When referring to their own “faculty or administrator” career development, they thought of professional development, career paths, and counselling. When referring to student career development, interviewees were talking about work-integrated learning and work-integrated education. It was fascinating that the same term had two different meanings based on the stakeholder, and based on my analysis, my assumption is that this is due to the lack of college commitment towards employee career development Section 2.3.1, Table 2.5 demonstrated how despite increasing the number of faculty to accommodate instruction, professional development spending had decreased. An important academic capitalism observation is the relationship with time. People at Langara were struggling with keeping up with the work, educating students, and providing students with career development solutions. Financial resources were not provided for employee career development, and there was not enough time to attend to Langara employee professional development and career development needs. In Cantwell and Kauppinen’s (2014) book, *Academic Capitalism in the Age of Globalization*, chapter 4 explores the “...Academic Capitalism Time Regime”, the argument is that we assign time to learning, to being, and as such our societies increasingly struggle with working longer hours and spending less time on tasks. Faculty at Langara increasingly teach more, with less secure contracts. As an example, regularized faculty (pre-PDD) usually teach in blocks of 4 courses per two terms, and then use the third term for non-instructional duty, professional development activities, and holidays. Most PDD faculty are hired on term contracts, meaning that since early 2015, these faculty members did not have access to professional development or non-

instructional duty time. With a never-ending teaching workload, the *time needed* to engage in one's own career development is unfortunately lost. As part of the strategic plan, there is an expectation *to take the time to think* about student career development, yet this same outcome for Langara College employees isn't part of the academic capitalist framework or Langara's strategic plan. According to interviewed participants, encouraging their own career development would be a welcome new strategic priority.

#### **4.4. Q1 Findings: Career Development and its Role in Educational Programming as it relates to the Strategic Plan**

Educational programming at the Institution has fundamentally changed in order to include some type of career development. During the focus group session, one participant suggested that faculty were not really sure how to attach programming to career development.

*[Throughout the College there is a] ton of work integrated learning...lot of great things happening here... what I am hearing from faculty is that they don't know necessarily what to do... there's huge engagement for a lot of program areas that believe in this stuff, but there's a disconnect between how it's attached to the programming and what happens with career development (FG, Christa, pg. 5).*

Sergio was keen to add that, "...it's meeting the needs of the marketplace" (FG, Pg. 8). All voices in the focus group agreed to this one, especially in regards to preparing students to find work in Canada.

One person noted how new companies in the education marketplace were competing for students, charging large fees for programs, and guaranteeing work placements, for example, "*Red Hat guarantees a work placement*" (FG: Christa. Pg. 8).

Another focus group participant questioned why people went to colleges and universities, and then answered his own question, "*To get a job!*" (FG, Karim, pg. 11). This prompted everyone else in the focus group to agree, with one participant adding, "*To get a job! To get careers*" (FG, Christa, pg. 11).



Many of the faculty start the curriculum development process working with employers to determine the skill that employers need, and this is not just the traditional business programs, but also the hard sciences. An example:

*They [employers] want very specific things: good reasoning skills, problem-solving, good communication skills, and a lot of soft skills so we start from there. How do we achieve this? You want people to be worldly, so where do we touch on these in these courses. So, we're kind of flushing that out, it's been a good opportunity because we never really thought about that stuff. The programs were assembled without our input, we never really knew how my course fits into the overall program (Lori, pg. 10).*

When asked whether the Institution should be incorporating career development into educational programming, this person explained:

*If career development is "This is what you need to be fulfilled and satisfied in your job and these are the job opportunities that you can pursue to meet these goals", then I think yeah...I think it [the Co-op & Career Development department] needs to be there, but I think it needs to be the full meal deal, not just 'these are the skills you need to get this job' (Catherine, pg. 4).*

Catherine goes on to explain:

*So, program development should incorporate more on the job career development or career development including on the job training that prepares students for what's going on. Plus it exposes them to skills "Oh, I really need to learn this and I didn't know that what I was doing was applicable to this area. So this is really good to know now, and it's not just a course I'm taking, this is going to help me do the thing I want to do." So I think that makes the educational experience richer too when you realize "oh, it's not just core stuff, this is what people actually do in labs" (Pg. 4).*

When asked how important they perceived career development to be in educational programming, one participant implied that it was good for the students, but also a good reflection on their own department and the entire Institution.

*I'm proud of the programs we offer and I can only be proud if students are benefitting from career development and learning what they need to [theory]...and learning how to apply that and being able to make those connections with employers through the Career Centre, Co-op, and those sorts of opportunities because once, if they are adequately employed in good jobs, then it's a good reflection on our department and our College. If we're not providing those opportunities then we're not doing our jobs, because I think we all went into teaching to make a difference in the lives of students, and in the long run, yes, they want to learn, they want to have the college experience, but the students that we get, I think, they're also here because they want good careers and they want prosperous lives at*

*the end of it, or fulfilling careers at the end of it and that plays into how we deal with career development and being supportive of it (Sue, pg. 7).*

Throughout the College, there is a lot of discussion about how important career development is for international students. The majority of international students come to Canada to complete a two-year program. Once the program is complete, they are eligible for a three-year work permit, which could later lead to permanent residency (Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2017). Interviewees commented on how they were surprised with the first cohorts of PDD students – they did not expect that everyone would be eager to find a part-time job during the academic portion of the program, as well as full-time employment after graduation.

It was intriguing to ask whether interviewees perceived career development to carry the same level of importance for both domestic and international students. The answer was “yes”, it is important but for different reasons. Both domestic and international students wanted a better career, however international students had the added pressure of succeeding in a new country and obtaining a perceived better life through immigration to Canada.

*Yeah, absolutely. I mean, it might be for different reasons, but I think if you talk to young people, they want to be able to live well, and they want to be able to have meaningful careers. I think with the international students, the ones that are planning on remaining in Canada, maybe there's a little bit more pressure because there's so much invested from their families for them to do well (Sue, pg. 7).*

When developing new programs, career development is considered at this Institution, as evidenced by the multiple comments below:

*Yes, I think we do [consider career development when developing new programs]...we definitely talk to our advisory committees to see what's happening in the real world. Offering courses that are relevant that will somehow maybe give the student the edge when they graduate (Sue, pg. 9).*

*I think it [career development] should be threaded in everything that we do...so you are standing up there, you have to explain to students what you are teaching and how it fits where their personal goals are and so that's no.1. But there is another layer of complexity. We know that people now with an education, by the time they have graduated, we need to prepare them for something we don't know exists, and so how am I in my day to day teaching going to accomplish [this]. So that whole global awareness piece, I think it's important for us to make sure that the curriculum has that*

*threaded through the student's entire academic journey...I think that career development is absolutely important and it shouldn't be this stand-alone thing that kind of sits out there. It's just like when we talk about cultural competencies, indigenous learnings, these things now need to be threaded through people's curriculum and be part of people's learning outcomes. I don't think it's just Langara College – I think Academia, in general, is going to have a really hard time with this because there are some people that are believers that we shouldn't [think of career development] (Doug, pg.6).*

*I think career development is going to be important. The other piece is whatever we are teaching domestic and international students – they need to understand how that's relevant to where they are going to go in their personal and professional careers and we sometimes forget that personal, professional careers are not Metro Vancouver. Could be BC [British Columbia], Canada, North America, China, India, somewhere else where they could end up landing. And I think its [career development] absolutely critical (Doug, pg. 7).*

*If you finish your degree, your odds of getting a job and being employed are actually very high because you have proved over the four years [in school] that you can do a sustained amount of work for a long time...and those are good things attractive to any employer (Candy, pg. 10).*

*Students do need to think about “what does my future look like”... need to be focused and be able to say “why do I want to work for Telus or the Royal Bank” or whatever, beyond just “I need a job” (Candy, pg. 11)*

The overall findings were that participants believed that career development has an increasingly important role in educational programming as it relates to the strategic plan and should be considered when developing new programming in order to help the students learn-by-doing, as well as better prepare them for the challenges of our global environment.

#### **4.5. Q2 Findings: Career Development Definitions – Most Important Components of Career Development as Related to the Strategic or Academic Plans**

In the previous sections, I mentioned that participants were asked for their own definition of career development and a summary of their definitions is outlined in Section 4.3. The participants were also asked what they considered to be the most important components of career development. One participant stated that it is a “...lifelong endeavor... it shouldn't be just at the transition points of the students' life...it's not linear, it's all over the map and it's continuous...” (FG Ray, pg. 1).

A second participant insisted that career development was about “*specific skills within and/or experience within a given profession*” (FG: Chelsey pg. 2).

In answering the question about whether they believed the College is committed to their own well-being and success in terms of career development, answers were surprising, considering the focus on student career development. If we, however, take into account academic capitalism theory and declining resources, then the answers may not be as surprising. “*We don’t do any career development in our own department for ourselves*” (FG, Mike, pg. 20). “*There is not a lot of support in coaching and career development, so that’s why they have a hard time finding people to be department or division chairs. There is no roadmap*” (FG, Sergio, pg. 21).

One person was sympathetic and understanding towards the Institution, stressing that she thought that the Institution wanted to engage employees in career development, but that the college growth was happening too fast for engagement to happen.

*I think that there is a commitment to the students for a whole lot of reasons, not just because of funding or growth. Is it done well at all levels? No. In terms of me, individually, I would say that the Institution wants to but we are growing so quickly and so fast that nobody can keep up to what the needs are individually or what we need to support students (FG, Christa, pg. 21).*

An interviewee defined career development from the faculty and student perspective noting that due to the collegial model where faculty rotates in administrative functions, people were not trained to be administrators, nor did many want this responsibility. “*HR is talking about leadership development/leadership coaching, but again, yes, I think it’s a huge shortfall here...*” (Gary, pg. 5).

*Most faculty [members] do not want to be administrators. They do it because of our collegial model...and quite grudgingly because it’s their turn. And they are ill-equipped to do it because it takes a lot of training...and then [years later] you could be the subordinate of the person you were evaluating...They are not comfortable having those tough conversations with faculty – the actual performance reviews. It’s a skill set that’s very managerial (Gary, pg. 5).*

When focusing on career development for students, this same participant had perceptions which were quite different and there was almost an insistence on career development as being a large part of the entire student experience, as well as part of the

degree. *“The co-op piece is invaluable...I can’t see ever not having that as part of the degree. You must have real experience. We are not [a university] and you are not leaving with just theoretical knowledge” (Gary, pg. 7).*

Christine looked at career development through a lens which connects it to work-integrated learning (WIL), or what Lave and Wenger (1991) also defined as situated learning, where learning “takes place in the same context in which it is applied (Lave and Wenger, 1991, pg. 40).

*[Career development] ties into work-integrated learning (WIL)...when coop was implemented it was a way of trying to take what was being learned in the classroom, so taking theory and providing the practical, integrating the practical into practice, so theory in practice began. Forming a better praxis (Christine, pg. 6).*

Praxis may be thought of as the process by which a theory or learning is performed, practiced, or achieved. The interviewee went on to explain why she thought career development needed to blend the theory that students were learning with praxis.

*To me what is fundamental is providing context to the theory. So here’s the theory, here’s the practice and how do the two meet...what it really is, is taking the theory and practice and blending them together to form a better praxis, better prepare students for what happens outside when they leave the academy. That could be for further studies, for the field of work, and so it gives them a sense of what is really going on. So this is what I think career development is (Christine, pg. 6).*

*Career development is showing a person the options that are available and letting them know the pathway that they can take to get to that. So there are lots of different options and there are lots of different ways to get there and so what’s the best way to get to that point (Catherine, pg. 2).*

Catherine went on to explain her beliefs:

*Post-secondary education should be about an education and the career is something else that’s on the side. Looking at the international focus, there’s a lot of students who want to get a job and so there’s been more emphasis in the last six, seven months on what that means and what needs to happen at the College (Catherine, pg. 3).*

So despite Catherine’s personal belief that education should be free of market influences and should not focus on careers, her students’ needs come first. If her student’s express that they need jobs, she believes that it is then the college’s responsibility to prepare them and integrate learning to meet these needs. She believes

we can compare by looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, published in 1943 in a paper titled *A Theory of Human Motivation*. The theory states that a person needs to be able to meet one basic need in order to move on and meet the next need. As you progress up the ladder, your needs become less basic and more focused on self-growth. In this case, interview participants perceived that many students *need* career development in order to continue their education, pay for various expenses, and obtain meaningful employment during and/or at the end of their programs. Sue agrees with Catherine on the aspect of connecting theory to practice and also voices her opinion on what career development should be like for people working at the College.

*I think that career development is providing the resources and the time, which I guess is part of the resources, and the support for people to grow in their careers. So it could be in-house workshops, seminars. It could be really supportive of people wanting to go to college here or take courses elsewhere, and it's providing the funding to be able to do that. But it also means having those opportunities for people to move into, to have a sense that "it's worth it for me to do A, B, or C because I can see that there is, within this organization, there's a place for me to go." ... For students...it's ensuring that our courses are very applied, that they're learning the theory obviously...but they have to also have the understanding of how this gets applied in the real world (Sue, Pg. 6).*

Sue goes on to talk about experiential learning and the college career development centre.

*The other important aspect of it [career development] is having experiential learning opportunities if the student wants it, and I think that's where things have changed, because... going way back, students would come in and if they were doing a career program, it was those practicum and those co-op opportunities that were essential because they really did not have a lot of other opportunities to practice what they'd learned in the classroom. Now there's still some students that fit that criteria, and more and more as we bring in more international students that maybe come from cultures where you just go to school, you don't have to work while you are going, or you don't work meaningful type jobs. Now we do have students that do have some really, quite senior roles and are also going to school. So, maybe it's not integral for those students, but I think that I was very pleased when we opened up the Career Centre because I think that even for students that already have jobs, there is room to maybe go into something else and have that opportunity for employers to communicate with us when they have these opportunities and for students to be able to connect (Sue, Pg. 6).*

Sue continues to talk about the specific advantage of career development that international students experience:

*I do think that having co-op opportunities, even for students that have the work experience, is still an opportunity maybe to do something different and especially for PDD [international] students. I know it's sometimes hard for them to find those positions. But in the long run if they are doing a program and they are new to Canada, and they're able to find a related position – in the long run that's what is going to make them successful employee's and also, if they are planning on staying in Canada, that's what's going to give them the edge as far as being able to stay in Canada and have prosperous lives once they're done with their education (Sue, Pg. 6).*

Interviewee's opinions were undivided in that it did not matter whether the student was a domestic or international student. They expressed that all students need career guidance since most would not even know what is available without this guidance.

*I don't believe most students have a clue what they want to be when they grow up. Career Development actually starts with the exploration of what kinds of opportunities there are out there and what do I like doing that might fit with some jobs that are out there, and so I think that's part of career development...so that should influence the kinds of things I'm studying, and then there's the whole again, that piece of getting you ready to actually successfully be able to apply for jobs and get interviews...be the successful candidate in a competitive marketplace (Candy, pg. 8).*

One participant was keen to describe how he would define career development, and what it would mean to him, and at the same time, he acknowledged that this was not something that was done at the Institution.

*[Career Development is] some level of external coaching... I think 360 feedback is important – two way for sure. So where are the areas of interest that will enhance my skills, understanding of my portfolios, broaden my skills...again this not something we typically do at this Institution (Doug, pg. 5).*

#### **4.6. Q3 Findings: How New Curricula is developed to accommodate the New Vision for the Institution**

In the past, each department had the sole responsibility for developing a curriculum that satisfied their specific program requirements. Although departmental responsibility is still key, this research has also shown that people within the Institution do refer to the overall college vision. They communicate with others outside of their departments when redesigning or developing new curriculum. A major consideration

during this process of creation or redesign is the vision of *meeting student needs*, which increasingly reflects some form of work integrated learning (WIL).

*I don't think that all WIL needs to be a coop. There are volunteer opportunities, there are internships, externships, and there are just pure work placements. There's all those things that provide students with some form of learning to get a better sense of the world. In this Institution, it's very important, not only in terms of participation but in very large numbers too. In an institution like this you have to be very careful when you are imposing curriculum guidelines on faculty because anything to do with the curriculum under the Colleges and Institutes Act with respect to the powers of EDCO [Education Council] is the purview of the faculty and not the purview of the administration (Christine, pg. 7).*

Participants' thought that integrating career development into the curriculum, transition, and reform may encompass doing an assessment of both funding needs and student needs. “[Career development] I think it's here to stay. It's just part of the core student learning experience that students need to be successful. The challenge is that it's not funded. So how do you fund it?” (Christine, pg. 10). Christine acknowledged that funding is an issue as government grants decline despite the growing need for career development. “Career Development should be looking at the whole person as opposed to just the job you're going to get at the end of it” (Catherine, pg. 4).

In answering the question of how the curriculum is developed, this is what Catherine had to say in regards to the development of one course that many students take in their first year. She emphasized that it was a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) that works on developing curriculum.

*[Feedback was provided by] departments that we've been involved with, faculty and students. We have a lot of student feedback. So we developed these ten units and there were 300 students and three questions on each unit, so there's about 900 pieces of feedback per unit and five units, so 4,500 pieces of feedback. And the students were giving us feedback too. They were writing “I liked this, I didn't like this.” ... we made changes based on their commentary. [Our department and library] has been involved in development... educational technology has been involved, the teaching and curriculum development centre have been involved. International education has been involved...we have to consult everyone...to get it passed by EDCO [Education Council] (Catherine, pg. 11).*

The participant continued to talk about how she and her colleagues consulted more departments in this example.



*...we've gone out to several departments, kinesiology, the arts department, Studio 58... business etc...and we'll have to continue doing that in the curriculum development (Catherine, pg. 11).*

When asked what influenced the development of new programming – whether it was free will, a “Band-Aid” solution, or whether it was handed down by someone, the response was the following: *“I proposed it, together with [XYZ person from a different department]. We wrote the proposal...So I don't think it was a “Band-Aid”, it was more “we don't have anything, we need to develop something” (Catherine, pg. 11).*

Since the curriculum is being developed in conjunction with a number of departments, rather than at the discretion of a sole department, I asked whether participants' thought that a “community of practice” existed within the Institution. Below is the response of one interviewee who did not know what a community of practice was, so I first explained:

*It is a group of people that gather together and they work together, they practice together, they develop stuff together, they innovate together. It can be from different areas of your organization, it can be within your department. So I am wondering whether you feel that Langara as a whole, whether we have those communities of practice, whether they exist, whether you see them taking place anywhere.*

The interviewee answered:

*Well, I think there are committees that are cross-functional, that people do get together and work on [projects], like the APAG groups are a good example of that...I feel like the one that I'm in, we can pretty much talk about our point of view. But I feel like that on most things that I participate in. So, I see the value though. I think that there are different user groups and committees around the College that probably would fit that criterion. Should there be more? Probably. I think it's of value to be able to brainstorm and be able to come up with ideas with other like-minded or not like-minded people. Sometimes it is even better with not like-minded people. Maybe this sort of thing could be encouraged more (Sue, pg. 13).*

Since the new vision does emphasize work-integrated education, I asked about the importance of a career development center for the entire college. Should Langara College highlight work-integrated education, and educate all students about the importance of getting a job, pathway, a career, regardless of program area?

*In my ideal world, yes, I do! Are we resourced to do that here? Absolutely not! But do I think students should be, all students should be thinking about*

*it from the first year... I mean, this is why, you know they've put this stuff in the high schools (Candy, pg. 4).*

#### **4.7. The Bottom Line Motivation Objective – International Students**

*I think it's all about the money, and about saving our butts, because we were in a hole (FG, Sergio, pg. 17).*

Sergio echoed perceptions that many of his colleagues had. The College may have been at a serious risk of downsizing, but then figured out a way to create programming that satisfied international students' needs. The fees they collected from these international students eliminated immediate risk and also grew revenues. *"The program just exploded, and it was unexpected, the dollar signs showed, and nobody was taking the time to actually put all of the supports in place" (FG, Mike, pg. 17).*

Supporting this incredible growth may have been a challenge. *"There was no operational budget. They [the College] moved this programming through the system and there's no awareness of the impact on the system" (FG, Sergio, pg. 17).*

The system Sergio is referring to is staffing, student support services, and outdated operational systems. Many employees feel that they are at the end of their rope in terms of how much more can be added to their plate.

*They are getting more internationals that are bringing in more dollars... Those dollars are making up for deficiencies that the provincial government is continually defunding, so it's not like there is extra money because they are bringing in international students, they are just closing gaps because of the defunding (FG, Chelsey, pg. 17).*

Everyone in the focus group agreed loudly to this. It seemed crucial to determine what exactly had influenced new programming at this Institution, and I asked this in an open-ended way, *"What has influenced new programming at the Institution?"* The response had been similar among participants and the one below seemed to summarize best what general perceptions were around the College.

*I'd say over the last 5 years definitely we've had a lot of influence on a lot of the programming that has happened at this Institution, service-wise, given the realities with international students. Some of that has been driven by international students, some of it by leadership...this is a decision that we [Institution] made if you go back 3-4 years ago, we were in an*

*economically difficult situation, so we had two choices: 1) we were either going to contract our way out of this, 2) grow our way... We decided not to contract, and try to grow... the first thing is: we need more product, we need new programs. People don't realize the benefit of some of these new programs may have been the intention of the international student, but have resulted in a net benefit of the Institution as a whole. Our institutional growth whether you have more security, or more people cleaning facilities, all the growth is triggered by international students but benefiting the whole Institution. We still have ways to go, but it's about finding balance (Doug, pg. 9).*

It may be that people understood that, yes, initially, it was about the bottom line, and now there was evidence that the entire college was benefitting from the new institutional direction designed to meet student needs.

#### **4.7.1. Challenges to Maintaining Student Recruitment**

Interview questions were open-ended, and yet nobody within the College mentioned any challenges to maintaining student recruitment, even though one interviewee thought this to be a threat to the Institution. One participant explained that domestic recruitment would be on the decline for the next 12 years, after which we should expect an increase in domestic students. The reason this participant thought this way was that there were increases in the number of children enrolling in Kindergarten (the year before Grade 1).

Participants did not provide any thoughts on contingency plans or “what if’s” in a scenario where international students decided that Canada and Langara College were not viable places to study, which was mentioned as a risk. Many participants had mentioned lack of time to think or breathe, which is why they may not have had the opportunity to think about threats.

#### **4.8. Challenges to Increasing Programming for International Students**

The main challenges to increasing programming for international students were space and workloads. Langara College has a relatively small campus and it is becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate classes. There are constant renovations on campus in attempts to create better spaces. Even the leadership team has been in

portables, while attempts have been made to renovate other spaces for them, since their offices had been converted to classrooms.

The second important challenge is workload. Almost everyone interviewed had strong thoughts and the inability to keep up with their own workloads. Participants frequently referred to having to resort to *working off the side of their desks*.

#### **4.8.1. Quality, Plagiarism, and Lack of Student Support Services**

Interestingly, this seemed to be an enormous issue for faculty and administrators. Quality curriculum, relevant learning that included some aspect of career development, and elimination of plagiarism. Participants thought that more could be done in the realm of relevant learning, and yet were satisfied with new college policies on plagiarism.

Some participants noted the lack of student support services, and in particular pointed to the need for accessible written English language education for international students, more appropriate counselling support for international students, and more work-integrated education (career development) for the entire college.

### **4.9. Concern for Meeting Unique Student Needs**

Participants acknowledged that the Institution has turned to internationalization efforts in order to offset declining government funding and this was generally supported. There was mention of concern for meeting students' needs, and now that the Institution was out of immediate danger, participants emphasized the need to focus on services. Part of these services is meeting student needs and career development seems to be a large priority for both domestic and international students. I asked whether there was a difference between career development for international students and domestic students, and the participant below elaborated on this difference. Doug's elaboration also referenced changing demographics and career development differences between international students and the local demographics in general.

*I'm going to complicate your answer. The answer is yes, but you've got now, in domestic students what I will call "domestic-domestic" students, students that maybe mom and dad, both raised in Canada, grew up in a metropolitan area. You then have our "new immigrant domestic students," whose parents immigrated a long time... they're settlers here and [these*

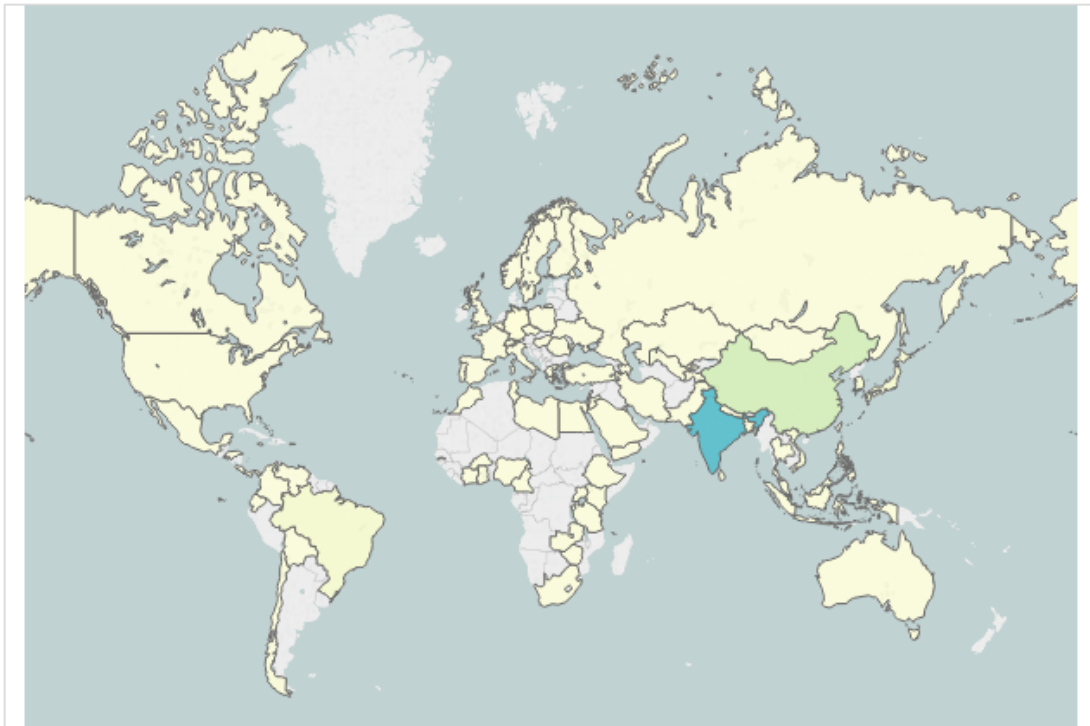
*students] are pretty much born and raised Canadian, but have some attachment to their background. Then you have the “immigrant-domestic” student, who recently arrived during the last three-five years, so for all intensive purposes, they are still international and they are still not Canadian culturalized, and English may not be their primary language spoken at home. Flip that on the international students, for what I will say are “international-international” that come from a non-Canadian country for the first time, travelling from overseas and landing at our doorstep. They need our help. We have “international students that are in our local areas”...they have been studying already for a few years in the K-12 system, they graduate as a BC grade 12 student. They need a whole different set of support. They are not permanent residents, they are international students. How do we help those? And then you have the “temporary transitors” who might be coming to Canada for a short period of time, to be either educated or maybe work and be educated. Working holidays and those types of things... So I think career development has to look at those 6 contexts because you are going to get a different learner, so I do think that as an institution or as a sector, we need to consider the global citizenship piece (Doug, pg. 6).*

Needs are not the same as goals. For international students, immigration is a goal and at the same time, obtaining a job may be a need. In this respect, I would argue that all students may have the same need regardless of whether domestic or international and career development may play an important role in meeting these unique needs. In the demographics charts below it seems clear that in past fiscal year 2016/2017, the largest percentage of international students came from India with a total of 2,733 students, with the next big market being China with 1,165 students. The top program was LEAP which is Langara College’s “Learning English for Academic Purposes” program. What is interesting to note from the next two tables is where international students are coming from (Table 4.2), and the growth in international students (Table 4.3) studying at Langara College.

**Table 4.2 Changing Student Demographics Showing Top Countries International Students Come From and Their Top Programs (Source: Langara College, 2017)**

Year Type: Academic Year | Year: AY16-17 (partial) | Program Type: All | Program: All | Country: All

Current Selection: Year: **AY16-17 (partial)** | Program Type: **All** | Program: **All** | Country: **All**



Filter the views by selecting any country in the map.

**Top Countries**

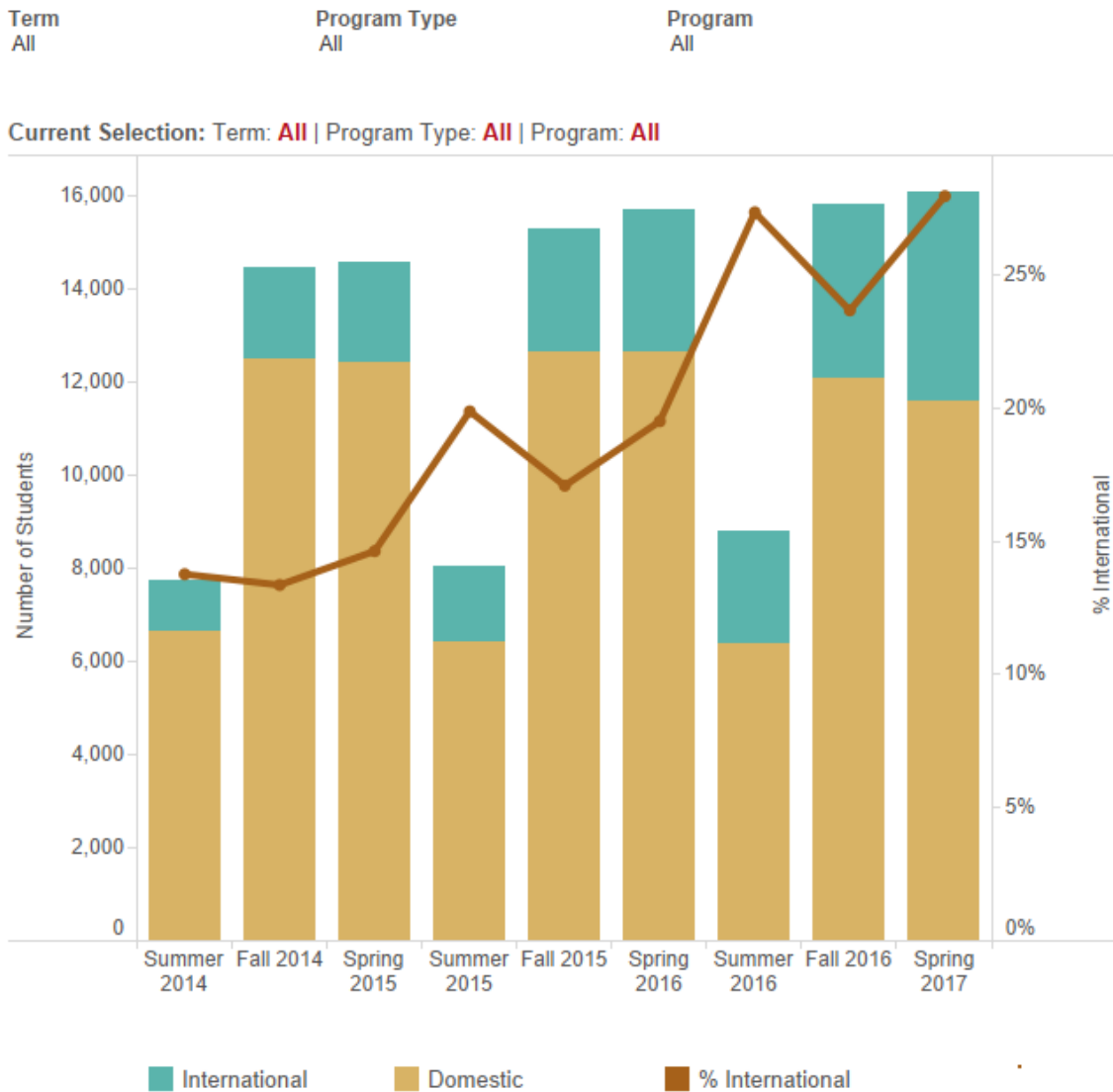
1	India	2,733
2	China	1,165
3	Japan	256
4	Brazil	251
5	Viet Nam	168
6	South Korea	164
7	Undeclared	161
8	Saudi Arabia	52
9	Indonesia	51
10	Taiwan	40
Total		5,415

**Top Programs**

1	LEAP	796
2	Computer Science	550
3	Health Sciences	438
4	Commerce	394
5	Business Management	328
6	General Arts	306
7	Computer Studies	290
8	Business Administration, Post-Degree	261
9	General Sciences	216
10	Kinesiology	174
Total		5,415

Domestic student numbers have declined, while international student numbers have increased.

**Table 4.3** This figure shows the number of domestic and international students at Langara College. Domestic students include Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and refugees. International students are those studying in Canada under a Student Visa (Source: Langara College, 2017)



International students frequently site immigration as a goal, and career development or obtaining a job as a need.

### 4.9.1. Student Needs

It was felt that all students benefit from career development and especially international students. Participants noted that the primary reason students come to study at Langara is that they expect to obtain employment and stay in Canada. By studying at a Canadian institution and gaining local work experience, students can further apply for three-year Canadian work permits, which subsequently leads to Canadian permanent residency. An interviewee assumed that this could be the main reason why work experience courses were a mandatory part of the PDD programs, so I asked other interview participants to comment on why work experience is a mandatory component of the Post Degree Diploma (PDD) programs. Below are the findings:

*...there is mountains of evidence that immigrants tend not to do well, their overseas education tends to get discounted, they tend not to do well and so we have a lot of people underemployed. So to me, this is a way of transitioning people more successfully into the Canadian workplace (Candy, pg. 4).*

Candy went on to talk about skills and work-integrated learning.

*And I also firmly believe that there are two skill sets. There's the skill set that you need, and the knowledge and whatever, to do the job and then there's the knowledge and the skills you need to actually get the job and those are completely two different things. You might be really, really good at doing the job but if you don't interview well, no one will ever know that because they will never hire you. [Reminder, why work experience mandatory] Big believer in work-integrated education and knowing that this [PDD program] was primarily people that were intending to immigrate, making sure that we could help them be successful moving into the Canadian workplace (Candy, pg. 5).*

One of the easiest ways of immigrating to Canada is by enrolling in a Canadian educational institution and completing a two-year degree. Candy thought that this seemed to be the perfect match between what international students needs were, and what the Institution was offering in terms of educational programming for PDD students.

*...by far the easiest way to immigrate into a country. The federal government is reinforcing, "if you want to come in, this is the way to do it, through a two-year program"... It's allowing them [international students] to immigrate and it's allowing them [the government] to give to the schools the funding that they need to basically cover their budgets (FG, Chelsey, pg. 18).*



International students are often very young and far away from their homes for the first time. Students come from a variety of countries, cultures, and environmental influences. One of the participants talked about how some students were well off financially, and yet a large number of international students had their families and villages pay for them to be here and to become successful. This is enormous pressure on a twenty-year-old student, and the interviewee felt that the Institution had a moral duty to help these students become successful.

*We have some students that come in and their families have a lot of money. But we also have a large number of students whose entire village paid for them to be here. **We are honour-bound, duty-bound morally to help these students be successful.** And so we have to figure out, and I think we've figured that out... as soon as these students walk in the door...our job is to help them get to where they need to be, and help them learn skills that they need to get there (Christine, pg. 12).*

At 5.6%, British Columbia has one of Canada's lowest unemployment rates (Statistics Canada, 2016). There are many entry-level jobs, in fact, "British Columbia continues to have the highest vacancy rate in the country at 3.1 per cent representing 56,000 unfilled jobs" (Canadian Federation for Independent Business, 2017). Despite this, new immigrants with higher education qualifications have a hard time finding employment in their area of expertise. Many new immigrants end up driving taxi cabs, working in lower end jobs, or starting their own small business. This is especially true for those immigrants with lower English language skills (Skilled immigrants struggle to find jobs as government plans to welcome more, CBC, 2016).

Participants commented that Langara College's Coop and Career Development Centre was focused on educating employers about the benefits of hiring PDD students. The staff in this Centre are frequent attendees at networking events where they try to educate employers about the fact that hiring an international student does not involve any extra paperwork nor money. The perception was that this department was one of the least funded departments carrying such a huge weight on their shoulders, and as Sue explains below, "...if we want to get employers on board we also have to maybe have more resources to build our image with employers. That might help as far as student placements" (pg. 9). Placing students is meeting international student needs.

#### Lack of Resources to Meet Student Needs

It may be that people from service departments have the largest issue with resourcing. Departments which are able to attach sections to workload can more easily justify the acquisition of resources, both financial and human. Others are stuck in overflowing work, and the impossibility of quantifying workload. *“There are resources, it’s just exploring how much resources there are and where to get the resources from”* (Catherine, pg. 2).

The person quoting the above is part of a department that can easily attach sections to workload. The below quote is an administrator’s perception.

*...the PDD, career, and co-op would have never have grown without the PDD money, and that wasn’t an institutional decision. That was the only way to get the Institution to start investing in this area from a financial perspective. And now, you are at a point where you can’t live without it. But the reality is it took the PDDs to get us to this point. Without the PDDs, we’d still be trying to figure out what to do with career and co-op, and the career centre. I think we need to do a better job of communicating those pieces* (Doug, pg. 14)

In order to capture these differing perspectives, the final quote in this section is from an interviewee who is a faculty member. This interviewee thought that the largest pressure was on staff in the CCDC who work on, teach, and participate in career development educational programming for the entire college.

*Communication has completely broken down and we don’t know what’s going on. Part of that is that we are growing so fast, and just reacting, reacting, reacting...we’re doing a great job with students getting them where they need to go, but in the meantime, they [leadership] have to start looking at what’s going on for us, cause all you are going to see is people leaving or going on disability* (Christa, pg. 21).

## **4.10. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented the findings of my research that allow us to look at the impact of a trend that might be rationalized as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming. The chapter started with discussing experiences and attitudes towards Langara College and looked at the culture and core values of the Institution. It highlighted the strategic and academic plans, which were perceived by some interviewees to be a checklist for obtaining approval and funding for new ideas.

The findings for the research questions were presented in this chapter, and these included interviewee perceptions of what career development is as well as its role in educational programming. There was a noted difference in how interview participants defined career development for themselves and for students. For both faculty and administrators, career development related more to professional development, whereas when thinking of students, career development was work-integrated learning and work-integrated education.

Examples of resource dependency were identified, which prompted a section on the bottom line objective and developing curriculum and programming that meets student needs.

The next chapter will summarize research findings through an academic capitalism lens and discuss the potential influence of mandates on higher education. This final chapter will outline the significance of internationalization, the growing role of career development, and the corporate approach to transition and reform. This section will end with implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter 5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1. Chapter Outline**

This chapter starts with an introduction and revisits the purpose of this study, demonstrating the application and significance of various theoretical frameworks to the research findings. Summarized findings from the research questions are repeated and merged into a discussion of the Six Emergent Themes. This chapter also describes the implications for policy and practice that have emerged from the interview data presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes a list of recommendations that have surfaced from the research findings and a discussion of the study's limitations. The chapter concludes with offering ideas for future research, and my reflection of this study and my learning journey.

### **5.2. Introduction**

The lack of resources and the need to generate new programming which would attract paying international students may have created an entrepreneurial opportunity for Langara College and the subsequent transition impacted the traditional systems within the Institution. There are many systems and subsystems within the College that enabled systems thinking to occur, and this transition to entrepreneurialism to happen, which is why systems thinking may be an important way of explaining this entrepreneurial transition in the future (Checkland, 1981; Getzels and Guba, 1957; Senge, 1990). Departments, individuals, which include bargaining groups and preferred groups, communities of practice, and processes within the Institution can all be thought of as systems. These systems have influenced and been influenced by institutional change throughout Langara College and may have enabled people to take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities provided by this trend in post-secondary education that may be rationalized as academic capitalism.

Entrepreneurial opportunities and other elements of academic capitalism, encourage new resource creation which at this Institution led to attracting international students. In order to attract international students the College needed to meet the needs of these new students. Top among these needs include the ability to search and obtain a

job which would enable students to obtain a three-year work permit in their quest for permanent residency in Canada. Campus-wide there needed to be, and this need continues, a focus on the integration of career development curriculum throughout most programming. This may be especially important within the Post Degree Diploma program curriculum that is specifically designed for international students of which 99% say the reason they are at Langara is that this PDD program is their pathway to immigrating to Canada.

In Chapter 2, I explained how entrepreneurs within an academic setting act independently or as part of an organizational system to instigate innovation. By using the Strategic Plan as a guiding document, faculty and administrators within the College are organized and supported to be entrepreneurial. This case demonstrates the effects of the impact of academic capitalism through the lenses of resource dependency and entrepreneurialism.

This thesis presented a case study about Langara College, exploring the impact of a trend, thought of as academic capitalism through perceptions of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming. The study allowed me to ask questions that enabled understanding of the relationship amongst systems within the College, perceptions, and ways in which programs are developed. The main benefit of using a case study was that it provided rich details and a holistic view of the systems, which enabled an in-depth inquiry into Langara College.

### **5.3. Study Purpose Revisited**

Langara College's Strategic Plan states that independent new programs will generate 75% of revenues. To achieve this target, transition and reform are a necessity and this necessity has expedited the creation of the Co-op and Career Development Centre (CCDC) as key in the role of ongoing career development. There may, however, be a gap between the strategic plan visioning, and the lived experiences of faculty and administrators who create educational programming and enact a 'new direction' for the Institution that hinges on the rhetoric of entrepreneurialism. Consequently, the problem addressed is the presumed gap between policies and processes surrounding attainment of strategic goals and the perceptions and experiences of faculty and administrators who

have the responsibility or receive guidance by policies, processes, and development of programs with a career development component.

Organizational behaviours have changed in Canadian higher education (Levin, 1994) and the history of BC Colleges has pointed towards meeting skill development or workforce needs. The government funding priorities have changed in light of their diminishing budgets, but the need for Langara College to innovate is essential for the survival of the Institution.

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that could be framed as academic capitalism by revealing faculty and administrator perceptions about career development and its role in educational programming, rather than career development theories themselves. The research examined academic capitalism through the entrepreneurial role of career development and by asking interview participants to provide opinions regarding the role of career development at Langara College a time of transition and reform. Three principal research questions provided findings that revealed: (1) the understandings of faculty and administrators' about career development and its role in educational programming, (2) faculty and administrators' perceptions of the most important components of a Career Development Centre, and (3) faculty and administrators' engagement in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution.

The study results show how the Institution's Strategic Plan, which was created to brand and provide direction, could in fact significantly affect the lived experiences of those who it influences and guides. Following is a list of purposes that led this study:

- To explore faculty and administrator perceptions of career development at a time of transition and reform, when the strategic plan states the need to create programming that generates revenue for the College.
- To provide a more holistic view of the strategic plans "push" towards and impact of entrepreneurial initiatives within the working lives of administrators and faculty.
- To demonstrate the possible effects of academic capitalism at a medium-sized college, as well as lived experiences of faculty and administrators tasked with making college programming relevant and revenue generating.

This study explored how faculty and administrators' working in the College experience and respond to academic capitalism. Academic capitalism is thought of as

the pursuit of external revenue, markets, and market-like behaviour in this case by Langara College. This research expands on existing literature to include perceptions of faculty and administrators' on the role of career development at a time of transition and reform in a comprehensive college setting where career development is seen as the example of academic capitalism at work.

#### **5.4. Application of Theoretical Frameworks to Research Findings and Methodology**

The theoretical framework of the study used entrepreneurship and resource dependency theory as useful frameworks for viewing academic capitalism. The findings confirmed evidence of entrepreneurship and resource dependency theory, but also added notions of internationalization, curriculum deliberation, and reflective practice.

Theories have an important role in explaining various situations. Depending on the context at hand, a researcher is tasked with choosing a framework most suited to his or her needs. I used academic capitalism as the main theoretical framework to guide and analyze the research data collected at this institution. Other frameworks were used in an attempt to explain the current situation at Langara, as well as provide recommendations. This applied research thesis identified relevant theoretical frameworks and employed them in conjunction with research findings through six emergent themes. The theoretical frameworks used to explain the six emergent themes include: 1) Structural policy change, 2) Academic capitalism and resource dependency theory, 3) Internationalization 4) Career Development theory, 5) Corporatization, and 6) Entrepreneurship.

Academic capitalism is a framework that explains motivations and outcomes in this research. Research participants at Langara College either view career development as a positive learning element since it connects to employment outcomes, or as a negative learning element since education is viewed as a good in its own right. In other words, career development became a proxy for academic capitalism. People do not talk about academic capitalism though in a college setting, and most did not know the meaning of academic capitalism. Career development and its role in education is the motivation for and the outcome of transition and reform, and as such the theory of academic capitalism is more useful in interpreting and understanding this case than a career development theory.

The literature suggests that colleges and people within them, have been relatively insulated from the market, and have yet to become academic entrepreneurs (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Levin, 1994, 2002, 2005; Mars 2007, 2008, 2010). This study supports existing literature that claims that there are inconsistencies in how academic capitalism is experienced in higher education (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). In other words, academic capitalism is not universal in universities and colleges, or even amongst the varied educational departments within a single institution. Instead academic capitalism is *uneven* as Slaughter and Leslie said, "Movement toward academic capitalism is far from uniform, indeed, it is characterized by unevenness" (1997, pg. 12).

## 5.5. Discussion of Findings

The central research question was: *What are the perceptions of the faculty and administrators regarding career development and its role in educational programming at Langara College?*

Interviewees noted career development was an essential component of learning to be threaded throughout the curriculum. All interviewees were convinced that career development plays an important role in education and should be part of any type of curriculum, and examples included more lab time for sciences courses, more clinical time for nursing students, more work-integrated education for computer science and business students. Most faculty and administrators felt that the College was on the right track with student career development, and that program reviews were now being conducted relatively quickly in order to thread career development into courses.

An unexpected finding emerged in regards to a shared career development definition, which interviewees defined in a dissimilar way for themselves and for the students. This was unexpected since I had assumed that the term career development would be defined in the same way by everyone. The faculty and administrators used the term *career development* differently for themselves and for students. When discussing their own career development, faculty and administrators' referred to it as the *professional development necessary for them to perform their jobs effectively*. This may



encompass targeted individual professional development, career path exploration, and career counselling. Both faculty and administrators' responses suggested that they would benefit from more intentional career development. In their opinion, this was an opportunity that the Institution should invest in and develop. The faculty felt that many times group professional development sessions were not targeting their professional needs, and administrators' felt that they would benefit from outside mentoring or 360-degree feedback.

When faculty and administrators' referred to student career development, they emphasized work-integrated learning and work-integrated education as essential elements to the overall student learning experience regardless of their program area. These opinions demonstrated the challenging complexity and extensiveness of using a term such as career development. The term career development may have different meanings for students using the Langara College Co-op and Career Development Centre. The name of this department may need to be revisited to better reflect the services offered both internally and externally.

In terms of career development during a time of transition and reform, the overall sentiment is that it is an essential element of learning for both students and employees. Participants in this research emphasized career development, which encompassed work-integrated learning and work-integrated education, as fundamental in the process of transition and reform. The essence of this belief is that career development holds an increasingly crucial role in learning and programming at Langara College.

*Sub-question 1 discussion of findings - What are the understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming?*

The majority of participants defined career development in different ways and emphasized that there was a new strategic focus on campus that encouraged career development. Career development was defined as any applied situation a student could learn from, from work-integrated learning and cooperative education, lab time and clinical time, to plainly *getting a job*. Participants acknowledged that students now were different than ten or twenty years ago and that most students were working at least part-time, with many even working full-time. This may be significant as it demonstrates a possible need to integrate career development learning opportunities.

All faculty and administrators perceived that career development plays an important role in educational programming. Not a single participant had a different view. Interview participant, Lori emphasized that:

*Langara College was different than local research universities, in that it had smaller class sizes and provided, for example, more lab time than at any of the local universities. Once students move on to university after studying at Langara College, they are often chosen for lab assistant positions over university students due to hands-on experience.*

Research participant, Gary, noted that *Langara students are usually the first to obtain research assignments when they move on to university due to their applied experience at the College*. Interviewees stated that career development in educational programming plays a critical part in student learning.

*Sub-question 2 discussion of findings - What do faculty and administrators perceive to be the most important components of a Career Development?* Every participant response had student needs in mind, and many interviewees repeated quotes in line with *we are here for the students, or we have the student's needs in mind when thinking about the best type of career development*. Both faculty and administrators' perceptions were surprisingly similar in that they believed the following career development components to be most important:

- Meeting student learning needs;
- Meeting student working needs;
- Meeting student work-education counselling needs through dedicated career centre instructors;
- Helping students learn how to develop job application paperwork, how to network and apply for jobs, how to interview etc;
- Meeting faculty and administrators' learning and professional development needs;
- Meeting faculty and administrators' training needs (this point refers to new technology, processes, and especially to assuming leadership roles); and
- Helping employees within the College develop career pathway plans.

*Sub-question 3 discussion of findings - How do faculty and administrators engage in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the Institution?*

Faculty and administrators reported having good working relationships with each other. Most administrators were aware of the Strategic and Academic Plans, although the majority would refer to one or the other, with the Academic Plan taking on more significance. The faculty, on the other hand, either have never referred to the Strategic Plan or use it more as a checklist to acquire resources. It was interesting to note that those who were aware of the Strategic Plan used it extensively to help acquire resources and develop new types of programming.

The Strategic Plan lays out the new vision for the Institution, and this has subsequently made both faculty and administrators' become entrepreneurial in accommodating this new vision for the Institution. Three to four years ago the College had a very set way of programming with few changes or minimal updates. Due to accommodating the new College vision, the faculty and administrators' organically created communities of practice, gathering people in different departments to generate ideas, promote idea champions, project sponsors, to work together to develop new programming and solve problems. Some of the participants interviewed for this study were part of these communities of practice. They perceived themselves as being one large community of practice that consists of all staff at the College, with smaller communities of practice that revolve around specific new programming, such as the PDD community of practice. True learning exists, bumps exist, and people may have experienced a constant refining of processes to develop new curricula that accommodated the new vision for the Institution.

When I asked participants how they perceived career development, I intentionally inquired vaguely in order to determine what came first to their minds. The majority of participants answered with a question, *career development for me or for the student?* Everyone was eager to talk about the lack of career development for themselves, despite growing awareness and programming for students. This may have indicated a need for a more dedicated approach to career development, which I will outline further in the recommendations section.

Interviewees used various terms interchangeably to describe career development. These terms included career development, experiential learning, co-operative education, work-integrated learning, work-integrated education, hands-on learning, applied learning, and internships. The phrase *threaded through the curriculum*

kept appearing in findings as a means of intentionally creating programming with the most relevant career development components intertwined with subject matter theory.

*I would like us to keep using the term, experiential, but I keep using the words, threaded through curriculum, because it's not a stand-alone piece. Absolutely important that people understand that. Work-integrated/experiential learning are concepts that people need to buy into (Doug, pg. 16).*

From my observational data it was rendered that the relationship between the faculty and administrators' can still be described as collegial and increasingly showing elements of a managerial culture with some faculty indicating that administrators asked for increasing number crunching, or in other words, outcomes based on numbers.

## 5.6. Discussion of the Six Emergent Themes

In the following pages there is a description of six themes that became apparent as I read and analysed the data from my interviews. These six themes kept reoccurring so I organized this data first, into similar groupings of data, and then went back and forth reading and learning my data until these six themes were deemed as the most frequently repeated themes. The findings for both faculty and administrators are outlined together since they had similar views.

### Table 5.1 The Six Emergent Themes

Theme 1: Potential Influence of Provincial and National Mandates (Structural Policy)

Theme 2: Academic Capitalism and Resource Dependency at Langara College

Theme 3: Significance of Internationalization

Theme 4: Growing Role of Career Development

Theme 5: A Corporate Approach to Transition and Reform

Theme 6: Examination of Entrepreneurship through Curriculum Deliberation

This next section will discuss these six emergent themes adding to the overall summary of the research.

### **5.6.1. Potential Influence of Provincial and National Mandates on Higher Education (Structural Policy)**

Findings from this study suggest that government structural policy change may have influenced Langara College's transition. This study expanded awareness as to how academic capitalism influences the college context. These findings provide confirmation of Slaughter and Leslie's (1997) tools for maintaining and thriving in a changing higher education environment. They highlight three of Slaughter and Leslie's tools. First, by engaging in developing curriculum and programming to support student career development and meet strategic priorities, faculty and administrators' are also developing an awareness of how academic capitalism is influencing higher education in general, and the way work is changing to deliver education at Langara College. Second, by being informed by entrepreneurialism and resource dependency theory, I hope that faculty and administrators' make the best out of the transition and reform being brought about by academic capitalism. Third that the College works towards developing a strategy of diversified resource attainment to service the needs of students and community. This may require college staff to engage in enterprising activities (Marginson and Considine, 2000), such as developing partnerships with external organizations, and participating more deeply in shaping and controlling both academic work and the relationship between institutions and the marketplace (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). "Professionals, including faculty, are building new networks that connect them with the new economy, spanning boundaries between public, non-profit, and market organizations. In doing so, they are restructuring universities to accommodate an academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime" (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Evidence of this in my findings is the increasing creation of PDD programming, partnership development, the emphasis on financial sustainability and change being inspired by the strategic priorities.

Bakan (2012) discusses the effects of corporatization and believes that government policy is actually set by industry which lobbies for its own corporate agenda. Perhaps even more controversial, it has been said that the lobbying comes from the wealthy individuals that own these corporations and governments around the world are too weak to protect their own constituencies and instead implement policies favourable to corporations. This trickles down to higher education institutions and in Langara College's situation, British Columbia's International Education Strategy (The BC Jobs

Plan, 2016) policies to promote education as an immigration pathway in order to meet employers' needs in obtaining qualified workers and to fill an ageing population gap. At the same time it is meeting international student job needs and longer-term immigration goals.

By encouraging international student programming the government is attending to the skills gap shortage (BC Jobs Plan, 2016) that exists as domestic birth rates decline, baby boomers increasingly retire, and as new types of jobs emerge. Immigration strategy has become a key to population management and this has influenced Canada's international education strategy, which in turn has influenced programming for international students at Langara College.

In my research findings, there was a difference in perception as to what came first, government policy or Langara's strategic priorities. A few interviewees believed that Langara College was tasked with delivering an educational solution to help new immigrants integrate better into the community and workforce. Other interviewees thought of this process more in terms of a successful fluke. Their perception was that government welcomed this idea to create international student programming, the Post Degree Diploma programs, only after it determined that there were indeed benefits and demand from international students. One of my interview participants offered the following perspective. *Having a child, in this case, Langara College struggling, and being able to save itself from drowning and then to also create employment for more British Columbians, train new British Columbians, and grow was thought to have been deemed successful by the government, who's funding ability was continually decreasing (Christine).*

Candy also commented on an article she had just read the morning of our interview. She explained that she had been following these types of reports even before the creation of the CCDC in 2015, and that this concern of preparing people for future jobs was a concern that lingered around for years.

*The CBC report that came out this morning (January 2017) saying that we will be short 500,000 workers by 2025. And they put pressure on the post-secondary education [system]; we need to find out what the workers' needs are, we need to find out how to prepare these people for these jobs, so that's going to be a huge concern for career development (Candy, pg. 6).*

When I asked Candy whether the PDD work experience component was mandated by the government, the interviewee did not think that this was the case. Although not mandated, she did believe that there was government influence on work-integrated education since they wanted prepared workers for the workforce. For Langara to produce outcomes, or students that would be immediately employable after graduation, they needed to make career courses mandatory, especially in new PDD programming. This interviewee's perception was that in order to make students take career related courses along side academic courses, you needed to attach classroom time, instructor time, and mandatory assignment time, meaning that career courses were graded and did affect the students' overall marks and GPAs.

*No... I knew that we had to make it mandatory to get the students really committed to it. So the evidence around work-integrated education, I mean, is there a week that goes by and there's not a new study demonstrating that work-integrated education is really, really effective (Candy, pg. 5).*

### **5.6.2. Research Findings through Lenses of Academic Capitalism and Resource Dependency Theory at Langara**

Governments around the world are struggling with the effects of increasing health care costs and lower education budgets. The British Columbia provincial government and the Canadian federal government are no different. Year after year, government funding grants have not increased at Langara (Langara Institutional Research), despite increases in costs, inflation, properties, and taxes. As one interviewee perceived: *it's not that government does not want to fund us, it's just that they have increased health care costs and there's less overall money in the pot.* The reality is that institutions are dependant on resources in order to deliver education and reduced government funding may create the need to make money to survive. In British Columbia, educational institutions are allowed to raise tuition fees 2% each year, and interviewees regularly referred to Langara College as having a very bad start even when this rule was implemented in 2005. As an example, average tuition fees for Arts Programs in British Columbian post-secondary institutions vary significantly and it could be argued that there are numerous reasons for this difference. The cost of living for students is similar regardless of where they take their arts program. In a corresponding manner, higher educational institution expenses are similar when looking at costs incurred to run a program. An arts program at Langara College will cost a student \$2,811 in tuition. In

comparison to this an equivalent arts program at Simon Fraser University will cost a student \$5,428 in tuition (BC Data Catalogue, 2017).

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) described how as a college or university becomes more entrepreneurial, they tend to focus less on education as a public good in its own right, and more on education as a cost-recovery or revenue generating activity. In this study, the Institutional Strategic Plan does emphasize that the College will generate 75% of its revenue, and with growing Post Degree Diploma programming, they may be on track to achieving this ambitious goal. Based on my observations of data and interview responses I would argue that education at Langara is not viewed as a profit-oriented activity, as might be the case in institutions where for example scientific breakthroughs lead to patents and are sold in the marketplace. Interviewees, both faculty, and administrators' at Langara, consistently stressed student learning as the first and foremost priority. They also stressed that an essential part of a students' education is their holistic career development.

Nevertheless, the Institution is currently resource dependant on international student fees and a few of my interviewees suggested the College could diversify funding sources to eliminate this risk.

The college could for instance look into developing a new capacity, such as offering services to community partners in order to generate revenues. One of the participants mentioned partnering with organizations such as City Studio, a Vancouver project school, or developing consultancies and charging for things as such creating marketing plans or campaigns for clients. Students would gain real career experience, the community would benefit from these services, and the College would generate revenue. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) and previously, Slaughter and Leslie (1997, pg. 210) drew conclusions regarding the "encroachment of the profit motive into the academy".

*We now point to the internal embeddedness of profit-oriented activities as a point of reorganization (and new investment) by higher education institutions to develop their own capacity (and to hire new types of professionals) to market products created by faculty and develop commercializable products outside of (though connected to) conventional academic structures and individual faculty members" (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004, pg. 11).*



### 5.6.3. Significance of Internationalization

#### ***Consideration for Internal and International Communication***

Faculty and administrators recounted severe issues with plagiarism, and the written English language output by international students. The first seemed easier to solve as plagiarism events initiated new procedures and policies, more education surrounding plagiarism to students, and more support for faculty to deal with issues of plagiarism. The second issue of incoming students having low English language skills was identified by faculty as an item that needed improvement. Perceptions included thoughts on how the Institution needs to be doing more student preparation before they arrive in Canada.

*...before students get here as opposed to when they start, if they can have information about "this is what you'll need coming in and this is what the department offers." I don't know how much exposure the students have to it, I don't know how much exposure the faculty has to it. So maybe reaching out to the faculty and saying "This is what we have here, and these are the students you should send to us when you have these questions."... There are so many things [services] that go on at Langara that nobody knows about (Catherine, pg. 6).*

Catherine indicated this need for better communication both internally within Langara College, and also internationally before students arrive so that expectations are clear. Interviewees were well aware that reputation is everything, and that morally they as a community have a duty to ensure quality programming, as well as ensure that programming met the needs of students, such as preparing them to face the labour market in Canada and become successful.

In regards to domestic students, faculty had concerns over quality and worried about their adaptability to a visibly different student demographic. At the time of the interviews, a large number of students were from India, and this was visible. Their needs were also different and the majority of these students needed to have jobs to support themselves. Interviewees were proud of Langara College's reputation, and aside from regular course material which was not a huge concern at the time of the interviews, an issue was the intercultural integration and education of all students and employees on campus. One participant had noted that:

*We have no idea what kinds of jobs we are preparing these students for, we have no idea where these students will live and work potentially anywhere in the world, but what we do know is that we need to teach them global awareness skills and the ability to function in cross-cultural environments” (Doug pg.7).*

### ***Effects of Changing Demographics***

Vancouver has experienced significant demographic changes in the past ten to twenty years through immigration to Canada. *The census figures show 21.9 per cent of Canadians report being or having been an immigrant or permanent resident (Census, 2016).* The College campus has traditionally served students from Vancouver, and according to Langara institutional research, today a large proportion of its students travel daily from Surrey.

A second large change have been the decreased domestic birth rates and the declining number of children in elementary and secondary school settings. Vancouver finally had its first significantly larger than in previous year’s kindergarten enrolment in 2016, and it will take twelve years before these children reach college age which in turn influences Langara enrolments.

Finally, in 2013-2014, there was a large influx of Chinese students in Vancouver institutions, and many of the students at Langara were financially in better positions than the current student demographic and did not need to work while studying. China was the main source country for international students for all provinces in 2013-2014, except for Quebec, and New Brunswick (StatsCan, 2016). Further, in Chinese culture, education is highly valued and students are encouraged to excel in school, finish school, and once finished focus on their careers. Today, the majority of student enrolment growth is coming from India and more recently Brazil. In the case of Indian students, many students stay with family, are younger, and need part-time jobs while in school, and full-time jobs when on any scheduled school break. Brazilian students tend to be more mature, many come with families, and may have more savings to last them for the duration of the program. These students may not need immediate employment, however their goal is to obtain mid-level career positions. Most local domestic students also work, and on average may take longer to finish their studies which demonstrates the need for the College, as one participant stated, to think strategically about students, about the community, about changing demographics, and future growth.

*If there is a way for us to strategically grow (and I say “strategically”, as we can grow)... I think as an Institution, it would be to our benefit because it'll serve our community well, our students well...if anyone looks at our demographic stats, we are on a decline. Only this year we are seeing an uprising of students in kindergarten and it's going to take thirteen years for that group to reach us...so if we had this decline over the next ten-twelve years, we are not seeing an increase until they come to their thirteen<sup>th</sup> year – how are we going to deal with that if we want to remain a comprehensive college...That's one challenge we'll face...that kid is in kindergarten, what are the economic realities in Vancouver? What kind of an Institution will they need? The other important thing is continuing studies. Ten years ago our average age was fifty five, this year it was thirty two and it's on a decline, so we are seeing people come back, so are we ready to take these people on? What kind of programming – the 32-year-old learner is not going to want to come to class and sit with 19-year-olds all day from morning. They are going to want more flexibility...so what is online learning, experiential learning, how do learning assessments allow students to enter certain streams. Those are all things we are going to have to look at as an institution and those will provide growth opportunities I believe...a big implication for career development as all those 32-year-olds are working (Doug, pg. 10).*

Although participants were not specifically asked about continuing studies programs, data obtained from Langara documents was significant in showing these trends that are relevant when considering any institutional change, and especially career development needs of all students coming and leaving the Institution.

### ***Impact of International Students***

Interviewees that were part of the faculty group talked about their high expectations of the academic abilities of first cohorts in the PDD programs. They noted the cultural shock (Hofstede, 1993) that both faculty and students experienced with the introduction of the first PDD programs. Students reported experiencing homesickness, too many assignments, low first grades, and overall their initial excitement of being in a new country had worn off. Prior to the first cohort arrival, faculty worked hard to develop a quality program with a curriculum that was somewhere in between what an undergraduate degree and graduate degree would offer. People were proud of the curriculum that they had developed. Unfortunately, once the first three cohorts of students arrived, they learned that the curriculum was inappropriate and too demanding for most of these new international students due to differences in learning, time spent on adapting to a new culture, English language skills, and most of all the need for these students to work immediately, hence the career development training that Langara

needed to provide. Faculty acted quickly to redevelop curriculum and seemed to have acquired a new ability, to learn-in-action (Schön, 1983). This suggested entrepreneurial behavior.

The interview findings of the study suggest that most of Langara's employees were unprepared for how different these new students were, and many people really struggled, almost as much as these new students struggled. According to interview data, a form of culture shock was experienced by many on campus. To assist with the learning and process of internationalization, an Intercultural Coordinator position was created and subsequently filled by a faculty member. This position, although still evolving, was tasked with researching best practices, developing professional development courses for the entire College, as well as creating a student success course. Other roles, such as PDD Coordinator roles, library support, writing support, extra counselling support, and more people in advising and the international education were added to better support these students. These initiatives helped employees and students manage the impact of such a huge influx of international students.

#### **5.6.4. The Growing Role of Career Development**

The reality emerging from my interview findings is that student needs could be thought of as a conceptualization of education within the terms of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Students need to satisfy lower level needs before they can move on to higher level ones. As education is something that students must pay for in Canada, then I would argue that it fits the higher levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, whereas today's typical student has to think about bare essentials like expensive housing, tuition, food, a career after school, and all of these require that the student work on their own career development needs throughout their time at Langara.

The College mandate suggests a growing role for career development needs, and although funding has been the biggest issue, there seems to be a commitment to student career development, as a few of the below interviewees note.

*I think we are committed, but not given the resources (FG, Karim, pg. 15)*

Others suggested that there was a verbal commitment, however the practical aspect of funding or resourcing the Co-op and Career Development Centre has yet to be

realized. Some participants did not believe that the College was at all committed to the concept of career development despite its mandate.

*...transfer out of here into the workforce... better be funding the support of those programs and we'd better be recognizing that there is a really key part of that success of that program [PDD] in how we transition them out (FG, Sergio, pg. 16).*

*There is no way we could say we are committed (FG, Chelsey, pg. 15).*

*...if we had the capacity to add more workshops...more exploration. We can't just keep doing it on the side of our desks, we need capacity...there is an overlap of roles (FG, Sergio, pg. 15).*

*Theoretically yes, practically no. I also think that the decisions that are made to bring in international students don't take into consideration the lifecycle of a student through the Institution... (FG, Christa, pg. 15).*

The majority of people interviewed believe that career development has not been supported at the College. In Chapter 4, participant Catherine was quoted as saying "Career Development needs to be the full meal deal". She thought that having the CCDC was essential in helping students learn the skills they needed to obtain the jobs they were looking for. This importance was heard from various participant conversations, and yet those interviewees that had a stronger connection to the Co-op and Career Development Centre thought that it was not resourced to perform this vital role. A few participants noted the difficulty in assigning the value of this department, and some proposed interesting funding structures which will be outlined in the recommendation section. A few interviewees were quite negative about the lack of career development and were truly frustrated with not knowing where to go for their own or students' career development.

*I don't think we do very much career development here. It's very hard to do it with our students if we haven't even thought about our faculty. We talk about interculturalizing our departments. Our little cultures that don't interact with other departments. Right, we don't, the whole community of practice thing?! So when we're talking about career development for students, the faculty haven't even thought about it, because for whatever reason, we just don't think about that. I don't think that's somewhere, I don't know who's responsible to do that, is that HR? I know where HR is because I think I went there once because my cheque was wrong or something and they directed me somewhere else [laughs] (Catherine, pg. 15).*

Participants expressed their belief in the work that the Co-op and Career Development department does, especially as a service that reinforces meeting student needs and contributes to student work-integrated education or career development.

### **5.6.5. A Corporate Approach to Transition and Reform**

Colleges across Canada may have adopted a corporate approach to managing their operations. Strategic plans, mission statements, and other corporate tools are used to guide business operations. Interviewees suggested that Langara College had been a *sleepy little college* in the middle of Vancouver, with a collegial institutional culture. The interviewees who were also long-term Langara employees remembered that pre-2015, the Institution was at serious risk of layoffs and elimination of various educational programming. They said that at that time there had even been discussions of a possible merger or outright sale. They also thought that faculty, administrators, and other employees knew that the threat was real and that a corporate sense of urgency was needed to rectify the situation.

The first major benefit of creating a Strategic Plan and using a corporate approach to reform was that by creating programming to generate financial resources, nobody was laid off. In fact, many people were hired in the process, and the various departments increased substantially. An example is the Langara School of Management that grew to two-thirds of its original size.

This growth approach made people work together as a community of practice and/or as smaller communities of practice, depending on the specific need, and these groups were able to learn-in-action, often by continuously adding *Band-Aid* solutions.

Finally, it made the College and people within it entrepreneurial and willing to critically think, problem solve, innovate and create.

The growth in international students has been unprecedented and has increased by over 50% in less than three years. In the 2014 summer term, there were 1,061 international students attending Langara, which was 13.8% of the total student population. By the 2017 spring term, there were 4,485 international students studying at the Institution which represented 27.9% of the total student population (Langara College, 2017). Revenue generated did not officially increase profits, as Langara is still a public

institution. The revenue that came into the College was enough to cover expenditures and all other programming on campus. The issue though is the risk. What happens when international student funding stagnates or dries out? Participants in this study acknowledged that such a risk exists. When referencing recent history with international student markets in the UK or Australia the conclusion is that a real risk exists, and alternative revenue sources are provided in the recommendation section.

### ***“Marry” Academic Plan to Strategic Plan to Focus on Learning Outcomes, and Especially Career Development***

Research from this study showed that the Strategic Plan was an important document for planning to ask for resources. Interview participants said that they used the Strategic Plan as a guide and checklist when developing proposals that required resourcing. As one participant said, *the more checkmarks you tick off, the more feasible it is that it will obtain approval.*

If career development is to be part of learning outcomes in every program, and this indeed is a relevant target in the Academic Plan, then perhaps the measurements required by the Strategic Plan need revision.

*And every time a student participates in co-op, they discover how useful it is to have work experience before you graduate and so to me it wasn't "oh, the strategic plan says to do this", it was more, "this is good programming for the kind of people that we know we're going to get into this program, which is consistent with the strategic plan (Candy, pg. 5).*

Quotes like Candy's demonstrate the relevance of "marrying" or connecting the academic and strategic plans in ways that make sense for career development, which is not always possible to measure in concrete numbers, as there are many intangibles involved. A large part of career development are also employer and industry education. *They [employers] are not willing... they basically say "you are going to be job-ready from day 1"...they are unwilling to train people and they are unwilling to take people that aren't 100% trained (FG, Chelsey, pg. 14).*

All participants agreed with this quote noting the importance of a better resourced Co-op and Career Development Centre, which is able to meet the priorities of both the Academic and Strategic Plans.

### 5.6.6. Examination of Entrepreneurship through Curriculum Deliberation

*...I think that Langara has the capability because we are small, we are nimble, we have the ability to change, adapt and be more nimble about it all...I think that it's easier at our level in our institution size, than it is at SFU or UBC (FG, Christa, pg. 9).*

Faculty and administrators' perceive themselves as entrepreneurial, which is a skill that has helped them create reform with such speed. They may have been aided by the fact that the College is relatively small, serving about 21,000 students annually.

When talking about curriculum deliberation, participants had divided thoughts, and perhaps this was due to the difference in the job roles and titles. Administrators' were keener to talk about entrepreneurship in a more business sense of meaning, whereas the faculty also talked about being entrepreneurial, and having to be entrepreneurial when developing the curriculum for these new programs.

*We compare that [100-year-old system] to that of the School of Management, reinventing themselves and figuring out how to do evenings and nights, and get the space and get the numbers. I mean that's business. They already broke the mould on the old academic cycle and started getting innovative... that's what businesses expect too (FG, Christa, pg. 9).*

The most innovative and fastest growing department is Langara School of Management (LSM). When referring to the 100-year-old system, Christa was thinking of a local university system.

This case is a prime example of the need to engage in reflective practice in order to constantly improve the way things are accomplished so as to benefit students and their needs. Reflective practice is a highly regarded exercise within the different communities of practice at Langara. Issues that were impossible to think of, keep popping up, and faculty and administrators' perceptions are that they are on a moving vehicle, and *whenever gas needs to be added, we'll add it in motion*. In order to truly have a learning organization, integrating reflective practice (Schwab, 1970, 1983; Schön, 1993) is an essential add on.

Reasons for transition and reform are mainly due to changing environmental factors. Perceptions were that most people would not change without any significant reason, however, all of the Langara reasons were difficult to ignore. Some of the most



significant changing environmental factors are different workplaces and types of jobs, demanding employers, immigration policy, increasingly less funding from the government, community partnership needs, and a global village concept. Vancouver may be physically far from the rest of the world, but we do live in a global village where students come from all over the world, go anywhere in the world, and have access to technology that enables real-time information derived from anywhere in the world. Employers repeatedly ask for these global skills.

*“They [employers] are not willing... they basically say “you are going to be job-ready from day 1”...they are unwilling to train people and they are unwilling to take people that aren’t 100% trained”* (FG, Chelsey, pg. 14). All participants agreed on this point which was a reason they believed it was essential that higher education institutions take on this role of career development.

## **5.7. Implications for Policy and Practice**

The findings in this study have implications for policy and practice, and these will be discussed in this section. Based on what was learned with the Langara case study, specific and practical recommendations will be made in Section 5.8 to address the findings and to attempt to solve the challenges identified in this study.

There may exist a need for the Institution to shift from financial to institutional sustainability. This means obtaining and spreading resources to better support faculty and also to invest in support services, which includes career development services. As mentioned in Chapter 4, interviewees believed that institutional sustainability meant that students are at the core as without the students there is no Institution, followed by faculty that teaches the students, and finally all of the support services that help the students become successful in their learning goals.

The institution wants to make sure the students are prepared, and one of the best ways of doing this is through creating policy and support systems that are intertwined throughout the organizational structure. Faculty and administrators’ perceive changes as positive, yet tiring and everyone indicated that there was excess *work on the side of their desk*.

Performing a Langara College SWOT analysis helps create a current snapshot of the state of the College and explores the relationship between funding sources, the increased reliance on international students' fees, and the branding of programs.

<p><i>Strengths</i>          Increased revenues from international students          With these revenues, ability to fund other college programs, hire BC workers          Central, safe Vancouver location          Current economy and low dollar          Competent faculty &amp; administration          PDD (with a work component)          Entrepreneurial setting where people figure out how to do things as they happen</p>	<p><i>Weaknesses</i>          Lack of support systems for international students          Lack of support for faculty &amp; administrators that need to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviours          Funding from International Students increasingly supporting other areas within college          The need to generate 75% of revenue</p>
<p><i>Opportunities</i>          Prepare international students for Canadian labour market          Help students succeed, create great relationships for life          Life-long learning          Reflective practitioners          Become a global campus</p>	<p><i>Threats</i>          Over-reliance on international student funding          Inability to change employer perception to help international students find meaningful jobs          Canadian Immigration &amp; Citizenship (CIC) program changes          Strong economy &amp; dollar (less attractive to international students)</p>

**Figure 5.1 Langara SWOT Analysis. Demonstrating a link between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and showing how funding weaknesses are potential sources of strengths and opportunities.**

### 5.7.1. Collegial Environment and Addressing *Side of Desk* Work

In order to maintain and promote a collegial environment, and one where communities of practice will naturally form to innovate and solve problems, there needs to be an ongoing investment in people. The findings showed that career development was not something that faculty or administrators' perceived they had access to for themselves.

All of the interviewees expressed concerns about *side of desk* work. They felt that there had been a sense of urgency which is what created the drive to work hard and long hours, and that they had succeeded in preventing the *sky from falling* at Langara. Interviewees also expressed concerns about being at the *end of their ropes in terms of how much more can be added to their plate* and the system in general. The system they are referring to is insufficient staffing, student support services, and outdated operational systems. Many interviewees believed that senior administrators lacked awareness about

how over-worked they were, and due to a severe lack of time to cover one's own work, there had been no time to invest in self-promoting this concern to senior leadership. This is reminiscent of Levin's (2017) findings on the effects on community colleges under neoliberal pressures. Since resources that the College provides are now attached to outcomes through the strategic plan, it has been more difficult to attach justification for additional resourcing for work performed on the *side of the desk*.

### **5.7.2. Internationalization Sustainability**

Is the current internationalization strategy sustainable? Participants in this study believed this to be a major risk for the Institution, based on examples involving higher education institutions in the UK and Australia. Even in the case of Canada maintaining its national image as *a safe country full of opportunity*, and attractive immigration policies through study, interviewees felt that the Institution had the obligation to fulfill promises made to students. This was noted by Catherine.

*...looking at the strategy of internationalization: what obligation do we have if we're promising jobs and then as an Institution thinking about if we're promising jobs and they're coming, then we have an obligation to provide that – a career development pathway for them once they get here. I think that's become one of the questions that I have, as we start to look at internationalization at Langara College. If we are promising this, what is our obligation? If we're promising careers then we have an obligation to make sure that we have the complete development of that throughout their time here, not at the end "Oh, here are some job opportunities". But from beginning to end (Catherine, pg. 4).*

Interviewees felt that the obligation to provide career development pathways was an obligation that we were unable to support to the fullest and that this support was needed to achieve sustainability. As Garson (2016, pg.1) argues in her paper on Reframing Internationalization, "Many institutions now strive to internationalize; although this can encompass a broad range of activities, for many, the focus has been on increasing international student enrolment". Langara has the opportunity to reframe internationalization and educate future global citizens. "For internationalization to truly reach its potential, a reframing of internationalization at home, informed by critical global citizenship education, may offer a way to realize the social and academic outcomes that would support an ethical, inclusive, and equitable approach moving forward" (Garson,

2016, pg.1). This may influence career development regardless of a domestic or international status and would make the issue that Chelsey identified below ethical.

*They are getting more internationals that are bringing in more dollars... Those dollars are making up for deficiencies that the provincial government is continually defunding, so it's not like there is extra money because they are bringing in international students, they are just closing gaps because of the defunding (FG, Chelsey, pg. 17).*

Chelsey's quote was part of the focus group session, and everyone in the focus group agreed vocally to her statement. Determining domestic and international student career development needs and creating sustainable pathways was definitely one of the big points emerging from this study.

## **5.8. Recommendations**

I have had the privilege to interview faculty and administrators at Langara College, who have been keen to share their perceptions. Based on the findings that have surfaced from my study, I offer the following recommendations. These recommendations have implications for faculty, administrators', students, and policymakers.

1. Create a working definition of career development within the Institution, and revisit appropriateness of Co-op and Career Development Centre name, services offered, and structure.
2. Design a framework for career development support throughout the entire student lifecycle. Interviewees felt that the Institution could do more in career development education for all students from the moment they enroll, during their time at the Institution, and once they become alumni.
3. In order to determine the extent of specific career development needs, two assessments could be performed:
  - a. A Student Career Development Needs Assessment – a student needs assessment to determine what students needs are, and also relate this needs assessment to specific subject matter material in order to link to applied and relevant learning outcomes.

- b. An Employee Career Development Needs Assessment – many of the interviewees felt that employee career development needs to be defined at Langara and would welcome this change which would help them develop the skills they need to better support students.
4. Construct better support systems for *Communities of Practice* in terms of allocating time, resourcing, and team-building. One interview noted that these communities of practice come together organically in most cases. Developing better ways of building awareness on campus of the skills or interests specific individuals have could promote the building of these communities. Perhaps creating a Library of Human Skills and Resources – so that all staff can seek out specific team members' skills. A further suggestion could be to borrow a concept from the corporate world, for example, 3M allows employees to work on *their own projects* for 15% of their work time in order to boost innovation.
5. Secure investment for creating a college-wide Career Development or Work-Integrated Learning Institute. Cooperative education should only be a portion of this institute. Interviewees felt that career development was wide encompassing and essential, and to support this there needed to be growth within this department as well as resourcing. The College may consider adding a mandatory student career percentage fee for this service and also seek external sponsor funding. A competent Academic Leader, in the form of Dean, may be needed to manage this centre. The centre could consist of faculty and professionals that have the ability to influence faculty within the College and others external to the College. Dedicated faculty would have work-integrated learning experience needed to support curriculum development. It was suggested that this department (institute or centre) be branded as a service internally to other departments and externally to industry and community.
6. Develop better general systems support – in order to support departments and services better, it was proposed that the College develop and communicate plans for upgrading so that departments know when their turn will come for an assessment.

7. Diversify revenue streams and raise money in ways that are not attached to student fees. Urgently engage in business development to acquire sponsors for the career development institute and other areas within the College. Levels of sponsorships could be centre name, instructor name, and program name. The commitment for a sponsor could be for a pre-defined amount of time through using their brand name. For example, RBC Career Instructor, Google Career Centre, Workshops Brought to You by Telus, event sponsorships etc... Another way to diversify revenue could be from the sale of other services, such as marketing, business, fashion, or other consultancies. Slaughter and Leslie (1997) stated that academic capitalism in certain situations might be less about a research product and more about selling services.
8. Develop new programming that could include Research Co-ops, Lab Co-ops, Entrepreneurship Co-ops, Social Entrepreneurship Work Experiences, International Work Experiences, and more industry training partnerships. Just because *co-operative education* has strict requirements in order to be called a co-op, that does not mean Langara cannot keep the regular co-op program and also provide innovative new career development based on student needs. It may be that an open mindset and an individualized approach are required to meet the next generation of learners.
9. Continue with developing intercultural competencies throughout the College, and also create intentional programs around inbound and outbound internationalization strategies. Continue with internationalizing curriculum and supporting student needs with more one-on-one support and peer mentoring.
10. Promote academic and strategic plans to employees as the guiding vision but work on developing different success factors and customized measures of outcomes. People within the institution would welcome the opportunity to be heard so that they don't feel disenfranchised.

## **5.9. Further Research**

Further research needs to be done in terms of looking into holistic terms of the whole student lifecycle. What happens to students while they are studying? What are students' perceptions about the role of career development in educational programming? It would be useful to determine what student perceptions are about the role of career development, and also how they would want educational institutions to change. Other questions that could be asked is how academic capitalism influences curriculum and student learning.

I made the decision to focus on faculty and administrators' perspectives of career development and looked at the impact of a trend that may be rationalized as academic capitalism, but it would be interesting to take this research wider and look at government and outside influences, as well as determine perceptions that CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) staff and/or students have. One thesis cannot combine all of these, which is why I selected to focus on faculty and administrators' perceptions.

Academic capitalism is a wide-reaching and multidimensional topic. My original contribution to knowledge is that this research chose to focus on one area of academic capitalism, further informed by entrepreneurialism and resource dependency theory and specifically looked at the role of career development at a time of transition and reform. This study contributed to research by providing a detailed focus on a comprehensive college setting, specifically Langara College, and by exploring the perceptions of its faculty and administrators'.

## **5.10. Reflection on This Study and My Learning Journey**

It has been a privilege to be on this journey. How did I get to this place and how did I get to collaborate with such an amazing group of people? These are questions which I have yet to answer.

The journey started in 2012 with a number of informational interviews, including one with Dr. Pidgeon, who met me for coffee and explained the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership. Next came the intent letter, where I wrote that I wanted to look at an exciting innovation in a higher education setting, which I called entrepreneurship at

the time. I also told Dr. Pidgeon that I was doing this to make a positive difference in the education field having previously developed a social entrepreneurship program in a college and having worked with youth entrepreneurs.

Our doctoral student cohort had a number of interesting people. Coming to class every second weekend, pushing each other in debates and at times to the point of tears was a wonderful part of the learning process. Learning that even those people we thought were the most senior and experienced educational leaders felt like imposters was gratifying. We were really all in the same boat, floating in uncharted waters.

I would like to mention what I have learned in my research journey. Something I learned about Langara College is that I truly work with a dedicated, hard-working, and innovative group of people. I realized that even though we are collectively doing innovative educational work, there are still opportunities to improve and do better. People at Langara want a voice, they want to contribute, and most importantly they care about their students.

I have learned about myself on this journey. I began this process thinking *research is easy* based on a few *Survey Monkeys* that I had performed for mostly marketing projects. As a scholar-practitioner, I believe that above all the hardest part for me is learning to be patient with the process. To this day, I can acknowledge that I am still uncomfortable with the term *trust the process*. It has been hard to learn to switch from *directly working on creating and implementing ideas* to researching past practice or theory, and making decisions informed by theory. Today, I find the search for a theory or past practice an absolute must in the process of idea generation. My point style management business writing has tried to show up in this thesis, and I am grateful to the many people that provided feedback to eliminate what we defined as *Trumpisms*.

Being part of the findings discovery process was enlightening. For instance, remembering back to when I first determined that career development had a different meaning depending on the stakeholder and remembering that *feeling of excitement*. This discovery felt like an enormous and significant finding. Discovering key themes and being able to provide implications for practice, and then practical recommendations based on solid research findings was also rewarding.



I have presented components of this research at four conferences so far, and wish to highlight that I have learned that communicating these results in different ways is a necessity in order to grasp the attention of the audience and answer their *what's in it for me* thoughts. Throughout my dissertation, I realized that this case may be able to assist people external to Langara as they also transition, and the results of this case may help them in their professional endeavours. One of the best experiences in undertaking this study was the opportunity to initiate a dialogue with my colleagues and see their eagerness to participate in the study and voice their opinion. People within the Institution seem to have needed to have someone listen.

If there was anything that I learned and would like to reinforce, that would be the importance of investing in people. We work in education as we believe that we are helping people. It is all about people, starting from students but also taking into account the entire staff at the College. The college has dedicated faculty, administrators', and staff that work tirelessly to make learning and education happen. In the process of transition and reform, I believe that when on this path of transitioning from A to B, the Institution needs to continually invest in its people. The notion of bringing people along for the ride in (corporate) reform is of utter importance. The people in this case have not challenged academic capitalism or corporatization. These movements may be non-negotiable elements of present day life and it may be that we are in the business of providing education. Internationalization, globalization, and corporatization will not go away, and people were not blaming these concepts even at the threat of layoffs, rather they were behaving in a manner that said: *let's make the most out of what we have*. This to me signals a quality staff that strives to provide quality to students. If providing high-quality service is to continue as a strategic objective, then the College needs to invest in its people and bring people along for the ride. This study may have reinforced that there could be consequences for ignoring the development of your workforce and that there is a need to provide investment in people.

Finally, as researcher and practitioner, I must mention what I have learned about the Co-op and Career Development Centre. According to findings in this study, the work that the Co-op and Career Development Centre does may maintain the value and contribute socially regardless of its ability to bring in large grants or impact College revenue generation. The service nevertheless reinforces meeting student needs and contributes to student work-integrated education or career development. My belief is that

this service is essential and non-negotiable and that the College needs to provide an investment into truly developing its career development/work integrated education strategy.

## 5.11. Conclusion

Researchers regularly look to theory and quote research from thirty years ago. We must take into account how much the world has changed, how much it is changing, and how much it may yet change. How do people cope today? What will be different tomorrow? Finding answers to these questions is difficult, as the world enters perhaps what might be the most turbulent and unpredictable times so far. As seen in my thesis, it was difficult to apply a single theory to what was happening at Langara. There may be a whole new level of complexity in our environments, and despite a mix of educational and organizational theories it may still be hard to explain reform and transition.

This descriptive qualitative study was dedicated to looking at the impact of a trend in post-secondary education that might be rationalized as academic capitalism. By revealing faculty and administrators' perceptions about the role of career development and its role in educational programming, this may inform institution leaders and government, scholars, and practitioners on how and why this phenomenon developed at a small college. The development of dedicated educational programming was driven by predominantly economic motivations, but also by taking advantage of opportunities such as immigration policy and international students' needs.

The vision to be *Canada's Premier Pathways Institution* helps guide everyone in the College to help all students regardless of where they are from in the world, or which part of society they represent. The example that this case study has shown is that even in the face of economic difficulties, an educational institutions' main task is to help students get to where they need to go, and this is the sense of urgency that awoke the entrepreneurial spirit at Langara College.

In order to help students get to where they need to go, an investment may need to be made in the people at Langara College. If the College is to continue to provide high-quality education, there needs to be a quality investment in the people that work

there and that strive to deliver value, anticipate curriculum needs, and meet student learning needs.

I end this thesis with a quote from Philip Kotter and by saying that as educators in a higher education context, we *can* and *must* collectively do better.

Speed will only increase. A sense of urgency will only become more essential. It can be helpful to think in terms of the biggest issues of all, because to do adds clarity. Think nationally and globally: climate change, terrorism, the monumental effects of China and India becoming developed nations, the ethical issues to be raised by the biosciences, the need for better K-12 education... Do we have a strong sense of urgency to deal with these issues? Remember, words are not the test. Action is the test. Never forget, furious activity and running and meeting and slick presentation are not a sign of true urgency. Alertness, movement, and leadership, *now-* and from many people, not a few- are the signs of true urgency.

So where do we stand today? Is this where we need to stand for the sake of the next generation?

We can do better (Kotter, P., 2008, pg. 193).

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BC Colleges website: <http://www.bccolleges.ca/>

BC Jobs Plan 2017 <https://bcjobsplan.gov.bc.ca/>

British Columbia Government website – Tuition Limit Policy (2017)  
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/tuition-limit-policy>

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British Columbia Website – Audited Financial Statements  
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# Appendix A. Interview Questions

## Draft Interview Protocol

The central research question:

What are the perceptions of faculty and administrators regarding the role of Career Development at Langara College at a time of transition and reform?

This central research question is broken down into three principal research questions:

1. What are the understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming?
2. What do faculty and administrators perceive to be the most important components of a Career Development Centre?
3. How do faculty and administrators engage in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the institution?

### Interview #1

What are the understandings of faculty and administrators about career development and its role in educational programming?

1. Tell me about how long your experience at Langara College:
  - Length of service? Previous work experience? Single role or many roles within the college?
2. Has your work changed since January 2015 and how?
3. Do you and if yes, how do you interact with students?
4. How do you interact with other faculty or staff?
  - Did this interaction change since January 2015 or after?
5. What support services were available / or are available to you to help you in your role? Do you make use of them? Tell me a story of when you may have felt that you needed support services and what these were.
6. What is career development?
7. How important is student career development in your role? Examples?
8. Do you think that career development is an important part of educational programming? Why or why not?
9. Describe your participation in educational programming.
10. Does career development play any role when developing educational programming? If so, what type of role?

11. How does your participation in student career development enhance your professional development?
12. Is there anything you want to tell me about what you think about career development and educational programming at Langara College? What should Langara be doing?

## **Interview #2**

What do faculty and administrators perceive to be the most important components of a Career Development Centre?

1. To what extent are you involved with career development at Langara College?
  - What influenced this involvement? Did this involvement change over time?
  - Do you think that career development is an important part of education or not? Why?
2. What off-campus career development or employer development activities have you been involved with since January 2015?
3. Are you engaged in your work role? If yes, what motivates you? If no, why not?
4. What are your experiences with the co-op and career development centre? How are these experiences different, if at all, compared to pre-January 2015 (or pre PDD programming)?
5. What factors do you feel to be the most important elements of a career development centre for students?
6. If you could change anything about the co-op and career development centre (CCDC), what would this be?
7. Do you feel that the institution is committed to the well-being and success of all of the students, including international PDD students?
  - Why or why not?
8. What, if anything, would you have liked to experience as part of the development of CCDC?
9. Is there anything else that you would like to add or emphasize that would enhance my understanding of the CCDC?



## Appendix B. Focus Group Questions

### Focus Group Questions

How do faculty and administrators engage in developing new curricula to accommodate the new vision for the institution?

1. Do you develop curricula or do you provide input to the development of curricula (programs)? If so, do you do this as part of a team or alone? Tell me about your experience in developing new curricula?
2. Is curriculum that is developed by you and/or your department, communicated to other departments, or are other departments involved in the creation of new curricula? If yes, which departments?
3. What influenced you to participate in development of new programming? Did you propose this at free will, was it a band-aid solution, or was it handed down to you by someone more senior?
4. Are you aware of the institutional vision, and if so, is your department connected to this vision? Did you participate in the creation of this vision?
5. Do you feel that curricula and programming is connected to Langara College's vision for the institution? Why or why not?
6. Are you asked to provide feedback on the outcomes of new curricula / programming?
7. Do you know what a community of practice is, and if yes, do you feel that Langara faculty and administrators have a community of practice?

# Appendix C. Informed Consent Form

## PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**Research Project Title: “The Role of Career Development at Langara College at a Time of Transition and Reform”**

### **WHO IS CONDUCTING THIS STUDY?**

Principal Investigator:  
Natasha Mrkic-Subotic, MBA  
Doctor of Education Candidate  
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University  
[...]@sfu.ca / 604-[...]

Dr. Allan MacKinnon, EdD  
Faculty Supervisor  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University  
[...]@sfu.ca

### **WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?**

You are being invited to take part in this research study because we are searching for faculty and senior administrators from Langara College.

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of Langara College faculty and administrators at a time of transition. We feel that you would have extremely valuable information to offer by sharing your experiences, thoughts, and feelings about the changing nature of your work and policy within the college. This study will help us learn more about the role of career development and its role in educational programming.

### **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study at any time or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

### **HOW IS THIS STUDY DONE?**

If you decide to participate, you will be involved in an in-person focus group and / or up to two in-person or phone interviews by the principal investigator to discuss your experiences and perceptions of the role of career development and educational programming at Langara College.

Breakdown of potential research participation options:

To participate in this study, you must work at Langara College and be in a faculty or administrator role. If you decide to participate, you will be invited to either:

- 1 focus group discussion,
- 1 focus group discussion and 1 interview,
- 1 focus group discussion and 2 interviews,
- 1 interview, or
- 2 interviews.

For each type of participation, you will have the opportunity to read and sign this consent form separately, indicating the exact type of participation in this space:\_\_\_\_\_ .

You will be given a sample of interview questions shortly before the interview, however you will also have the opportunity to discuss anything you feel relevant as part of your experience of career development and educational programming at Langara College. Some of the interview questions will centre around the implementation of the strategic plan.

Both the focus group discussion and each interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. The focus group session will take place in a meeting room or classroom on the Langara College campus. Interviews will take place at a time and location most convenient for you. The focus group discussion and interview(s) will be audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

### **IS THERE ANY WAY THIS STUDY COULD BE BAD FOR YOU?**

There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this study. Some of the questions asked may be sensitive or personal but you do not have to answer any question if you do not want to. There is a theoretical risk of indirect disclosure of your participation from disseminating study data, but this will be minimized via the confidentiality measures described below.

### **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING?**

There may or may not be direct benefits to you from taking part in this study. However, in the future, others may benefit from what we learn in this study.

### **PARTICIPATION INCENTIVE**

You will have the opportunity to talk about your experience and perceptions, and you will also receive an honorarium of \$50 for each interview or focus group participation in the form of a Visa gift card.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your confidentiality will be respected. Information that disclosed your identity will not be released without your consent, unless required by law. Information provided will be used in the graduate student's thesis, and may form part of a public document if

published. All efforts will be made to ensure confidentiality, however please note telephone and email communication cannot guarantee confidentiality.

All participants and documents will be identified only by a unique code number. Participants will not be identified in any part of the study or in any presentation or dissemination of findings (e.g., research papers, articles, conference presentations etc.). Audio recorded interviews will be transcribed either by a third party transcriber who will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, or by the researcher. Audio-recordings will be deleted immediately once the interviews are transcribed. The interview transcriptions will be stored electronically in an encrypted form on a removable drive and password protected, and will only be used by the principal investigator. Data will be retained for a maximum of 5 years after which it will be deleted from the server.

Strict confidentiality cannot be maintained in a group setting such as a focus group. We encourage participants not to discuss the content of the focus group to people outside the group; however, we can't control what participants do with the information discussed.

### **STUDY RESULTS**

The results of this research will be reported in a doctoral study, and may be presented at conferences, and / or published in journals. Collected data may be used in separate future research. Study results will be available to participants on request.

### **WHO CAN YOU CONTACT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY?**

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Natasha Mrkic-Subotic, principal investigator, at [...]@sfu.ca or 604-[...], or Dr. Allan MacKinnon, faculty supervisor, at [...]@sfu.ca

### **WHO CAN YOU CONTACT IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THIS STUDY?**

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and / or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics [\[...\]@sfu.ca](mailto:[...]@sfu.ca) or 778-[...].

The study has been reviewed by the Langara Research Ethics Board which is responsible for helping to ensure that the rights of research participants are upheld. If you have any concerns or complaints, you may contact the chair of the LREB, John Russell, at 604-[...] or [\[...\]@langara.bc.ca](mailto:[...]@langara.bc.ca)

### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND SIGNATURE**

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact to you.

- Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.
- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.
- You do not waive any of your legal rights by participating in this study.

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Participant Signature

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Printed Name of Participant

If you consent to participate, please sign and return this form to the principal investigator in person or through email at [...]@sfu.ca

Yours Sincerely,

Natasha Mrkic-Subotic, MBA Principal Investigator Faculty of Education Simon Fraser University	Dr. Allan MacKinnon, EdD Faculty Supervisor Associate Professor Faculty of Education Simon Fraser University
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## **Appendix D. Langara College Strategic Plan**

<https://langara.ca/about-langara/strategic-plan/2020/>

## **Appendix E: Langara College Academic Plan**

<https://langara.ca/about-langara/academics/pdfs/academic-plan-fall-2014-web.pdf>

## **Appendix F: Accountability Plan & Report 2016-2017**

[https://langara.ca/about-langara/institutional-research/planning-and-accountability/acc\\_docs/2016-17%20Langara%20College%20Accountability%20Plan%20and%20Report.pdf](https://langara.ca/about-langara/institutional-research/planning-and-accountability/acc_docs/2016-17%20Langara%20College%20Accountability%20Plan%20and%20Report.pdf)



## **Appendix G: Langara College FTE Enrolment Reports**

FTE Enrolment Report 2015

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/board-fte-report-2014-15-final.pdf>

FTE Enrolment Report 2016

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/Board-FTE-Report-2015-16-Final-Mar-31-2016.pdf>

FTE Enrolment Report 2017

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/LC%20FTE%20Report%202017.pdf>

Number of International Students per Academic Year

<https://langara.ca/about-langara/langara-at-a-glance/country-of-origin.html>

## **Appendix H: Langara College Financial Statements**

Annual Report 2013

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/annual-reports.html>

Annual Report 2014

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/2014-financial-statements-final.pdf>

Annual Report 2015

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/15lc-fs-final-signed.pdf>

Annual Report 2016

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/FY16-Langara-College-Financials-FINAL.pdf>

Annual Report 2017

<https://langara.ca/departments/financial-services/pdfs/Annual%20Report%202017.pdf>