APPROVAL

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Universities are acknowledged to play a critical role within their societies. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the ascendancy of neoliberalism, the role the university plays within society is undergoing a substantial change. In most western jurisdictions, the public university has been restructured to have a governing board composed of both internal and external governors. The governing board provides oversight of the university as a public funded corporation. Within Canada, the majority (usually by one) of the university governing board members are appointed by the state. Since the university is a multi-million dollar operation, which the governing board is charged with overseeing, the question that this raises is: to whom do the governors of the university think they are accountable and represent? This question is critical to help understand the nature of the university and how it operates. Very little research has been done about the perception of individual governing board members. Most research conducted on university governance has focused on the role of the president with some very limited research on how the board works as an entity. The perception of the individual governing board members has not yet been researched.

This research study focuses on the perceptions of externally appointed governing board members at three universities in British Columbia and triangulates these with the perceptions of the presidents of those universities. Four specific questions are posed and addressed: Does the structure of the board influence larger policy issues in advanced education?; What are the contemporary influences on the board and does this
affect their oversight role?; Is the board an agent of the government or the university?, and; Is the board in transition or is the current environment a different iteration of past reality? The data for this research was gathered using a qualitative methodology combining both grounded theory and case study. The data analysis resulted in the creation of a conceptual model that explained the relationship between internal and external stakeholders within the university. This conceptual model was then compared against Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory as a further means to understand the data.

Keywords: Governance; universities; governing boards; government; funding
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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION (SURVEYING THE GROUND)

1.1. Overview of the Thesis

These first words are the starting point to surveying the ground over which this thesis will travel. In some ways these first words should be the easiest to write, yet are the most intimidating to annunciate. Once written, words take on a near mystical quality that is almost transcendent, beyond the here and now. Perhaps that is the point. Words define and, in so doing, craft meaning. They provide a marker—a trail—over which others can pass. The more this metaphorical ground is travelled, the easier it is to understand. The ground covered in this thesis should not be viewed as a road but, rather, a trail. Some have travelled this path before, but there are weeds growing along the trail and a whole wilderness still to explore. The goal of this thesis is not to pave the road but, rather, stabilise the trail and post a few signs encouraging others to come this way in the future. I say this since the area of university board governance has been little studied and its importance in a shifting landscape is ever-growing.

1.2. Personal Background

This research builds on my past academic work at the University of Victoria, where I received both my bachelor’s and master’s degrees. My 598 master’s paper researched accountability systems in higher education. An outcome of that research, I was able to co-author two scholarly papers that were published in academic journals. I
have continued to be interested in governance, since my professional career has spanned both government and higher education. My career has taken me back and forth between Ontario and British Columbia as I have assumed increasingly broader and more senior positions. In each new role, the issue of governance has become increasingly important to my day-to-day transactions.

In February 2009, I assumed the position of Senior Vice President Academic at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario. Prior to Fanshawe, I served as Dean of the School of Transportation at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) for over 10 years. In stepping into the role of Senior Vice President Academic (SVPA), I noticed an immediate difference in both the expectations and requirements of the vice president’s role, versus my previous dean’s role. The SVPA’s role called for a more hands-off approach, and required the ability to work through others to address day-to-day operational issues and meet the organisation’s objectives. While the issue of management function was clearly different, the more pronounced difference is that of governance. In my new role, I have a direct link to our college’s board of governors as I serve in an ex-officio resource and support role. The role the board plays is critically important as it works with the president and the executive to manage the finances of the college and to ensure that the college remains embedded in the community. While my engagement with this board has reinforced the importance of this research, it has also pointed out key differences between the colleges and the universities; specifically around the university bicameral governance structure.

My career history provides an overview of my interest in governance, but it does not describe my inherent assumptions and biases that both shapes and influences this research. My ontological and epistemological understanding could be described as
The shift in ontological understanding—perhaps in a contradictory manner—supported an earlier belief that knowledge is discoverable. More recently, I have come to believe that our understanding of the world is a social construct. Perhaps this is because as I have matured and have gained a greater appreciation of the role that language plays in defining how we come to understand the world in which we interact. My intent in saying this is not to open a debate but, rather, to indicate how I understand and move in the world. Language is a tool that shapes culture and, in turn, provides us with our first interaction and connection to each other. As language changes, so does our understanding of the world. I want to make these beliefs—which may appear to be contradictory—clear, because I cannot separate from my beliefs and place them outside of myself in an objective manner. However you, the reader, will know my inherent biases and my limitations in the design of the research methodology.

1.3. Rationale for the Study

Universities have enjoyed a special relationship with the nation-state, which has been characterised as a binary relationship (Considine, 2006; Marginson, 2002; Readings, 1996) associated with modernity (Dale, 2005). In this relationship, the university supported the development of the nation-state through cultural reproduction and knowledge development. With the fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall and with the emergence of neoliberalism and globalism, the role of the university as a bulwark to bolster the nation-state against opposing economic and socio-political systems has been questioned. Neoliberalism has changed the calculus between the state and the individual by implementing a private sector model on publicly delivered
services. Under this new structure, government has implemented accountability mechanisms, measures and targets that publicly-funded agencies must achieve. The universities have not been immune to reform and restructuring. In many OECD nations, legislative changes have been passed making universities corporations with governing boards accountable for meeting broad government policy objectives. Universities have been encouraged to become entrepreneurial: to lessen their dependence on state funding, to maintain or provide additional seats without additional state support, and to become engines of national economic development.

Perhaps the most significant reform has been in the governance structure of universities as they are increasingly defined as a corporation with a board of governors. The governing board oversees all financial activities within the university, and is responsible for facilities and generally supporting the programming directions of the senate. The majority of the governing board members are appointed by government to serve as lay-governors on the board (King, 2007; Middlehurst, 2004). The questions that this raises are: Who are these externally appointed lay-governors?; What do they think is their role as members of the governing board?; Whom do they see themselves representing (their constituency)?; and To whom do they believe that they are accountable?

1.4. Research Question

This research will examine the role the university plays within society and how university governance structures influence that role. Governance, broadly defined, is the act of oversight, guidance and advocacy. For public higher education, governance structures have evolved into a complex and sometimes muddled power-sharing
arrangement, with various groups having jurisdictional responsibility for administration, academic matters, and public service concerns. Ideally, these various groups work hand-in-glove to ensure the effective and efficient achievement of the university’s mission. In theory, these groups are agents of the university’s mission and, therefore, assumed to be loyal to that mission.

The senate deals with academic policy issues that are meant to guarantee the institution’s academic validity, credibility and purity of knowledge acquisition, and its transfer to students and society. The board of governors oversees general fiscal and administrative concerns, and is responsible for reporting to external stakeholders and advocating for an advantageous public policy atmosphere for the institution. The executive—usually embodied in the form of the president and executive or senior administration—is situated between these two bodies, and can be thought of as the thread that weaves or binds these two fabrics together.

In British Columbia, the provincial government is the principal funding source for universities. Government is also principally responsible for board appointments. As with universities, government’s public policy interest is assumed to be in the best interest of the public good. However, tension often exists between government and universities. Government seems to be inclined to have universities play an increasingly larger role in economic development of the province. They have called for an increase in the number and types of graduates that universities produce. Universities, for their part, have seemingly welcomed the request for growth, however, they have generally complained about state influence on the academic agenda and the limited funding that accompanies government’s request.

This brings us to a set of fundamental questions about the university and its role:
1. In this current environment, how does the make-up and workings of the board influence the larger policy issues for advanced education?

2. What are the contemporary influences on the board by government and various other stakeholder groups as they deliberate on and exercise their oversight role within British Columbia?

3. Is the board an agent of government or is it an agent of the academy, or both?

4. Is the modern board in transition or is the current environment simply a different iteration of past reality?

1.5. The Need for this Research

The role of governing boards in higher education governance has become more important. This reflects the state’s concerns for more accountability by utilising third-party steering-from-a-distance mechanisms (King, 2007). Few studies have been done on the role of the governing board within higher education governance. The studies that have been done have looked at ways to make the governing boards more effective, or looked at the selection process of lay-governors or the governors’ perception of their contribution to the institution. What has not been asked of state appointed lay-governors is, “Whom do they think they represent: the government, the university, their constituency or stakeholder group, the public, or is it all of the above?” This question is worth further investigation, since universities play a critical role in our societies.

Governing boards are responsible for managing the overall health of the university. In British Columbia, the powers of the governing board include oversight of matters connected to finances, facilities, property, business, and employee and faculty appointments. The governing board has shared responsibilities with the senate for setting student capacity and admission requirements. Clearly this makes the governing board central to the continued operation of the university. Few studies have been
conducted about governing boards and the perceptions of externally appointed lay-governors about their role.

The research study I have conducted will help to address the paucity of information currently available about governing boards. My study did not focus on issues of governing board effectiveness or selection but, rather, focused on the perceptions of government appointed lay-governors in British Columbia. My intent was to ask these externally appointed lay-governors about their perceptions of whom they think they represent, and to determine whether they received any direction on their role as a lay-governor from government, and on their orientation process from the university.

1.6. Scope of Research

Chapter 2 examines the historic mission of the university since its inception. It investigates changes to university governance structures over the last century and the factors that have caused those changes. It looks at the university’s current role based on those governance changes within the Canadian context and, in particular, within British Columbia. University governance is a broad area that spans the relationship within the university, and between the university and the state. To narrow the focus of enquiry, the paper concentrates on answering the questions identified in the previous section about university governance related to the structure of decision-making played by the board of governors. Chapter 3 looks at how the research design methodology was selected. It then focuses on how the research methodology was developed and applied to answer the four research questions already identified. It considers issues of validity and reliability in the methodology and limitations of the methodological approach. Chapter 4 describes how the data was analysed and examine emergent themes. Other
documentation, such as government publications, is referenced as appropriate. In Chapter 5, a critical analysis of the themes that emerged from the data identified in Chapter 4 is conducted through the lens of two leading critical theoretical frameworks: Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory. Responses to the four key questions are threaded into the analysis of university governance that examines the historical, philosophical and evolutionary aspects of the development of higher education governance structures, and looks at how this has influenced governance structures of three universities in British Columbia. Finally, in Chapter 6, recommendations regarding future research opportunities are made along with recommendations germane to the organisations that were studied.
CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW (POURING THE FOUNDATION)

2.1. A Brief History of the University

The university is an ancient institution predating the modern nation-state. It can trace its roots back to Plato’s Academy and Aristotle’s Lyceum. It has survived from ancient times to modern times by continuing to adapt and evolve to serve the society in which it is situated. Historically, the university existed in a binary relationship with its society (Readings, 1996), be it city-state, municipality, principality, church, or nation-state (Scott, 2006). As Philip Altbach (2004) indicates, almost “all of the universities in the world today, with the exception of the Al-Azhar in Cairo, stem from the same historical roots—the medieval European university and, especially, the faculty-dominated University of Paris” (p. 2). While the university has been part of society, it has also existed at a distance from that society. This relationship provided the university with certain privileges that afforded it various degrees of autonomy from its benefactor. The level of autonomy of the university within this binary structure has ebbed and flowed depending on the historical era, location and events of the day. John Scott (2006) indicates that globalisation is having a significant impact on the future of the university, “[d]espite the profound economic, scientific, and academic advantages of internationalization or regionalization, there may be costs involved. Most damaging can be the loss of distinctive cultural heritages in the pursuit of universalism” (p. 31).

Increasingly, governments have become more active in trying to recast the role of
universities as engines of national economic development similar to the *imagined* American private universities, but without the same resources, history or culture of the elite private American universities (Dale, 2005; Marginson, 1999).

The governance system of the university was very stable, until there was a shift toward mass education (massification). *Massification* was part of the nation-state’s strategy for human capital development and industrial competitiveness that emerged in the post World War II era (Kelsey, 1998; Lapworth, 2004; Marginson, 2002; Maton, 2005; Middlehurst, 2004). *Massification* required a significant increase in public funding to build new facilities and to hire additional faculty. It also resulted in the need for more sophisticated systems of governance and management to oversee the larger university structure. Support for the growth of the universities was popular with the public, because there was an expectation on the part of the public that they could access higher education and a better life (El-Khawas, 2001; Marginson, 2002; Maton, 2005). As student participation rates increased, government responded by reducing per unit funding for students, raising or introducing student tuition fees and by encouraging the universities to become more entrepreneurial (Buchbinder, 1993; Crespo & Dridi, 2007; Dennison & Schuetze, 2004; Henkel, 2007; Marginson, 2002; Salter & Tapper, 2002; Shanahan & Jones, 2007). Mora (2001) asserts that under both neoliberalism and globalisation there has been a significant shift in the role of the university. After the neoliberal framework became the dominant discourse (Altbach, 2004; Dale, 2005; Henkel, 2007; Lapworth, 2004) and with the fall of the Berlin Wall (Readings, 1996), the university was redefined as a tool for national economic development (Dealove, 2002; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Readings, 1996; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).
2.2. Changes in University Governance over the Last Century

At the start of the 20th Century, universities were elite institutions with small student numbers. Yet by the close of the 20th Century, the university had become a universal institution (Mora, 2001). During this period, the number and size of universities grew dramatically. Post secondary participation rates continued to increase and, by the end of the 20th Century, it was estimated that “over 20% of all adults 25 years of age” (Scott, 2006, p. 19) in the United States had some form of degree. Scott (2006) indicates that “European and other nations have been closing the gap with America in graduation rates” (p. 19). Like the USA and Europe, Canada implemented similar strategies that resulted in the expansion of the higher education system and a massive increase in participation rates (Shanahan & Jones, 2007). As Hans Schuetze (2002) states:

Canada has gone further than most countries in developing a mass system of higher education: 40% of the Canadian population in the typical age group are enrolled in tertiary education, as compared to 35% in the US, 27% in the UK, 17% in Germany (OECD). (p. 81)

The 20th Century saw some of the most profound changes in the university. At the end of the 19th Century, the debate over whether universities should adopt the Humboldt or Newman university model had been settled. In the USA, the Humboldt model was adopted and adapted, resulting in the three currently-accepted roles of the American university of teaching, research and public service. In the UK, the “liberal Oxbridge ideal, forged in the second half of the nineteenth century, was concerned with the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, including the transmission of knowledge” (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 260).
By the start of the 20th Century, universities started receiving public funding grants from the state. In the United Kingdom, the British Government created the University Grants Committee in 1919 to administer grant allocations to the universities (Middlehurst, 2004). The determination of how these funds were spent was left up to each institution. There was recognition on the part of both society and the government that “[t]he model of internal governance that supported this position was one in which academic authority was supreme, expressed operationally in terms of management and decision-making through committees, with senior academics chairing the committee” (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 260). Yet toward the end of the 20th Century, this situation had shifted as many western governments implemented neoliberal fiscal policy measures to control higher education expenditures and steering-from-a-distance accountability mechanisms on the universities (El-Khawas, 2001; Henkel, 2007; King, 2007; Middlehurst, 2004; Mok, 2005).

There is an inherent assumption that the 20th Century represented both the pinnacle and decline in collegial governance within the modern university. Is this true? Middlehurst (2004) examined the balance between collegial and managerial forms of governance and leadership in UK universities through an historic lens. With the exception of 'Oxbridge', her analysis indicated that collegial forms of governance in the pre-1992 universities were a relatively new phenomenon, which dated back to 1919 when the intercession of the central government to provide funding grants to the universities through the formation of the University Grants Committee. Prior to this, the university operated closely with their local communities and benefactors who found and/or provided funding to keep the university operating. These benefactors sat as lay-governors on university boards (Buckland, 2004; Shattock, 2002). With public funding, the need for benefactors ceased and the role of lay-governors and boards diminished.
significantly (Buckland, 2004; Maton, 2005; Middlehurst, 2004). From 1919 onward, the level of grant the universities received annually continued to increase. This did not initially place a strain on the public purse since the universities were small in size and number. However, with public funding came an increase in government intervention in the affairs of the universities (Henkel, 2007; Maton, 2005; Middlehurst, 2004; Shattock, 2002). By the end of the Second World War, government began to question traditional liberal ideals and saw university “education as an economic resource to be deployed to support the country’s industrial development” (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 260).

The liberal ideal emerged out of the Enlightenment era alongside the advent of the nation-state. This coincided with the emergence of a new understanding of the role of the individual within the society—a role that gave the individual primacy. Writers like John Locke, Adam Smith, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and J.S. Mill (Marginson, 2007) postulated a separation between the state and the individual. The liberal ideal required that the individual be protected from the state. Other political philosophers, such as Rene Descartes, postulated a subject-object dichotomy that created a division—a separation between the self and the other—which defined the relationship between the public and private spheres. This bifurcation cleaved the individual from society, thus making the individual separate and apart from society and placing the individual in a space that needed to be protected from the reach of society. This represented a fundamental shift in the way that humans imagined themselves and how they should interact with other private individuals and with the larger public society. With this shift in understanding of the individual as separate from the society, the role of the nation-state was redefined to provide the individual a secure environment in which to engage in economic and other pursuits free from interference.
Since the universities were viewed as not being responsive to the government’s economic agenda, the UK Government implemented new public policy objectives and tools, which resulted in the creation of the “polytechnics” in 1965. The polytechnics were an example of government intervention in the higher education sector to promote technical skills training to meet the needs of industry. This was emulated in Canada with the creation of the college system in the late 1960s—a deliberate strategy by government to increase higher education participation rates. This occurred in the UK, the USA, Canada and other OECD nations. The creation of an alternate higher education training system represented a significant public policy shift on the part of government. Given the economic situation of the 1980s and early 1990s, neoliberal funding reforms were initiated by governments in various jurisdictions around the world to reduce or cap the growth of the universities’ draw on public resources (Altbach, 2004; Henkel, 2007; Lapworth, 2004). Some of the specific reforms initiated were designed to increase efficiency (getting more for less or the same) through structural changes to both the funding model and to the universities. It is within this context that Middlehurst (2004) analysed the types of internal governance changes made by the British government to universities within the UK using legislative tools to create change. She indicated there were a variety of reasons that led toward restructuring the internal governance of the universities. One of the primary reasons was “to create greater efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of the universities and colleges” (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 264). One of the main solutions to achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness was changing internal governance. Implementing an executive management and leadership structure within the universities was designed to replicate the functions and functionality of a business corporation (Bennett, 2002; Birnbaum, 2004; Buckland, 2004; Middlehurst, 2004; Shattock, 2002).
In 1992, the British government converted the polytechnics into universities to create competition with the pre-1992 universities. The polytechnics were “constituted as higher education corporations [that] adopted management structures that were closer to the corporate sector. While they typically maintained a ‘deliberative’ structure of committees, they also adopted an executive management approach” (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 265). These internal governance changes represented a profound change to the autonomy and purpose of the universities. It was initially resisted by the pre-1992 universities, but embraced by the former polytechnics (post-1992 universities). As well, government reinforced the role of university boards to manage the assets of the institution and transform the universities into corporations that were more entrepreneurial and less dependent on public funding. They were charged to work collaboratively with industry on applied research that supported government’s economic development agenda (Bennett, 2002; Crespo & Dridi, 2007; Dale, 2005; Dearlove, 2002; Marginson, 2002; Salter & Tapper, 2002; Shanahan & Jones, 2007).

As part of Middlehurst’s (2004) analysis of the internal governance changes, she referenced a model posited by McNay (1995) that shows four idealized university cultures: collegium, bureaucracy, corporation, and enterprise. Within this framework, the legislative changes being made by government in the UK were designed to move the universities along the scale from collegium institutions (traditional Anglo-Saxon universities) to become enterprise institutions that mirrored private corporations. Middlehurst points out that Oxford and Cambridge are examples of institutions with collegium cultures and are the antithesis to the enterprise culture encouraged by the UK government. This assessment is interesting given that both Oxford and Cambridge are in the top 20 on the research universities list compiled by Jiao Tung University, and are highly successful at attracting international students and research funding—typically
associated with entrepreneurial universities. Middlehurst’s assessment that governance changes within the UK higher education system were initially driven to constrain public expenditures is similar to Marginson’s (2002) argument about the rationale for governance changes made to the higher education system in Australia. According to Marginson (2002) and Middlehurst (2004), the national governments in Australia and the UK implemented neoliberal policies designed to constrain public resource expenditures. This led to legislated internal governance changes within the public sector and, in particular, to the higher education sector. Legislative changes were made to restructure university governance to make the universities more efficient and effective with public funds, to have the ‘consumer’ of the service pay a portion of the cost, and to encourage the university to look at revenue generation (entrepreneurial) activities. This latter point is important because, within the legislation, the universities were allowed to keep the revenues that they generated from any entrepreneurial activities. Scholars such as Buchbinder (1993), Considine (2006), Crespo and Dridi (2007), Henkel (2007), Salter and Tapper (2002) and Willmott (2003) agree these measures were designed to create a culture-shift within the universities to make them function and behave like private sector corporations.

While Middlehurst’s (2004) analysis provided a good analysis of the historical changes to the university in the 20th Century and a conceptual model for understanding the governance system government wanted the universities to implement through legislative changes, she did not sufficiently address the issue of internal resistance within the universities to these imposed external changes. This may be because any resistance is ultimately futile, and resistance will fade over time as new faculty members are hired and these changes become accepted as the norm within the university system. Salter and Tapper (2002) point out how the research funding structure has been
accepted by academics in the UK. The government implemented a process called the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which is administered by a committee of academics who approve the annual allocation of research grants based on merit. The national government used the RAE process to affect a behavioural change in research but, more importantly, the management of research. Within this framework, the “vision of academic meritocracy in action enabled the incorporation of the post-1992 universities into the resource allocation game and encouraged all institutions to respect the integrity of the rationing process” (Salter & Tapper, 2002). Under this research grant process, applications for grants are reviewed by a panel of academic peers who rank-order the grant submissions on an annual basis. That rank ordering then results in the distribution of research funding grants. This structure shows a deliberate calculation on the part of government who used the university culture of merit to create acceptance of a (neoliberal) competitive funding structure for rationed government grants.

Similar to Middlehurst’s (2004) analysis of university governance changes in the UK, Glen Jones, Theresa Shanahan and Paul Goyan (2001) looked at the history and evolution of governance of Canadian universities. Their review starts with the recommendations of the Flavelle Commission in 1906, which made recommendations to revamp the governance structure of the University of Toronto. The main recommendations articulated the rationale for bicameralism: a senate that would be responsible for academic matters and a corporate governing board that would be responsible for administrative matters (Jones et al., 2001). To ensure the needs of the public interest were met, the governing “board [would be] composed of government appointed citizens” (p. 136), who would oversee all administrative matters. These recommendations were incorporated into the University of Toronto Act and passed into legislation. Later, several other Canadian universities (Dalhousie, McGill, and Queen’s)
also implemented bicameral governance structures based on the University of Toronto Act, and this became:

[the] dominant governance model in Canadian universities [which] historically can be seen as an attempt to clarify the relationship between the university and the state by establishing external accountability through the delegation of state interests to a corporate board composed of lay-members. (Jones et al., 2001, p. 136)

Although the Flavelle commission provided the basis for bicameralism, the authors noted that most Canadian university senates and governing boards operated in-camera, and that the community both within the university and outside of the university was not privy to their discussions and deliberations. It was not until the late 1960s that additional legislation based on the 1966 recommendations of the Duff-Berdahl Commission was enacted. The intent of the legislative response to the Duff-Berdahl recommendations was to modify the existing bicameral legislation to “create more open, transparent governance arrangements, include faculty participation on the university governing board, and reform the academic senate so that it would be a smaller, stronger decision-making body” (Jones et al., 2001, p. 137). The intent of these changes was not to undermine the bicameral governance structure, but to modify it to ensure that there was faculty and student participation in university decision-making. Jones et al. (2001) indicate that another intention of the Duff-Berdahl recommendations was to ensure that non-members had open access to both senate and board meetings. While changes were made to include faculty and student participation on the governing boards, not all of the other recommendations were implemented in legislation. However, two other significant factors that influenced the evolution of the governance of Canadian universities in the 1960s and 1970s were the growth of faculty unionisation and the move toward massification of higher education. The authors indicated that, even though there had been substantial changes to the bicameral governance system which resulted
in decision-making becoming more participatory, it had also become more complex (Jones et al., 2001). With the economic recessions of the 1970s and the government’s attempts to control spending at both the federal and provincial levels, there was a move by some university faculty to unionise as a means of protecting their rights and interests. As Jones et al. (2001) indicate:

Twenty-two university faculty associations had obtained union status by 1980 and the number of faculty unions continued to increase through the 90s in response to recent financial restraint and job security concerns. A large majority of all Canadian university faculty are now members of institution-based faculty unions. (p. 139)

This level of unionisation meant that a large number of administrative issues were dealt with through collective bargaining, thus reducing the flexibility of administrative policy and, in some cases, academic policy control.

The other and perhaps more significant factor influencing university governance has been the growth of the higher education system in Canada. At the start of the 20th Century, the university was an elitist institution but, by the close of the century, it had become a mass education system. The main period of growth was in the in 1960s and 1970s, when existing universities were expanded and new universities were created. As an example, the McDonald report that was released in 1962 by the then President of the University of British Columbia, Dr. John MacDonald, made recommendations to expand access to post secondary education and create a University of California-style multi-campus education system in British Columbia. While the recommendation to create a University of California-style system was not implemented, the provincial government did create two new universities and one institute: Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, and the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). In addition, the
province also created the legislative framework that allowed for the formation of community colleges through plebiscite (Dennison, 1995).

The creation of these new institutions required significant investments in facilities and capital infrastructure for both existing universities and the new universities. To manage this increase in size, the administrative structure in the university grew and this required “an increasing network of full-time administrators, institutional researchers and planners employed to manage university activities” (Jones et al., 2001, p. 139). The continuing economic fluctuations and deficits of the 1980s and early 1990s resulted in provincial governments in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario adopting neoliberal fiscal policies that: used market principles to allocate resources, encouraging universities to generate their own revenues; implemented accountability and efficiency structures; and deregulated tuition (Crespo & Dridi, 2007; Dennison & Schuetze, 2004; Shanahan & Jones, 2007). Unlike the UK where the government amended legislation to create specific governance changes to the universities, the changes in Canada have been much more evolutionary than revolutionary, and “have been accomplished without massive reform of the governance of post-secondary education” (Shanahan & Jones, 2007, p. 42).

Like Shanahan and Jones (2007), Schuetze (2002) notes that Canadian universities have not been subjected to massive restructuring but “[r]ather [that] changes occur in a piecemeal manner and through a process of adoption, negotiation, and ‘mimetic isomorphism’, i.e. copying successful models from other provinces” (p. 93). One of the more significant changes he notes is the rise in managerialism within the Canadian universities as a response to government accountability requirements. This has strengthened “central administrations in Canadian universities and, conversely,
[resulted in] a reduction of collective and individual autonomy” for faculty (p. 96).

Unfortunately, Schuetze does not elaborate on this point in detail. This lack of detail is reflected throughout Schuetze’s analysis, where he provides all the key pieces but does not sufficiently elaborate on how the pieces fit together or identify and address dialogical debates on the impact of massification on the future of higher education in Canada.

What Schuetze’s analysis does do is corroborate the research of other scholars about the changes that have happened to university systems in other jurisdictions.

2.3. University Governance Structures in Canada/British Columbia

The previous section of this chapter examined the history of the university and its evolution. This section of the paper provides a brief overview of the two main university governance models (the Anglo-American model and the Continental European model), and then examines the specific legislative structure of university governance and the role of various constituent and stakeholder groups within Canada, but specifically within British Columbia.

As was discussed earlier, Mora (2001) identified three models of university organisation: the German Humboldt model, the French Napoleonic model, and the Anglo-American model. The main difference between the German and French models is the level of autonomy of individual academics. In the German model, full professors had the autonomy to pursue their own research interests while, in the French model, the academics, as civil servants, were expected to pursue research that met the needs of the state. While there are differences between the German and French university governance systems, there are more similarities than differences and they are often grouped together as the continental European university model (Harman & Treadgold,
2007; Mora, 2001). Under this continental European model, “the State has traditionally had a great deal of power over higher education. It has controlled finance, programmes and appointments to professors with civil servant status. University autonomy has been non-existent or has been limited to academic freedom only” (Mora, 2001, p. 99).

Consequently, there was no need for any governing board since the state oversaw the day-to-day operations of the university. However under neoliberal influences, the continental European model has changed so that the “state administration of universities (rather than the traditional institutional autonomy as found in the USA, Australia and the UK) is giving way to more ‘remote steering at a distance’” (King, 2007, p. 415) through newly legislated university governing boards. A variety of European scholars, such as Bleiklie (1998), de Boer, Enders and Leisyte (2007), de Boer and Goedegebuure (2007), Frolich (2005), Huisman, de Boer and Goedegebuure (2006), Huisman and van der Wende (2004), Hufner (2003), Meister-Scheytt (2007), Pritchard (2006) and Wolter (2004) have looked at the affect that the implementation of these governing boards have had in various European nations. They indicate that the impact has been varied but:

it is possible to argue there is a new trend in European higher education that creates a central governance body (board or council) with representation of external stakeholders while authority is reinforced at central level and collegiality is weakened or even abandoned. (Taylor & Machado, 2008, p. 251)

The traditional continental European model is substantially different than the Anglo-American model where “[t]he role of government is limited to providing funds and setting general criteria as party of its higher education policy. The universities themselves decide on their own academic and financial policies” (Mora, 2001, p. 98).

Since there was a separation between the university and the state, oversight of the university was provided through a governing board of lay-governors who represented the community. Lay-governors were tasked with securing the resources to operate the
university but, when universities started receiving public funding, this role diminished (Buckland, 2004; Henkel, 2007; Maton, 2005; Middlehurst, 2004). Internally, the president/vice chancellor and the deans were responsible for the day-to-day administrative operation of the university. It must be noted that there is some variation within the Anglo-American model between the public and private institutions in the USA, and between the pre and post-1992 universities in the UK and other nations, like Australia, Canada and New Zealand who operate at the periphery of the Anglo-American model (Scott, 2006; Marginson, 2002; Middlehurst, 2004; Mora, 2001). It is important to understand the Anglo-American university model, because this is the basis for the university systems in Australia, Canada and New Zealand (Marginson, 2002).

While the governance structure between Australian, Canadian and UK universities were initially similar, there have been some significant changes. According to Shattock (2002), the UK Government restructured the post-1992 universities (the former polytechnics) to include a governing board structure with defined roles between the governing board, the president (vice-chancellor) and the senate, but the governing board is supreme. This structure purposefully resembled the corporate governance model, “where the institution’s governing body represents the dominant locus of power and decision-making on a \textit{de facto} and \textit{de jure} basis” (Shattock, 2002, p. 236). Shattock indicated that the UK Government strongly encouraged the pre-1992 universities to adopt a similar governance approach, and provided the legislative framework for the pre-1992 universities to change elements of their governance structure, such as the size and composition of their governing boards. The Australian government has made similar legislative changes to the UK universities that, according to Harman and Treadgold (2007), Marginson and Considine (2000), Rytmeister and Marshall (2007), and Rytmeister (2009), imposed a corporate-type of governance structure where the senate
is subordinate and reports to the governing board. Rytmesiter and Marshall (2007) indicate that the governing board:

... is charged with the overall governance of the institution, with comprehensive powers of delegation in relation to day-to-day management and authority. Each university has an academic governing body, termed Academic Senate or Academic Board, established by the enabling act, statute or by-law. Although this body holds academic authority and is responsible for decisions relating to the academic business of the university, it is subsidiary in statutory authority to the overall governing body. (p. 283)

Shattock argues that these actions by government to concentrate power in the centre is not going to work since universities are essentially bottom-driven (faculty) organisations. A balance is needed between the centre (governing board, president and executive/senior administration) and the periphery (faculty) to allow for shared governance from all stakeholders. Harman and Treadgold (2004) support this approach and suggest some alternate models of shared governance are necessary if the universities are to retain what makes them unique.

The universities in Canada, including British Columbia, have a bicameral governance structure with a governing board (board of governors) and a senate which, in theory, have separate but equal powers. This governance structure is an inherited arrangement “stemming from times when universities were small and serving a small segment of the population, the academic senate is understood by many university members, especially the professoriate, as the most important instrument of academic self-government” (Schuetze, 2002, p. 94). This structure is based on the Anglo-American university tradition from England with strong institutional modifying influences from the USA (Marginson, 2002). The federal government does not have constitutional authority or responsibility for the education in Canada, rather, it is a provincial matter. Shanahan and Jones (2007) believe that the constitutional structure is one of the
reasons why, “[r]egardless of the province, postsecondary education has been a state-regulated, secular, publicly funded enterprise characterized by a high level of institutional autonomy for universities” (p. 37). The provinces have overseen the universities indirectly through delegation to a governing board comprised primarily of external representatives.

State authority over universities is delegated to a corporate board made up of government appointees overseeing the administration of the university, and a senate primarily made up of faculty as the governing body responsible for academic issues. There is little interference or regulation by provincial governments in the internal day-to-day university decision-making. The main areas of intrusion occur in relation to funding and accounting for funds. (Shanahan & Jones, 2007, p. 37)

This has resulted in a mosaic of 13 similar, but different, higher education jurisdictions within Canada.

In British Columbia, the University Act specifies the power of the board of governors and the senate (Appendix A). The University Act is very clear in delineating the separation between the administrative and academic responsibilities between the board of governors and the senate. The responsibility for the “management, administration and control of the property, revenue, business and affairs of the university are vested in the board” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 27), and the responsibility for the “academic governance of the university is vested in the senate” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 37). The University Act specifies that boards should be no larger than 15 members with “8 members being appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, 2 of whom are to be appointed from among persons nominated by the alumni association” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 19).

Further review shows that the senate structure is comprised of:

a number of faculty members equal to twice the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), to consist of 2 members of
each faculty elected by members of that faculty, and the remainder
elected by the faculty members in the manner that they, in joint meeting,
determine. (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 35)

Paragraphs (a) through (f) refer to the administrative positions of the university,
such as the president, vice president academic and the registrar. The legislation
 guarantees that there is twice the number of faculty members as there are administrative
members to insure that the senate represents the interests of the faculty and has control
over the academic agenda of the institution. This bicameral governance structure is
unique and was designed so the university would operate in a collegial co-governed
manner. One exception from the other universities in British Columbia noted within the
University Act is for the University of British Columbia, which has a board of 21 members
since it has two senates: one for Vancouver and one for the Okanagan (University Act,
R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 27). However, the majority of the membership on the board is
still composed of external lay-governors.

It should be noted that while there is a bicameral governance structure, the
University Act also specifically recognises the role of the president and the vice
president academic. According to the University Act, the president “must generally
supervise and direct the academic work of the university” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996
c. 468, s. 35) as well as be responsible for the day-to-day administrative operations of
the university, which includes dealing with staff and student conduct issues. The role of
president is noted in the University Act as vice chancellor—retaining its historic roots to
the UK—but is also referenced as the Chief Executive Officer, reflecting that the
university is a publicly-owned corporation. The president is a member of both the board
and the senate, and this places considerable executive decision-making power in the
office of the president. Depending on whether the issue is administrative or academic,
the decisions of the president are subject to review and scrutiny by either the board or
the senate. While the University Act is written to recognise the bicameral decision-making structure within the university, the specific recognition and powers it gives the president creates a triad structure among the administrative oversight of the board, the academic role of the senate, with the president providing the interface between the board and the senate; and provides both the leadership and management function for the institution. This makes the role of the president central and critical to the university's well-being and, therefore, a very powerful position.

While there are differences between the University Act and the equivalent legislation in other provinces, such as the Post Secondary Learning Act in Alberta, the bicameral structure and powers of the board and senate of universities in Canada are essentially the same. As Dennison (2006) notes:

The subject of management (i.e., how, when, and by whom decisions are made) is an important issue in educational institutions. Governance of universities, certainly for the last fifty years, has, with few exceptions, been based upon the principal of bicameral management (Duff & Berdahl, 1966; Murray, 1992). Under this arrangement, in theory, at least, financial decisions are under the aegis of the board, while academic governance is the purview of senate (the inescapable fact that such decisions are rarely, if ever, independent of each other must be acknowledged). University boards are widely representative, including faculty, staff, and student members, while senates are also broadly inclusive, are predominantly composed of faculty members. (p. 118)

For the most part, the legislation is similar from province to province, but there are variations since education is the domain of the provinces under section (93) of the Canadian constitution, except for limited responsibilities by the federal government for the provision of education to First Nations and the military. Consequently, universities have been able to mature and develop without overt national political interference and with limited provincial interference. The University Act specifies that the Minister “must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university, its board, senate and
other constituent bodies” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 48). This would imply that universities have operated freely without interference from government in either their day-to-day operations or their long-term strategic direction. While it has been noted by scholars, like Skolnik & Jones (1992) and Dennison (1995), that Canadian universities are some of the most autonomous universities in the world, their observations are more than a decade old.

There are signs that the traditional autonomy universities have enjoyed may be changing. The recent situation where the provincial government has inserted itself into the internal affairs of the university in the selection of the next president of Memorial University of Newfoundland indicates a more active involvement by government that reduces university autonomy.

Over a decade ago, Slaughter and Leslie (1997) noted that Canada had not been significantly impacted by neoliberalism restructuring toward academic capitalism. They indicated that other jurisdictions, like Australia and the UK, were well along a path of implementing academic capitalism with the universities. Under academic capitalism, university knowledge is exploited to support economic development through commodification and commercialisation, turning public knowledge into private goods. Within this economic instrumentality, there is the potential that those areas of the university that do not support economic development or product commercialization will, over time, be minimised and eventually discontinued as non-productive economic activities (Giroux, 2002). Slaughter and Leslie further indicated that Canada had resisted the incursions on neoliberalism within its university system. However, the more recent work of Schuetze (2002), Dennison and Schuetze (2004), Crespo and Dridi (2007), and Shanahan and Jones (2007) indicates that academic capitalism has gained
a strong foothold in Canadian universities, and that government may be prepared to intervene in the universities if government’s goals are not being met.

The Canadian federal government, which provides the bulk of research funding, has used its fiscal powers to achieve changes in university behaviour through their structuring of federal research grants (Crespo & Dridi, 2007; Shanahan & Jones, 2007). This is similar, but on a much more limited scale, to what the British government did with the RAE. The provincial governments, who have direct responsibility for the universities, have tinkered with legislation: creating either new universities with modified mandates, such as the new regional/teaching universities in British Columbia in response to the Campus 2020 report (Plant, 2007); allowing other non-university post-secondary institutions to have (limited) degree granting privileges; and allowing competition from private sector universities. It could be argued that these actions were taken because universities were not seen as being responsive to government policy direction. As well, provincial governments have used overt policy to change university behaviour by modifying the provision of annual operating grants through targeting new funds for specific program areas. These measures are explicit and designed to create behavioural changes. The question this immediately raises is, “What, if any, are the implicit actions government has taken to have an effect on behavioural changes in the universities?”

One of the obvious levers government can use is whom it appoints to serve as lay-governors on a university board of governors. Since the government appoints the majority of the board, this would imply that it has the ability to influence the administrative affairs and policy actions of the university through these appointments. But is this necessarily true and what does the literature indicate?
The next section of this chapter will explore the last question posed above and through this analysis attempt to begin to answer the four questions raised at the beginning of this paper about governing boards.

2.4. Role of the Board

One of the most influential studies on governing boards that was conducted by Thomas Holland, Richard Chait, and Barbara Taylor (1989) and was published in Research in Higher Education, considered one of the more prestigious higher education journals (Hutchinson, Lovell, & Cheryl, 2004). The main premise of the study was “to refine the theoretical understanding of governance and to contribute to knowledge about effective board performance” (Holland et al., 1989, p. 436). The authors conducted a 3-phase approach using a combined grounded theory and case study qualitative approach. The first phase consisted of an exploratory pilot to refine the issues and their understanding of the issues. The second phase consisted of in-depth interviews that were used to develop a self-administered questionnaire. The third phase was a refinement of the questionnaire developed as an outcome of the second phase.

Since this was an exploratory study the authors used a grounded theoretical approach to develop a working theory on university governance and the role the board played in creating effective governance. The in-depth interviews allowed the authors to develop a model of the elements that are necessary and present in effective boards, which they identified as consisting of six key dimensions: (1) understands institutional context—contextual dimension, (2) builds capacity for learning—educational dimension, (3) nurtures the development of the board as a group—interpersonal dimension, (4) recognises complexities and nuances—intellectual dimension, (5) respects and guards
the integrity of the governance process—political dimension, and (6) envisions and shapes institutional direction—strategic dimension (Holland et al., 1989). Based on their study, the authors reached four conclusions: (1) that a multiple case study was the best way to draw on the insights and experiences of the trustees; (2) that there is evidence that effective boards are differentiated from less effective boards, based on the six key dimensions the authors identified in the study; (3) that trained observers can reliably collect this type of data; and, (4) that their research methodology and approach has applicability to other aspects of educational institutional studies (Holland et al, 1989).

One interesting limitation of the study was the authors’ attempts to create a quantitative closed self-administered questionnaire survey. The authors indicated the questionnaire that was developed at the end of the second phase was not successful (Holland et al., 1989, p. 449). One of the main reasons for the self-administered quantitative questionnaire being unsuccessful was that a questionnaire couldn’t capture the nuances and contextual meaning that a trained interviewer can draw out. Subsequently the authors discontinued the proposed third phase of their research.

The article by Holland, Chait and Taylor provided ground-breaking research that was the basis for their book, *The Effective Board of Trustees*, published in 1991. Although the research in the book is now more than 18 years old, the book has been updated several times and is considered a seminal work on the role of boards of trustees in university governance. The data collection and analysis was conducted over a 3-year timeframe with their initial data findings published in the 1989 article referenced earlier. The authors expanded the number of interviews they had conducted and referenced in their 1989 article. The starting point for the book was the first two phases referenced in the 1989 article, with the addition of a new third phase. The initial two phases were: (1)
asking experts to identify the least and most effective boards; and (2) visits to 10 campuses to interview the president, the board chair, the immediate past chair and 2-3 other trustees. The data was then analysed and coded. Based on this analysis, a third phase was conducted at another 12 US institutions to expand the data collection and analysis. This new third phase used interviews to collect data with a further refined instrument. The analysis of the new data reinforced and refined the authors’ earlier findings.

Although there had been a significant amount of research on the role of the president in effective higher education governance, Holland et al. (1989) found that very little research had been conducted on the role of boards of trustees. The book examined the effectiveness of boards of trustees in enhancing institutional performance, but this was a subtle shift from their stated purpose in their 1989 article. The book focused on the factors that create an effective board based on their six key dimensions. The authors concluded that there was a link between board effectiveness and institutional performance at the institutions studied. Institutions that had effective boards also performed better in terms of their financial status and student outcomes. One area that the authors appear not to have studied is whom the lay-governors on boards of trustees think they represent: Is it the public, the State Governor, the university, the community, or some other group or organisation? It is clear that this represents an area worth further study.

In a more recent study, Sandra Dika and Steven Janosik (2003) examined the selection, training and effectiveness of boards of trustees at American colleges and universities. Dika and Janosik used a quantitative descriptive research approach and developed a survey instrument that was mailed out to the offices of all 50 Governors and
to all 50 State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEOs). Follow-up letters were mailed out two weeks later, along with a second questionnaire for those who did not respond to the first mail-out. The survey contained six specific questions about public colleges and universities. The questions ranged from: Who were the key players; what were their qualifications; what statutory requirements existed in the selection of trustees; and what training did the trustees receive (Dika & Janosik, 2003)? The authors achieved a response rate of 82% from the SHEEOs and 48% from the Governors’ offices. When both sets of responses were combined, the authors had data on all 50 states.

Dika and Janosik’s (2003) analysis of the data indicated that, while there were similarities between the various states on certain variables, there was no systematic approach to how trustees were selected and oriented. In some states, the trustees were required to have an orientation program before assuming their role, while in other states there was no requirement. The authors indicated that the majority of governors thought “that the process of the selecting trustees received a high priority and none of the respondents implied that appointments are given a low priority” (p. 284). The authors noted that the USA does not have a national policy on higher education governance. They indicated that further studies were needed to examine the issue of selection and orientation of trustees. They also suggested that a study be done to determine if there was an interest to create a national higher education policy structure. While the article is interesting, the methodology is limited in its usefulness in interpreting the data. Dika and Janosik supported the conclusions of Chait et al. (1991) on the need for further studies on higher education, governance and governing boards.
Adrianna Kezar (2006) has written extensively on higher education in the USA. Her study on governing boards examined the elements that contribute to creating high performance public governing boards in higher education. Kezar indicated that there is a large variation of practice around governing boards.

In some states, governing boards are elected by the citizens, and in others they are selected by the governor. States vary in the composition of governing boards as well as in the membership and duration of terms. Some states have multicampus or system governing boards that govern more than one institution. (p. 969)

She noted that the commonality to all boards is that they supervise higher education institutions for the common good (Kezar, 2006). Lay-governing boards play an important role in the governance of higher education institutions in the USA by providing policy-making and public accountability. Kezar noted that the quality and effectiveness of governing board affects the ability of higher education institutions to serve the public interest. Like Chait et al. (1991), Kezar indicates that the study of governing boards is important, because there are few studies and most of the research is focused on presidential leadership. She also indicated that most studies already done on public governing boards have been anecdotal or small case studies, and that more empirical studies are required.

Kezar (2006) used a large elite interview structure of 132 different experts from all 50 states using open-ended questions. As an outcome of the interviews, she identified six key elements of effective boards: (1) leadership, (2) culture, (3) education, (4) external relations, (5) relationships, and (6) structures. These elements all interrelate in complex ways and require constant attention. Kezar’s analysis also indicated that public higher education governing boards have a much more complex environment than private higher education governing boards because of the “challenge of trying to balance
layers of stakeholder interests” (p. 998). To overcome the competition of stakeholder
groups, public boards need to reach out to all stakeholder groups to incorporate their
issues into the formal agenda of the board. There is no single approach to do this and
unique approaches are required to solve issues, rather than simple solutions. The
results from Kezar’s study are like Chait et al. (1991) and to similar research on non-
profit, corporate, and private higher education boards, although there are some
variations. This is a good study but, as Kezar (2006) noted, “[m]ore research is needed
on ways that the various layers of governance can best be integrated to produce an
effective and efficient [public higher education] system” (p. 1000).

There are some additional studies that also look after different aspects of the role
of governing boards in university governance. Jason Lane (2007) examined the formal
and informal (direct and indirect) forms of higher education oversight in two American
states: Illinois and Pennsylvania. Lane used a political economy "principal-agent"
contractarian theoretical framework to define the relationships between the state and the
universities. He indicates that use of:

principal-agent theory leads to the conclusion that the university operates
as an agent of the state government (the principal). However, the
relationship is awash with information asymmetries, leading the principal
to have to rely on a complex array of oversight mechanisms and other
actors to reduce some of these asymmetries. (p. 616)

The author stated that, while some of the direct oversight mechanisms have been
studied, what has not been studied is the indirect (asymmetrical) forms of oversight and,
consequently, there is little information how these affect the behaviour of the state and/or
the university. Since the study was designed to be exploratory, Lane used a qualitative
analysis through a comparative case study methodology. The author collected data
through interviews and document research. The interviews were determined with an intensity sampling structure, and both inductive and deductive analyses were used.

Lane’s research examined the relationship between the state and the university and the types of oversight employed by the state to ensure that the publicly funded university met the state’s objectives. The author indicated that while some forms of direct oversight have been studied, there are only limited studies of indirect forms of oversight. The author studied three campuses of the University of Illinois and (24) campuses of Pennsylvania State University between 1998 and 2002. Results of the study indicate that while there are differences in the approach to state intervention in the two university systems (direct oversight), there are similarities in the types of indirect oversight that influence the behaviour of the universities. The author compares this to a spider-web that links both direct and indirect oversight together and binds the potential actions of the university and the state. The author indicates that both his methodological approach and the subject area (university governance) provides a rich area for future research. The study adds to the understanding of university governance by looking at how government, as one of the main funders of higher education, can influence university behaviour both directly and indirectly.

Another study by Keith Dixon and David Coy (2007) examined whether annual reports produced by New Zealand universities, were used by their own governing boards, and if so, how useful was this information. The Councils (governing boards) are an integral component of the decision-making process of the New Zealand universities. They represent one of the three decision-making groups within the university that also includes the vice chancellors (president) and the academic boards (senates). Unlike the other two groups, the Councils are separated from the day-to-day workings of the
university and do not have the same intimate level of knowledge as the other two groups. The authors examined how the university Council (governing board) in New Zealand make their decisions and to what extent they use the university's annual report in their decision-making process.

The authors used a qualitative analysis. They sent questionnaires out to all recipient/users of annual reports of universities in the 2000 calendar year. The Council (governing board) members were identified as a subset of the total group for purposes of their study. The authors asked three questions: (1) How and why do council members use annual reports?; (2) How important are the reports as a source of information?; and (3) How are they used for accountability? The results of their study found that the Councillors considered the reports more useful and informative than the other two user groups. Council members indicated they wanted high quality information in order to make appropriate decisions. The annual reports help the Councillors understand the university better but they have limited value since they do not specify future resource distribution, overall plans and financial implications. The authors noted that the council members were not proactive in attempting to exercise their formal powers to improve the information they received.

This is an interesting research report that raises issues around how governing boards can be effective if they do not have insider knowledge of the university or do not receive high quality information needed to make good decisions. There are several implications to this last point that may indicate that governing boards are captive to university administrations who provide them with the data that they use to make decisions, such as funding allocations, which impact the universities’ future directions. While this study may add to our knowledge of the subject matter and raise some
additional questions for investigation, it could have used some additional editing to make it sharper.

Brian Pusser, Sheila Slaughter and Scott Thomas (2006) examined university governance and looked at the extent of overlapping interlocks between corporate board directors and public and private university board of trustee memberships to determine what effect this may have on the behaviour of the university through its policies, research and administrative structures. The authors conducted this study because there is not a great deal of research on university boards of trustees. Their research focused on the role that boards of trustees may have played over the last decade in influencing or increasing the level of entrepreneurial activity and the use of corporate management structures in financing post secondary institutions. The authors looked at university behaviour in an environment where block public funding decreased to determine if institutions had altered their resource-seeking patterns to compete for funding from the private sector and for targeted funding grants aimed at encouraging university-industry partnerships. This latter is an important point because, according to other studies (Crespo & Dridi, 2007; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004) universities are increasingly being viewed and promoted as engines of national economic development.

Pusser et al. (2006) utilised a quantitative empirical research methodology that reviewed secondary data sources to examine the level of corporate involvement in university governance structures. The period of study for the research was the 2000 calendar year. The authors studied the top 10 private and top 10 public research universities in the United States. The determination of the top 20 universities was based on research expenditures as published by the National Science Foundation. Once the
20 universities were identified, the authors then reviewed the institutional public records for each of the universities. From this review they found that there were 662 active board members that served as trustees on the governing boards of the 20 institutions that formed the study group. The next stage in the study was to then look for overlaps between the 662 active trustees with concurrent active Board of Director appointments at publicly held corporations. This information was gathered from information filed by the publicly held corporations with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. The authors analysis indicated that of the 662 active trustees, 413 of these trustees also served on the boards of 338 publicly held corporations.

The study also looked at the relationship between university trustees who served together on third party corporate and university boards and the way in which this may also affect policy-making structures. The authors studied the interlocks between individuals whose dual role serving as both university trustees and corporate board Directors may have influenced the governance policymaking structure of the university through overlapping and multiple board memberships. The authors indicate that alliances between the universities and the private (corporate) sector provide varying degrees of corporate access to faculties, students, laboratories and intellectual capital of the university, as well as providing the university access to other non-public sources of revenue generation. While the economic aspect of the relationship may be well understood, the authors indicate that what is less well understood is the process by which these multiple board and Trustee relationships are translated into institutional policies and practices. Consequently, the number and types of boards with which university trustees are affiliated provides a key window into sources of information, networks of legitimacy and authority, and normative understandings of effective institutional organisation and behaviour.
The study by Pusser et al. (2006) provides a good analysis of a little studied area and takes a different perspective examining how overlapping board memberships may influence university behaviour. Although the study is limited to the top 20 public and private research universities in the United States, the information gleaned through their analysis provides an interesting look at the level of interlocks between the corporate world and the public and private universities in the governance structure of the university system, especially in the private universities. The study indicates that there is a higher level of corporate influence in the private American research universities than the public universities but both private and public institutions’ policies, research and administrative structures are being influenced by the private sector. It is clear that further studies are needed given this study’s small sample size. However, a serious concern with this study is the small number of universities. The small number of universities makes it problematic to reach conclusions that can be generalised to the entire private and public university system in the United States. This is an important point because the study focused on the top 20 American research universities (10 public and 10 private) and these institutions may not be representative of the rest of the American public and private university system since the institutions studied can be classified as elite institutions. Finally, what the study did not do is survey the trustees for their perspectives and rather drew inferences that may not align with the views of these trustees. Clearly though, their study further widens the trail and provides additional information that expands our limited understanding of the role of university governing boards.

The most current published research on university governance is by Catherine Rytmeister, a lecturer at Macquarie University in Australia. Rytmeister (2009) examined the perceptions, practices and tensions at the governance-management interface in
university governing boards in Australia. The author used a qualitative constructivist grounded theory methodology that included 36 interviews of governing board members at seven Australian universities. Constructivist grounded theory postulates that knowledge and meaning is socially constructed and, therefore, meaning is derived from the interviewer and from the interviewed, not externally. Rytmeister’s analysis looked at the underlying tensions and relationships between university management and governing bodies (board) and examined how this dynamic affects the capacity of governing boards to play a greater strategic role within their institutions.

Rytmeister found that the governing boards are wholly dependent on the vice chancellor (i.e. president) for the information they need to make decisions. This finding supports the research by Dixon and Coy (2007) referenced earlier in this section. She indicates that governing board decision-making is based on strategic plans that are jointly developed by the university governing board members and the vice chancellor (executive management) through meeting retreats. The vice chancellor reports back to the university governing board through “ends-based” monitoring reports detailing the progress toward achieving the goals within the strategic plan. The author notes that there is an explicit level of trust that is built between the executive management and external government appointed members who form the majority of the university governing board members. The dependence of the governing board on the vice chancellor and executive management generates tension since there are no alternatives available to the board except those provided by management. This is not to imply anything inappropriate on the part of management and that the board has the right and responsibility to request additional information, clarification and options from management if they do not think they have sufficient information to make a decision. Rytmeister also looked at this issue in an earlier paper (Rytmeister & Marshall, 2007).
The author indicates that additional studies are required to understand the role of university governing boards and indicates that a framework should be developed that can link the various studies on university governance together to build a more comprehensive understanding of this subject.

In examining Canadian literature, there are even fewer studies about governing boards in Canada. One notable exception is the study by Jones et al. (2001) that was reviewed earlier in this dissertation (p. 28). Their study consisted of two parts; the first examined the evolution of governance in Canadian universities starting with the Flavelle Commission in 1906. The second part of the article—relevant to this part of the paper—examined data from two studies, one that had been conducted in 1995 and reported out in 1997, and a latter study from 1999. The 1995 study by Glen Jones and Michael Skolnik, had two parts. The first part of the study collected data through a national survey of governing board secretaries on board structure and composition. The second part of the study was a survey of individual board members focusing on their perceptions of the role of members of the board. The second study by Jones et al. (2001) was structured in the same was as the Jones and Skolnik study and had two parts. The first part of the 1999 study collected data through a national survey of senate secretaries on senate board structure and composition. The second part of the study was a survey of individual senate members focusing on their perceptions of the role of members of the board. Both the 1995 study and the 1999 study used survey instruments to collect data. The 1995 study had a response rate of 75% from board secretaries from all provincially funded institutions in Canada with a national response rate of 49% from individual board members. The 1999 study had a response rate of 63% from board secretaries from all provincially funded institutions in Canada with a national response rate of 40% from individual senate members.
Both the 1995 and 1999 surveys indicated that the majority of public universities in Canada have a bicameral governance structure and that approximately 50% of governing board members are appointed as lay-governors by the provincial government. Both British Columbia and Alberta appoint the majority of lay-governors to their university’s governing board. Ontario is a much more complicated mosaic with many of the older universities that have unique Charters (Jones et al., 2001). The responses from the individual board and senate members indicated that they were reasonably happy with the way that the governance structure worked at their universities and that “both board and senate members felt they influenced decision-making within their respective decision-making bodies” (Jones et al., 2001, p. 143). There was also recognition of the separate roles of the board and senate under the bicameral governance structure with the board having responsibility for administrative and financial policies and the senate for academic policies. One area that both studies identified that required improvement was the orientation program for new governing board and senate members. As well, the surveys indicated that there was a need for regular and on-going third party review of governing board performance so that lay-governors could improve their performance (Jones et al., 2001). These findings are similar to the recommendations made by Chait et al. (1991), Kezar (2006), Lane (2007), Rytmeister and Marshall (2007), and Rytmeister (2009).

The survey methodology of the 1995 and 1999 studies referenced by Jones et al. (2001) was of limited value, as was the study by Dika and Janosik (2003) because the quantitative research design does not capture the same nuances and complexities of qualitative research design using interviews. Holland et al. (1989), Chait et al. (1991) and Kezar (2006) indicate that given the complexity and nuances in higher education, interviews are a more effective tool for gathering meaningful contextual data. Jones et al
(2001) indirectly acknowledged this by indicating that additional research is needed using "detailed case studies on governance arrangements of a small number of institutions … [to] increase our understanding of why certain types of governance arrangements are perceived to be more successful than others" (p. 146).

2.5. Chapter Summary

It is clear from the literature review that governance within the universities is not a widely studied subject matter and the metaphor of a trail is appropriate to describe studies on governance. Most of the studies that have been done have focused either on the role of the president or the role of the governing board as an entity. Very few studies have looked at the perceptions of the individual lay-governors to ask them: What do they think their role is as a lay-governor; and to whom do they think they are accountable? Because university governance is a little studied area, the studies that have been done using qualitative interviews provide a richer understanding of the context through the data provided by the people being interviewed. Because of the small numbers of those being interviewed, there is not a sufficient sample group that can be used to make generalisations about the entire population of lay-governors and university governance. The literature review will help determine the most appropriate types of research methodology for the type of questions being asked and the size of the sample group. The next chapter will examine appropriate research methodologies that can help to build a richer understanding of the perception of externally appointed lay-governors.
CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY (FRAMING THE STRUCTURE)

3.1. Methodological Considerations

The quality of research is based ultimately on both the clarity of the question posed and the methodological approach used to gather data that addresses the issues inherent in the researcher’s question(s). A poorly stated question will result in a methodological approach that will yield data that may not help the researcher address the desired research objectives. However, even if the question is concise and well written, a poorly designed research methodology will also produce results that do not answer the question appropriately. This could result in data that is not reliable or valid and that fails to meet the researchers search for understanding. The fundamental nature of research requires, a well-written and concise question, the appropriate methodological approach needed to gather the data, the proper analysis to determine what the data means, and finally, how this information responds to the posed question.

It is clear that the question must drive the research methodological approach used to gather data (Creswell, 2003, 2008; Yin, 1994). If the question is designed to yield responses that can be generalised to a broader population, then the appropriate research methodology would be quantitative since quantitative methodologies are designed to gather large sample data on population sets that can, through statistical analysis, allow the researcher to make generalisations about the population group under study (Babbie, 2002; Creswell, 2008). If the question is designed to explore an issue in-
depth where there is limited or no previous research, and without trying to have this
research be generalisable to a broader population, then the appropriate methodological
approach would be qualitative. Quantitative research is objective, structured and follows
very predictable patterns while qualitative research is subjective and uses more flexible
innovative approaches that respond to emerging patterns from the data (Creswell, 2003,
2008). This implies that there is a sharp divide between both qualitative and quantitative
methodologies, but as Lund (2005) indicates, “the differences between quantitative and
qualitative research in psychology and education are often greatly exaggerated” (p. 115)
and the two approaches should “be conceived as methodological variants” (p. 115).

This chapter will explore and identify the type of research design and
methodological approach that is appropriate to respond to the questions and issues
posed in Chapter 1. Various qualitative methodological approaches will be reviewed and
the two most appropriate research design approaches will be identified. The strengths
and weaknesses of these two research designs will be examined and from this analysis
the most appropriate research design will be identified.

3.2. Research Design Methodologies

A review of the literature indicates that that most appropriate type of research
methodology for exploratory research on a limited sample group is a qualitative
methodology. This section of Chapter 3 will examine the most common types of
qualitative research designs and then identify the two most appropriate qualitative
research designs that could be used to answer the research questions posed in Chapter
1. The merits of these two research designs will be examined and, based on this review,
the most appropriate qualitative research design will be chosen.
3.2.1. Qualitative Research Designs

John Creswell, a scholar at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has written extensively on both qualitative and quantitative research methodological approaches. His textbooks on how to conduct research are extensively used within higher education at both the introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. Creswell (1994) indicates that the researchers must state their knowledge claim structure upfront because “philosophically, researchers make claims about what is knowledge (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), what values go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric), and the processes for studying it (methodology)” (as cited in Creswell, 2003, p. 6). Stating assumptions and biases up-front is critical so that the reader understands the researchers’ research design methodology. Creswell also examines the appropriate research designs based on knowledge claim assumptions.

A recent article that Creswell co-authored with three other scholars provides a good overview of five generally accepted qualitative research design methodologies. Creswell, Hanson, Clark and Morales (2007) indicate that the five most common and accepted research designs are “narrative research, case study, grounded theory, phenomenology and participatory action research (PAR)” (p. 237). Narrative research typically involves a study of “one or two individuals, gathering data through collecting their stories, reporting their individual experiences, and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences” (Creswell et al., 2007, p. 240). A case study focuses “on an issue with the case (individual, multiple individuals, program, or activity) selected to provide insight into the issue” (Creswell et al., 2007, p. 245) that “builds an in-depth, contextual understanding of the case” (Creswell et al., 2007, p. 245). Grounded theory is a systematic approach used when there is little or no theoretical understanding to guide the researcher. Theory is grounded from the data collected from participants.
Phenomenology, like grounded theory, collects the views of participants but “instead of theorizing from these views and generating a theoretical model, phenomenologists describe what all the participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell et al., 2007, p. 252) rather than abstracting the statements into a model. Participatory action research (PAR) is different than the previous four research designs because it calls for overt change where the researcher acts as an advocate to address an inequity or imbalance that exists in the group being studied (Creswell et al., 2007). The descriptions above provide a high level overview of these five research design approaches, but a qualitative research approach that is missing from this list is ethnography. Ethnography appears to share some commonalities with phenomenology but the major differences is that it used for “describing, analyzing, and interpreting a cultural group’s shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that develops over time” (Creswell, 2008, p. 61).

Having briefly identified six qualitative research designs, which of these six are the most appropriate? The narrative approach is focused on one or two individuals and gathers their life stories and experiences. This approach is not appropriate because the sample size needed will be larger than two and will probably not need the subjects’ life stories. The case study approach does an in-depth examination of a group or related groups through interviews and other data to focus on their shared experiences. This approach is exploratory and used to generate a better understanding of an individual, a group, the dynamics within a group or an issue related to the individual or group. The case study appears to be a very appropriate research design for this dissertation’s research. Grounded theory provides a structured approach to develop models and theories where there is little information available about a group. The grounded theory approach uses interviews as the primary data-gathering tool to explore and develop an
understanding of the area being researched. Grounded theory may be very useful because of its structured approach to research where there is little theoretical knowledge or other information available. Phenomenology is similar to grounded theory in the exploration of little understood areas but differs in that it does not develop theory or models but rather simple describes what the subject group feels. While phenomenology may have potential, it is too descriptive. Participatory action research (PAR) is different than the other research design approaches because it is used primarily as a tool of advocacy to effect a change to an inequity or social imbalance. This approach is not appropriate because the questions posed in Chapter 1 are primarily about developing a better understanding of the perception of externally appointed governors on governing boards and not about addressing an inequity. Finally, ethnography develops and provides a detailed picture about a culture-sharing group. This approach may have had some applicability in a homogeneous group but is probably not appropriate because a governing board probably does not meet the criteria as a culture-sharing group because of their potential diversity and the duration of their tenure that is a maximum of six years.

Of these six qualitative research design approaches, the two most appropriate methodologies are grounded theory and the case study (Creswell at al., 2007). Grounded theory and the case study are the two most appropriate research designs because they seek to explore and develop understanding in subject areas where there has been little research or the subject matter is not explained by existing theoretical models (Creswell, 2003). Both methodologies use the interview as the primary data gathering technique but also use other data gathering techniques for triangulation. The major difference between the two approaches is that grounded theory attempts to create a theory from the interviews whereas the case study approach describes the common themes and trends within a particular group or issue being examined.
Based on the research questions identified in Chapter 1, and after a review of the literature, it is clear that this is an exploratory study that will build additional understanding of the role of externally appointed lay-governors serving on higher education governing boards. But is the intent of the question to develop a theoretical model from these studies or to increase our understanding of the dynamics of the role of the individual lay-governors on the governing board? Grounded theory focuses on the former and case study on the latter. Both research designs rely on the early identification of the research question to start the research process but there is also a recognition that the research question may shift during the research as the researcher immerses themselves into the process and gains a better understanding of the subject matter (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Having identified the two most appropriate research design approaches, grounded theory and the case study, each research design will be examined in more detail. The strengths and weaknesses of each approach will be reviewed to determine which of the two qualitative research design methodologies is most appropriate to address the research questions asked in Chapter 1.

3.2.2. Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a qualitative research design used by researchers to generate a theory or model of behaviour based on the views, actions or dynamics of a group of people (Babbie, 2002; Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 2003, 2008; Creswell et al, 2007; Fassinger, 2005; Thomas & James, 2006). According to the literature, grounded theory was developed over “40 years ago by Barney Glasner and Anselm Strauss. Their 1967 book, The Discovery of Grounded Theory, laid out a set of procedures for the generation of theory from empirical data” (Thomas & James, 2006) and that “theories
should be grounded in data from the field, especially in the actions, interactions, and social processes of people” (Creswell et al., 2007). Grounded theory is used as an exploratory strategy when existing theoretical understanding of a process or group is limited or insufficient and there is a need to develop or provide an explanation for a dynamic or behaviour. It uses a structured rigorous approach for collecting and analysing data (Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 2008; Fassinger, 2005) through an iterative process as the researcher gains more familiarity and understanding of the subject matter.

Since its founding over 40 years ago, grounded theory has become one of the dominant qualitative research design methodologies in the social sciences and “is highly regarded as a method of social analysis in fields such as education and health studies” (Thomas & James, 2006). There are different variants of grounded theory that reflect much debated positions within the academy around knowledge claims: positivist/postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism (Creswell, 2003; Fassinger, 2005). These positions reflect differing epistemological and ontological philosophies about knowledge claims, inductive and deductive reasoning and about class and oppression (Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Thomas & James, 2006). In highlighting this item, my purpose is not to enter into the debate about the merits of these positions but that these positions have influenced the evolution of grounded theory since its founding. According to Creswell et al. (2007) and Thomas and James (2006) there are two schools of thought on grounded theory, the systematic approach and the constructivist approach. The systematic approach reflects the positivist/postpositivism position while the constructivist approach reflects the constructivism position. The positivist/postpositivism knowledge claim assumes a deterministic and reductionistic philosophy that ‘causes’ probably determine outcomes
and that these items are reducible into small, discrete sets of ideas that can be known and tested (Babbie, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Thomas & James, 2006). The approach is highly structured and designed to identify the concepts that emerge out of the data from the subjects who are being studied (Creswell, 2008; Fassinger, 2005). This approach also assumes that the researcher can maintain a stance of objectivity and neutrality as they interact with their subjects and data. The constructivism knowledge claim reflects a position that knowledge is socially constructed. Researchers need to recognise that their own background shapes the way that they interact with subjects and how they then interpret the data that was generated (Babbie, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Thomas & James, 2006). This approach is less concerned with structure and process and more concerned with a flexible approach that “emphasise[s] the meaning participants ascribe to situations” (Creswell, 2008).

The strength of grounded theory is that it provides a highly structured approach for first time researchers and is widely used and generally accepted within the social sciences. The structured approach guides the researcher through the research project. Each step of the research process requires the researcher to continually analyse the data to develop a greater understanding of the issues. This in turn allows the researcher to ask more insightful questions and seek additional information in subsequent interviews that again inform later interviews until a saturation point is reached (Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al, 2007; Fassinger, 2005). This iterative process allows the researcher to build their understanding of the subject matter, and as they come to understand the nuances and complexities, to develop theoretical models that explain phenomena that have occurred. The structured process allows for the exploration of new areas of inquiry, or little understood or previously studied areas, in a systematic way that is especially helpful for novice researchers.
In reviewing the literature, there appear to be two major criticisms of grounded theory. The first is an internal criticism between the systematic objectivist (positivist/postpositivism) and constructivist (constructivism) approaches, while the second is an external criticism that relates to a much larger debate within the academy over knowledge claims between the modernists and postmodernists.

The internal debate within grounded theory between the systematic and constructivist positions represents both a methodological difference as well as a knowledge claim difference resulting in the critique of each other’s methodology. This internal debate by grounded theorists perhaps reflects the origins of the grounded theory research design. The two founders of grounded theory came from two different traditions of research. Glasner came from Columbia University and had been trained in quantitative methodology. Strauss came from the University of Chicago, which had a strong background in qualitative research (Creswell, 2008). Although Glasner and Strauss pioneered grounded theory together the two authors later diverged on how grounded theory should evolve. This divergence resulted in debate among qualitative researchers and from that debate emerged the two leading grounded theory approaches.

The other major criticism of grounded theory is generated by the fierce debate between modernists and postmodernists. The postmodernist/post structuralist’s criticism of grounded theory is that traditional qualitative research of the positivist/postpositivists should be critiqued because “research involves issues of power and that traditionally conducted social science research has silenced many marginalized and oppressed groups in society by making them passive objects of inquiry” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 4). It has done this through use of jargon and conceptual maps that cannot be
decoded by those being studied (Babbie, 2002; Creswell et al., 2007). The postmodernists are also critical of the *constructivism* methodology because they see it not as *inductive* but rather as *abductive* (Thomas & James, 2006). What this means is that the while constructivists may be heedful of their own biases, they still separate the participant as subject, from the object, which is that participant's experience. The object is then used to generate a model and understanding that is alienated from its originator.

Common recurrent themes in postmodern critiques of traditional qualitative research include: research involves issues of power; research is not transparent but authored; it is separated from issues of class, race, sexual identity and gender; and finally, it silences members of oppressed groups by marginalising them or by attempting to speak for them without their permission (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 5). Another way of considering this critique is “that meaning is constructed by the interpreter. The interrelationship between interpreter and interpretation is indissoluble; there is no ground, no hidden truth residing somewhere in the data ready to inscribe itself” (Thomas & James, 2006, p. 782). The act of research is therefore an intrusion where the researcher wittingly or unwittingly imposes his/her thoughts and beliefs into the process of creation and presents these as "truth". This critique is explicit that research is biased and, therefore, the results of that research are both compromised and suspect.

Even from this brief review of the criticisms of grounded theory it is apparent that the external critique represents a larger debate within the academy that is outside the scope of this paper to resolve. Suffice it to say that while grounded theory has been subject to much criticism, it continues to be used in the social sciences because it provides a well accepted approach to exploratory research to investigate little understood dynamics or phenomena within groups or between groups. It uses a
structured approach to both gather the data through field work and then to code the data. This structure, which is subject to legitimate criticism, therefore, requires the researcher to be particularly aware of: how the participant as other is treated; the researcher's own experiences and biases that need to be declared at the outset; and being vigilant about the dynamics of ethics and politics during the research process (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 5).

3.2.3. Case Study

The case study is a flexible research design methodology that can be used in both qualitative and quantitative research and can range from being exploratory to descriptive. Its use can be fitted to the research strategy (Creswell et al., 2007; Yin, 1994) needed to understand “the dynamics present within single settings” (Eisenhardt, 1989) that “explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one of more individuals … [that are] … bounded by time and activity” (Creswell, 2003). Within qualitative research:

The case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. The case study relies on many of the same techniques as a history, but it adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian’s repertoire: direct observation and systematic interviewing. (Yin, 1994, p. 8)

This perspective is shared by Eisenhardt (1989) who indicates that “[c]ase studies typically combine data collection methods such as archives, interviews, questionnaires, and observations. The evidence may be qualitative (e.g., words), quantitative (e.g., numbers) or both” (p. 534). The purpose of the case study is not to be a narrative of the individual or individuals within the single case or in multiple cases, but to provide an understanding of the dynamics of the issue or issues associated with that individual or individuals (Creswell et al., 2007).
The case study can focus on a single individual or on multiple individuals who could form a multiple case study. But the flexibility of the case study has created confusion within the academy over whether or not the case study is a real research design (Yin, 1994), or just a tool or technique used in other research designs. The literature on research design methodologies reviewed indicates there is an inconsistency or confusion in how the case study is classified. Creswell (2003) and Creswell et al. (2007) indicates that the case study is a separate research design. In his more recent book on educational research (Creswell, 2008), he classifies it as a tool used in ethnographic research design. Why Creswell has made this change is not clear and it may be related to how educational research is differentiated from other social science research. One of the leading proponents of case study research is Robert Yin (1994) who indicates that “ethnographic research does not always produce case studies” (p. 14) and a case study is not always a qualitative research design. Yin (1994) indicates that in most circumstances the confusion about the case study probably exists because “people have confused case study teaching with case study research” (p. 10). Case study teaching is a pedagogical technique employed to illustrate a point or highlight an issue or concern. Case study research is an empirical methodology that follows “a set of prespecified procedures” (Yin, 1994, p. 15) whose “design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions” (Yin, 1994, p. 19). This is the same underlying structure that is used in all empirical research.

The strength of the case study is that it is scalable. It can focus on a single individual or several individuals who form a group as a single case study or it can use a multiple case study approach for individuals in separate groups. As with any empirical study the way the data is collected and the way the data is then coded will impact both
the validity and reliability of the case study. Since a case study uses multiple data sources to collect detailed information, this allows for triangulation between data sets that will identify potential issues around validity and reliability (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994). Another strength of the case study is that it investigates “phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 1994, p. 13) especially when the “boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Through a constant iterative process the researcher goes backwards and forwards between steps (Eisenhardt, 1989). This allows the researcher to continually refine the question as new data is collected and the researcher gains additional insights about the phenomenon being studied through the iterative process. This is especially critical if conflicting data emerges that does not match with what the literature indicates about previous studies or if the data generated is contradictory. These conflicts speak to the need for further analysis and refinement of the research questions and that a better understanding of the environment and the data is still required. But it is from further investigation and refinement through the iterative steps that new insights can emerge, and novel theory be developed (Eisenhardt, 1989).

The main critiques of the case study can be described as methodological and ontological (knowledge claims). The methodological concerns with case studies are that they may be used to extrapolate predictive behaviours based on a single study. This is a concern that requires particular attention because small sample sizes may allow for exploratory studies that build knowledge about a little understood area but are not generalisable to a larger population or dynamic. Normally the intent of exploratory studies is to build an initial understanding that allows for additional studies that over time may develop a more complete or comprehensive picture of a population or the dynamics at play within a population. The ontological criticism of case studies is the same as with
grounded theory: the way in which the case study is conducted can leave it open to knowledge claim criticisms that the researcher is imposing their own biases and beliefs and through a process of transference is grafting those beliefs onto the conclusions thereby rendering the conclusions invalid. The other concern is that the researcher is separating the individual being studied from their own story and that this is an invasive act that silences the voice of those being studied by not allowing them to speak for themselves (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

The use of the case study as a research design approach would need to address these criticisms if this approach was used. The methodological issue can be addressed by making it clear that the study is designed to be exploratory and not predictive, specific or global. These would need to be threaded into the conclusion and any recommended future steps. The ontological issue refers to the much larger debate occurring within the academy around knowledge claims and between the modernists and postmodernists and between the positivist/postpositivism and constructivism. As previously indicated, the purpose of this research is not to address that debate but to heed the criticism and concerns and to state the ontological and epistemological biases of the author.

### 3.3. Research Design Approaches

Both grounded theory and case study have strengths and weaknesses that would potentially impact the way in which the proposed research study on the role of external lay-governors within a higher education governing board would be conducted. The strength of grounded theory is that it is highly structured and provides a template for conducting a research project for novice researchers. The strength of the case study are its flexibility and that it is scalable to suite the area under study. As well, like
grounded theory, it can use an iterative and interactive process that constantly steps backward and forward between the question and the data to allow a greater understanding of the nuances and complexities of the subject matter. There is both an internal and external criticism of the two approaches. In the case of grounded theory, the internal criticisms from within the research paradigm are that it is too structured and that it focuses on process over understanding. For the case study, the internal criticism is that single case studies are often used as the basis for extrapolation with only one or only a few cases studied. The external criticism is similar for both grounded theory and case study and relates to ontological and epistemological debates within the academy over knowledge claims previously discussed. The way to respond to this external critique is to make sure that all ontological and epistemological biases are acknowledged at the start so that the reader knows the assumptions that have shaped the structure of the research design, the data analysis and the conclusions.

Based on the literature review and the analysis conducted it is clear that there is an overlap between these two research design approaches. Eisenhardt (1989) treats the case study and the grounded theory as variants of the same research design paradigm. Thomas & James (2006) see grounded theory as overly structured and jargoned reflecting the quantitative background of one of the two founders of grounded theory and that it needs to be more organic reflecting the qualitative nature of the research being conducted. This latter point is shared somewhat by Fassinger (2005) who think that grounded theory can be flexible in its methodological application reflecting the data rather than the structure. Charmaz (2003), one of the principal proponents of constructivist grounded theory, believes that grounded theory is flexible and that one of its strengths is that: “Grounded theory methods require that researchers take control of their data collection and analysis, and in turn these methods give
researchers more analytical control over their material” (p. 312). But these authors agree that qualitative research needs to be focused on the participants and not solely on the research structure. Charmaz (2003) builds on this last point indicating that: “Qualitative interviewing provides an open-ended, in depth exploration of an aspect of life about which the interviewee has substantial experience, often combined with considerable insight. The interview can elicit views of this person’s subjective world” (p. 312).

Both the literature review of higher education governance and the methodological review, indicate that either research design would work to address the questions identified in Chapter 1. Accordingly, for this research, the two research methodologies are combined into a hybrid design that builds in the scalability of the case study with the structured approach of grounded theory useful for novice researchers. The rationale for this is that this combination reflects the target group under study and the limitations imposed by time and cost. The case study provides the method and rationale for the selection of participants while grounded theory provides the data gathering structure that is iterative using interviews that allows the researcher to gain more familiarity and to better understand data that has been collected with each additional interview. This combined case study and grounded theory research design was used effectively by Kezar (2005) in her study of the consequences of radical changes in governance in universities.

The next section discusses the issues of validity and reliability with the proposed hybrid research methodology.
3.3.1. Validity and Reliability

Two key considerations in any research study are validity and reliability. There are differences in how validity and reliability are checked and tested between quantitative and qualitative methodologies. For purposes of the hybrid grounded case study research design, these two considerations are addressed from the qualitative perspective.

Validity checks to see if what is intended to be measured is indeed, what is measured. (Babbie, 2002). Stated another way, in qualitative research, validity checks credibility to determine “whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the reader” (Creswell, 2003, p. 198). If these align then there is a good chance that the data collected is valid. However, valid data may not necessarily be reliable data. Reliability checks for consistent patterns in the data that has been collected, and if those patterns are repeatable (Babbie, 2002). If the data collected from the participants is consistent, then it is probably reliable.

With a small sample size, and given the exploratory nature of the proposed study, reliability will be a somewhat harder issue to address. Within the proposed research, this concern will be addressed by ensuring the accuracy of data findings through clarification and correction of the data with participants and by utilising other data sources. The information that is collected during an interview with a participant will be shared with the participant to make sure that the participant’s intention and meaning have been accurately caught and encapsulated. In addition, other data sources will also be used to increase data validity and reliability through data triangulation. If the data appears to present contradictory information or meaning, then as Eisenhardt (1989) indicates, the researcher needs to reconsider their initial findings and look for deeper
meaning. It is from studying contradictory data that a deeper understanding and new insights can emerge.

3.4. Research Design Approach

This section of the chapter discusses how the research project was conducted. In order to keep the research project at a manageable size, the original scope of the research design was to conduct interviews at three sites. Each site would consist of interviews with four individuals, which would provide for a total of 12 interviews.

Prior to the interviews, other data was collected and reviewed. This includes documents from the government of British Columbia on their expectations of the role of public governing boards, related legislation, standards of ethical conduct for lay-governors serving on public sector organisations, annual Letters of Expectation between the government and higher education institutions, and other public records such as any public minutes from meetings of the appropriate governing boards.

3.4.1. Ethics Approval and Saving the Participants Harmless

It should be noted that the research design structure received ethics approval from the Department of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University on October 23, 2008 (Appendix B). In addressing ethical considerations, the research approval was based on protecting the confidentiality of prospective participants to minimise any potential harm through the interview process and to protect the integrity of the data generated through the interview process. Some of the issues considered during the ethics approval process were how to protect the confidentiality of the participants given the small number of universities in British Columbia. Other issues related to maintaining data integrity through electronic communication, involving the relocation of the author
from Vancouver, British Columbia to London, Ontario. All e-mail communication was predicated on an additional informed consent by the participants that allowed the researcher to communicate with them electronically.

As part of the research ethics approval, it was indicated that all participants would have an opportunity to review their transcripts and make any changes if they misspoke. A modification was sought and approved that allowed the researcher to use the services of a transcriptionist to convert the interviews from electronic to printed format.

3.4.2. Selecting the Interview (University) Sites

There are currently 11 publicly funded universities in British Columbia. Three of these universities were chosen as the interview sites based on a variety of factors, such as their location, their size and their research capability. However, to ensure the confidentiality of the institutions and the participants who were interviewed, these universities will be referred to as University A, University B, and University C. The identification of the three universities formed the basis for identifying the externally appointed lay-governors. From these three universities there was a potential pool of 51. To further reduce the potential sample population, the eligible participants were defined as those individuals who were externally appointed through an Order in Council (OIC) by the provincial government. This reduced the eligible sample population down to 27 potential participants (Appendix C).

3.4.3. Process for Selecting the Interview Candidates

The research design was based on interviewing nine externally appointed OIC lay-governors, three per institution, along with each institution’s president, for a total of
12 individuals. The composition of which lay-governors were interviewed was based on a stratified structure that included the chair of each of the university boards, the vice-chair (or next longest serving externally appointed lay-governor) and the newest externally appointed lay-governor serving on the governing board. The rationale for this stratification structure was based on an assumption that there could potentially be a difference in the perceptions of longer serving experienced board members versus newer less experienced board members.

The sampling structure assumed that access to the board would be through the university to ask for volunteer participants from each board (Appendix D). Correspondence to the universities indicated that in the event that the chair or vice-chair were not government appointments or not interested in participating, then the requested selection would be based on the next longest serving eligible externally appointed lay-governor. This approach was also used to ask for the newest externally appointed lay-governor serving on the university board. If one of the eligible lay-governors did not wish to participate then the selection, based on the rules indicated above, would be to the next lay-governor with the greatest or least amount of time on the governing board.

3.4.4. Interviewing Three University Presidents

The presidents have been included as part of the interview process because of the critical role they play in university governance (Appendix D). The presidents represent the nexus between the governing board and the university. This nexus provides a juxtaposition to triangulate the views of the externally appointed lay-governors versus the perspective of the presidents. This approach provided a method of examining the views of experienced lay-governors and new lay-governors to see if there are any differences in their understanding of their roles. Finally, it also provided an
opportunity to look for differences in perception between the lay-governors within each of the universities and between the three universities selected for the study.

3.4.5. Interviewing Former Government Officials

An interview was conducted with a former government official to triangulate responses with those interviews conducted with the governing board members and the presidents (Appendix D). The interview was conducted after the data analysis of the interviews with the board members and the presidents had been completed. This subsequent interview with the former government official allowed the author to seek clarification to questions that emerged as an outcome of the data analysis process. The analysis of the interview with the former government official also provided another triangulation point of the reliability of the data analysis.

3.4.6. The Interview Process

Although there are four primary questions related to the research identified in Chapter 1, answering them requires collecting data from both interviews and published information, either academic or government. However, the question related to the perception or understanding of the role and responsibilities of externally appointed lay-governors who serve on university governing boards can best be answered through interviews (Holland et al., 1989; Chait et al., 1991; Kezar, 2005, 2006). To get a response to this question required asking externally appointed lay-governors serving on university governing boards for their perception and understanding of their role in university governance.

A semi-structured interview process was used with a common set of questions for each of the externally appointed lay-governors. There were two data gathering tools
(interview questionnaires) used: one for board members (see Appendix E) and one for presidents (see Appendix F). The interview process allowed for the possibility that the participants may add additional information that the researcher had not considered or been previously aware of. As well, additional optional questions were also developed that could be asked should there be sufficient time and a willingness on the part of the participant.

The length of the interviews averaged approximately one hour. The researcher conducted all the interviews personally. During the interviews the researcher attempted to build a rapport with the participants by sharing some personal information or similar experiences to make the participants more comfortable. Each of the interviews was conducted at a location of the participants choosing. Three of the interviews were conducted by teleconference since the participants’ location did not allow for a face-to-face interview. All the interviews were conducted between January 5, 2009 and February 16, 2009. A subsequent triangulation interview was conducted on July 23, 2009 by telephone with a former government official (Appendix G).

3.4.7. Interview Data Collection Tool

To capture the interviews, an Apple video iPod (generation 3) was used with a Griffin iTalk Pro adapter. The interviews were audio captured and converted into an electronic wav file format. The interviews were stored on the researcher’s home computer (a MacPro) in an encrypted file folder to increase security and data protection. A professional transcriptionist who works part time at both the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe College transcribed these interviews between April and June 2009 and the triangulation interview in July 2009.
3.4.8. Interview Schedule

Table 1 shows the dates when the interviews were conducted.

Table 1: Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Interview Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President 1</td>
<td>University A</td>
<td>President—Staff</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>January 5, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 1-1</td>
<td>University A</td>
<td>BOG—Internal staff representative</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>February 16, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 1-2</td>
<td>University A</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
<td>February 16, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 1-4</td>
<td>University A</td>
<td>Secretary to the Board—Staff</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>February 16, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 2</td>
<td>University B</td>
<td>President—Staff</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>January 16, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 2-1</td>
<td>University B</td>
<td>Old Chair (2009)</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>January 7, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 2-2</td>
<td>University B</td>
<td>New Chair (2009)</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>February 9, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 2-3</td>
<td>University B</td>
<td>BOG—OIC</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>January 12, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 3</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>President—Staff</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>January 27, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 3-1</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>Past Chair (2008)</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>January 26, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 3-2</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>BOG—OIC</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>January 26, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 3-3</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>BOG—OIC</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>January 26, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOG 3-4</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>BOG—OIC</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
<td>January 26, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 1</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Former Government Official</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>July 23, 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.9. Limitations

The process described earlier of how the participants were selected is similar to that employed by Holland et al. (1989) and Chait et al. (1991) which consisted of interviews with the president, and the board chair but instead of interviewing the immediate past chair, the vice chair, if available was interviewed along with the most junior (in time served on the board) government appointed lay-governor. This approach allowed for cross comparison of data based on the participant responses between the three selected universities, as well as to look for trends within the three universities, or
for commonalities or differences from all the participants. It must be made clear that the intent of this research design was not to create data generalisable to all universities, but rather to conduct an initial exploratory study that will encourage additional studies to build on the knowledge base that further widens the trail in this area of research.

Since this study uses both a grounded theory and a case study research design, I was immersed in the data process and was not a neutral observer but was rather involved in the interview process with the participants to elicit the data. To make the participants more comfortable during the interviews I shared pieces of personal information and professional practice in order to elicit clarification to some of the responses that the participants provided. The specific concern that this raises is: How does being involved in the process affect the inductive nature of the research design? Harry, Sturges and Klinger (2005) indicate, “inductiveness requires the researcher to approach the data from a perspective of relative neutrality, the main goal being to describe and understand rather than evaluate” (p. 11). This position reflects the traditional grounded theory approach that has been criticised by post modernist and by constructivists. The approach of this research design that uses both grounded theory and case study has both objectivist and constructivist elements that blend the traditional work of Glasner and Strauss, as well as the more current work of Charmaz. As Creswell (2008) indicates:

Charmaz felt that both Glasner and Strauss (and Strauss and Corbin) were much too systematic in their procedures. Grounded theorists needed to stress flexible strategies, emphasize the meaning participants ascribe to situations, acknowledge the roles of the researcher and the individuals being researched, and expand philosophically beyond a quantitative orientation to research. (p. 433)

The implication of using a hybrid grounded theory and case study approach that blends both objectivist and constructivist approaches is that it can be critiqued from these two
theoretical positions as having the researcher’s biases integrated into the data and the
data analysis or alternately that the researcher has separated the participant (object)
from their experiences (subject).

With these potential critiques in mind, my role as the researcher was to
accurately capture and encode the words of the participants. As indicated earlier, the
participants were given an opportunity to review the transcripts and make any
corrections they deemed appropriate to make sure that the transcribed words captured
and reflected their intended meaning. During the coding phase, I was respectful of the
meaning and intent of the participants’ words to ensure that the analysis was appropriate
and balanced. This approach reflects current educational research where “the
educational researcher usually approaches the data with a great deal of knowledge
about literature on the topic being studied, as well as a set of beliefs” (Harry, Sturges, &
Klinger, 2005, p. 11) and “that there is more art than science in the conduct of research
on a topic” (p. 12) that is complex. Another way of stating this is that:

Constructivists also view data analysis as a construction that not only
locates the data in time, place, culture, and context, but also reflects the
researcher’s thinking. Thus the sense that the researcher makes of the
data does not inhere entirely within those data (Charmaz, 2003, p. 313).

3.5. Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 reviewed the process that led to the selection of the combined
grounded theory and case study research design. Respected scholars like Adrianna
Kezar have used this combined research design in her research of higher education
governance. The research design therefore has legitimacy, especially given its previous
use in the study of higher education governance. One major concern noted in this
chapter concerned issues of validity and reliability. These items were examined and
identified to make sure that the reader was aware of areas where there may be weaknesses in the methodology and how the researcher would address these concerns. Other limitations in the research design were also identified such as the inherent biases of the researcher. The next chapter (Chapter 4) analyses the data being mindful of issues and concerns raised in this chapter.
CHAPTER 4:
DATA ANALYSIS (FINISHING THE STRUCTURE)

Thirteen interviews were conducted at the three universities selected with nine board members, three presidents and one management staff. Of the nine board members interviewed, eight were Order-in-Council appointments, one had recently retired from a board, and one was an internally elected staff representative. The three university presidents interviewed provided a juxtaposition that broadened and enriched the study by providing additional information and a data triangulation point. During the interviews, two of the presidents and several board chairs suggested that a board secretary should also be interviewed as an additional information source, which provided another data triangulation point. A former government official was also interviewed at the end of the initial data analysis to clarify some questions that emerged as a result of the initial data analysis.

The board members were asked (21) semi-structured questions (see Appendix E). Three of the board members also responded to the five optional questions that were designed to provide another point of triangulation. The reason that three of the board members responded to the optional questions was that there was sufficient time left after the main (21) questions had been answered that they agreed to answer the optional questions. The responses to the optional questions provided some additional context about the board members’ perceptions. The presidents were asked 20 similar questions (see Appendix F). The semi-structured format allowed the presidents to provide
additional rich information that helped to contextualise some of the questions with specific examples. The same questionnaire that was used for the presidents was used for the board secretary. Finally, a former government official was asked 19 questions (see Appendix G). This questionnaire was based on the president’s questionnaire with some questions being eliminated, and others added, to clarify some questions that emerged during the initial data analysis.

The data was analysed by reading the transcripts several times. On each reading of the transcripts key concepts were identified and highlighted. A spreadsheet was developed and these concepts were entered into it. The spreadsheet was printed out and common concepts were grouped together that created sub-categories and categories. The sub-categories and categories were further analysed, which resulted in the development of four themes. The themes were tested against the interviews, field notes and literature. This clarified the conceptual structure of the four themes. The four main thematic areas that emerged from the coding stages were: Governing, Leading, Managing the Internal Environment, and Managing the External Environment. The Governing Theme represented the oversight role of the board for the university and the president. The Leading Theme represented the leadership role of president with the board and the university. Managing the Internal Environment represented the management role of the president with the universities internal stakeholders. Finally, Managing the External Environment dealt with external stakeholders, such as government and the community, and how these groups affected the actions of the university. Table 2 provides a tabular representation of these four themes and the related categories that emerged during the data analysis.
### Table 2: The Four Emergent Themes and Their Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Governing</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous Management/Governance Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiduciary Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Leading</td>
<td>Managing the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment of new board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board Secretary/Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board as a Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3: Managing the Internal Environment</td>
<td>Relationship with internal stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 4: Managing the External Environment</td>
<td>Need to work with Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link to the Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University as Opportunity generator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these four themes will be examined in their own sections in the remainder of this chapter, starting with the Governing Theme. Finally, a conceptual model based on the analysis of these first four sections will be discussed in the fifth section.

### 4.1. Theme 1: Governing

In analysing the data for the Governing Theme, Table 3 shows each category along with the addition of the sub-category. Table 3 looks at the perceptions of
governing board members and the presidents on governing. Each category will be reviewed within the context of the Governing Theme to provide a finer level of detail and meaning.

**Table 3: Governing Theme: Categories and Sub-Categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>Giving back to the community</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time commitment</td>
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<td>Compensation</td>
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<td>Previous Management/Governance Experience</td>
<td>Understanding role of the board</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding the role of Management</td>
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<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Initial governance orientation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>On-going ‘Educationals’</td>
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<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Of the President and new board members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In the past, appointments were seen as political</td>
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<td>Government has created an arm’s-length agency to vet prospective board members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Institutions are developing their own matrix and names of future board members</td>
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<td>Fiduciary Responsibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Using accepted Governance principles (i.e. Carver model, etc.)</td>
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<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Shared Governance</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Confidence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
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4.1.1. Public Service

All of the board members interviewed indicated that the reason they participated as a governing board member was a sense of public service, because the university is “a great institution and, you know, these opportunities to serve in life don’t come up every day, so I’m actually always very humbled by the prospect” (BOG 1-2). It was clear from the interviews that the board members saw their participation as a way of giving back to the community. One newer board member’s response captured the sentiment expressed by all the board members about why they agreed to serve on the governing board.

*But at this stage of my life, I mean, you do these things. It was interesting when I was appointed, it was mentioned in the paper, because there’s no payment for this, and I would have people facetiously saying, “Well, why on earth did you agree to take this on?” And I said, “Well, because people asked. And I think if you have an ability and people believe that you can assist, I think you have a duty to assist.”* (BOG 2-3)

The various responses all had a clear sense that agreeing to serve on the university governing board provided the interviewees with an opportunity to give back and support the community.

When asked about the time commitment to be a board member, the responses were also remarkably similar regardless of institution. One former board chair indicated:

*And the board members, I would say if they’re doing all their reading, and if they’re attending all their board and committee meetings and the two or three other occasions in a month, they’re probably getting close to a day a week. It’s hard to really say, unless you start marking your time down.* (BOG 3-1)

This represents a time commitment of 20% of a working week, which is approximately 6-10 hours per week for the ordinary board member. In raising this issue with the two past board chairs and three current board chairs, they were also quite consistent in their
responses indicating that they spent between 15-20 hours a week in this role. One board chair indicated:

Well, you know, I’ve been asked this from time to time. I think, generally—although it’s hard to break down week by week, because it depends on the activities that are taking place and the nature of the demands—I probably spend half of my time at it. (BOG 1-2)

This perspective was shared by another board chair, who indicated a time commitment of “a minimum of 15 to 20 hours a week” (BOG 3-4). This is a significant amount of time for these volunteers, but two of the board chairs are retired and were able to make this time commitment. As well, two of the board chairs brought considerable past experience, having served on other higher education boards that they felt allowed them to be more effective in how much and how they allocated their time as chairs. The time commitment by the governing board members was recognised, but perhaps underestimated, as one of the presidents who said:

And, you know, I’ve got to tell you, individual board members put a lot of time in, and our board chair, for goodness sakes, he’s got to spend 20% of his time—maybe not quite that over the year, but a ton of time being board chair. (President 3)

The time commitment to perform the duties associated with being a board member was not seen as a concern, since all the governing board members indicated that the reason they agreed to participate on the university governing board was because of a sense of public service and giving back to their community.

All the externally appointed OIC board members indicated that they received no monetary compensation to be a governor. Most board members felt that they received compensation in the prestige of being a governor and in the number of things that they were exposed to, which were happening both within the university and the community. However, this view was not unanimous and two board members from the same
university felt that given the time commitments required to conduct university business, they should be appropriately financially compensated, "particularly when you've got other Crown Corps that are paying their board members" (BOG 2-1). In raising this issue with the presidents, there was a mixed response. Two of the presidents thought that there should be no compensation, while one of the presidents was more sympathetic to board members being compensated.

"I've kind of shifted from being actually opposed to it, to being open to it. On the other hand, I think it is an enormous strength of the universities at least that individuals have been prepared as volunteers to associate with, to identify with, to engage and to give service to the universities on a volunteer basis. Enormous strength. And that's symbolically very important, that people of stature who could earn a lot of money on the time they devote to the university and, in fact, are committed to serving it. (President 2)"

In discussing this issue with the one board secretary interviewed, the board secretary thought that some form of compensation would be fair given the amount of time that board members commit.

"I think they should receive some compensation. The amount of time they give is unbelievable. There should be some compensation for that. I have a lot of respect for people that give the amount of time that these people do give out of their busy schedules. Other than their self satisfaction or career recognition, they really don't have any financial benefits for that. (BOG 1-4)"

One concern of the current volunteer system is that it limits the scope of who can serve on the board to those individuals who have the financial resources that allow them to participate. What was interesting to note was that both past chairs and two of the current chairs were retired or semi-retired and had the time and financial wherewithal to make the time commitment to serve on the university board. This structure may limit access for the broader community to also have an opportunity to participate on the university governing board, which could lead to it being narrowly focused.
4.1.2. Previous Management/Governance Experience

In examining the previous management/governance experiences of the board members, it was quite clear that all of them, including the internally elected staff board member, had previous experiences in management roles and in dealing with governing boards in the public, not-for-profit, and the private sectors. Two of the nine board members interviewed also had past experience serving on other post-secondary education boards. In addition, two board members had taken courses and been certified to serve on governing boards. As one of these two board members commented:

*On education, though, just to come back to that, there is something that I think you should think about, and that is formal educational training in governance for board members. I was a graduate of the…corporate governance program that was held by the Institute of Corporate Directors. (BOG 3-4)*

This comment was made in relation to a discussion around board governance responsibilities and how complicated the work of public boards can be and, in particular, university boards. This part of the discussion focused on how some form of formal governance education or training would help board members better understand their role as governors versus the management role of the president. While all the board members had extensive prior experience with boards, the university board was viewed as more complex due to the stakeholders and the structure of bicameral governance. President 3 commented that the universities have “this complex bicameral governance system, where the senate is responsible for formulating academic priorities and the board is responsible for ensuring the resources are there to run the university and to meet those priorities.” This complexity is not necessarily well understood by the external board members, and can result in frustrations because the board cannot directly affect the core business of the university. As President 2 indicated, “it’s frustrating to some
board members, initially—of making decisions about the second-order instrumentalities rather than the core business of the university, and often they chafe a bit at this."

All the board members and the presidents had a clear understanding about the difference between the governance role of the board and the management and leadership role of the president. As one past board chair indicated, “I think the board has to really always recognise that it’s a policy board and it has really no business getting into details” (BOG 3-1). President 1 echoed this sentiment that the boards need to govern and not provide day-to-day oversight because of the complexity of the university.

*I think part of the reason for that is the complexity of the organisation. I think people are smart enough to realise that they don’t know and that they can’t get into the micromanagement because they don’t know enough to get into the micromanagement. (President 1)*

While the board should leave the day-to-day management in the hands of the president, one board member indicated that the university structure does not allow for the same type of hard questions that can be asked on a private sector board:

*...because this is a very collegial atmosphere, your ability as a board member is somewhat—I don’t want to use the word compromised, but you have to adjust [to] it. It’s not as if you were a board member of a private corporation where you could, in fact, be—and I use the word in a positive way—aggressive in terms of your questioning. You can be questioning, but you have to be much more cognisant to the collegial atmosphere that exists in a university. (BOG 3-2)*

This indicates that, while the university does have a board structure, it is a substantially different structure than private sector boards and requires a more collegial and less confrontational approach. This was referred to earlier in a quote by President 2 who indicated that some board members may feel frustrated between the structure of
corporate boards and university boards because the university board does not control
the core academic activity of the university.

While the board members may not have the organisational knowledge to engage
in day-to-day management of the university, they do need to understand the
organisation that they are governing. Since the external board members are outsiders, it
takes time to acquire this knowledge.

No, I don’t think they have in terms of what my role is or what the duty is. Obviously, the longer you spend on the board, the more conversant you become. There’s a great learning curve whenever you get appointed to any board. The governance is fine, but it’s understanding what the organisation does. So, if you’re a member of the board of Canfor, you’ve got to start learning the forest business. If you become a member of the board of governors of the Real Estate board of Greater Vancouver, you’ve got to start understanding the real estate business. In that sense, there is a learning curve in understanding the higher education business and all the various components that go in it, which come to the board or the committees that you sit on, on a daily basis. But, beyond that, I don’t think that the governance structure or the role of the governors is particularly different; their job is to manage the affairs of the organisation. (BOG 2-3)

This comment illustrates that board members believed that their past background and
experiences gave them a good sense of their role as governors and how that role was
differentiated from management. The board members saw their role as setting priorities
and organisational direction through the strategic planning process, and working with the
president on achieving those objectives. As one board chair indicated:

Senior administration is a partner, in my mind, with board and board
governance. I don’t think it’s up to senior administration to lead the
boards; I think that they should work in tandem with each other and
synergistically. And boards, if they’re good, will normally take the lead on
those situations and let administration know what the board wants to try
to achieve through its own governance practices. So, I think that the
administration is a partner in all of that, and those discussions should be
ongoing. (BOG 1-2)
It is clear that the board members did not see their role as being involved in the day-to-day operations of the university but, rather, in establishing priorities and evaluating the president against those objectives. While past governance experience was clearly an asset, additional education was needed to ensure that board members understood the difference between corporate governance and university governance.

4.1.3. Orientation

One of the president’s main objectives is to make sure the board understands its roles and responsibilities, and understands the university. The initial and on-going orientation process is one of the key tools the university uses to make sure the board members understand that role. The initial orientation session for new board members was thought to be essential by all those who were interviewed. When asked if the orientation was mandatory or voluntary, the response was that orientation is voluntary but the way it was structured effectively made it mandatory.

Well, in one sense, it’s voluntary, except that the orientation is effectively mandatory, because we simply say we’re going to do the orientation and we expect you to be there, and they all come—they want to have an orientation. And then much of the board education takes place in the context of board meetings or board events, like dinners that are associated with a board meeting, etc. So, they’re not mandatory, but, basically, everyone comes unless there’s some family reason or what not that they can’t come. (President 1)

President 3 indicated that, in addition to their annual board orientation session, they also had on-going education sessions for board members so “at every board meeting, we do some sort of professional development.” The initial orientation session provided the overview of the university and the environment in which it operates. It also provided an opportunity for the university to specify the difference between corporate governance
and university bicameral governance. The additional education sessions provided the board members with more information about the university and its activities.

The bicameral governance structure is unique and can be a point of frustration as can be the amount of information that new board members need to absorb. As one board chair indicated:

_There was, and continues to be, an orientation session for new board members, and the content of that varies from time to time. I would say that’s an evolving process. As well, existing board members are always invited to participate in those orientation sessions for new members to be able to keep fresh on information that’s being presented or reminded about information that they may have forgotten about or not had to turn to for some time._ (BOG 1-2)

However, given that universities are complex organisations with many constituents and stakeholders, it takes time for new governors to understand the organisation and the milieu in which it operates, “because until you really understand the machinations and how the universities work, it doesn’t have much value” (BOG 2-1). The orientation sessions provide the opportunity to make sure board members understand the issues. As the board secretary interviewed noted:

_With the academic institution, especially with the government appointees, they come in with no knowledge of the academic world, however, with a very high skill in finance or any other sector skills they may bring to the table. So, you know, one sort of, I guess, axis that I use is for all appointed members I do start with the academic side of the house, make sure that they’re well in tune with what is the university structure and how the governing bodies work, to differentiate between the role of the academic side of the house and, of course, the board’s fiduciary duties, which is totally finance. So, that’s the key that’s used. But, as I said, everybody brings in different levels of intelligence, the learning curve is different, so, I really do cater to individuals…_ (BOG 1-4)

It takes individual board members varying amounts of time to understand the university and their roles and responsibilities. The board members indicated that it took them about one to one-and-a-half years to understand their role and responsibilities, and the
dynamics of the university. As one new board member indicated, “[e]ach process you go through, each committee meeting you attend, each board meeting you attend—the learning curve is quite steep…” (BOG 2-3).

4.1.4. Recruitment

One of the major functions that governing board members indicated was their responsibility is to recruit new (external) board members as well as to recruit the president. This latter was identified as the more important function, since the president is the employee of the board and is the interface with the rest of the organisation. As one of the board chair’s indicated:

So, the board’s involvement in selecting the right candidate is by far the most important thing. And boards often get it wrong. In particular, the last three or four years, there have been some decisions by boards for who will be president and vice-chancellor of universities which have not worked out at all. So, as I say, the most important one. (BOG 3-4)

This comment alludes to the additional complications in finding a candidate with the right credentials and management experience. There is only a small pool of prospective candidates available. The recruitment of a good president is critical, because the president serves as the focal point between the board and the university. Having a good president is essential to have a well-run university that meets the needs of the community. This board chair indicated that once the board does make a decision on the choice of a president, “[i]t requires approval of the Minister of Advanced Education and requires the approval of the Minister of Finance” (BOG 3-4). This comment was echoed by other external board members who thought that the process of recruitment was more political than in other Canadian jurisdictions, such as Alberta and Ontario.
The process of external governing board member selection was seen as being less political than in the past, where it had been a patronage appointment, although as was indicated earlier, there was no remuneration. When the government changed so, too, did the externally appointed board members. As one board chair indicated, “So, the past practice—and all governments are bad for this, of firing boards wholesale when the government changes—it’s never a good idea to run governance on that basis, but they all do it” (BOG 1-2). More recently the selection of prospective board members has changed and is being done through the Board Resourcing and Development Office. As a past board chair indicated:

Now, this works sort of two ways. The government has an office that has oversight for the appointment of all the board’s order-in-council—and I don’t think just Order-in-Council, all boards of government agencies and organizations. So, everything has to go through there, anyway. How it works currently is the committee of the board will meet, put forward some recommendations. If it is an alumni or In-Council appointment, it comes from the alumni association. Three names are put forward to the government; the government has their own list. Sometimes you’ll identify your list as to 1, 2, 3. Sometimes they ignore the list and have the ability to appoint whomever. They may have separate applications, because all the board postings are posted. (BOG 2-1)

Generally though, the universities indicated they were much happier with the newer selection process, and that the calibre of board members was much better.

Concurrent with the new government selection process through the Board Resourcing and Development Office, each of the three universities indicated that they had also developed their own recruitment process by developing a skills matrix to identify the types of skills that they needed on their boards, including demographic diversity. Prospective board members are identified and, then, asked if they would be interested in having their name stand. Both the board chairs and presidents indicated they had a standing list of candidates who could serve on the board. Two of the
universities indicated that they worked closely with government to ensure they got the type of individuals with the appropriate skill sets they needed on their governing board. One of those universities indicated that they had developed a governing board skills matrix that, at one point, had over 100 potential board members. The president of that university indicated that, because they had such an extensive list, they were able to recruit the people they wanted to their board.

So, our board is very much a planned board. We were able to engage the Board Resourcing Office and the Minister’s Office in a proactive way. They were part of the process. And when we went in with the names, there were no surprises, they had been engaged, and they understood the rigor that we had brought to that process. So, the board is a very well put together board. (President 3)

What was very interesting to note about the government and university appointment processes was how they were viewed. Two of the universities seemed quite happy with the new process, but two board members from the third university expressed a level of concern: They did not always get the candidate they wanted, but someone else they had not vetted who was appointed to serve on their board, “because the government decides, and the government wants a number of choices. How they choose between recommended candidates for the board is their mystery, it’s not something that is ever shared” (BOG 2-2). Clearly this was a point of frustration for this university.

One other issue related to recruitment was a concern expressed by two board members from the same university, that there were not a sufficient number of external board members to conduct the business requirements and responsibilities of their board. They indicated existing board members are so busy with committee work that the board is “actually, short external board members, because with the busy people that you’ve got, oft times there are two away—inevitably there is one, but oft times there are two” (BOG 2-1). This meant the workload of the external board members increased even
though they were not being compensated for their time. One suggestion made was that more external board members need to be appointed in order to more equitably distribute the governance work of the volunteer board. This suggestion would require a change in legislation, and could be interpreted and criticised that the board was becoming more ‘corporate’.

4.1.5. Fiduciary Responsibility

The majority of the board members interviewed identified and used the language that they had a fiduciary responsibility, as defined by statute, to look after the best interests of the university.

*If you understand, I am on the board of governors of the university. At law, I have a fiduciary obligation to the entity that I serve, and that is the university. So, you always have to look at the university as the entity and say, “Am I acting in the best interests of the university?”* (BOG 2-3)

Within this context, many of the board members referred to the budget “because, of course, it’s one of the two most important responsibilities of the board, oversight of the budget and management of the budget and approval of the budget” (BOG 3-4). The governing boards operate through policy oversight, which monitors how well the president and institution is doing by the achievement of outcomes through the jointly developed strategic plan. All the board members saw their role to help advance the university through planning and goal setting. Perhaps this is because of their past background having served on other boards, but the board members felt their role was governance and not management.

*Planning for the future, yes; day-to-day oversight, no, I don’t think that’s our role. There’s sometimes a real temptation to put our fingers in pies where they don’t belong. That’s why we have a president and an executive team. Our job is to ensure that we feel comfortable enough that the president and his or her executive team, that we fully delegate*
and entrust them to the day-to-day management of the university. (BOG 3-4)

This perspective was also supported earlier in the review of the Previous Management/Governance Experience Category.

While this was the generally accepted perspective, one board member indicated s/he thought government had created boards to provide the government with some distance and insulation from decisions, which both government and management wanted but the board did not want.

At the end of the day, if the government and the management want it, it goes ahead even if there is a great concern on the part of the board that there are risks in this enterprise. One of the great risks always is how much money can be raised from the public. The basic conservatism of the board is often overlooked. The costs that result from a large capital expansion are almost always universally underestimated by management, and the government wants them underestimated because it knows it can lay off those responsibilities on the institution… (BOG 2-2)

The inference is quite clear that the boards serve to buffer the government from criticism. The issue, of course, is: Is this a factual assessment or a supposition on the part of this board member?

The board members at all three universities indicated their role was to represent the university and make the best decisions for it. Two board members stated there was no way they could represent government, since they had not had any communication with or received any direction from government. As a board chair indicated:

We’re not beholden to anybody. I mean, it’s an order-in-council, so it comes from the government in power at the time, but when I look at the people who have been appointed, I think it was fairly general, you know, as far as community interests, people who have served the community and showed a willingness to come to the party without bringing their specific biases. (BOG 3-1)
This response seems to address one of the questions posed in Chapter 1, and the basis for this research, around whom do the board members think they represent? This response would indicate that, by default, the external governing board members are agents of the university. However, this response also indicates this board member felt there should be some communication with government. One former government official interviewed indicated: “I think the Ministry could probably do a good policy or issue orientation, and right now we don’t for new board members; they end up learning it by gosh or by golly through the process” (GOV 1). It needs to be noted that, while the board members felt that they were on the board to represent the university, many of them commented they volunteered their time because this served the community and provided a way “to give back, but always when you give back, you get more back, I feel” (BOG 3-1).

4.1.6. Evaluation

Most of the board members felt that the board should be evaluating its performance on an annual basis as a means of improving their performance and serving the university better. This question was sensitive because all but one of the board members interviewed are unpaid volunteers. The internally-elected staff representative interviewed indicated that “nobody wants to do a performance review of a board member, but I think it’s important, so things like attendance are monitored, and that there is a certain standard that needs to be lived up to” (BOG 1-1). This sentiment was echoed by an external board member at another institution.

"I think boards should be evaluated, but I think they should probably evaluate themselves against effectiveness criteria. I think you’d get just as good input if you outlined the effectiveness criteria, or even developed yourself, you know, collaboratively, and then evaluated self-evaluation against them." (BOG 3-3)
There were no dissenting opinions or concerns expressed other than that the process used for the evaluation needed to recognise the reality that the external board members were volunteering their time for the betterment of the university. President 2 indicated:

> Well, I think they should evaluate themselves, and they may want to get some independent help in terms of a formal process of assessment and review. I think it would be a bad idea, you know, because of this autonomy question, if, for example, government decided to come in and evaluate boards. So, I wouldn’t go any further than that, I think, on the evaluation side.

This comment indicates a potential weakness in the current university board structure, because formal external evaluations of a volunteer board would probably not be well-received.

### 4.1.7. Shared Governance

Shared governance represented one of the more sensitive issues that emerged from the interview process. This category was separate from the Previous Management/Governance Experience Category, because it pertains specifically to the unique feature that differentiates university governance structures from other public, private and not-for-profit governance structures. The university bicameral governance structure has a board and a senate and is unique, with the possible exception of government structures. It is further complicated because of the staff role the president plays as the interface between the board and the senate. The president sits as a member on both governance bodies and, consequently, acts as a bridge between them. The board has no jurisdiction over the academic agenda of the university, and the senate has no control over the financial agenda. As one past board chair indicated: "We have the right to veto what happens at the senate, but we have no control over [academic] decisions that are made or input to those decisions at any point" (BOG 2-1). Two of the universities had
attempted to lessen this divide by having annual joint retreats of their board and senate to collectively work on development of the institution’s priorities within the strategic plan. The university “also holds a board-senate retreat to try to better connect the board with the senate, so that the academic and the financial, fiduciary, has got some linkage” (BOG 3-3). The intent was to improve the relationship between both governance bodies, so they could make better decisions that are not isolated but tied to specific goals as identified in the strategic plan. As President 3 noted:

So, how do we make sure that there’s a degree of congruence between both those governing bodies? I chair the senate, and I’m a member of the board and accountable to the board. How do we make sure the senate is not running over here and the board is running over there? How do we ensure that there’s some harmony and shared purpose? So, annually, we have a joint board-senate retreat.

The president’s role is crucial, since it bridges these two governance bodies to bring them together to create a common set of priorities and directions.

An aspect of university governance, which is outside the formal governance structure, is the collection of competing internal and external stakeholders and constituent groups that are all seeking to influence the decision-making processes of the university. The president has to balance the competing and conflicting agenda between the board and senate, as well as the stakeholder and constituent groups. As one board member stated:

I think the challenge is always trying to balance so many different needs or information or lobbying or different groups and trying to take that all in and really think about it strategically and think about it carefully and making the right decisions. There are just sometimes so many different groups who have input, or there’s so much information, so I think it’s really weighing all of that appropriately and making sure we have the right information to make the correct decision or the best decision. (BOG 1-1)
Managing this is not an easy task since some of these stakeholders groups also have formal representation within the governance structure through allocated seats on the board and/or senate. This would seem to conflict with good governance principles, because these groups are in simultaneous positions as being both ‘owners’ and ‘employees’.

One of the challenges with staff and faculty on the board is that they feel like they have to defend their position at the university, and they will often look, again, through a very narrow lens at the challenges, and that’s why you absolutely have to have external board members, to bring perspective and to look at the situation globally. (BOG 2-1)

This can create conflict since some issues that should be discussed at the board table may not be discussed because that would potentially compromise the institution’s negotiating position. Regardless of background or constituency. “Once they become members of the board, their duty is to act in the best interests of the organisation, not to act in the best interests of the constituency which they came from” (BOG 2-3). The governing board plays a crucial role in the university through the president and with the senate and various stakeholder groups. Understanding the complexity of these relationships is vital, because of the competing and conflicting goals. As one board member stated:

I think the challenge is always trying to balance so many different needs or information or lobbying or different groups and trying to take that all in and really think about it strategically and think about it carefully and making the right decisions. (BOG 1-1)

But these stakeholders are a reality and must be factored into the decision-making process.

Several strategies that have been used by the universities to improve their decision-making processes, have been to develop their own selection process to get
better external board members, improve the orientation and education for all board members, and include the senate in the development of the strategic planning processes. These types of activities produce a better-educated board that is able to understand the complexity of the university, its bicameral governance structure, and how all the stakeholder groups, both internal and external, influence the university.

The university is the students, the faculty, the staff, so it’s all those internal groups that make it up, so, I think that’s who we represent. But we have a responsibility to other groups in a lesser way, if you have to pick a hierarchy. So, we have a responsibility back to the provincial government, so I think we do have a connection to them as the board, because some of the people on the board are appointees from the government. I don’t happen to be one, so I may see it differently, but we have to keep connected to that community around us, the residents, the community in general. We’re funded by taxpayers’ dollars, so we have a lot of stakeholders. So, I would say it’s those internal groups and a responsibility back to the provincial government and community in a different way, so a hard line dotted line. (BOG 1-1)

These are the factors that make university governance so much more complex than unicameral governance structures that exist in corporate boards where there is also a more hierarchical decision-making structure.

4.1.8. Confidence

Under the ‘policy’ governance structure, the board plans for the future and monitors the performance of the president against the priorities in the strategic plan. Trust and communication between the board and the president is essential, because the board is not involved in the day-to-day activities of the president and assumes the president is providing the leadership to advance the mission of the university. Building trust is essential so that, once the board has “satisfied themselves that they’re getting the complete information, then I think they can feel more at ease” (BOG 3-1). The board chair’s role is critically important, because the board chair liaises with the president “to
act as a sounding board for his decision-making processes and the administration of the university” (BOG 2-1) and serves as the link between the president and the rest of the board to keep them informed on what is happening within the university. As President 1 commented:

> And, again, though, I think the quid pro quo to that is that I can’t abuse that. And if it’s really something where either I’m not certain about what the right course of action is or where I think it’s highly politically charged, incumbent upon me, I think, to touch base with the board. I mean, for most things, I won’t have to, but where there is a real chance of things getting difficult, then I would never want them to be surprised, if at all possible.

Trust is maintained as long as the board is confident that they are getting the information (communication) they need to make decisions and that the president is working to meet the objectives outlined in the strategic plan. As one board chair indicated:

> The best boards are the ones that are all striving to achieve alongside administration what it is trying to achieve, and its priorities, and work together to do the best thing always in the broader interests of the institution. So, the challenge would come from losing that balance. (BOG 1-2)

If trust is lost, then the board's options are to manage the activities of the president on a day-to-day basis or to seek a new president. All board members interviewed indicated that they were very supportive of their respective presidents, but trust is a fragile commodity that can be lost through more than not communicating well. It can also be lost if the board feels that the president is not reading the political ground very well, leaving the university exposed or not prepared. In this circumstance:

> You’re at risk if the president, through his own lens and interpretation, you know, delivers the wrong message to the senate and/or to the board. So, there’s no [one]—other than the fact that the board hires and fires the president, do they [the board] have any control over that. (BOG 2-1)
This adds further complexity to the role of the president and makes it essential that the board hire a president who has the right academic and management credentials.

4.1.9. Governing Theme Summary

It was clear the governing board members see their role as one of oversight of the university, but they are cognisant they are operating in a complex environment with a multitude of stakeholder groups. While they may have ultimate control over the budget, they do not control the academic agenda of the university. This causes some board members to be frustrated, since the university board cannot affect the core academic business of organisation in the same manner that a corporate board can direct a change in the core business of a company or corporation. The role of the board, though, is to operate as a bridge between the university and the external environment and ensure that it meets the needs of the broader community. Having or hiring the right president is essential if the board is to ensure the success of the university.

4.2. Theme 2: Leading

In analysing the data for the Leading Theme, Table 4 shows the addition of the sub-category that provides a finer level of differentiation and context to each category. Table 4 looks at the perception of both the governing board members and the presidents regarding leadership, since the president is the sole employee of the board and the connection to the internal environment of the university. Each of the categories identified in Table 4 will now be examined.
### Table 4: Leading Theme: Categories and Sub-Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing the Board</td>
<td>Focus on Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liaising with the board Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping the Confidence of the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of new Board members</td>
<td>Professionalising the recruitment of new board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing a board member skill matrix profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Secretary/Support</td>
<td>Initial governance orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On-going ‘Educational’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working with board members to identify their needs and concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Board as a Resource</td>
<td>The board provides advice and direction to the President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board provides link to what is happening in external environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board supports development agenda of university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Jointly developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sets institutional priorities and objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basis for evaluating the performance of the President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.2.1. Managing the Board

The presidents indicated that managing the relationship with the board was one of their key responsibilities. The relationship with the board was seen as critical, and required a significant amount of time to build trust with the board and have open dialogue.

*I think, so long as the board chair and the chancellor and other key committee chairs know or have confidence that they’re being told things that they need to know to be actually making appropriate decisions, I think they’re just not inclined to want to go much further. (President 1)*

If the president or senior administration loses the board’s confidence, then there would be a greater likelihood that the board would want to engage in micromanagement
activities within the university. This reflects a critical tension between the board and the president around the overlapping lines of authority and responsibility that are unresolved in the overall governance model.

I mean, broadly speaking, regardless of sector, there are always tensions and gray lines around the authorities of boards and management. I mean, broadly speaking, everybody can recite the mantra that boards need to operate at a high level on policy and not on micromanagement, but it doesn’t always work that way. (President 2)

Confidence by the board in the president is essential to ensure these tensions are managed and mitigated. As President 3 indicated, “You can’t run a complex institution if you’ve got a board trying to run it, as well. You need the board to govern, and the president needs to manage.”

One of the president’s main tasks then is to make sure the objectives set by the board, outlined in the jointly developed strategic plan, are achieved. The board uses the strategic plan to monitor and evaluate the president’s progress in achieving its goals, through the regular meetings of the board and through the various sub-committees of the board. In between meetings of the board, the president liaises with the board chair to keep the board chair informed of what is happening within the institution. This is similar to the Category of Confidence under the Governing Theme, but is differentiated because the perspective is perceived by the board members of the president’s role.

And the role of the president with respect to this is to support the board members in that activity, by making himself or herself available and to be capable of communicating a vision that meets the community requirements—the community at large… (BOG 2-2)

By keeping the board chair informed and involved, the president is able to maintain the support of the board and ensure that the board is not getting involved in the day-to-day operations of the university. This requires a “balance between enough knowledge to be
strategically relevant and helpful without allowing the board to get mired into the day-to-day operations” (President 1).

To manage the governing board and keep them out of the day-to-day operations of the university, the president must be able to show the board that: the commonly agreed-upon objectives are being met, the institution is operating within its approved budget, and the stakeholders and constituents are generally content. This was supported by another board member who indicated:

I don’t think it’s the board’s job to be providing day-to-day management; it’s our job to set policy and have that policy implemented by the administration, and then to review back—have them report back on the implementation of that policy. If we’re not happy with the implementation, then we have an issue with dealing with senior staff. (BOG 2-3)

This is not an easy task and may explain the references that were made by the three presidents and several board members regarding the sudden departure over the last two years of between 12 and 13 Canadian university presidents.

I haven’t actually done this research, but there have been a spate of failed university presidencies in Canada; it’s becoming more and more common for people to leave under obscure circumstances early in their terms. And my bet is that almost all of them have been people that haven’t held a senior academic position in a university and are not used to this by way of training they get between the board and the senate, or they can’t manage the board because they share its frustrations. (President 2)

The president’s role then is to provide the leadership that bridges the divide between both the board and the senate. The president can act as the bridge between the board and the senate, since the president serves as a member of the governing board and as the chair of the senate. This places the president in a very powerful position as the intermediary between the two governance bodies. As President 2 indicated:
This very often raises, either in senate or on the board, a certain amount of concern about the executive powers in the administration and the degree to which it can shape the decision-making in either place. And it can, of course, and I believe it should, because there’s no other way the place can operate well…

But as was indicated earlier, a failure to bridge this divide or to include the stakeholders can result in loss of confidence by the board.

4.2.2. Recruitment of New Board Members

One of the tasks board members saw the president having responsibility for was the recruitment of new board members, even though most board members did not “know very much about the succession planning process, because [they] suspect that that’s mainly carried out by the university [board] secretary and the president” (BOG 3-3). Several of the board members and all three presidents indicated having a board with a broad range of skill sets, which include accounting, business, financial management, legal, and real estate development, is critical. These skill sets are sought in external board members through a competency skills matrix that the university has developed. The skills matrix is applied against the skill sets of prospective board members to identify gaps that need to be filled.

We also get information from the chair, the chancellor, the president, about any gaps they perceive. We also discuss any gaps that we perceive or any opportunities where it would be great to have somebody with that kind of experience on the board. So, I think it’s a very well thought-out process. I’ve been involved on both sides of those, with the alumni and with the governance committee, and I think it’s a very solid, well-thought-out process. (BOG 1-1)

The creation of the competency matrix indicates the types of skills needed on the governing board and allows the university to identify and recruit individuals with those skills sets in a more systematic and professional manner. At one of the universities, the
development of the skills matrix was managed by the board secretary in conjunction with an external human resources company. The development of the skills matrix created an inventory, or bank, of prospective future board members. As one board chair said, “[w]e have a bank, but that bank continually needs refreshing, which we do using a consultant who knows the community very well” (BOG 3-4). The board members believed that having the skills bank allowed the president to be more successful in recruiting the specific individuals needed to address any skills gap in the board or, alternately, find other individuals with those appropriate skill sets.

All three presidents indicated that the recruitment and appointment process of new board members has improved dramatically. Prior to 2000, being selected to serve on “university boards were patronage appointments—not the highest priority patronage appointments—and they were given to people who expressed an interest and who had the kind of political credentials the government felt were needed” (President 2). However, the current process for recruiting board members has been 'professionalised' with an “arm’s length appointment process that reflects serious assessment of the skills of individuals and the needs of institutions and not simply partisan convenience” (President 2). The universities work closely with government through the Board Resourcing and Development Office to make sure government understands that the universities take the recruitment and selection of new board members seriously.

We were able to engage the Board Resourcing Office and the Minister’s Office in a proactive way. They were part of the process. And when we went in with the names, there were no surprises, they had been engaged, and they understood the rigor that we had brought to that process. So, the board is a very well put together board. (President 3)
The explicit reality of this last statement indicates that the universities are not leaving the selection of new board members solely to an outside agency, but are actively engaged in managing the process.

Each of the universities developed their own skills matrix that looked at the types of skills existing board members had and identified what skill sets were missing from their board. The skills matrix was then aligned with the skills profile of potential board candidates to indicate who had the skills needed by the board. As President 1 indicated:

"...we’ve created a template of skills that we believe are required for the board, and everyone has to complete that, so we’ve got a matrix that helps us assess what skills are present on the board and where there are gaps. And we’ve also gone ahead and tried to identify a list of—I think we probably have about 30 names on it now; I’d like to get it up to about 50 names—potential board members, people we should be keeping an eye on."

The process that President 1 identified is similar to the process used at University 3 where they hired a search consultant, who “developed a list of what would have been close to 100 people, and winnowed it down over the space of about six months, everything from reference checks to interviews, and worked with government very, very closely” (President 3). All three presidents indicated they were much happier with the current recruitment process and they, consequently, have much better boards. This new selection process has both the Board Resourcing and Development Office and the universities working in tandem to identify, review and recruit new board members. It was implied by Presidents 1 and 3 that they were able to get all the people they want appointed to their respective boards, while President 2 indicated they were only about 75% successful in getting the people they wanted.

"I would say 75% of our appointments in the decade I’ve been here have been individuals we’ve asked for. About 25% have not been, but they have been people who satisfied the kind of skill requirements we’ve
This difference in success rate may be perceptual, but it does leave the impression that University 2 may have had external board members appointed to their board without sufficient prior consultation. This 25% difference may be the source of the concern expressed by two of the board members that University 2 did not always get the board member they sought or thought they needed. However, the former government official indicated that getting the people the university wanted “really would depend on the institution, how experienced the president or the board chair were in actually following guidelines and rules and thinking through in a very strategic way about their succession planning” (GOV 1). This indicates that University 2 may not have adequately communicated to government about the skills of their prospective board candidates and, consequently, the board Resourcing and Development Office selected someone else they thought had the more appropriate skill sets needed by the university.

4.2.3. Board Secretary/Support

One of the areas board members identified as crucial for the board to function effectively was to have a dedicated support position. All three universities have a board secretary position whose main or sole function was to support the board. The board secretary was viewed as a critical resource to whom board members could go to if they had any questions about legislation, university policy, procedures or process, and for access into the university for tours and events, “and board members are free to ask the board secretary for any and all information that the board deliberates on, including what the procedures are” (BOG 1-2). The board secretary was also tasked with the initial orientation of all new members to the governing board, after they had had a preliminary
discussion with the president. This orientation included “background materials, and the university secretary reviewed the background materials and how the board worked and things like that, so there wasn’t ‘nothing’. And that was probably the thing that was the most useful” (BOG 3-3). The ‘nothing’ referenced by this board member was in connection to not receiving any briefing by government about its expectations. Many board members felt that, although their university provided them with a good orientation session, there was no orientation to the ‘system’. The former government official interviewed indicated that government “could do a better job—we, being government—of helping that, getting the leg up in terms of the context” (GOV 1) for new board members, and provide them with a big picture orientation about the higher education system in British Columbia.

Providing the board with a single point of contact into the university is a strategy presidents have adopted to manage the tension between the board’s governance role and the president’s management role. This starts with the initial board member orientation, which provides an overview of the role that the board is expected to play and the difference between governance and management. The issue of whether orientation was mandatory or voluntary was sensitive, since the board members are unpaid volunteers. But orientation is critical in setting the tone and context of the role of the board and board members. As President 2 indicated:

*There’s a mandatory one and a voluntary one. The mandatory one consists—I mean, I don’t think we actually spell it out that it’s mandatory, but we make sure that it’s done. So, every new board member has a lengthy session with me, followed by a formal orientation conducted by the secretariat, which would cover, you know, statutory obligations, bicameral governance, which is new to most people. It would cover the rules of the board, survey the committee assignments and agenda, broadly speaking, and look at the current state of strategic planning at the university.*
This approach was echoed by President 3, who indicated the orientation session happens every year and “involves everything from sort of an overview of the university, overview of the budget, overview of the legislative framework, and we talk about board procedures, talk about responsibilities of board members, tours of the institution—just a familiarisation.” The one board secretary interviewed indicated that, after meeting with the president, all new board members receive an overview:

…of the university’s structure, [to help them] understand the level of authority the board has, the level of authority the senate has, and that is a must. Also, the conflict of interest—they need to understand the conflict of interest part, depending on what their background is or what they’re involved in currently. So, I make sure that they understand what they can and cannot participate in. (BOG 1-4)

The day-to-day interface between the board members and the university is handled by the board secretary. As President 3 indicated, the board secretary is the one who “develops the handbook, the manuals, and…making sure the policies of this place are in order and updated and reviewed in a timely fashion.” This included working with the board members directly to identify their concerns, the information they need, and then providing them with that information individually or through a board education session scheduled at one of the regular board meetings. The board secretary also answered questions on policy and procedural rules and provided advice, when asked, on what the board members should do and made sure that the board was briefed so they can provide a knowledgeable response.

Any time an issue comes up that I feel the board members or one particular board member may not have full knowledge before making the decision, I make sure that the administration spends at least a couple of hours briefing that board member on the issues, so that when a vote is called at the board table they feel comfortable saying yea or nay. (BOG 1-4)
The support provided by the board secretary to the board members forms an important extension of the president in supporting—and managing—the board.

The board is comprised of a diverse group of individuals with differing skill sets and understanding of the role of the university. To facilitate the smooth operation of the board, the board secretary acts as an avatar for the president. As President 1 commented:

*I think, again, having the board liaison person, she’s out there always talking to board members; she plays a really important role. So, if she hears anything, she will immediately tell me; we touch base all the time, so I can assess whether there are particular issues that the board is concerned about that we need to address.*

The board secretary is constantly meeting with board members to determine if their needs are being met and finding out what else can be done to fulfill those needs.

*And that comes, I guess, from me spending a lot—and I mean I spend a lot of face time with each board member. Before the board meeting, I do prep meetings, I do sort of debrief, I try to do it with each board member.* (BOG 1-4)

This takes up a considerable amount of the board secretary’s time, but is crucial in making sure that the governing board members are able to function in their role as ‘governors’ of the university. It was indicated the board members are: "encouraged to use the facilities of the [board] secretary’s office to give us the answers to some of those procedural or policy questions" (BOG 3-1). As another board member indicated about the support they received from the board secretary: “Well, that one-on-one kind of checking in. Is everything okay? Do you have any questions? Are there things we can be doing better? Those are ongoing conversations every couple of months, one-on-one, which I find very helpful” (BOG 1-1). This interaction provides the board secretary with a considerable level of influence on the board members and their decisions.
4.2.4. The Board as a Resource

One of the clearest categories that emerged from the coding process is the board sees itself as a resource to the president to provide advice and direction within the normal governance framework but, particularly, through the relationship between the president and the board chair. The board chair is a fundamental resource for the president, who provides advice on a wide range of areas through accessing other board members between regularly scheduled board meetings. At one of the universities, the board chair regularly met with the president to review what was happening within the university.

*We go to a local Starbucks not far from where we live and we sit down for an hour, and he brings me up to date on things that he thinks he should make sure I'm aware of, that I might be hearing about them, and so on and so forth. And I usually have my little list of what’s happening on this and what’s happening on that.* (BOG 3-4)

Through the formal and informal meetings, the chair can advise the president and report back to the board on what is happening. The board members view their role as setting goals and directions for the university, and then working with the president on course corrections to achieve those goals, and in assisting the president to address sensitive issues.

*The board is not passive. If they think that the administration is making a bad decision, they’ll tell them. Or if they have come to a board [meeting] expecting a decision and not providing adequate background information or done their due diligence, the board will bring them to task, and does. Yes, we’ve supported the president in resolving some potentially highly inflammatory issues before they’ve become that way. So, [it’s] a critical role.* (BOG 2-1)

The board also provides a link to the external environment that helps the university manage external issues. This takes the form of acting as a bridge to create relationships with outside organisations, such as provincial health authorities. It also
takes the form of assisting the university in addressing issues that are outside the
normal scope or expertise of the university’s core mission, and dealing with areas such
as real estate development and the development of alternate funding strategies that
diversify the university’s funding portfolio and reduce its dependence on government. As
President 1 indicated, the board has multiple links into the community and, therefore,
was “a tremendous resource for the institution. And that can be with political leadership;
it can be with other business people; it can be, as I say, in the arts community.” The
type of support the board plays ranges from informal advice the president can seek from
any board member, to issues that fall within a particular board member’s area of
expertise or skill sets.

Well, the board members, especially the outside board members, are a
fundamental resource to the president, first of all in terms of expertise—
obviously, we try to bring a measure of experience and particular skill sets
to the board table through order-in-council appointments. So, you know,
when there are legal issues, we always have one or two lawyers on the
board, and it’s useful to check with them and get free third-party opinion
or advice about how to go. (President 2)

The board in particular can help the president and senior administration to address
sensitive or political issues with either internal or external stakeholders. President 3
highlighted one sensitive matter the university had to address and how the board played
a significant role in ameliorating the situation.

We talked long and hard about what the implications would be, how it
would be rolled out, how would we manage this with staff, what the
blowback might be, what the board could do to help. So, the answer is
yes. And one of the things that I greatly appreciate—and it came up in
the audit committee meeting yesterday—on numerous occasions, board
members will say, “Well, we need to know that information to protect
management. If something goes awry, we need to be able to stand up
and say, ‘No, we looked at that.’” So, very sensitive to their role as
supporters and facilitators.
Having this kind of support from the board is important for the president to provide leadership and manage the university. This latter point is linked to the Confidence Category of the Governing Theme and Confidence Sub-Category of the Managing the Board Category of the Leading Theme. The president needs to keep the confidence of the board to be able to function and carry out the leadership and management responsibilities of the position. This point was emphasised by the former government official who stated: “I think it also comes down to the relationship between the board chair and the president, even the chemistry of that relationship, the degree of trust” (GOV 1). Losing the confidence of the board would impair the ability of the president to lead and could, depending on the seriousness of the issue, lead to the early departure of the president.

4.2.5. Strategic Plan

The strategic plan forms the university’s official communication with both internal and external stakeholders about the university’s priorities and the direction that the university is going. It provides a statement about where resources will be allocated and how progress will be monitored. As President 3 indicated:

*When people ask me what’s the priority of the university, there’s always one priority, that’s our strategic plan, which really sort of outlines exactly what we’re trying to accomplish. So, I think the simplest way to fulfill the goals and aspirations of the university is articulated in the strategic plan. My job is to do that.*

The strategic plan is developed by the board and the president in conjunction with the senior administration. The development of the strategic plan provides a means of creating a shared vision between the board and the president about the future direction of the university. The board members indicated that the strategic plan provided them
with a metric for determining how well the university is doing achieving these goals and for assessing the president’s performance.

Based on the interviews it appears that the governing board reviews the strategic plan annually to determine if the goals need to be adjusted.

Well, a lot of the goals are there in the strategic plan, and we don’t do an official annual review of the strategic plan, but the board is asked once a year to do a survey, basically, and that survey is tied to the goals and values of the strategic plan. (BOG 3-1)

The structure for the annual review of the strategic plan varies among the three universities along with who is invited to participate, but the common format is a 1- or 2-day retreat. University 3 included the senate in the planning retreat, because of the complex “bicameral governance system, where the senate is responsible for formulating academic priorities and the board is responsible for ensuring the resources are there to run the university and to meet those priorities” (President 3). University 1 indicated they had, or were about, to include the senate as part of their strategic planning process in order to build greater links between both governance bodies. Including the senate in the strategic planning process increased communication and created ‘buy-in’ from both the board and senate about the university’s priorities. University 2 did not appear to include the senate in the strategic planning process. President 2 indicated a different perspective on the board’s role in the strategic planning process.

And in my view it isn’t to establish the strategy; it is to have confidence in the president and his representation of a coherent, strategic plan, to be involved in discussing, criticising, adjusting that plan, but at the end of the day they say, ‘yes, this is the way we agree the university ought to be going’, and then to monitor performance of the president at the top of and underneath the institution as to whether in fact it appears to be moving in a coherent direction about which it’s informed, which it’s bought into, which it approves.
It would appear that University 1 and 3 are moving in the same direction on the development process for the strategic plan, but a different approach is used by University 2. However, all three presidents agreed that the strategic plan forms the basis for assessing the performance of the president against how well the university is doing in achieving its goals and objectives.

Once the strategic plan is developed, it needs to be implemented. A past board chair noted: “the most important role is to agree to and implement the strategic direction of the university. And the concurrent one for the president is to devise that strategic direction and seek the approval and implementation by the board” (BOG 2-2). The strategic plan is operationalised into year-over-year objectives that form the major component for assessing the president’s performance. Once the strategic plan is approved, the board then allocates the resources needed to achieve the various objectives, “that we are strategically tasking the administration to move forward in those areas that along with administration we see as being priority areas” (BOG 1-2). Most of the major initiatives within the strategic plan take many years to implement and complete. This is one of the disconnects in the governance model, because the long-term planning inherent in the strategic plan and the time limits on the length of service of governing board members do not align. As one past board chair indicated: “you’re never there to actually benefit from the joy of having them succeed or the disappointment of having them fail” (BOG 2-1). One ominous note that emerged during the interviews about the strategic planning process was about the actual lack of power of the board.

...a policy could be devised by the president, approved by the board, which wants to accentuate the growth of the campus in downtown Vancouver, for instance, and if that isn’t consistent with the views of the government, it’s never going to happen. So, the president and the board have to react to the realities in which they operate, which are much, much
The implications of this statement are clear. The university may consider itself autonomous and able to make decisions that are considered academic in nature, but issues that pertain to financial or capital infrastructure can only happen with the support of the provincial government.

It was evident that the strategic plan was the essential tool that allowed the board to exercise governance by monitoring the performance of the president. The strategic plan keeps the board out of the day-to-day management within the university and allows the president to provide the leadership and management necessary to implement these priorities, goals and objectives. The strategic plan is a tool that allows stakeholders input into the decision-making process within the university and, through this input, create buy-in. While the strategic plan specified the areas of growth the university intended to pursue, one issue that repeatedly emerged during the interviews was the financial dependence of the university on the government.

4.2.6. Leading Theme Summary

The board members see the role of the president as an integral interface between the board and the university community. The university is a large complex organisation with many stakeholders and two governance arms that the president must bring together. The president needs to have the academic credentials that are recognised by the internal stakeholders in order to carry out the academic mission, which is outside of the board’s formal oversight but within the purview of the senate. The level of operational complexity due to the internal and external stakeholders is far higher than in other organisations, such as private sector corporations. In addition, while
the university appears to be autonomous, it is clear that the university is dependent on the government for financial support to achieve these objectives.

4.3. Theme 3: Managing the Internal Environment

The internal environment is where the president exercises management oversight within the university and deals with the internal stakeholders on a day-to-day basis. The president and senior administration are responsible for dealing with the internal stakeholders and ensuring that the organisation operates and carries out its core mandate of teaching and research. Table 5 shows the sub-category under Relationship with Internal Stakeholders Category within the Managing the Internal Environment Theme.

*Table 5: Managing the Internal Environment Theme: Category and Sub-Category*

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with internal stakeholders</td>
<td>Are main stakeholder needs being met (students, faculty, staff)</td>
</tr>
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4.3.1. Relationship with Internal Stakeholders

The university is a complex organisation with a myriad of stakeholders and constituents. Some of these internal stakeholders are formally recognised by having seats on the governing board allocated to them under the University Act. The internal stakeholder groups have multiple points of contact within the university that range from seats on the governing board, the majority of seats on the senate, to having collective representation through either faculty unions/associations, various types of staff unions and student government. The relationship between these constituencies is based on a
collegial structure, which requires the president to balance the various stakeholders so that the university operates smoothly. As one board chair stated when comparing the role of the university president versus a corporate president or senior government official:

_The job of the university president is more difficult than either one of those, because of the number of constituencies that you have to balance, the number of individuals with whom you have to interact, the peculiarity of faculty and management dynamics, the relationship with the student community, the absolutely extraordinary relationship particularly in this province with the provincial government, which is—I’ll come back to this in one of the other questions—which is far more intense and hands on than it is, for example, at Ontario universities._ (BOG 3-4)

Keeping harmony between these groups is essential if the university is to carry out its core mandate. As one board member indicated, “I think what I would not want to see develop is the York University situation, where things get entrenched to such a degree that the whole community suffers” (BOG 3-2). When these situations occur, there is a loss of trust between the university community and its president.

The president is responsible for ensuring that the university’s core mandate of teaching and research are carried out. To ensure that the core mandate is carried out requires that the needs of the various stakeholders—the faculty, the students and the staff—are being, and are seen to be, addressed. As President 3 indicated, “[f]aculty make it possible to do what we do, and they have a stake in it, as well.” What this refers to is that faculty have a stake in making sure that the university operates—hopefully well—because, if the faculty are not engaged in teaching students or in research activities that involve students, then the core mandate of the institution is not being delivered. The long-term implications of this are a potential decline in student numbers, and therefore funding, which would reduce the number of faculty needed to deliver the university’s core mandate. Without faculty, neither teaching nor research would happen
but, without students, there would be no funding to support either teaching or research. While this later statement seems to be circular in its reasoning, it indicates that faculty and students are the rationale for the existence of the university. What is missing from the previous analysis is the role of staff within the university. Universities are complex organisations that require support to allow the faculty to teach and engage in research and for students to learn. These support staff services range, to name a few, from facilities and engineering support, janitorial support, to administrative support. The role of the staff support groups within the universities is also recognised through their formal representation on the board.

Each of these stakeholder groups has its own formal representation on the various governance bodies, such as the board and the senate, but also through specific bargaining units, whether a faculty association, student government or a staff union.

_The board has representatives on it that are faculty, students and staff, and the board looks out for the institution. Now, it has to be aware of what’s going on in the different stakeholder groups, but their job is to make sure management has got those conduits for communication open. So, it’s not the board’s job to understand all the issues that every bargaining unit has; it’s the board’s job to make sure administration understands all the issues all the employee groups have._ (President 3)

This threads these stakeholders into the university at different levels and involves them in setting the direction of the university. However, these various stakeholder groups are not monolithic and the “elected reps, for example, don’t vote _en bloc_ by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, you know, sometimes one professor will vote one way and another will vote another way. The students don’t even always vote _en bloc_” (President 1). This means that, even though there are formal stakeholder representatives on the board and senate and there are formal bodies that represent the stakeholder groups individually to the university, there is not necessarily a common front either between the
various stakeholder groups or between various individual constituents representing a particular stakeholder group. This further increases the level of complexity in which the president operates to ensure that stakeholder needs are being addressed. President 1 referred to this as ‘deep listening’ and indicated that:

I’m expected to take a leadership role there, but a leadership role in consultation both with my own group here in the administration of the university and, more broadly, the faculty association, etc., and with the board itself. So, it’s a sort of iterative process in that respect.

Communication is essential for the president to understand the real issues and needs of the stakeholders.

The president is clearly responsible for managing the internal environment and must understand what is happening within the university. The president must understand the needs of each stakeholder group. As President 3 noted, “We serve our students—we’re accountable to students. We support and serve our faculty and our staff—we’re accountable to them.” The president’s responsibility to the governing board is to make sure they are aware of what is occurring within the university.

Now, it [the board] has to be aware of what’s going on in the different stakeholder groups, but their job is to make sure management has got those conduits for communication open. So, it’s not the board’s job to understand all the issues that every bargaining unit has; it’s the board’s job to make sure administration understands all the issues all the employee groups have. And that’s the difference between governance and management; the board holds me to account for ensuring that we, the university, has a conduit to sources of information in all those different stakeholder groups. (President 3)

Through the process of deep listening and dialogue, the internal community is provided an opportunity to have input on setting the future directions of the university. If the president is not engaged with the internal stakeholders, then there is an increased
potential for disruption similar to the situation that occurred at York University where teaching ceased to function for an extended period over a labour dispute.

### 4.3.2. Managing the Internal Environment Summary

The president’s role is to listen to the various internal stakeholders and, through this iterative process, thread their input into a coherent plan that meets the needs of both the internal stakeholders and the external community. Where there is a disconnect in this iterative listening process, there is a chance that the operations of the university will become mired in labour disruptions, student protests or a decline in community support.

As President 3 said, “It’s only in situations, as you’ve got at York right now, that the faculty are going, ‘Let me into the boardroom; I’m going to tell them what. I want to be on that board; I’m going to show them’.” These types of events can result in the president losing the support of the board.

### 4.4. Theme 4: Managing the External Environment

The board and the president both have responsibilities for dealing with the external environment. This may mean that they deal with the provincial government, federal government, and leaders in the community, which may include the business community or various social groups. Each of these external bodies has a greater or lesser pull on the university, which will be explored in this sub-section. Table 6 looks at the perception of the governing board members and the presidents regarding the external environment and how it affects the university: It shows the addition of the sub-categories that further define each category, building a better understanding of the Managing the External Environment Theme.
Table 6: Managing the External Environment Theme: Categories and Sub-Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to work with Government</td>
<td>Provincial government for operating grants and for capital infrastructure grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal government for research grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to the Community</td>
<td>Business community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The community where the university is housed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The citizens of the Province and the nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University as an opportunity generator</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for social levelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts as an economic development generator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can work with the community to address social concerns</td>
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4.4.1. Need to Work with Government

In theory, the university is independent from government, but dependent on government for its funding. Though universities are generally considered autonomous, that autonomy is increasingly based on achieving accountability targets. The provincial government provides the majority of the base-operating grant that funds the university’s core operations. The level of funding is based primarily on the number of students, with some additional funding for other targeted activities and a sliding percentage of funding for new capital infrastructure. Combined, this provides the university with the support needed to deliver its core mandate of teaching. Growth in universities is restricted by how many additional seats and the additional grant per student, which the provincial government is willing to fund each year. In the past, growth in the number of additional student seats was based on annual negotiations with the provincial government. The federal government funds the majority of the research that the universities apply to under the various federal research funding envelopes. In order to access or receive these funds, the university is also expected to deliver or achieve
certain outcomes. As President 3 noted, “The government is one of our largest funders. They have public policy priorities that the postsecondary education system in general and in this university in particular help them meet. So, they have a rightful stake in what we do.” Universities have certain responsibilities that must be met in order to continue to receive funding, but it appears they are autonomous in how they meet those objectives.

Since the provincial government provides the annual base-operating grant and, as was indicated in Chapter 2, appoints the majority (by one) of the university governing board, de facto, this makes the provincial government the key external stakeholder in the university. The governing board members expressed a variety of different perspectives, but one element that emerged is that universities may not be as autonomous as is generally perceived by the public. As one board chair commented:

… the university is really a function of government as opposed to an independent institution. It likes to believe it’s an independent institution, but it really takes its marching orders—its non-academic marching orders, but those are marching orders that are essential to strategy development—from the government. (BOG 2-2)

This perspective may be overstated but it indicates that, while the university may have some academic autonomy, its financial and administrative actions are strongly influenced by government. Recently the provincial government implemented Letters of Expectation that specify annual objectives and targets the university is expected to achieve to meet its funding requirements (Appendix H). The Letters of Expectation formed the basis for more of a contractarian relationship between the universities and the provincial government, which is different than past practice. Board chairs indicated that the Letters of Expectation were received without prior notification or discussion, “I mean, the Letter was sent to us for signature within five days, presented to us with little or no kind of background, no input to the actual content, and the [university] board chairs
did not sign it” (BOG 2-1). This resulted in a negotiation between the universities and the provincial government that removed the original Letters of Expectations with revised Letters of Expectation being sent that were subsequently signed off by the board chairs.

This raises a number of governance issues. If the provincial government appoints the majority of the governing board, does the government direct or influence the actions of the appointed governing board members? The responses received from the governing board members to this question were that their responsibility was to the university and its well-being. But, with respect to the question, “Does the provincial government exercise influence over appointed board members?,” the response received from one board chair addresses this point.

This is made a more certain outcome by the government, who doesn’t pay any attention to its Order-in-Council appointees after those people have been appointed. There is no process of consultation between their representatives and the Ministry responsible, so that the members of the board appointed by the Order-in-Council are singularly creatures of the organisation, as opposed to representatives of the government on that organisation… (BOG 2-2)

It would appear, then, that board members do not receive any direction from the provincial government and are independent. When I asked the former government official about this, it was indicated that the board chairs “might phone for advice, but for the most part, they just kind of bit the bullet and did what they needed to do” (GOV 1).

One of the board’s roles is to assist and advise the university in its relationship with government at both the provincial and federal levels. These relationships are critical “with the federal government, [and] obviously the relationships with the province, [who is] the principal funder” (BOG 3-4). While *prima facie* it would appear to be the case that the government does not control the board, there are levels of complexity to the relationship among the government, the board, the president and the senior
administration of the university. This issue was commented on by the longer-serving board members who, in the case of University 2, indicated that the board tends to be much more conservative than senior administration so that, in some situations, regardless of what the board wants, the will of both the government and senior administration prevail, especially around capital infrastructure projects. “At the end of the day, if the government and the management want it, it goes ahead even if there is a great concern on the part of the board that there are risks in this enterprise” (BOG 2-2). This provides government with the opportunity to be seen as supporting the university publicly but, at the same time, to shift the responsibility—and blame—to the board if there were cost over-runs in the capital project.

The governance structure and the relationship with the external environment creates underlying tension between the university and government, which the university president has to manage. As was indicated in Chapter 2, the universities existed before the existence of the modern nation-state and, therefore, have a level of assumed autonomy. However, the universities are not as autonomous as is generally assumed if they do not meet certain outcomes expected by the government. As President 2 stated:

…it’s a very important part of the history of western civilization, as we like to call it, that these institutions did become autonomous from government, and they’ve always retained a certain autonomy. But it’s a limited autonomy; it’s a relative autonomy, as some theorists say.

The relative autonomy referred to is that the university is expected to be accountable for the funding it receives and the delivery of certain specified outcomes, such as number of student seats provided and the types of programs offered, normally ones that may be considered more professional or vocational in orientation.

Government has been willing to fund the universities because they have been seen as a tool for ensuring human capital development and, more recently, national
economic development and competitiveness. But the expectation, at least within a neoliberal framework, is that government expects to receive an economic benefit. This specific point was referenced earlier where one of the board chairs indicated that the universities were just an extension of government. In another situation that was also referenced earlier, two presidents and all the board chairs discussed their concerns with the Letters of Expectation received from the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education. The Letters specified outcomes that government expected the universities to deliver, and they were not well received by the presidents and the university boards. As President 1 indicated:

_The board chairs, actually,…got together with the presidents; we issued a response; we refused to sign the initial letter, and we then, when the new Deputy Minister came on, convinced her to withdraw that letter and to put out a new one—which is not perfect, but it’s much, much better._

The universities could not resist the government’s intention to implement a more contractarian framework, but they were able to achieve modifications in the language used in the re-issued Letters of Expectation. This situation is illustrative of the tension between government and university over a shifting interpretation of autonomy and accountability, which President 2 noted is:

_…very contradictory. I mean, with respect to the universities, I think there’s this kind of double moment where, on the one hand, there have been tendencies towards more autonomy and saying, “You go and do this because we can’t,” and on the other hand, much more regulation and oversight. So, you get all this regulation to see whether the resources we’ve given you have been properly spent, etc. And a fair amount of target—you know, these are the things we want done—you can decide how to do them, but these things we want done._

The president’s role is to manage this tension between the university and government to ensure that the university continues to be funded by meeting the government’s
objectives while maintaining a sphere of independence and autonomy, so that the university does not end up as a mere instrumental tool of government public policy.

Resisting this pressure to become an extension of the state is difficult, because both the provincial and federal government are important external stakeholders that influence the behaviour of the university through funding mechanisms. What is not clear is the way these relationships work indirectly, and the nature of the levels of complexity between the government, the board and the university. This requires further study to better understand the dynamics, including how the president maintains an autonomous space for the university outside the sphere of government.

4.4.2. Link to the Community

The board members indicated that, while they represented the university, the majority stated they also had a broader responsibility to the ‘community’. The definition of community was scalable to include the community in which the university was situated, to the entire province, and even all of Canada. As the elected board representative indicated “we have to keep connected to that community around us, the residents, the community in general” (BOG 1-1). The relationships with various groups in the community are essential for a university to further its mandate and mission, especially in a resource-constrained environment. The university has to meet, “the perception of the community, that this institution is perceived as being high value to the community at large—not [only] perceived as being, but is of high value” (BOG 3-1). Moving beyond perception to demonstrate the university is an integral part of the community means that it has to be actively involved in the community. This is done in a variety of ways, ranging from participating at social events to the:
...contribution that the staff and faculty make to ongoing local and regional issues, whether it’s homelessness or whether it’s drug addiction and so on, you’ll find countless number of committees on which the expertise the faculty has called upon, involved in. (BOG 3-4)

It is through these actions and initiatives that the university has embedded itself into the community as an integral component.

One of the president’s roles is to act as a conduit to the community. The community cannot be thought of as homogenous, but as heterogeneous, comprised of differing groups all vying to have the university support their specific group or agenda, either through researching issues that are affecting that group or by offering programs and services that meet its needs.

_This is a multi-stakeholder organisation, unlike any other. It’s not like shareholder bottom line. We serve the people of this country, and we’re accountable to the government of the province and the government of Canada. We serve our students—we’re accountable to students. We support and serve our faculty and our staff—we’re accountable to them. And we’re accountable to the community at large, because we’re an incredible resource for this region of this province._ (President 3)

The university serves as a lens for the social and economic development of the community. The recruitment of external board members, who represent the broader community, provides the university with one means of outreach, so that there are “people who know something about us, know what our challenges and opportunities are, and also have that broader set of contacts in the community to help with context, I think, is really useful” (President 1). The external board members are seen as a link to the external environment because that is where they live.

...I would say they’re very important in terms of advising on two fronts in terms of external relations. One front is government relations. Most of these people have connections of one kind or another in government, so experience with government relations, whether in private sector or public sector agencies. It’s always useful when you’re hitting some sticky patch to seek advice. And the other, candidly, is the business of advancement,
so public relations and the crass business of fundraising. Board members can be very helpful. (President 2)

Being embedded in the community allows the university to show that the community’s needs are being met and, therefore, to make a case for additional funding support from government, either at the provincial level for additional operating grants and new facilities or at the federal level for research grants.

The universities are increasingly looking to cultivate external benefactors to help them address needs that have not been satisfied through public funding and are leveraging their board members to conduct these fund-raising activities. This has become important because of the constrained resource environment and the number of roles and needs the university is being asked to meet.

I think that there will be funding challenges, and that universities will more and more have to look to ways to find their own funding, through research grants and probably engaging in business and other more innovative things than they necessarily do on a large scale. I think there’s going to be a huge increased need for fundraising related to the funding problem. (BOG 3-3)

Without these additional resources, the university is constrained in meeting the demands being placed on it and, therefore, has pursued relationships with donors and alumni to seek the resources to meet these other needs. External board members are increasingly expected to spend:

…at least five or six hours a month of community activity that should benefit the university, that people should want to do—to take someone to lunch, to talk about the university and talk about the requirements of the university, talk about the goals and that sort of thing. (BOG 2-2)

The question that needs to be asked is: “Why are volunteer board members being tasked with playing an increasingly greater role in assisting the university in this funding-raising role?” It is clear that this new role for board members “has just grown into [an]
enormously important significance [which] is fundraising and relationships with donors” (BOG 3-4).

In the interviews with the three presidents, it was apparent they were committed to a broader dialogue with their communities. President 2 spoke about one of the roles of the university as having a “very deep engagement and involvement in the community.” One of the strategies used by some of the presidents to help their boards understand the role that the university plays with these various constituent groups is to have these groups come and speak to the entire board at a board meeting. President 3 indicated that, “We always have a dinner where we invite a guest, and the guest tries to give a broad overview that doesn’t focus on the university, but talks about the external environment and how it affects the university.” This outreach is essential if the university is to continue to play a prominent role, but it makes the operating environment of the university more complex and complicated and has the potential to impinge upon the autonomy of the university. The former government official commented that universities have taken on too much.

*They’re over stretched—that’s my perspective. So, I think one of the goals of the board and president should be, within that vision piece, to also keep their feet on the ground and say, “Whoa, wait a minute here, this is a neat idea, but do we have capacity?”* (GOV 1)

### 4.4.3. University as an Opportunity Generator

The board members perceive that the provincial and federal governments see the university as an agent of social change and economic development. The provincial government provides funding for student seats and programs that are designed to meet various societal and economic development needs. The types of programs range from healthcare programs and social programs to professional programs. The federal
government provides the bulk of research funding, which is partially linked to economic development. Combined, these funds are still not sufficient to meet the demands placed on a university, and this increases the external and internal pressures placed on the board and the president.

You’re entrusted to ensure that this institution provides people with the opportunities, whether its faculty or staff, provides, in fact, value for money to the students for the fees that they pay, which are not insignificant. So, you have responsibility back to them. (BOG 3-2)

The board members indicated that, regardless of other demands, student experience and educational quality were paramount. As one board member indicated about their president’s commitment to the students, “I think student satisfaction is really important to him, that we offer a great student experience and a great educational opportunity for our students” (BOG 1-1). Having the students graduate with a quality education prepares them to enter the community when they leave the university. The current economic crisis was seen by some board members as an opportunity that the university could use to leverage their infrastructure spending capabilities to meet the future needs of the community.

We will be looking to take advantage of [reduced costs] in this declining economic situation, take advantage of declining costs, as well, as we continue to build what is required in the way of university assets. So, there is an opportunity to average down the costs from what we’d experienced on the run up in this economic cycle. I know our president is very keen on getting at the quality of the undergraduate experience at the university, and so our board is, as well, very concerned about those issues, so we’ll keep pursuing the quality of the education… (BOG 1-2)

It is clear from this response that, even though the board does not have governance responsibility for academic issues, providing students with a quality education was one of the board’s priorities.
The role that the university plays within the community by meeting social needs and acting as an opportunity generator is one of the reasons that people are prepared to volunteer their time to sit on the governing board. As one external board member said to me, “if people think that I have skills that I can bring to assist society in going forward, then I’m prepared to do that” (BOG 2-3). Inherent in this statement and tied back to the Category of Public Service under the Governing Theme, was a sense of social responsibility and ‘giving back’ to the community. This is a very powerful motivator a university can use, which helps it to recruit board members with significant skills and contacts that have further expanded a university’s sphere of influence.

At a broader level, the university is seen within the community as a way of achieving a better more prosperous life (the good life). The traditional definition of the good life as espoused by either Plato or Aristotle has been redefined to incorporate economic rationality at both the personal and societal levels. Neoliberalism shifted the traditional intrinsic philosophic definition of the ‘good life’ to an extrinsic consumption oriented activity of a “goods life”. Giroux (2002) clarifies this concept by indicating that “[w]ithin neoliberalism’s market driven discourse, corporate culture becomes both the model for the good life and the paradigmatic sphere for defining individual success and fulfillment” (p. 5). Government has increasingly come to view the university as a tool for economic instrumentality. Under massification, the universities grew, as did their reliance on government funding. Within a neoliberal framework, the university is seen as providing a personal economic benefit and, therefore, the user should also have to make an investment. This is the ideological basis of the argument for increasing tuition as a co-payment—or investment—for a future state of economic well-being. Government has been willing to make targeted funding investments through research grants into the university as a means of promoting innovation and industrial competitiveness. As
previously mentioned, the concern this raises is about the level of autonomy of the university. Is it an independent entity, or a mere extension of the state? According to President 2:

Interestingly, in the era of modern capitalist governments, I would say most governments have seen there’s a huge advantage to this relative autonomy, it’s functional, right? If you bureaucratically manage the business of science and technology, for example, but broadly speaking, of research and education, you’d probably screw it up, like Stalin did. Right? And I think they kind of recognise that, so it’s functional, it’s productive, etc. Every now and then they get pretty intrusive, they get pretty manipulative, because they have a funding power, either by incentive or by some kind of compulsion.

While the debate about the role of the university and its autonomy continues in the academy, government and society, it is clear that the university does provide opportunities to a higher standard of living, which is associated with a better economic lifestyle. Access to a professional career associated with that better lifestyle is more readily achieved through a university education. (Arts graduates still have higher average lifetime income then non-degree holders.)

Another more generally accepted perspective is that the university supports the betterment of the society in which it is situated. According to President 3, “if you recognise our fundamental mission is about knowledge, it’s about creation of new knowledge, the transmission to future generations and the application to the betterment of society.” The university does this by continuing to push the boundaries of knowledge, and this provides both social and economic benefits. The neoliberal ideological issue is that those who benefit should pay. This perspective on beneficiary changes depending on the political lens and therefore, so too, do the public policy levers that are used.

Beyond being an engine of economic development, the university must have a level of autonomy from the state if it is to have the necessary distance required to
critique and act as a social ‘conscience’ for the community. Autonomy allows the
university to push the bounds of knowledge because it is able to continually question
common wisdoms and truths. President 1 indicated:

*I guess what I would add is that I think that the university has a critical
role to play as a kind of—well, some people use the term the canary in
the coalmine, the conscience of the society. I think we have to be asking
hard questions about where we’re going as a society, as a culture, etc.,
and that’s not something ‘The university’ does; it’s people within
universities that do that. But I think we have to be very strongly
supportive of them. And, therefore, sometimes they’re going to be really
critical of government policy and of social evolution, in ways that people
won’t like. And I think we have to support that really, really strongly, and
defend it.*

This ability to question and expose societal flaws could not happen within a private
sector corporation, because those critiquing the organisation would be asked to leave.
As well, corporations have to be careful in criticising society, because they would be
exposed to potential product boycotts and other actions. The university also
experiences the periodic wrath of the community by asking these hard questions but,
because it has some autonomy, it can normally protect the researcher who has
unmasked commonly accepted truths.

### 4.4.4. Managing the External Environment Theme Summary

The external environment is essential for the university to be successful. The
university receives its primary funding from government and must meet certain
objectives in order to continue to receive funding. It does this while trying to maintain a
level of autonomy from government. The university also must respond to the diverse
needs of the community, since the community can influence government. Increasingly,
the university is using its board members to reach out to the community but, also, to
generate funding opportunities that allow the university to meet the multiple demands
placed upon it. The role of the president is to manoeuvre through these competing and conflicting demands, so the needs of the primary funder are met while protecting the internal autonomy of the university.

4.5. Building a Conceptual Model

Four themes inductively emerged using the grounded theory data analysis. Each of these themes was examined earlier in Chapter 4. What the analysis indicated is that the relationship between the university and the government/community is a binary relationship. The university is part of, yet apart from, the society in which it is situated. It has a special relationship with its community that was reviewed in Chapter 2. The society represented by the government has increasingly seen the university as an instrument to affect national economic competitiveness. Because of the unique nature of the university as a knowledge centre, government has been loathe to interfere in the basic operational structure of the university, at least within a North American context but, rather, has wanted to ensure a level of oversight given the financial commitment. The university has willingly accepted the growth in funding associated with massification. The issue that exists is the relationship between the university’s external environment and its internal environment, and the effect these have on the autonomy of the university. Two of the four themes dealt explicitly with managing the internal and external environment; the other two themes—Governing and Leading—dealt with the interface between the external and internal environments. The interface represents what both the university and the government have adopted as the acceptable balance, which maintains external oversight for resources received and internal autonomy of action. The initial analysis yielded the inductive themes that emerged from the data. Further, deductive analysis of the themes and the relationship between the university and the
government/community yield an emergent theoretical model of the relationship and the interface in the relationship. This model represents a ‘field theory’ regarding how the stakeholders operate with the internal and external environments.

The emergent theoretical model is named the Environment Synapse Communication Interface Model and is illustrated in Figure 1. It is based on the internal and external environments and the interface between those environmental components.

**Figure 1: Environment Synapse Communication Interface Model**

The four domains of the emergent model are: the Internal, Internal/External, External/Internal and External. Each of the four environmental/interface components or domains will be examined individually. The analysis of the Environment Synapse Communication Interface Model will then be linked back to the four themes that emerged from the inductive data analysis.
4.5.1. Internal

The Internal domain represents the university in its day-to-day operations and activities and is comprised of the various stakeholder groups of the university: students, faculty and staff (including administrative staff). The Internal domain represents the totality of the university, where teaching and research occurs and defines what makes the university special and valued by society. Figure 2 shows where the boundary and periphery points exist between the four domains. While the normal means of transaction between the internal domain is through the interface of the Internal/External domain, there are also points of access from the internal domain to the External/Internal domain and to the External domain. The main interactions occur on the boundaries through the direct linkage created by the University Act for faculty, student and staff representation on the two governance bodies, the senate and the board of governors. As well, there is informal access on the periphery to the External domain by internal stakeholders, not as representatives of the university but, rather, as representatives for their specific stakeholder group. The Internal domain is one of the three domains where the president provides leadership, but the Internal domain is where the president manages the university.
4.5.2. Internal/External

The Internal/External domain is where half of the bicameral governance of the university occurs through the senate. The senate sets the academic priorities and program direction for the university. As President 3 indicated, “the reason [the] senate doesn’t make budget decisions is so that society understands that the best academic decisions are being made.” This approach tries to ensure that the senate is focused on academic issues and, consequently, that the decisions it makes are made for the right reasons. It is then up to the president and senior administration to communicate these priorities to the board, so that the board can allocate the resources that support the academic priorities.
The president is responsible for providing leadership at the *Internal*, *Internal/External* and the *External/Internal* domains. The *Internal/External* domain is where the president provides leadership as both a member of the senate and its chair. So faculty are not overwhelmed in setting the academic priorities of the university, the University Act ensures that they have twice the number of representatives on the senate as there are administrative (management) members. The rationale for this is to ensure senate can make the best academic decisions independent of the board and administration. Figure 3 shows the domains of responsibility of the president.

**Figure 3: Description of the Internal/External Domain**

To improve communication between the senate and the board, two of the presidents indicated they had joint planning sessions with both governance bodies.
These sessions provided an opportunity for dialogue between the two governance bodies, and to create a shared vision of future direction and priorities of the university through the strategic plan. The jointly developed strategic plan provides both governance bodies with a document that communicates the university’s priorities. While the senate and the board are independent components forming the bicameral governance structure of Canadian universities, it must be pointed out that this governance format is different from other jurisdictions, such as Australia, where the senate (Academic Council) has been legislated so that it now reports to the governing board (Governing Council) of the university. Figure 4 shows the boundary point where the president unites the senate and board through the development of a strategic plan document that creates a shared vision between the two governance bodies.

*Figure 4: The Internal External Domain and the President*
4.5.3. External/Internal

The External/Internal domain represents the interface between the external environment and the university. This domain provides the societal oversight mechanism of the university to oversee the public funds that have been allocated from the government through a governing board. Under the University Act, the majority of the governing board members (by one) are external appointments with the remainder being comprised of the internally-elected stakeholder representatives from the faculty, students and staff. The role of the governing board is to provide the fiduciary oversight and ensure that public funds, as well as internal resources, are used in the appropriate manner intended. Other areas of oversight also include capital infrastructure and real estate. There is no formal linkage between the governing board and the senate, other than through the president and the senior administration.

The bicameral governance structure ensures that there is a deliberate disconnect in the separation of powers and responsibilities between the senate and the governing board. The common link between both governance bodies is the president. This increases the power of the president, who serves as the nexus of communication between both the senate and the board. The power of the president is further increased by having input into both the academic directions of the university at the senate, and on the allocation of the budget by the board. This places the president in an extremely powerful position. Iteratively, the president is aware of the deliberations of the board and the senate and, therefore, has a greater ability to influence the direction and decisions made by both governance bodies. This is not to imply a Machiavellian intent on the part of the president to suborn the governance of the university but, rather, speaks to issues of subtle control through the agenda and agenda setting. Figure 5 illustrates how the
president acts as the bridge that binds the decision-making capabilities of the senate and the governing board.

**Figure 5: Description of the External/Internal Domain**

Implicit in Figure 5 is how the government can also influence the direction of the university through whom it appoints to serve on the governing board. The governing board members and the presidents interviewed thought the process of external board appointments has improved dramatically with the introduction of the government’s Board Resourcing and Development Office and the development of internal skills competency matrices in each university to identify and ensure that externally-appointed governing board members had the right skill sets needed by the university. Regardless of the process of external board recruitment and selection, one concern that exists is that the internal board members tend to be better informed about university issues, leaving the
external board members, especially new ones, at a disadvantage to provide the appropriate advice. As one external board member indicated:

*Most of what the board does, it does because it’s statutorily required to do. So, a large number of approvals of pro forma matters on which there is the statutory power to dissent, but there isn’t sufficient information or knowledge that would make dissent rational. So, in some ways, the board is just a rubber stamp. And I have a lot of sympathy for management in having the process drift to that situation. The price of educating the board is too high in time and energy, so that it is just better to move it to the rubber stamp function as quickly as you can.* (BOG 2-2)

This statement is telling and highlights the power of the president as the bridging mechanism, where the tendency is for the external board members to support the recommendations from the president and senior administration. The power of the presidency is further increased because the, “elected reps, for example, don’t vote *en bloc* by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, you know, sometimes one professor will vote one way and another will vote another way. The students don’t even always vote *en bloc*” (President 1).

### 4.5.4. External

The *External* domain surrounds the university and influences how it operates. The university strives to be independent and autonomous from government so that it has the necessary critical distance to both critique and serve as a societal conscience. The history of the university as an entity that pre-dates the modern nation-state affords it a level of autonomy that other publicly-funded entities such as healthcare and social service agencies do not enjoy. The price of autonomy that the university pays to maintain its independence is it must demonstrate it is using public funds responsibly and meeting the needs of the community. As the representative of society, the government provides the funds but has created an oversight body, the governing board, to ensure
that the funds received by the university are spent appropriately. This raises the question of whether or not the externally appointed board members are agents of the government. All the board members interviewed, including the internally elected board member, felt that they represented the university and not the government. In point of fact, two board members indicated that, even if they wanted to represent the government, after their appointment they had received no further communication of any kind from government. However, all board members interviewed did acknowledge they felt that, as representatives of the university, they had an obligation to their community.

The External domain has a multiplicity of levels and layers. Government forms one of the key elements of the External domain, which influences the university through both legislation and resource allocation. But there are other groups that are part of the External domain, which the university seeks to work with or seeks additional resources from, such as the private sector. The government attempts to influence the university through this interface primarily through its funding mechanisms and not, according to the board members, through direct interaction or direction with the external board members. The university seeks to work with the external community through outreach activities with the community, but there is an increased focus on working with the private sector to seek new financial support for areas such as research and to deliberately diversify the funding base to be less dependent on government. Figure 6 shows the level of complexity in the relationship and interface between the university and the external environment.
4.5.5. Building a Conceptual Model Summary

The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model described in this section of Chapter 4, provides an intermediate model of the data analysis from the interviews conducted at the three universities. The model shows the four domains and is based on the four themes: Governing, Leading, Managing the Internal Environment, and Managing the External Environment. Governing spans the External/Internal and the Internal/External domains where bicameral governance is divided between the senate (Internal/External) and the governing board (External/Internal). Leading is core to the president’s role with the focus of leadership being exerted in the External/Internal, Internal/External and the Internal domains. The president’s leadership is recognised in
the External/Internal domain by being a member of the board and in the Internal/External domain by being the chair of the senate. This makes the leadership of the president essential and critical for the university to operate. The Internal domain is where the university exists and where the president exercises both leadership and management of the university. The external environment envelops the university, forming the External domain where government influences the university through the selection and appointment of external governing board members but, more directly, through the use of funding to affect specific outcomes wanted by government. The External domain is also where the university seeks out the community through both formal and informal means.

4.6. Chapter Summary

The genesis for this research project was the examination of the perception of externally government-appointed governing board members about their role. The governing board is responsible for the fiduciary oversight of the university and, while they do not directly control the academic agenda, their control of the budget does influence the academic priorities and future direction of the university. As Chapter 2 revealed, very little research has been done about the perception of board members. As de Boer, Huisman, and Meister-Scheytt (2007) ask, who are these mysterious guardians and what is their role in governing the university? This is a critical question given the large on-going investment of public resources into universities. This issue is also important for the internal stakeholders in the universities to understand more about who the governors are that shape the future direction and priorities of the university.

The analysis of the interviews with the nine board members, three presidents, one board secretary and the former government official indicated there were four themes
that influence the relationship between the university and the government, between the board and the president, and between the president and the internal stakeholders. These four themes were Governing, Leading, Managing the Internal Environment, and Managing the External Environment. In examining each theme and the related categories and sub-categories, it was evident that there is a high level of dependence, interconnectivity and complexity between all the constituents, which is reinforced by both the governance structure and the perceived collegial nature of the university. The analysis of the data indicated the importance of the president’s role in leading the university. This is not surprising and is supported by previous studies conducted by Chait et al., (1991), Holland et al., (1989), and Kezar (2005, 2006). However, the focus of this research was not on the importance of the presidency but, rather, on the role and perceptions of externally-appointed governors serving on university governing boards. The analysis of the interviews indicated that the board members believe they represent the university and that their role is not to provide day-to-day oversight, but to provide strategic leadership. The board members contribute a substantial amount of personal time to conduct the business of the university, especially the board chairs. The external board members are prepared to make this time commitment because they believe this to be part of their public service, which better the community. They do not sit on the board to represent the interests of the government which appointed them or any other specific stakeholder, but to look after the best interests of the community. This commitment by board members clearly indicates the importance of the university, but it also raises concerns about who can participate on the board which, over time, could result in a narrowly-focused board comprised only of individuals with the independent financial resources to draw upon that allows their participation.
The next chapter looks at the data analysis and determines if two common theoretical models of Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory can help to interpret the data to respond to the four questions asked in Chapter 1.
CHAPTER 5:
THEORETICAL ANALYSIS (LISTING THE SALE)

The previous chapter analysed the data that emerged from the interviews and identified four themes that created the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model which, within the data set, provided an explanation of the relationships between the university and its various stakeholders. The model was based primarily upon the interviews with external governing board members and their perceptions of their role within the governance framework. The emergent model was also triangulated based on interviews with three university presidents and one former government official. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model was grounded in the interviews that were conducted, and should not be considered generalisable to the rest of the university system. However while the emergent model is not generalisable, it is important because, within the confines of the interviews conducted, it provides a frame of reference to analyse the data against established theoretical models relating to organisational behaviour and governance. This chapter looks at the data, the four themes generated from the data, and the emergent model and analyses these through two well-established theoretical models: Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory. It must be pointed out that the data may not fit perfectly with the two theoretical models, nor should they. Rather, the two theoretical models provide an additional established context for understanding what the data means.
5.1. **Resource Dependency Theory**

Resource Dependency Theory is a well established theoretical model that gained prominence with the release of Jeffrey Pfeffer’s and Gerald Salancik’s seminal work, *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective* in 1978. Pfeffer and Salancik examined organisational behaviour from both the internal and external environments rather than just the internal environment. This approach provided a more robust analysis of how organizations behave. The authors’ analysis indicates three key issues: (1) organisations are complex entities that operate internally and externally through a series of shifting coalitions, (2) organisations seek acquisition of scarce resources, and (3) organisations attempt to build stability in their internal and external environments, through either acquisition or control of scarce resources or the distribution of goods and services. These factors influence how people within an organisation behave and how the organisation itself behaves. Organisations attempt to cope with unstable internal and external environmental factors by seeking to control or influence the environment as a means of assuring institutional survival. These strategies range from attempting to control resource procurement through to market distribution. Pfeffer and Salancik show that organisations seek to stabilise fluid and dynamic environments that consist of resource scarcity, competition, government regulation, changing personnel, social perception and norms, and technological change. Organisations seek to control unstable or dynamic environments by influencing such factors as board interlocks, hiring or sharing of personnel, joint projects, alternate or multiple resource acquisition and product distribution, and company acquisition and mergers.
Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) demonstrate how organisations are not monoliths, but are loose confederations where organisational sub-units seek to influence the direction of the organisation by trying to make their respective sub-units more prominent and influential in organisational decision-making. The authors indicate, “Organisations are not so much concrete social entities as a process of organizing support sufficient to continue existence” (p. 24). The importance of the internal sub-units shifts with changes in resources acquisition, regulation, customer expectation, personnel and technology. Some examples of the changing importance of sub-units are that an increase in regulations by government or lawsuits against the organisation will result in the legal department gaining a greater say in how the organisation operates. A change in technology will increase the role of the engineering department. Increased competition will result in the marketing department having a greater role. As different sub-units gain prominence, this results in a change in executives and a change in priorities. The organisational sub-units form coalitions with other sub-units which, like the parent organisation, engage in activities designed to secure their operating environment and resource allocation. As Pfeffer and Salancik indicate, “Executives are a source of control, and it matters who is in control because control determines organisational activities. The environment affects organization activities because it affects the distribution of control within the organization” (p. 228). Stated another way, different people have different backgrounds, and this affects the way they interpret signals from the external environment and determine what is important and what is not important. Therefore, changes in leadership represent an organizational vulnerability because of the potential for the new leader to misread environmental signals, which could result in organisational decline or failure.
One of the ways an organisation determines how it is doing is the use of metrics to define its performance. As Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) note, “that which is measured is attended to, and that which is not measured is ignored. Most formal organizations generally have very good internal reporting systems, while they are relatively weak in attending to changes in the environment” (p. 81). Poor information, poor metrics, misreading the information, and changes occurring in the external environment are critical issues and indicate that, while the internal environment is important, what drives the organisation are external environmental events and actions. The organisation operates in the external environment and seeks the procurement of scarce resources and/or securing the distribution of goods and services. A single source supply for a scarce resource needed by the organisation will result in the organisation seeking to secure either a stable supply of the resource or the entire resource base, or trying to develop alternates to that resource. Organisational behaviour in this case will be scalable depending on the perceived level of risk and could range from: entering into a legal agreement to buy some or all of the scarce resource, developing a coalition to ensure on-going access to the resource, looking at either a merger or take-over of the organisation that has or controls access to the resource, or the distribution of finished goods and services, but the “basis for control over a resource is possession” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 48).

The manner in which organisations attempt to secure scarce resources can also creates other external environmental actions. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), the “[c]oncentration of the control of discretion over resources and the importance of the resources to the organization together determine the focal organizations dependence on any given other group or organization” (p. 51). Organisations seek to stablise and control their environment, particularly access to scarce resources, because these are the
basis for the organisation's continued existence. If organisations in a similar business form a cartel to limit access to a resource or to determine the price of the resource, then there is a high probability that government will intervene to prevent monopolistic behaviour through either regulation of an industry sector or civil and criminal actions against organisations and individuals within these organisations, which affects its social legitimacy. Organisations are aware of the consequences of these types of behaviours and seek to maintain legitimacy, while seeking to secure access to scarce resources through various strategies of cooperation, cooption and merger/acquisition. This can occur later by trying to create either vertical (production) or horizontal (distribution) integration and, in some cases, trying to have both (Pfeffer & Salancik).

The analysis by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) is comprehensive and appears to provide a complete theoretical lens for understanding organisational behaviour. The recurrent theme is that, “[r]ather than accepting uncertainty as an unavoidable fate, organizations seek to create around themselves more stable and predictable environments” (p. 282). This raises two questions: Does Resource Dependency Theory help in understanding the data analysis in Chapter 4; and, does the theory help in answering the four questions posed in Chapter 1?

The next sub-sections analyse the data from Chapter 4 against the theoretical model of Resource Dependency Theory and determine if the model can help to understand the data and the four themes that emerged during the data analysis.

5.1.1. Applying Resource Dependency Theory against the Data and Themes

This sub-section uses Resource Dependency Theory as an analytical lens to examine the four themes that emerged from the data analysis of Chapter 4. As was indicated earlier, Resource Dependency Theory is comprised of three key assumptions
about organisations and organisational behaviour. To condense what was indicated earlier, the assumptions that Resource Dependency Theory makes are that: (1) organisations are complex entities that operate internally and externally through a series of shifting coalitions, (2) organizations seek acquisition of scarce resources or services and/or seek to ensure the distribution of their products and services, and (3) organisations attempt to build stability in the internal and external environment through either acquisition or control of scarce resources or in the distribution of their goods and services.

5.1.1.1. Governing

The Governing Theme represents the fiduciary oversight role of the governing board of the university to: recruit and hire the president, establish the goals and direction of the university in collaboration with the president and senior administration through the strategic plan, monitor the performance of the president against the strategic plan, and ensure that the finances and property matters of the university are in good order. The analysis of the interviews of the governing board members corresponded with these generally-accepted principles. The governing board members also had other thoughts and beliefs about why they agreed to act as a university governor, even though it is an unpaid voluntary role. These thoughts and beliefs were captured in the categories and sub-categories of the Governing Theme and will not be reviewed except as it pertains to the application of Resource Dependency Theory.

The rationale for governing boards is to ensure public oversight and transparency of the governance of an organisation and the decisions that are made. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978):
The board’s ostensible function is to oversee the organization’s operations and ensure that the interests of the owners are served. Boards are empowered to choose the management of the corporation and to vote on major corporate decisions. In public organizations as well, the board may be viewed as a means of control over the organization.

(p. 162)

The board, therefore, represents the external check and balance over the decisions of management and the direction of the organisation. Having responsibility for selecting the president is one of the board’s most important roles and perhaps its greatest way of influencing the day-to-day leadership and management within the organisation.

The current board structure of most Canadian universities, and in particular in British Columbia, is a multiple stakeholder board where the majority of the governing board members are external appointments. The other governing board members are internally elected from the main stakeholder groups, which consist of faculty, students and staff. The reason for a multiple stakeholder board is to ensure that all constituents, internal and external, have a voice in the governance and decision-making of the university. The question this raises is: Does the current composition and structure of the governing board provide for the long-term well-being of the university? As one board member indicated:

This idea of a stakeholders’ board is just wrong. I can see why politically people pass Universities Acts that have students, employees, faculty, on the board, but that should not be. The board should be people that take a very long view, with only the role of the institution. It’s impossible for a student to have that view; their interests are naturally the here and now, what’s going on in their year, in their faculty. The faculty are part of collective agreements that negotiate with the university. The staff are part of collective agreements negotiated with the university. The university can’t disclose at board meetings matters that they’re going to be negotiating with people that are sitting at that table. So, it’s a very unsatisfactory governance structure. (BOG 2-2)

The concern indicated by this board member is: How can internally elected board members act in the best long-term interests of the university, when their interests are
immediate, in the here and now? It is logical to assume—with the normal trepidation about assumptions—that government would have been aware of this potential conflict of interest for internal governors when they legislated this multiple stakeholder board. So why would government include the faculty, students and staff as part of the governance structure?

If this question is asked through the lens of Resource Dependency Theory, then the rationale of this decision to include internal stakeholders on the governing board is one of cooptation. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), “Such appointment[s] may occur either by means of an election or by direct invitation. Through providing at least the appearance of participating in organizational decisions, cooptation tends to increase support for the organization by those coopted” (pp. 162-163). The implication is that the inclusion of internal stakeholders on the governing board was an explicit choice designed to ensure that the internal stakeholders would see themselves as having a stake or vested interest in the well-being of the organisation, not just their own constituency. By participating in the governance process the internal stakeholders are “publicly identified with the organization, and thus may be expected to accept some of the responsibility for its actions” (p. 163). As well, through inclusion of the internal stakeholders in the governance process, this acts to limit stakeholder criticism that they have not been consulted or that their concerns are being ignored. This rationale also applies to why external governing board members are appointed. Their inclusion provides a visible demonstration that there are external non-vested governors who represent the best interests of the community.

The way in which the university creates a sense of ownership by the board in the organisation is through the strategic planning process. The strategic planning process
creates a “feeling of participation in setting organizational policy [that] makes the individual both more identified with, and more committed to, that policy” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 163). It also provides the board with a measurement tool to assess the performance of the president and senior administration against broadly defined objectives that were jointly developed. The strategic plan document serves as the communication tool that specifies the organisation's priorities to both internal and external stakeholders. The result of this process is that the board members then act as a bridge to their stakeholder groups to explain, and potentially justify, the institutional priorities and resultant resource allocation decision. Pfeffer and Salancik state: “Participation, it seems, has two effects. First, persons become committed to organizational actions because they are identified as having cooperated in their formulation. Second, persons become committed to the organization to maintain their perceived access or influence” (p. 164).

The concern expressed by the board member referenced earlier is that the governance structure unsatisfactory reflects a frustration with the bicameral university governance structure and the inclusion of stakeholders on the board. This concern shows a difference in the nature of private sector boards. The decision-making process for university governing boards is slow and could be seen as compromised, since the internal board members could act as a conduit for sensitive information back to their constituency group. However on closer examination, it would appear that the structure and composition of the board is deliberately designed to minimise the potential for conflict by inclusion of interested stakeholders in the continued well-being and stability of the university. It provides a means of 2-way communication and information flow that ties the actions of the actors together. The structure and powers of the board “are designed to impose constraint because it is simultaneously constraining (organizing) the
actions if interdependent organizations that enables each to face a stable, certain environment” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 165). The university is a complex environment and the multiple interlocks between stakeholders are designed to increase stability. By including the stakeholders on the board and involving them in the strategic planning process, this creates a sense of ownership in the organisation’s future direction and well-being. As Pfeffer and Salancik indicate:

Rather we would suggest that uncertainty will result in greater efforts of coordination, which require the concentration of power and decision discretion. We would argue that in the first place, uncertainty is managed so that the prediction of increasing environmental uncertainty is questionable. In the second place, increasing interconnectedness is likely concentrated decision structures, not decentralized structure as many have predicted. (p. 285)

5.1.1.2. Leading

The Leading Theme represents the role of the president and the Senior Administration to provide leadership and management to the university. The president is responsible for working with the board to develop and implement the strategic plan, manage the budget and provide day-to-day leadership. The analysis of the interviews of both the presidents and the board members indicated and acknowledged that the universities are complex organisations with multiple stakeholders. Within this environment the president needs to work with both governance arms of the university, the board and the senate, and ensure that the needs of the various stakeholder groups are being met. The role of the president is critical to ensure the smooth operation of the university, because the president is the interface between the two governance arms of the university that create the strategic plan with the resources to implement these priorities.
The role of the president is to manage the competing demands for resources within the organisation that shift over time. The situation in the universities is even more complex because Resource Dependency Theory indicates that “[t]he more useful the resources of an organization are to others, the more demands the organization will face” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 273). Universities have multiple demands placed on them by both internal and external stakeholders. These demands have been previously discussed in Chapter 2, but can be encapsulated as: building new knowledge, educating the citizenry and future leaders, supporting national economic development, and helping to address societal issues. Managing these multiple stakeholders and demands is the role of the university president. The recognition of the difficult role of the president was acknowledged by one board member:

*The president, basically, is the administrative leader of this organisation, so obviously, again, the areas of funding, he is a major factor, a major factor in external affairs, has to have a skill set both in terms of dealing with government and private donors. That is a big change in the last few years, in my opinion, where presidents probably didn’t. And they have to, in fact, have a very strong relationship with the university community per se, because they lead by collegiality.* (BOG 3-2)

The president serves as the focal point in the organisation, who balances these competing constituencies in the allocation of resources.

The president and senior management serve as the locus for control and direction of the organisation through the prioritisation and allocation of resources.

The fact of competing demands, even if correctly perceived, makes the management of organizations difficult. It is clearly easier to satisfy a single criterion, or a mutually compatible set of criteria, than to attempt to meet the conflicting demands of a variety of participants. Compliance to demands is not a satisfactory answer, since compliance with some demands must mean noncompliance with others. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 261)
Since there are more requests for resources than there are resources available, this means some organizational requests will be unfulfilled, creating a situation of winners and losers. The role of the president and senior management is to manage this process, so that the organisation continues to operate. The president manages this situation through controlling the flow of information (as an internal resource) and creating a strategic plan that indicates the priorities of the organisation. The strategic plan is critical because it provides a public statement about the direction of the organisation and its priorities. As previously indicated, the strategic plan is jointly developed with the governing board comprised of the stakeholder groups. Through the use of the strategic plan and “[t]hrough the control of information, management can see to it that board members, who are only associated with the organization on a part-time basis, are essentially prevented from exercising control except under the most extreme circumstances” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 162).

This should not necessarily be interpreted that the president and senior management of the university overtly manipulate the board, but the information that is presented to the board reflects the background and priorities of the president and forms the power-base of the president in leading the organisation. This means that, '[p]ower is, therefore, determined by the definition of social reality created by participants as well as by their control over resources” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 259). Depending on the external environmental issues, different sub-units of the organisation will have more influence and emphasis, and this will be reflected in the subsequent planning and priorities of the organisation. Universities are no different than other organisations in this competition for resources, except that perhaps they are more complex organisations given the diversity in their internal and external stakeholder groups. The cooptation process provides a means of inclusion of these various stakeholder groups, and the
strategic plan represents the outcome of the negotiation process resulting in the determination of how resources should be allocated. As Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) indicate, “[e]nactments of dependencies, contingencies, and external demands are in part determined by organizational structures, information systems, and the distribution of power and control within organizations” (p. 260). The role of the president is to lead this process so that all stakeholder groups have had an opportunity for input and, then, to implement the outcome of this process in such a way that the various stakeholders and sub-units continue to be engaged in achieving the organisation’s goals.

This concentrates a significant amount of power and decision-making in the hands of the president who serves as the focal point for the organisation. But it also places the president in a precarious position should there be significant internal discontent, unusual external pressures and demands, or the organisation is failing to meet its objectives. Under such circumstances, the president serves as the symbol of the organisation and can be replaced. Removing the president, or other senior managers, “offers a way of altering appearances, thereby removing external pressure, without losing much discretion” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 264). The issue of course is that, while this presents a short-term way of addressing issues of discontent, it does not alter longer term issues in the competition for resources. A change in leadership creates instability within an organisation concerning the way in which resources will be allocated in the future, and this is the antithesis to the stability that organisations inherently seek. However, if the stakeholders believe that their needs are not being met then they are prepared to risk instability by seeking the removal of the president. The three university presidents interviewed indicated that between 12 and 13 presidents at various Canadian universities had been asked to leave their organisations. While unverified, these
anecdotal comments made by the three university presidents indicate the precarious nature of managing multiple stakeholders within a bicameral governance structure.

5.1.1.3. Managing the Internal Environment

Managing the Internal Environment Theme represents one of the key roles of the president in providing the day-to-day management of the university. The internal environment is the nexus where the university exists, and delivers its core function of teaching and research—where the faculty and students meet. This is also the location of the constituent bodies for the faculty, the students, the support staff and the administrative staff. Finally, it is also the location of one of the governance arms of the university, that is, the senate. The president has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the core functions of the university are delivered and that the competing demands of the constituent groups are heard. According to Resource Dependency Theory, the constituent groups form and coalesce as a means of creating a power-base, so their requests for additional resources are heard.

Collective organizations and associations are another form of achieving concentration over some resource. Unions and to a lesser extent, trade and professional associations are instances of these attempts to achieve coordinated action, or to have many organizations or individuals act as one. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 50)

The role of the president is to manage the resource allocation process with these constituent groups, based on priorities set by the board. One of the means used by the presidents to address the resource scarcity to meet the needs of the various stakeholders has been to develop new funding sources. As President 2 noted:

*The university, like most institutions in B.C., was suffering an enormous number of difficulties in terms of space and facilities after a 10-year freeze. We absolutely had to unlock that somehow, or we couldn’t budge. In part, that’s been a business of leveraging every conceivable opportunity; some have been targeted government fundings, which have*
enabled us to build that kind of a plan [unclear] in the applied sciences and in health science. Some has been really raising the bar here in terms of private fundraising and leveraging private funding to do that kind of thing. Some has been upping our game in research and research funding and overheads to research.

Even with these additional resources, the president must have access to multiple conduits into all the stakeholder groups to be able to build a picture of what is happening within a particular constituency and to decide “which demands to heed and which to reject” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 266).

The organisational structure of the university helps to provide stability by building interlocking relationships between the internal stakeholders at the level of the board and the senate. The stakeholder groups have representation on both the board and the senate and, therefore, a vested interest in implementing the decisions made by those bodies. Resource Dependency Theory indicates that “[o]rganizations themselves are the interlocking of the behaviors of the various participants that comprise the organization” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 258), and that the stakeholder “directors are another form of interfirm linkage used to manage the organization’s relationships with the [internal] environment” (p. 165). It must be stressed that, while these interlocking structures help to stabilise the operating environment of the university, the constituency groups that comprise the internal environment are not a monoblock. The internal stakeholder representatives serving on the board, the senate, and the constituency leadership are, in all likelihood, different individuals with different objectives. They may be sending back different signals about what is happening within the organisation and how that affects the individuals within a particular constituency, since “[c]ontrol over this interlocking or structuring of activities is never in the hands of a single actor” (p. 267). This interface points out a potential for instability and conflict within the organisation between the university and its stakeholder groups, which is why it is important that the
president have multiple conduits of information to build a more accurate picture of each constituency.

The high level of interdependence of the internal stakeholders is a key concept in Resource Dependency Theory. As Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) indicate, “[t]he typical solution to problems of interdependence and uncertainty involves increasing coordination, which means increasing the mutual control over each others’ activities, or, in other words, increasing the behavioral interdependence of the social actors” (p. 43). The president is to maintain the balance of interdependence, as this is necessary to ensure the core function of teaching and research is not disrupted. Any disruption in the core function will create the most immediate negative impact on the university with both its internal stakeholders and with the external environment. The internal stakeholders are aware of this delicate balance, and it is normally in their constituency’s interests to maintain stability through the smooth delivery of the core functions of teaching and research. The multiple interlocks and interdependence of the internal stakeholders within the university structure reduces the “existence of incompatible demands [that] raises the possibility … that the organization may not be able to maintain the necessary coalition of support” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 27). This is not to say that labour disruptions will not occur. Resource Dependency Theory indicates that, if the internal stakeholder groups think their needs are no longer being adequately met, then there is a potential for some form of organisational disruption.

5.1.1.4. Managing the External Environment

Managing the External Environment Theme relates to the relationship between a university and its external stakeholders. The main stakeholders are: the provincial government, which provides a substantial portion of the university’s funding; the federal
government, which provides the majority of research funding; and the broader community in which the university is situated. These external stakeholders want the university to help them achieve certain objectives they believe only the university can provide. It can be strongly argued that the provincial government wants the university to produce a well-educated citizenry but, also, to provide training and education needed to support social and economic skills in fields, such as healthcare and engineering. The federal government’s primary interest is in supporting research and development activity that enhances Canada’s economic competitiveness. The community is a broad amalgam whose interests range from addressing social issues to ensuring that the university is offering programs that support business and industry. These external groups interact with the university and with each other, and this affects the environmental signals that the university receives. In some cases those signals about what external stakeholders expect is quite clear, for example, the provincial government’s Letters of Expectation. In other cases, the signals are less clear and require the university to interpret what is being indicated.

The external environment envelops the organisation and influences it. According to Resource Dependency Theory the external environment is more important than the internal environment, because this is where scarce resources are accessed. Without access to scarce resources the organisation would not be able to carry out its mission. This is particularly the case for the universities, since the provincial and federal government provide the majority of their funding through both base operating grants and research funding grants. Consequently, according to Resource Dependency Theory both levels of government have the ability to influence the actions and directions of the university. Additionally, the provincial government also appoints the majority (by one) of
the governing board members. This would imply that the provincial government should be able to influence the policy directions of the university. But is this really the case?

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), “[t]he control of organizational behaviour comes about, in part, from the organizations dependence on specific others” (p. 271). In the case of the universities, they are highly dependent on the government for their funding so, consequently, the government should have a great deal of influence on the actions of the university since “[o]rganizations are controlled by an external source to the extent they depend on that source for a large portion of input or output” (p. 271). This would indicate that the universities are creatures of the government. However, the University Act specifically limits the ability of the provincial government to interfere in the operations of the university. The Minister “must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university, its board, senate and other constituent bodies” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 48). It appears that the University Act is designed to act as a barrier, to loosen the dependence of the university on the government by limiting the government’s ability to intervene or interfere in the actions of the university. The Letters of Expectation then serve as a metric the government uses to formally indicate to the universities its expectations of deliverables in exchange for the resources it has provided without interference in the day-to-day running of the university. In this sense, the Letters of Expectation serve as the contract that allows the university conditional autonomy, but with the responsibility and accountability to achieve specific outcomes or targets set by government. The issue of autonomy emerged repeatedly during the interviews, and how it needed to be protected. But it was clearly recognised that the universities had to be responsible stewards of public funds, and this was the balance that needed to be maintained through constant negotiations and contact.
One interesting situation referred to by the some of the presidents and the board chairs during the interviews was the interference by the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador in the selection process for the new President of Memorial University of Newfoundland. While Memorial University operates in a different jurisdiction and under different legislation, the concern raised was how the government had directly intruded into the day-to-day operations of the university and affected Memorial University’s autonomy. This concern was also referenced within British Columbia, because the province has implemented a salary cap on what a governing board can offer for presidential remuneration. According to one board chair, the British Columbia Government requires that any salary offer must be reviewed and approved by both the Minister of Advanced Education and the Minister of Finance. While the situation at Memorial University represents a more serious intrusion on university autonomy, it is clear that the actions by the British Columbia Government are also a more limited intrusion on autonomy.

The potential intrusion by the federal government on university autonomy is limited, because the federal government does not have constitutional authority over the universities. The federal government can attempt to influence the universities by the amount of money they allocate for research funding, the types of research funding they are prepared to support, and the rules for applying for those research funds. But the federal government cannot directly dictate to the universities what they are supposed to do. However giving the funding capabilities of the federal government for research, some of the universities are attempting to engage federal representatives in the university governance process by having them become governing board members. The broader community also attempts to influence the university through participation in various university advisory and planning councils, by lobbying the president, senior
administration and the governing board and asking for the participation of university representatives on community boards and advisory councils. The strategy by the universities to include federal representatives on the board is one of cooptation, as is the strategy by the broader community to both serve on university committees and have university faculty and staff serve on community boards and committees. Through the process of cooptation, interdependence and interlocks are created that influence both the external environment and the university.

All three presidents indicated the university is increasingly using its external governing board members to reach out to the external environment to build relationships with particular communities and seek out new funding sources. This indicates that both the external environment and the university attempt to influence each other. According to Resource Dependency Theory:

The organization can adapt its structure, its information system, its pattern of management and human relations, its technology, its product, its values and norms, or its definition of the environment. In attempting to affect the environment, the organization can engage in strategies of diversification, total absorption or the environment as in merger, partial absorption as in cooptation, or in activities designed to influence the rules under which interorganizational action takes place. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 107)

The university attempts to secure participation of external organisations on its governing board and to have representatives on other external governing boards to secure access to scarce resources. Through this process the university creates interlocks and interdependence to build stability and a higher level of certainty in its decision-making. This represents an attempt to solve “their own problems of critical uncertainties and dependencies by interlocking behaviors with others, [where] the resulting environment is one of more tightly coordinated organizational action” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 285). The issue of course is to what extent are the behaviours of the university truly
independent of the external environment. The answer must be that the university is not separate from the external environment, and is both influenced by it and influences it, in the negotiation for scarce resources that range from finances, information, student enrolment, to recruiting new faculty members.

The next sub-section of this chapter compares Resource Dependency Theory against the Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model that emerged as the conceptual theoretical model from the data analysis in Chapter 4.

5.1.2. Applying Resource Dependency Theory against the Conceptual Model

Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) looks at the overlapping and shifting relationships in the internal and external environment of an organisation as it seeks to secure scarce resources. The emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model looks at the internal and external environment through four overlapping domains of the environment lens: the Internal, the Internal/External, the External/Internal and the External. Both models look at how internal and external stakeholders operate, and the role of management in trying to achieve organisational goals. At first glance, it would appear that there are similarities between RDT and the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model. This is not to say that the emergent model has the robustness of RDT nor its applicability outside of the interviews conducted, but it does provide a grounded understanding of how those interviewed perceive the nature of their role in governing and managing the university, and the role of the university in the community. The similarities and differences of the two models will now be examined to see if the emergent model described in Chapter 4 helps us understand the nature of relationships and behaviours by stakeholders within the university around issues of governance and management.
Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) indicates that organisations seek to secure resources by creating interlocks and interdependence that create a stable environment. Under RDT, one of the key roles of the president is recognising that all organisations are essentially coalitions (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) seeking scarce resources, and the leadership role of the president is to manage these sometimes disparate coalitions to achieve the organisation’s goals and objectives.

Power is the ability to organize activities to minimize uncertainties and costs, and as mentioned previously, power is inevitably organized around the most critical and scarce resources in the social system. Solutions to problems of interdependence require the concentration of power. Strategies to manage interdependence require interlocking activities with others, and such interlocking produces concentrated power. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 284)

The president is responsible for achieving the aims of the organisation and must build coalitions that reduce uncertainty. This is done through the creation of interlocks within the organisation and external organisations, which increases interdependency. The president both builds and exercises power through the creation of these interlocks and, by controlling information about what is happening within the organisation:

This interlocking of activities develops a concentration of power. Those who are least powerful in a social system are those who are least able to organize and structure the activities of the other social actors for their own interests. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 284)

If the president is successful, the organisation will have ensured its survival through the continued procurement of scarce resources and/or the distribution of its goods and services.

Resource Dependency Theory shows the sites of cooptation and influence that occur both internally and externally. Internally, sub-units within the organisation seek to increase their influence by showing how their department can help the organisation be
more successful. Externally, the organisation seeks to build influence with other organisations, which affects its access to resources. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) indicate “it is inevitable that the solution to problems involve interlocking activities among the organizations and an attempt to influence the other organization’s activities to the focal organization’s benefit” (p. 284). They state this search for stability through interlocks and interdependence is power-based, so “[t]he burdens of interdependence are shifted to the less organized and less powerful actors” (p. 284).

The four domains of the Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model explain the way in which communication happens within the university, and between the university and the external environment. The model shows where the boundary lines for all four domains intersect. This provides opportunity for informal communications and negotiations outside of the official communication channels. The boundary points also provide opportunities for internal and external stakeholders to interact with each other through participation on either external committees in the community or government, or on internal advisory committees.

The structure of the four domains has a rough analogy to the governance and management of the university. This is where the president exercises management. The Internal domain represents the internal environment, where the main stakeholders of the faculty, students and staff exist. Each stakeholder group has collective representation for itself as well as constituent representation in the governance of the university. This provides each stakeholder group with multiple levels of interface within the university and multiple opportunities to influence the university’s actions and decisions in the Internal/External and the External/Internal domains. The Internal/External domain represents one of the interface points in the bicameral governance structure of the
university through the senate. The *External/Internal* domain is where the board provides fiduciary oversight of the university. The board sets objectives through the jointly-developed strategic plan for the president to achieve, which indicates the university’s priorities. The president’s role is to implement the strategic plan and provide leadership within the *External/Internal* and the *Internal/External* domains and management within the *Internal* domain. Finally, the *External* domain corresponds to the external environment. The main external environment stakeholders are the provincial government, the federal government and the broader community. The provincial government provides the majority of the funding for the base annual operating grant, and sets objectives that the university must meet to continue to receive funding. The federal government provides the majority of research funding for universities in Canada. The broader community represents the variety of groups that utilise the university’s services or hire its graduates. These groups interact with each other, which further complicates how the university interprets incoming signals.

The composition of the university’s internal stakeholder groups, its bicameral governance structure and its funding structure indicate the university is an organisation with a high level of interdependence between its constituent groups through interlocking. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model provides a working explanation of: stakeholder behaviour at the three universities where the interviews were conducted, how the governance and management structure operate, and the relationship between the *Internal* domain of the university with the external environment. In looking at these factors, Resource Dependency Theory expands on the initial explanation of the Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model and provides a lens that can further explain the way in which universities function and operate.
The main internal stakeholders have collective representation as well as constituent representation on the board. The literature review in Chapter 2 indicated unionisation was an outcome of faculty and staff believing the university was not meeting their needs. Through collective representation, the faculty and staff were able to create an asymmetrical concentration of power that forced the university to listen to their concerns about salary and work conditions.

Collective organizations and associations are another form of achieving concentration over some resource. Unions and, to a lesser extent, trade and professional associations are instances of these attempts to achieve coordinated action, or to have many organizations or individuals act as one. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 50)

The creation of collective agreements provided both the university and the faculty and staff with stability and predictability in understanding the formal expectations between the respective parties. The inclusion of internal stakeholders on the bicameral governance bodies created further interlocks by providing stakeholders with input in the direction and priorities of the organisation. Resource Dependency Theory predicts that the outcome of these actions result in “growing interdependence, [where] organizations make more demands on one another to obtain some degree of control over each other’s activities so that the needs and interests of each can be predictably met” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 92). By participating in the governance process within the Internal/External and the External/Internal domains, the internal stakeholder groups then have full or partial ownership in the decision-making process for the university’s priorities through their elected representatives. Conversely however, the act of unionisation limits the ability of the individual faculty member to participate in the collegial management of the university, because collegial management is ceded by all the faculty members to the Union for collective representation. This limits the ability of the individual faculty member to participate in the governance of the university, unless they are elected through the
formal governance structures of the board and the senate. In this sense, collectivisation may have created a more symmetrical power balance between the university as an organisation and the Faculty Union as an organisation, but it has inversely reduced the influence of the individual faculty members in the co-management of the university.

The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model indicates that the composition of the board is where the Internal and External environment meet forming the External/Internal domain with external government appointed governors and the internally elected governors. According to Resource Dependency Theory, this is where the president sets the priorities for the organisation through the control of information and the appointment of board members.

If the chief executive is allowed to control the social distribution of information through secrecy and selective presentation of information, then he can control the definition of the situation. By defining organizational contingencies, his power can be institutionalized beyond both the formal authority structure and the contingencies of the environment. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 277)

However, the president does report to the board and the board oversees the performance of the president against a set of priorities identified within a strategic planning document. Resource Dependency Theory indicates it is only under extreme circumstances that the board will act to remove the president if the organisation is perceived to be consistently failing in achieving its priorities. The interviews with the three presidents all referenced 12 to 13 university presidents who left their posts during the last two years, well before their terms expired. The three presidents indicated that these 12 to 13 presidents were probably asked by their boards to resign or retire either because they had been unable to maintain an equilibrium between the senate and the board, or had substantially misread the political environment. The president must be the link between the two governance bodies and forge a shared vision of the future direction
of the university. This example demonstrates that, while the president may have substantial power, a board will act to remove a president when there is a substantive or consistent failure in meeting organisational objectives that affect the institution’s access to various types of resources.

Resource Dependency Theory indicates that when one organisation is dependent on another organisation, it is more susceptible to demands from the organisation supplying the resources. This would mean that an organisation, such as the university, which is highly dependent on the government for its funding should, therefore, be quite willing to carry out the directives or direction of the government. However as was indicated earlier, the University Act prevents the Minister from interfering in the internal business of the university. Government sets funding priorities through grant allocations that the universities must meet in order to receive funding. The three university presidents and the board chairs all referenced a situation where they had received Letters of Expectation from government, which resulted in them taking collective action to raise their concern with government about the tone of the Letters. The Letters specified certain outcomes that the government expected the universities to achieve. The universities felt that the language within the Letters impinged on their autonomy. As an outcome of the negotiation between the universities and the government, the original Letters of Expectation were withdrawn and modified Letters of Expectation were sent and signed by the board chairs. Through collective action, the universities were able to effect a change in the language of the Letters that they felt was less intrusive on their autonomy. Government still achieved its outcome with the implementation of a more contractual relationship, where funding was linked to the delivery of specific outcomes but the universities were able to negotiate the language used in the Letters to protect their perceived autonomy.
Resource Dependency Theory builds on the Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model in helping to understand how the internal and external environment affects how the university operates. While it may not provide a perfect theoretical lens in describing all situations, it does help to explain why the university is such a highly interlocked and interdependent organisation. As Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) indicate: “[t]he dominant problems of the organization have become managing its exchanges and its relationships with the diverse interests affected by its actions” (p. 94).

The modern university can be seen as a series of compromises that address the concerns of internal and external stakeholders, which explains the bicameral governance structure and the separate, but connected, relationship with the internal stakeholders, who have both collective bargaining representation and representation on the governance structure that allocates the academic direction and financial commitments of the university. These compromises cause some of the external board members concern because, while the governance structure of the university board is similar on the surface to a private sector board, the separation of academic governance to the senate, the collegial culture of the university, and the actual policy governance structure of the university board prevent the external board members from feeling that they are fully engaged in governing the university.

Figure 7 illustrates the Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model that emerged from the interviews supports the main theoretical points of Resource Dependency Theory.
The emergent model does not have the robustness of Resource Dependency Theory, because it is based on a small sample and focused on examining the perceptions of university lay-governors and presidents; it was not intended to be a definitive theoretical model but, rather, an intermediate theoretical model to help understand the interactions between the stakeholder groups in a little-studied area.

The next sub-section examine whether Resource Dependency Theory and the data from the interviews that lead to the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model can help to answer the four questions posed in Chapter 1.
5.1.3. Responding to the Four Questions

In Chapter 1, four fundamental questions about the university and its role were asked:

1. In this current environment, how does the make-up and workings of the board influence the larger policy issues for advanced education?
2. What are the contemporary influences on the board by government and various other stakeholder groups as they deliberate on and exercise their oversight role within British Columbia?
3. Is the board an agent of government or is it an agent of the academy, or both?
4. Is the modern board in transition or is the current environment simply a different iteration of past reality?

This sub-section of Chapter 5 attempts to see if the data derived from the interviews that resulted in the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model, and addresses the questions through the lens of Resource Dependency Theory. Each question is reviewed individually, and in order, to see whether we have sufficient information to respond with an appropriate answer.

Question 1 asks whether the structure and the deliberations of the board influence policy issues for the advanced education sector in British Columbia. The starting point in addressing this question is to look at the relevant legislation under the University Act that specifies the structure and role of the governing board. Section 27 specifies the powers of the board whose main purpose is to oversee, “The management, administration and control of the property, revenue, business and affairs of the university” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 27). Section 35 specifies the governance powers of the senate, which thereby limits the powers of the board. The University Act also specifies that the university governing boards are comprised of a majority (by one) of external government-appointed lay-governors. Within the rubric of
Resource Dependency Theory this structure implies that the university governing board should therefore be obligated to carry out the wishes of government, which both appoints the majority of the governors and provides a substantial portion of the university’s annual funding. It was clear from the interviews, governing boards did not feel obligated to government nor had they been given any direction from government. One example all the board chairs and presidents provided, and previously referenced, was receiving Letters of Expectation from the Ministry of Advanced Education. The three universities indicated the different governing boards worked together to influence a change in the government policy directives within the Letters. The initial Letters of Expectations were subsequently withdrawn and new Letters of Expectation were issued based on consultation with the three universities. This specific example shows how the universities will work together collaboratively to influence government activities related to the universities. But what is important to note is that, while government was prepared to listen to the universities and make some modifications, the Letters of Expectation were reissued.

Question 2 overlaps with Question 1 with respect to the appointment of the governing board members, but is broader in that it applies to how the oversight role of the board is affected by the board’s interaction with government and with other constituencies. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model indicates there are overlaps between the domain functions of the internal and external environments, and this is where the governance process of the university takes place with the president paying a leadership role as a bridge between the various constituencies and the governance bodies. Resource Dependency Theory indicates that the various stakeholders want a stable environment and, therefore, attempt to build interlocks and interdependence that binds the actions of all the constituencies together.
so that the actions of the other actors are predictable. Through the use of interlocks, the stakeholders have influence in shaping the direction and priorities of the university. The inclusion of the constituent groups in the decision-making and priority-setting process provides them with a stake in achieving the jointly-developed priorities. They also, then, have full or partial ownership in the decisions that are made and implemented. Finally, the interlocks create both formal and informal communication structures between the university and its stakeholder groups, which reduce the potential to misread the concerns and desires of the other group through contract negotiations. This process of interlocks was a point of concern for some board members who thought having internally elected board members undermined board confidentiality and decision-making. But all of the board members interviewed made it clear they were on the board to represent the university, not government or any other constituent group, and to assist the university in making strategic long-term decisions.

Question 3 represents one of the key questions of this research project: Whom does the board think it represents? The answer to this question is based on the perceptions of the individual board members. According to the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model, the board sits on the External/Internal domain between the external and internal environment and serves as a bridge between the external requirements and the internal desires. Under Resource Dependency Theory, the board members would attempt to span the interests between their originating point and their board role. This does not appear to apply, at least overtly, to the interviewed board members. Including the one internally elected governing board member, the governing board members interviewed felt they represented the university and not government or some other stakeholder or constituent group. When questioned about what this meant, all the board members indicated that they served as unpaid
volunteers on the board as their public service, and that they wanted to make sure the university served the broader society. This latter point was not well-defined and the responses ranged from the community where the university was situated to include all of Canada. In this context, the board members do serve as agents of the academy as long as the university continues to support the needs of the broader community.

Question 4 asks a critical question about the relationship between the university and its governing board. According to the literature, the university has always had a relationship with a benefactor who provided financial support. Before the advent of public funding in the 20th Century, universities had governing boards that were comprised of benefactors, who were prepared to support the university financially. This gave the benefactor, as board member, a substantial voice in the governing affairs of the university. What is not clear from the literature is how far into the university this influence extended. With the advent of public funding, the need for these community benefactors diminished, as did their role in the governing affairs of the university. The transition from the universities needing benefactors to receiving public funding allowed universities to be more independent and autonomous. This autonomy existed in the margin, from the transition of needing benefactors to the era of massification. In this transition period, the university was small and the draw on public funding was also correspondingly small, and government appeared reluctant to directly intervene in the internal affairs of the universities. However after massification, government investment in higher education increased exponentially, and consequently government wanted a greater say in the types of programs and the number of seats universities offered. So in this sense, universities are back to an earlier point where they had a benefactor or sponsor who had some influence on the governing affairs of the university through funding, but still had some autonomy in how it carried out its academic activities.
5.1.4. Resource Dependency Theory Summary

Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) shows how organisations seek out scarce resources and/or means of distribution of their products and services. Organisations are dependent on scarce resources to continue to operate, and attempt to create a stable environment that ensures they have access to these resources or can distribute their goods and services through a secure distribution chain. RDT indicates that organisations are not homogenous, but are comprised of individuals within sub-units all seeking to influence how the organisation operates. As senior leaders change so, too, do the priorities of the organisation based on the background of the new senior leaders. Universities engage in many of the behaviours described in RDT, such as seeking out scarce resources and creating a stable operating environment. Because the universities are dependent on government for funding, this would imply that universities are captured by, or creatures of, the government. This is not the case, because government has limited its ability to intervene directly in the affairs of the university, though it still does interfere periodically. The university has to constantly balance off the various needs of its internal and external stakeholders, while continuing to deliver its core functions of teaching and research. How the university balances off these competing demands to deliver its funded activity versus its own priorities is the margin within which it maintains its autonomy from government intrusion.

The next section of this chapter examines Political Theory and applies it to the four themes and the emergent model of the interviews. The same structure that was used in examining Resource Dependency Theory is used for analysing Political Theory.
5.2. Political Theory

Robert Dahl and Bruce Stinebrickner (2006) provide an overview of Political Theory and its application to political analysis in the sixth edition of their book, *Modern Political Analysis*, which was first published in 1963. Political Theory is scalable and can encompass a number of political theories and concepts. The book focuses its political analysis on politics, spheres of influence, power, political systems, participation and evaluation. This approach differs from Resource Dependency Theory with its focus primarily on resource acquisition, and looks at how people and organizations are influenced in their behaviours and actions; people do not have equal power, even in plural democratic countries. One of the main themes of the book is the relationship between power and influence, and how this comes into play at both the granular and aggregate levels. The authors’ main premise is that, for political analysis to be effective in examining how these concepts work, it needs to combine elements of conceptual, empirical and normative approaches. They also indicate that political analysis is controversial and generates substantial debate within the academy. This dialogue is indicative of the differing perspectives and values held about the nature of political systems and deeply held beliefs reflecting differing norms and perspectives, especially between modernists and postmodernists.

Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) indicate that politics influences our actions, because it provides the formal and informal structures that regulate our behaviour and activities. Politics provide the basis for the structure of human interaction, which is regulated by the government and the state within a specified territory. Both law and custom provides the framework for individual and organisational interaction based on the governmental and state structure. Those individuals, who are near the centre where
power is expressed, attempt to continue to keep power or the existing power structure in place, because it benefits them. The authors point out that those at the centre or apex do have limitations on their power, because of “established practices and institutions, legal and other; the inescapable scarcity of resources; events; and the influence of other persons” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 11). Those individuals who are far away from the centre feel marginalised; and that they cannot affect either political or social change. The authors indicate this results in various forms of dissent where: “[s]ome rebel in the time-honored fashion, by shirking. Others rebel more openly through collective action: They attempt to form unions or press for legislation to restrain management excesses” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 10). Under some repressive forms of government, expressing dissent or dissatisfaction can result in significant reprisals and penalties, ranging from imprisonment to execution. Political Theory shares similarities with Resource Dependency Theory in looking at the effects of scarcity and how this influences behaviour, but Political Theory goes further by looking at the forms of influence that may involve physical coercion and state sanction on the individual, a group of individuals or an organisation.

Politics is the basis for political and social structures where individuals and organizations vie for influence “over another person or persons” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 57). The authors state influence is a scarce resource that can be increased or decreased through access to or allocation of scarce resources, prestige and recognition, and position within the socio-political structure. The use of influence allows an individual or organisation to achieve their objectives. Loss, or lack, of influence results in increasing levels of marginalisation for a person, group or organisation. This concept is central to Political Theory, yet elusive, because influence serves as the lubricant of social interaction. It is what causes individuals with like interests to come together so
that, through collective action, they can increase their influence and, therefore, the opportunity to affect a change. As Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) state, “[i]n most societies most of the time, most people are neither at the nadir nor apex of influence, but instead occupy innumerable levels, stations, and positions between the nadir and the apex” (p. 19). The creation of political parties represented the collective aggregation of individuals with similar interests and varying levels of influence seeking change through collective action. Organisations can be thought of as the formation of individuals who have come together to achieve an intended outcome or purpose. The organisation has a macro-level existence in which it operates in the socio-political environment seeking influence. At a micro-level, it is also a socio-political entity where individuals seek influence to achieve their goals within the organisation. Influence within the organisation is based on asymmetrical power structures that, depending on how employees feel they have been treated, can result in worker collective action to redistribute the power imbalance through unionisation. The authors state that there are:

…historical examples showing how members of a weaker group have combined their resources, raised the costs of control, overcome attempts by others to exercise influence over them on certain matters important to them, acquired some measure of independence or autonomy. (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 37)

This has many similarities with Resource Dependency Theory, which also indicates that collectivisation is a response to asymmetrical power and that collectivisation allows for a more symmetrical power representation.

As Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) affirm, “influence occurs when one person or group causes another person or group to do something or to become predisposed to do something” (p. 38). But the authors point out that influence is a finite resource, and the
exercise of influence uses it up. Therefore the use of influence has to be well considered.

Exercising influence requires the expenditure of political resources. Resources are limited or, as economists like to say scarce. Consequently, exercising influence is costly. Hence a moderately rational ruler would not commit his resources beyond the point at which the value of the benefits he expected to gain were exceeded by the costs. (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 36)

Accumulating influence takes resources, and using influence expends the accumulated influence. The level of influence an individual or organisation has affects their ability to exercise power to achieve an intended outcome. Power is different than influence in that influence is seen as bi-directional, while power is uni-directional. Influence assumes some form of mutuality, whereas power has a directive element that results in an individual performing an action out of potential fear of reprisal. The authors are careful to distinguish their concept of power from the description in the seminal work of Steven Lukes’ (1974), *Power: A Radical View*, around the issue of *individual interest*: where the action taken may also be favourable to the person experiencing the application of power.

Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) indicate that political systems affect the way in which individuals, groups and organisations operate, because political systems provide the rules for interaction. Political systems act as a form of regulation on behaviour, and how influence can be acquired and used. It specifies the centre versus the periphery, and how these two interact. The formation of the political system also affects the way in which individuals behave. As Dahl and Stinebrickner state, “[i]n some countries, violent revolutions (particularly revolutionary wars for national independence) have helped to unite a people, while in other countries revolutions have left enduring cleavages” (p. 86). These differences affect the rules under which people interact and how they apply influence and power to achieve specific outcomes. If the state has no, or a limited,
history of participation by the citizenry in the political process, then there is an increased distance between the centre and periphery that affects how social actors behave versus a state where there has been a high level of participation and social actors feel that they can engage in political action to effect a change. In the former example, those at the centre operate to maintain their position through the use of power and coercion while, in the latter case, individuals may form temporary associations (groups) who attempt to effect a change. Both situations deal with the level of participation of the individual within the socio-political structure of the state and their respective perspectives (evaluations) on how well the state has met their specific needs.

Having provided a high level analysis of Political Theory, the next sub-section examines Political Theory against the four themes that emerged from the data analysis of the interviews in Chapter 4.

5.2.1. Applying Political Theory against the Data and Themes

This sub-section of Chapter 5 will use Political Theory as the analytical lens to examine the four themes that emerged from the data analysis of Chapter 4. As was indicated earlier, Political Theory looks at issues of politics, spheres of influence, power, political systems, participation and evaluation. These will be used as the means of examining how Political Theory relates to the four themes.

5.2.1.1. Governing

Governing provides the means by which the board exercises its governance oversight of the university. Within Political Theory, the way the board exercises its fiduciary oversight is based on politics, spheres of influence, political systems, participation and evaluation. Each of these concepts affects the way in which the board
as a whole operates as a group (the board’s dynamics), and the way in which individuals perceive their individual role on the board. Based on the interviews, the governing board members saw their role as providing direction on the long-term strategic direction of the university, and not its day-to-day management. The long-term strategic directions of the university is set through a joint planning process between the board and presidents, which results in the creation of a strategic plan that indicates the university’s direction and priorities. Two of the presidents indicated they also included the senate on the joint planning process as a means of enhancing communication and support for the university’s strategic priorities and directions. Once the strategic plan is developed, it is a public document that provides the board with a means of monitoring how the university is doing and for evaluating the performance of the president.

The process that creates the strategic plan represents the exercise of politics and the use of influence between the president and the board. Since both parties were involved in its creation, both have visible ownership; since the majority of board members are externally appointed and therefore probably not as knowledgeable about the university as internally elected board members, the strategic plan connects them to the university. The process that creates the strategic plan acts as a unifying tool, which builds a sense of coherence between the internal and external board members with the president and the senior administration. As one board chair indicated:

*Senior administration is a partner, in my mind, with board and board governance. I don’t think it’s up to senior administration to lead the boards; I think that they should work in tandem with each other and synergistically. And boards, if they’re good, will normally take the lead on those situations and let administration know what the board wants to try to achieve through its own governance practices. So, I think that the Administration is a partner in all of that, and those discussions should be ongoing.* (BOG 1-2)
Both internal and external board members, the president and Senior Administration can influence each other through the planning process. While all board members indicated they served on the board and represented the best interests of the university, they also serve as a means of providing constituent influence on the planning process, which should ensure that the needs of the internal constituent groups are not overlooked. This provides the university with legitimacy in its actions and its structure because, “the people to whom its orders are directed believe that the structure, procedures, acts, decisions, policies, officials, or leaders of government possess the quality of ‘rightness’, propriety, or moral goodness” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 60).

Political Theory raises the issue of legitimacy and how it is obtained, because it is “more durable than naked coercion but it also enables a leader to govern while minimizing the expenditure of other political resources” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 60). The board provides the president and the senior administration with legitimacy because, within the political structure, they have the authority to remove the president and decide on the university’s priorities. If the stakeholders see the board as being fair in how it addresses issues of conflict regarding priority-setting and resource allocation, then its decisions will probably be seen to be in the best interest of the university and, therefore, legitimate. This is especially true given the composition of the board where the internal stakeholders have been allocated seats on the governing board. While the internal board members may be acting for the best interest of the university, their constituency will see them as its representatives. The strategic planning process sets the future direction of the university for resource allocation and prioritisation. Through a process of negotiation, a consensus about the university’s priorities and direction is achieved. As Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) point out: “[p]eople who live together never
agree about everything, but if they are to continue to live together, they cannot wholly disagree in their aims” (p. 59).

The legitimacy of the board is further increased through the political system of the bicameral governance structure that separates the powers of board from the powers of the senate. As President 3 indicated:

*When I do my board orientation, I talk about the role of senate, and the board has to respect that. When I give my senate orientation, we talk about the role or responsibility of the board, and there’s a line between them, there’s communication, but the reason senate doesn’t make budget decisions is so that society understands that the best academic decisions are being made. The reason the board doesn’t make academic decisions is its job to make sure the university has the resources to do its academic priorities, which are set by senate.*

The bicameral governance structure provides additional opportunities for stakeholder participation within the political process of the university. As President 3 pointed out, it increases legitimacy through increased opportunities for participation in the governance structure of university and, because of the separation of powers, should lead to better decisions within the decision-making sphere of each governance arm of the university. Since the president serves as the bridge between both the board and the senate, the president has an enhanced role in the leadership of the university. This later point is explored in more detail in the Leading sub-section.

Two other points need to be explored in examining how Political Theory relates to the Governing Theme. The first relates to the orientation process for all governing board members; the second relates to the relationship between the chair of the board and the president. The orientation process provides new board members with an overview of the university and their individual and collective roles and responsibilities prior to them actually attending their first board meeting. There were also additional board educational sessions that provided the president with an opportunity to influence
the board members about the scope and limits of their role. However, it must be pointed out that the board members interviewed, even the internally elected board member, had previous experiences with board governance and, therefore, were reasonably knowledgeable about their fiduciary responsibilities. All the board members interviewed indicated that university board governance was substantially different than corporate board governance. As one board member stated about the board’s role:

> Most of what the board does, it does because it’s statutorily required to do so, a large number of approvals of pro forma matters on which there is the statutory power to dissent, but there isn’t sufficient information or knowledge that would make dissent rational. So, in some ways, the board is just a rubber stamp. And I have a lot of sympathy for management in having the process drift to that situation. The price of educating the board is too high in time and energy, so that it is just better to move it to the rubber stamp function as quickly as you can. (BOG 2-2)

This later point indicates that the bicameral structure of the university is a difficult environment in which to govern and that it may be easier for the board to just rubber stamp proposals made by the senate on academic matters and presented to the board by the president and senior administration, which increases the influence of the president.

The second point referenced earlier relates to how the chair acts as the interface between the president and the board, especially between scheduled board meetings. This gives the chair an enormous amount of control over the board meetings, because the chair sets the agenda based on the information that the chair has, which the other board members may not have. The chair acts as a sounding-board for the president, which also increases the level of influence the chair has over the president in the types of decisions that are made. It also provides a means for the president to have the chair support the president’s decisions, since the chair feels a sense of ownership in having helped the president reach a decision. It needs to be pointed out that the board
members, including the chair, are all volunteers who are unpaid and have a limited-term 
service. The question this raises is: Why do board members engage as governors of the 
university? Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) state individuals get involved in organisations 
or political processes for a variety of reasons, which range from some form of personal 
gratification to attempting to affect a societal change or benefit: “These people are 
unwilling to forgo immediate, certain, and concrete benefits or gratifications derived from 
non-political activities to obtain the more remote, uncertain, and abstract benefits that 
might result from political participation” (p. 107). It is clear this latter point is the 
motivator for those participating on university governing boards.

5.2.1.2. Leading

The Leading Theme represents the role of the president and the senior 
administration to provide leadership and management for the university. Within the 
context of Political Theory, the president and the senior administration are responsible 
for overseeing the day-to-day management of the university through politics, spheres of 
influence, power, and the political system. The bicameral governance structure of the 
university represents the formal political system in which the president operates. The 
president serves on both the board, as a member, and the senate, as its chair, and acts 
as the bridge to create a dialogue between the two governance bodies to develop a 
common set of priorities. The president’s role is recognised in the University Act, but is 
subordinate to both the board and senate. Yet, having the president serve as the focal 
point for communication between both bodies, increases the president’s sphere of 
influence because of the intermediary role of the position. The intermediary role requires 
that the president engage in a dialogue, which results in a common set of priorities that 
determine how resources will be allocated. The president engages in both active and
passive politics by using influence to build consensus on the direction of the university. But to use influence, the president must first build it and, since influence is a scarce resource, the president must use it carefully. One of the ways the president builds influence is by meeting with the various stakeholder groups to develop support for priorities within the strategic plan. However, a role like the presidency may occasionally require the use of power to affect a decision but, as Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) indicate: “Although it is conceivable that a popular government might coerce a large fraction of its population on infrequent occasions and survive, the more frequently it did so, the less its chances of survival would be” (p. 86). This warning is quite applicable to the universities which, as a microcosm of society that is also uniquely collegial, would indicate a failure of leadership if power were used repeatedly. It would also result in a failure of the governance system. President 1 referred to the number of university presidents let go because of failures of governance.

13 university leaders across Canada have been thrown out of their jobs in 2.5 years. This is a new phenomenon in Canada, and it’s almost always the result of a miscommunication, misalignment between the president and the board, sometimes for financial reasons, but sometimes not—we just don’t have confidence any more.

Legitimacy and authority are critical for the president to be able to both lead and manage the university; this emerged in the interviews and was referenced in the Governing Theme under the category of confidence, which a board must have in a president. Authority provides the president with the ability to lead because “[c]ompared to the other forms of influence, authority, once the ground-work for it has been laid, is cheap and easy to use” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 42). Authority is accepted within the organisation and underlies its political structures and systems. It is both earned and inherent in the position. New people in leadership positions are generally accepted because of the respect the group has for the position. As President 1 noted, “[b]ecause
I’m president, there’s no doubt that there’s a certain deference that’s shown by other board members—I don’t think inappropriately so; I mean, they’re challenging, too—but they’re really very nice, I have to say.” Once in the position, the new leader has to start building influence at a faster rate than is expended in order to maintain legitimacy and continue in the leadership role. The president of the university is in an even more difficult position than the head of a corporation, because of the bicameral structure and the number of internal and external stakeholders. As one board member noted: “So, the president and the board have to react to the realities in which they operate, which are much, much greater than would be the case in a private corporation or a private university” (BOG 2-2).

To provide leadership with these multiple constituencies requires a constant engagement with the university community, since there may be competing and conflicting interests. Finding a leader able to manage these constituencies with their competing and conflicting agendas is one of the key roles of the board, ensuring that the university is able to carry out its mandate of teaching and research. As one President pointed out:

So, it’s an iterative process; I don’t sort of create this out of whole cloth; I’m working with them. But, at the same time, I think it’s fair to say that there’s an expectation that the president will sort of catalyze and take a leadership role in establishing the priorities—but doing that through processes of consultation and deep listening, so that I’m not out there creating things that no-one has ever heard of or no-one is particularly interested in pursuing. I’ve got to understand what it is that can actually be delivered. (President 1)

Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) state that, in “complex societies a good deal of conflict is mediated, arbitrated suppressed, resolved, or handled in some fashion by political systems other than the state” (p. 60). The university represents one of the political systems where the competing constituent issues are addressed without requiring the
direct intervention of the state. The enabling legislation under the University Act provides the framework for engagement within the university by stakeholders over the priorities and allocation of resources. The president’s role is to ensure the university carries out its mission and mandate by providing the leadership that builds a consensus on the strategic directions of the university.

5.2.1.3. Managing the Internal Environment

Managing the Internal Environment Theme represents one of the key roles the president plays. This is the domain of the president rather than the board and, as was indicated earlier, the university has multiple constituencies, but managing the internal stakeholders of the faculty, students and staff is essential. These three groups represent the location where the teaching and research mandate is carried out. Political Theory indicates these groups will seek to influence the university by indicating to the university what their respective needs are. These groups are both part of the political system of the university and seek “[i]nstrumental benefits expected from political activity” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 106) to achieve ‘particularised benefits’ for their stakeholder group. An example of this would be the student government seeking either a tuition freeze or tuition reduction. The only beneficiary of this would be students, not the other stakeholders. The internal stakeholders have multiple interlinkages to influence the direction of the university, by having representation on the governance bodies and through direct contact with the president and the senior administration to seek to have their constituencies’ needs addressed. While the political system of the university provides these multiple engagement points, the individuals serving in these various roles have different perspectives and objectives, which means that the constituent groups do not function as a cohesive body with a single voice. The president
has to manage these disparate stakeholders so that they are able to have their
colloquialisms' voices heard, yet meld these differing needs and objectives into a
coherent strategic plan that specifies the priorities for the university. The strategic plan
is critical, because it represents the outcome of the negotiations between the
stakeholder groups through their duly elected representatives who are then coopted into
supporting the priorities within the strategic plan with their constituency. The inclusion of
the internal stakeholders in the governance structure and the use of the strategic plan
may be explicitly designed to prevent the level of unrest that existed within the
universities in the 1960s and 1970s when these groups did not have the formal
representation they now do on the governing board.

The internal environment is also the location where the academic priorities of the
university are set through the senate. The president provides both leadership and
management within the internal environment. For the senate, the president provides
leadership as its chair and as the link with the governing board. This role is critical
because the senate sets the academic priorities of the university and then, based on
available resources, the board approves the funding to carry out those initiatives. If the
president is unable to bridge the divide between the senate and the board, then the
university will experience difficulties in carrying out its mandate. The president cannot
rule by fiat, since the board controls approval of the budget and the senate sets the
academic objectives. The president must work with both these bodies to create an
alignment in priorities. Two of the presidents interviewed indicated that they created this
alignment by having joint planning sessions between the senate and the board to
establish the universities' priorities over a multi-year timeframe. President 3 addressed
this point by saying:
We also have board and senate retreats, where we get the board and the senate together, and on those we tend to talk about key areas where we want to make sure there’s congruence between the board and the senate, because we’ve got this complex bicameral governance system, where the senate is responsible for formulating academic priorities and the board is responsible for ensuring the resources are there to run the university and to meet those priorities. So, how do we make sure that there’s a degree of congruence between both those governing bodies?

This latter point speaks to the leadership role the president must play to create a bridge, which links the senate and board together to create a common multi-year vision (the strategic plan) that identifies the university’s priorities. Bringing these bodies together represents the exercise of influence by the president but, also, the exercise of influence by these respective governance bodies, collectively, and the individuals serving on them, individually.

5.2.1.4. Managing the External Environment

Managing the External Environment Theme represents the relationship that the university has with government and the community. Both levels of government provide the majority of funding that allows the university to carry out its mandate of teaching and research. The relationship with government as the main funder is essential if the university is to carry out its mandate. The relationship with the community is also essential, since the community supports the role and mission of the university. Under Political Theory, this creates spheres of influence that affect the decision-making process within government, since “beliefs about politics do shape how politics is carried out” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 92).

The provincial government provides the annual operating grant that sustains the base operations of the university. It is also responsible for the legislation that defines the structure and manner in which the university operates. The legislation creates the
political system and bicameral governance that defines the role of the board, the senate and the president. Under this structure the provincial government appoints the majority (by one) of the governing board members. The provincial government has tried to depoliticise the appointment of all board positions with the creation of the British Columbia Board Resourcing and Development Office. The Board Resourcing and Development Office utilises a skills-competency matrix to identify the types of skills needed by the various public agencies. The legislation, funding and appointment of the majority of the governing board indicates the provincial government has a significant amount of influence on the university even though the enabling legislation in the University Act specifies that the Minister is not to interfere in the duties of the university. In discussing the issue of university autonomy, President 1 stated:

In a public education system, it’s a tough issue. I would say my own perception—personally, not speaking on behalf of the board—is that often students think there’s the worry about sort of corporate control of universities, etc. I think the much greater worry is governmental intrusion.

It is clear from this comment there is a concern about the potential intrusion by government and the erosion of university autonomy. The concern relates to the government’s ability to intervene at the macro-level through legislation, or at the micro-level through ministerial orders, which affects tuition fees and salary caps. The use of macro-level levers to restructure the university is remote; what is far more likely, and indeed the existing situation within the province, is that the government has implemented salary caps and tuition fee caps that have impinged on the autonomy of the university.

According to Political Theory the influence, and the type of influence exerted, determines how well an organisation operates and how engaged are the stakeholders. The provincial government has a great deal of capacity to direct the university through legislation, funding, and board member appointments. However, the actions of the
provincial government at first glance seem muted. One external board member commented there was no relationship between the board member and government since that individual had been appointed.

And it’s not just financial consideration; it is extraordinarily difficult for the board chairs to get a meeting with the minister or the deputy minister. The board chairs, in a sense, are persona non grata; you’re in there, you have all the responsibility, no authority; you have very strict governance regulations around operating versus policy; you have no recognition by government -- no financial recognition, not even verbal recognition, and pretty much no voice. (BOG 2-1)

The implication of this statement is the provincial government does not contact the Order-in-Council board members or give them any direction. Where the provincial government has exercised some direction is in the Letters of Expectation, which specify the objectives the government wants the university to achieve in exchange for funding and exerting some control through micro-level levers, such as the tuition fee cap and the salary cap. These points of control by government reflect the ability of the state to intervene in the affairs of the university, regardless of the University Act prohibiting the Minister from interfering in the internal actions of the university. This is the concern President 1 indicated was greater than the corporatisation of the universities and indicates that the universities need to be engaged in a constant dialogue of negotiation with government to ensure that the university is able to preserve some form of autonomy.

The provincial government’s directive to implement a salary cap overrides one of the most important decisions the governing board makes, which is the hiring of a president. The implementation of the salary cap overrides the board and its ability to hire the person it thinks has the appropriate credentials and skills to lead the university
by limiting what it can offer to pay. Finding the right president is difficult, because of the academic and leadership qualification requirements.

*You know, being a skilful leader, management and executive does not necessarily go hand-in-hand at all with having impeccable academic qualifications, teaching skills, research—you know, a long line of research publications, and so on. So if you can find someone who blends all of that, then you’re just incredibly fortunate. But you need to, because there’s nothing easy about these presidential jobs. (BOG 3-4)*

While this is not as severe as the level of interference that has happened with the hiring of a new president at Memorial University, which was referred to during some of the interviews, it does represent an increased level of interference by the provincial government in British Columbia. The situation at Memorial University, where the Premier of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador overrode the wishes of the board in the selection of a new university president, is a serious concern, because it provides a precedent that could happen in other Canadian jurisdictions, further limiting the autonomy of the university. Political Theory maintains that “the development of autonomy threatens the nature of an authoritarian political system and the power of its leaders. Autonomous organizations are particularly dangerous and such organizations must be kept under the control of the government” (Dahl & Stinebrickner, 2006, p. 84). This latter point points out that the government acted because it felt the university was too autonomous and wanted to exert control over the university by determining who would be an appropriate president. The implications of this action are that, if stakeholders in both the internal and external environment believe that the government will impose its will, this impairs the legitimacy of the selection process and the authority of the president, which undermines the credibility of the university. This has not been the accepted practice in the recent past and, consequently, there will be other potential negative reactions, which may include a disengagement by faculty and others in the
dialogue needed to rebuild a shared vision of the university's future. In turn, this would also increase the level of difficulty in managing the university.

In looking at the relationship with the community, it is both more complex and less complex because of the number of groups that form the community. Each group sees the university as a means of addressing a concern, which ranges from trained and educated future employees to examining the underlying issues that cause or create social problems within the community. These groups attempt to influence the university to help them address their specific concerns. Increasingly, the university is reaching out to the community to build support for additional funding from the community, or to use the community as a means of influencing government in its decision-making and resource allocation processes. Because of the differing conceptions of the university, there is a debate within the external environment about the role of the university: Is it to educate the citizenry and provide a critique of society, or is it to be an engine of economic development? This discussion and debate influences the decision-making process of government about funding. The community attempts to influence both government and the university, but the community is a polyglot of perspectives that requires the government and the university president to manage these competing and conflicting ideas and objectives.

5.2.2. Applying Political Theory against the Conceptual Model

Political Theory looks at how politics, spheres of influence, power, political systems, participation and evaluation affect individuals, groups, organisations and the state. It provides a macro-level analysis of how and why these interlocking behaviours can be affected. Political Theory can be considered a meta-theory because it does incorporate other theoretical concepts such as Power Theory. Political Theory operates
at a much higher level than the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model, which is grounded in the interviews. Both Political Theory and the emergent model share some similarities around the concept of spheres of influence. Political Theory provides a much broader overarching understanding than the emergent model but, at the specific level of the individual and the organisation, there appear to be some overlaps in conceptual structures. These overlaps will be explored to see if this helps to further our understanding of the data that emerged from the interviews and perhaps will help us answer the four questions identified in Chapter 1.

Political Theory looks at how politics and spheres of influence affect individual and group behaviour and interaction. Within the university, Political Theory looks at how influence is used by the board and the president in the development of institutional priorities and the implementation of those priorities. Political Theory overlaps with Resource Dependency Theory in looking at how the identification of priorities specifies how resources will be allocated, and who will benefit from the resource allocation. While Resource Dependency Theory focuses on how organisations seek scarce resources, Political Theory looks at how political systems set the rules for individual and group interaction to procure resources within that political system and how influence is used to achieve a particular outcome. If the political system allows a pluralistic debate, then the way in which influence is used will be different than, for example, in an authoritarian regime. Dahl and Stinebrickner (2006) state:

The difference in the balance of persuasion versus coercion is a practical consequence of the differences in the political institutions themselves. A group that is effectively free to participate in the choice of government leaders is less likely to be coerced in a conflict than a group without this freedom especially if the group is numerous enough to constitute a majority. (p. 92)
It was clear from the interviews that the universities are seen as pluralistic collegial environments by the interviewees, and that the role of the board and president is to balance the different stakeholders’ needs and desires. This is different than corporations, where there is a hierarchy, less collegiality in decision-making and a more authoritarian political system.

Both Political Theory and the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model hold that the relationships among the various stakeholders are tempered through the political system and the means of achieving outcomes is through spheres of influence. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model shows the boundary points between stakeholder groups in the political system. The four domains of the Internal, Internal/External, External/Internal and External correspond to the spheres of influence referenced in Political Theory. It is in these four domains that internal and external stakeholders use influence to affect a particular outcome or course of action. The way in which these spheres of influence are managed will result in the organisation being able to achieve its objectives or being mired down in internal conflict. The political system and collegial nature of the universities is different than the corporate world and, therefore, requires more consensus-building to achieve a shared vision. As well, both the political system and collegial nature of the university shape how these various groups interact. As one board member said about the way the board functions:

*Although, because it is a different group that has powers, because this is a very collegial atmosphere, your ability as a board member is somewhat—I don’t want to use the word compromised, but you have to adjust it. It’s not as if you were a board member of a private corporation where you could, in fact, be—and I use the word in a positive way—aggressive in terms of your questioning. You can be questioning, but you have to be much more cognizant to the collegial atmosphere that exists in a university.* (BOG 3-2)
This comment by an external board member indicates that, for influence to be effective, it must mesh with the operating environment and conform to the norms, values and culture of the larger organisation. It is clear that how influence works in a corporation will not necessarily work the same in a university.

Political Theory and Resource Dependency Theory hold that the process for building a shared vision is essential. Resource Dependency Theory explicitly mentions the need for long-term strategic planning processes as a means of creating shared buy-in. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model, which resulted from the interviews, indicates the importance of the strategic plan in creating a shared vision.

The strategic plan also serves as the tool for evaluating the performance of the president. Political Theory does not explicitly reference strategic planning, but does reference decision-making and how and why groups form to achieve specific benefits for their group or universal benefits for everyone. The inclusion of the senate in the strategic planning process by two of the presidents is a clear attempt to ensure there is an alignment between the academic and fiscal objectives of the university. This provides the senate with input into the decision-making process, but also ownership of the outcome of that process. The use of influence is bi-directional and extends from these individuals and bodies back to their constituencies and stakeholders as a means of incorporating them into the decision-making process after the fact. Within this perspective, the strategic planning process provides the means for constituent group representatives to advocate for their group in contract negotiations but, also, act as an advocate through their representation on the governance structures of the university.
This interlocked structure was referenced by two board members as a concern, because it was seen as undermining the ability to have confidential discussions when a representative from that constituent group also sat at the board table.

*These groups get two kicks at the cat, one on the senate representation, then again on the board. But it’s extremely limiting to discussion. Their knowledge of the university, of course, is a great deal more than the order-in-council appointees, and so this is a damper on discussion when one person knows more. Even when they’re wrong, they’ll win an argument over someone that knows what in principal is right, but in detail is ill equipped to argue the point. So, as a result, I believe that discussion and outputs are diminished by these conflicts of interest.* (BOG 2-2)

Resource Dependency Theory sees the interlocked structure of the board as a means of increasing stability, through increased interdependence, where the interlocks reduced the potential for the constituent groups to misunderstand each other’s positions. Political Theory sees the political system as setting the ground rules on how influence is used. Having internal constituent representation on the board is then a factor of the level of polyarchy or plurality. Societies with higher levels of plurality will probably allow a wider range of representation and dissent than societies with lower levels of plurality. Having internal constituency representatives provides a means for allowing these groups to communicate their concerns and to influence the decision-making structure at the level of the board and president. It also provides a means for the board and president to communicate with and influence the constituent leadership, which decreases the potential for misunderstanding and conflict within the university.

Political Theory provides a broad overview of society and how political systems and politics affect individual and group behaviour. It does not explain specific motivations, but it does indicate that systems and organisations are based on the use of influence, and it also looks at how the types of influence impact perceptions of legitimacy. Political Theory treats influence as a scarce resource—like Resource
Dependency Theory—and indicates that influence is used in the decision-making process. Influence needs to be accumulated since it is also expended. The more legitimacy a social actor or organisation has, the less influence has to be expended in the decision-making process. Political Theory builds on Resource Dependency Theory in helping to interpret the data that emerged from the interviews by showing how political systems provide the rules of engagement between social actors. It also helps to understand how influence is used to build consensus in the decision-making process within the university. Finally, Political Theory provides a rationale for why government-appointed board members participate, even though they are unpaid volunteers. The 6-year term limit on board members prevents them from using their positions for personal gain. But Political Theory indicates that individuals participate in a political system to achieve either specific benefits or universal benefits. The board members indicated they participated because of sense of public service. This fits within the rubric of participating to affect universal benefits by ensuring the university continues to be strategically placed to serve the needs of the broader community.

Figure 8 shows where Political Theory meshes with the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model. The model provides an enhancement of Political Theory by showing how the political system and stakeholders of the university influence each other in the decision-making process. It needs to be made clear this is not to be contextualised to all universities but, based on the interviews with the three universities in this study, it does appear to explain how influence works.
The next sub-section examines if and how Political Theory can be used to interpret the data from Chapter 4 to respond to the four questions asked in Chapter 1.

5.2.3. Responding to the Four Questions

In Chapter 1, four fundamental questions about the university and its role were asked:

1. In this current environment, how does the make-up and workings of the board influence the larger policy issues for advanced education?
2. What are the contemporary influences on the board by government and various other stakeholder groups as they deliberate on and exercise their oversight role within British Columbia?
3. Is the board an agent of government or is it an agent of the academy, or both?
4. Is the modern board in transition or is the current environment simply a different iteration of past reality?

This sub-section of Chapter 5 attempts to see if the data derived from the interviews that resulted in the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model and, through the lens of Political Theory, address these four questions. Each question is reviewed individually and in order to see if we have sufficient information to respond with an appropriate answer.

Within the scope of Political Theory, Question 1 examines how the political system and structure of the university governing board affects how the board operates, and if this structure influences the higher education policy. The political system of the university is established by the University Act which defines the power of the board and the senate. The two governing bodies have separate domains of responsibility: The senate is responsible for academic matters and the governing board is responsible for all financial, property, and facility matters. While the two governance bodies are separate but equal, ultimately the board’s financial responsibility can override the wishes of the senate by not funding a senate-endorsed academic matter, such as a new program implementation. Within this political structure, since the president is a member of the governing board and the chair of the senate, the president acts as the intermediary between the two governance bodies. The president’s role is to provide leadership to both governance bodies, so there is an alignment in the priorities between the senate and the board. The president does this by using influence to create a shared vision of the future direction of the university in which the academic priorities are supported through the budget approval process. Two presidents indicated they created a shared vision and direction between the board and the senate through joint annual strategic planning retreats, which identified the university’s priorities over a 5-year timeframe. The
process of bringing both governance bodies together allows them to interact and exert influence on each other’s agendas and objectives. Properly managed, the end result creates a shared vision that the participants bring back to their respective constituencies and use their influence to create buy-in. If this is done appropriately, the legitimacy and authority of the role of the president is increased. If this is mishandled, this can result in the termination of the president. As President 2 observed:

…there have been a spate of failed university presidencies in Canada; it’s becoming more and more common for people to leave under obscure circumstances early in their terms. And my bet is that almost all of them have been people that haven’t held a senior academic position in a university and are not used to this by way of training they get between the board and the senate …

President 2’s observation speaks to the critical role the president plays in managing the board and the senate. This is a balancing act that is essential if the president and the university are to be successful.

In terms of looking at the way the university board structure may impact advanced education policy, one board member indicated there is no systems’ perspective in policy-making in British Columbia.

And that goes back to that community role, which is so important for both individual universities and the system. Too little is thought about of the system; everyone’s interest seems to be served by creating rivalry between institutions, rather than supporting the system and judging the system as a whole. And that really is the crucial part to an Order-in-Council appointee who is representing the government or the province, then you’re interested in the system. In principle, anything that’s good for the system should be good for every institution that’s in it. (BOG 2-2)

This last comment seems to indicate that advanced education policy is not about creating a system perspective; rather, it is about maintaining rivalries. Within the rubric of Political Theory this would be seen as a divide and conquer approach on the part of
government. This perspective was not shared by a former government official who indicated:

*So, I think on one hand, just in summary, the government and the Ministry and the Deputy [Minister] and the Minister need to pay more attention to keeping the boards up to date on what’s going on, and also being there for assistance. I mean, these are volunteers, for God’s sakes.* (GOV 1)

It is clear there are a variety of perspectives about whether the make up and workings of the governing board affect advanced education policy formation, but it appears that the governing boards have only a limited affect on the provincial government’s policy development and implementation.

Question 2 overlaps with the second part of Question 1 in looking at how the structure and workings of the governing board influences policy issues in advanced education, but how do government and other stakeholders influence the governing board in providing oversight? Political Theory looks at both the structure of the political system and the spheres of influence in examining how boards and leaders function. According to the external governing board members who were interviewed, they had not received any direction from government before their appointment, nor any direction after they were appointed. This perspective can best be summed up by one board member who indicated that the external board members were “singularly creatures of the organisation, as opposed to representatives of the government” (BOG 2-2). This would indicate the governing board members were independent of government and not directed in their actions. This latter point will be touched on in more detail in examining the response to Question 3. However, the creation of the arm’s-length British Columbia Board Resourcing and Development Office represents a move by the provincial government to ‘professionalise’ the selection and recruitment of public sector board members by identifying skills needed by public sector boards, including universities, and then
matching individuals who have those skill sets with the appropriate board. The creation of the Board Resourcing and Development Office represents an improvement over the previous board recruitment process, which was seen by those interviewed as partisan. However, the board selection and recruitment process is still within the sphere of influence of government. President 2 indicated that Ontario had gone a step further than British Columbia in ensuring that the board appointment process was outside of the realm of government intervention.

*Ontario decided not to continue the habit of Order-in-Council appointments to boards. It said it was going to entrench the autonomy of the university by creating independent boards that were self-reproducing; there are no Order-in-Council appointments on that board.* (President 2)

Though it is an improvement over the previous partisan based process, one potential criticism about the current board selection and recruitment process is that the way the skills matrix is defined could result in a narrowing of the external people, who qualify to sit on the board, so that it is no longer representative of the broader community. This criticism could also apply to the structure in Ontario, which has self-replicating boards. Government, then, indirectly influences the actions of the board by determining who qualifies to sit on the board and the breadth or narrowness of that individual’s perspective.

The internally-elected board members who, while a minority, constitute a significant portion of the board membership also influence the governing board. Their perspectives are formed by the internal constituency whom they represent. The elected board members can also be more knowledgeable about the internal issues of the university than external board members. This allows them to argue points with a deeper knowledge base about the university that can influence the decisions of the board. The president’s role is to bridge this divide between the internal and external board
members, so that the board does not end up divided and to create a shared vision through the strategic planning process. This bridging role is critical, so the university is not split between its various stakeholders and constituents, such as the senate and the board and the internal and external board members. If this were to occur, decisions made by the external majority would not be seen as legitimate by the internal minority of the board and, thus, by the internal constituencies represented by the internal board members. The president’s role is critical and this increases the influence that the president has on the entire process.

Question 3 is one of the main questions that this research has attempted to examine. Whom do externally appointed board members think they represent? Within Political Theory this question addresses the issue of spheres of influence. It is logical to assume that, since the provincial government appoints the majority (by one) of the governing board, the external board members would be under the influence of or susceptible to the influence of the government. But as part of the response to Question 2 indicated, the government has not provided any direction or directives to the external board members. This would imply that the provincial government is not using direct influence. As well, the provincial government has created an arm’s-length agency to oversee the selection and appointment of all public sector boards. On the surface, this would imply the government has not attempted to capture the governing board members it has appointed under the University Act. Another perspective would be that the recruitment process selects candidates who may be like-minded in political and philosophic disposition with government and would, therefore, be sympathetic to implementing the government agenda without any overt direction to do so. This premise is hard to prove although Power Theory, a subset of Political Theory, would indicate the board members would carry out the agenda of government, because of some fear of
reprisal or because they shared the same objectives. Perhaps what can be said is the current structure may, over time, create a process that results in a board with more of a business focus rather than representing the broader community.

During the interviews, all respondents indicated the board members had a duty to represent the best interests of the university and not any particular body, such as government or other stakeholders. The three presidents stressed that this point was made clear to all board members when they received their orientation. The external board members interviewed also believe they sit on the university’s governing board to represent the university. This would indicate that the external board members are agents of the university, and not government. However, the external board members volunteered their time on the board based on a belief that their public service with the university benefited the community. This latter point speaks to a belief that the university enriches the community by providing universal benefits, which is why the external board members volunteered their time, especially the board chairs.

Question 4 asks if the university is in transition, or if discussion occurs whether the role of the university is one that reflects the society in which it is situated. Under Political Theory, the university is subordinate to the needs of the nation-state. This would imply the university is just another public policy arm that implements government policy, such as in health care and that, as governments change, the university would implement the new public policy directives it receives. It would also mean that, as an arm of government, the university would not be able to criticise government or critique society. While it is true that the universities receive a substantial portion of their funding from government with assigned targets (deliverables), the universities are structured in such a way that overt government interference in the internal business of the university
is minimised. The University Act is quite explicit in stating that “The minister must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university, its board, senate and other constituent bodies by this Act” (University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468, s. 48). Along with this explicit direction in legislation, the political system and structure of the university gives it a status that other public policy areas do not have. According to BOG 3-3, “the [u]niversities need to retain a degree of independence from government—not only academic freedom, but they need to obtain freedom to the extent possible.” This is critical if universities are to act as the conscience of the community and provide a safe location where critical debate, to a point, can be engaged without sanction.

What is left unanswered is whether the university is in transition, or if its current role is an iteration of the past. It is clear the university has a special relationship with the state, which allows it to both receive funding while still being able to be critical of government policy. The situation at Memorial University that was referred to in several interviews indicates that government is willing to take an active role and interfere in the autonomy of the university. However, it is clear from the literature that, in the past, university benefactors were also prepared to take a more active role in the university if they thought their investment was not being used wisely. Ultimately this could include the withdrawal of financial support. This indicates that the university’s main point of vulnerability is its dependence on external funding, and this is the lever that is used by government to force change. Political Theory indicates that, if power is used to force a change or achieve a specific outcome, then this increases the potential for the action to be seen as not be legitimate. Therefore, this acts as a curb on government behaviour in pluralist societies where legitimacy is important.
The universities have existed for over 850 years and can trace their roots back to Plato and Aristotle. They pre-date the modern nation-state and have been fundamental to its existence. The universities have evolved to meet the needs of their societies and of their benefactors, and have existed in a binary relationship with the state. In the 19th Century, universities redefined their role from one of primarily teaching, to one of teaching and research. This reinvention represented a Herculean debate between the Newman and Humboldt schools of thought, which ultimately resulted in the ascendancy of the Humboldt model and the growth of the universities. As both Scott (2006) and Mora (2001) noted, the universities have evolved to mesh with the needs of their societies. Their boards have also evolved and played a more active role when the board members were the financial benefactors and, a less active role, when the state became the benefactor. While modern governing board members of public universities may not be financial benefactors, the universities are increasingly using their board members for outreach purposes in the community. One of the purposes of this outreach role is to have board members involved in fund-raising activities. In this sense, the current board is a modern adaptation of the role of board member as financial benefactor. But perhaps more important than the financial benefactor role is the role the board members play to provide advice, which keeps the university both grounded in the community and prepared to deal with an ever-shifting external environment.

The modern role of the governing board provides the conduit that grounds the university with the community. The board members were quite clear that their participation on the board was out of a sense of public service, which would benefit the community. The relationship between the university and the community described in Figure 8 represents how the governing board members, as representatives from the community, provide a means of influencing the direction and priorities of the university
but, also, how they influence the external environment through their advocacy of the university. This is a complex relationship that provides the government and the community with a means of fiduciary oversight for the significant financial investment that the public, through the government, has made. This structure can be thought of as a contractual relationship between the government, who represents the community and the university. In exchange for funding, the university has a governing board, comprised of a majority of external community representatives, oversee how those funds are allocated. The board allows the government to not directly intervene in the internal affairs of the university, which provides the university with a level of autonomy. The price of public funding is external oversight and the delivery of specified outcomes and objectives.

5.2.4. Political Theory Summary

Political Theory shows how politics, influence and political structures affect human interaction and decision-making through socio-political structures. It examines how political structures shape the way in which influence is used, and how individuals move closer to, or further away from, the centre of power that is the point of decision-making. In plural societies, the use of uni-directional power with imposed decisions undermines legitimacy while the appropriate use of influence, which is bi-directional, increases legitimacy through stakeholder input. The use of influence is essential within the university because of the number of external and internal stakeholders. For internal stakeholders, the use of influence provides a way of shaping the decision-making processes within the university, especially around issues of priorities and future directions. Inclusion of the internal stakeholders creates a level of shared ownership in the decisions that have been made. The relationship with the external stakeholders is
essential; particularly government, which is the main funder. Government holds the legislative and funding levers that directly affect the university. Government provides the funding to the university in exchange for certain outcomes. Both the university and government influence each other, but government has the ability to exert overt power. The university can maintain a limited autonomy by meeting the outcomes government has funded and by using influence, engaging in a dialogue and negotiating with government about the university’s role.

5.3. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I looked at how both Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory provide an established theoretical lens, which helps to better understand the data analysis of Chapter 4. It appears the emergent Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model supports the premises of both Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory as theoretical models that help to understand the dynamics in the three universities where the interviews occurred. The Environment Synapse Communications Interface Model demonstrates that concepts from these two theoretical models about issues of resource scarcity, politics, influence and political systems are essential to understand the decision-making processes within universities and how those processes relate to the both internal and external stakeholders. Both Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory show different aspects of the complexity of the university and its relationship with its various stakeholders. The university grapples with issues of resource scarcity, because there are more demands for its programs and services than resources to meet those divergent demands. The university must balance these competing needs against the resources it has been allocated. How the resources are distributed reflects the use of influence in the negotiation between the university and
the government. It also reflects the outcome of the negotiation to balance the competing demands between the internal stakeholders. Maintaining a balance is critical, and it must be constantly renegotiated to reflect changes in both the external and internal environments. Certain outcomes must be met for the university to continue to receive funding, and there are demands on the university to deliver services or provide benefits within the resources it has. The president’s role is to provide the leadership that allows this constant renegotiation to occur, where stakeholders attempt to influence each other on the determination of priorities of resource allocation without having the process end in anarchy and stalemate.

The concluding chapter will synthesise the potential meanings from the four questions asked in Chapter 1 based on the data analysis in Chapter 4, which was examined through the theoretical lens of Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory in this chapter.
CHAPTER 6:
CONCLUSIONS (PUTTING ON THE “SOLD” SIGN)

This chapter represents the conclusion of the exploration of the trail that was started in Chapter 1. The exploration is far from complete but the trail has been widened a bit more to encourage other scholars to examine the issues that relate to the university and the communities they inhabit. This chapter will attempt to synthesise some of the findings so that there is a clearer understanding of how they relate to the underlying premise of the four questions asked in Chapter 1. The chapter will conclude with my thoughts on recommendations and areas for further consideration.

6.1. Findings

6.1.1. Overview of the Research Project

This journey started by looking at the way in which governance works within the universities by asking externally appointed governing board members about their understanding of their role as governors. Four specific questions were posited from this starting premise. In order to gather the data to respond to the four questions and the underlying premise, the starting point was a thorough literature review. The literature review also included an analysis of the types of research methodologies that would be best suited to this type of research. Based on the literature review, the best type of methodology to conduct exploratory research about the perceptions of externally appointed governors was either Grounded Theory or Case Study. An integrated
approach with both methodologies was selected since this would provide both scalability as well as a more structured approach suitable for a new researcher. Once the research methodology was selected the next step was to identify the research sample group. The sample group selected was to consist of both experienced and new governing board members as well as the president of that university. The research sites were identified where the interviews of the sample group would be conducted. Permission was sought at those research sites to contact the sample group. Once this was received, the prospective participants were contacted and asked to participate through a letter of informed consent. Two related but slightly different semi-structured questionnaires were used to gather the data; one questionnaire was used for the board members and the other for the university presidents. During the interviews, it was suggested by some of the participants that both a board secretary and government official should also be interviewed, which were subsequently done.

The data from the interviews was recorded into a digital audio format and then transcribed into an electronic printed format. The draft transcripts were sent to the participants so that they could correct any mis-statements or misinterpretations they may have made. The finalised transcripts were then used in the data analysis. The transcripts were read repeatedly and on each reading, key words or phrases were identified from each interview. These key words and phrases were entered into a spreadsheet and then this was printed out. Words and phrases were grouped together and this created the initial sub-categories. The sub-categories were then grouped into categories. During this coding phase, the sub-categories and categories were linked back and tested against the transcripts. The categories were then analysed and grouped into four themes. The themes were also tested against the transcripts and other data sources and adjustments were made to the themes. An analysis of the
themes was then conducted which resulted in an emergent conceptual model. The data and the conceptual model were then examined for additional context and meaning through two established theoretical models—Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory—to see if this would help to understand and respond to the four questions posited at the start of the research. Each of the two Theories was used in conjunction with the data analysis and the emergent conceptual model to respond to the four questions. This provides a solid framework to now respond to the underlying premise of the four questions about what is the perception of the board members about their role as governors.

6.1.2. Overview of the Research Findings

The governing board members interviewed indicated they served on the university governing board to represent the best interests of the university. In particular, the board members felt that they had skills that would benefit the university. The board members indicated that they felt that it was a privilege to be asked to serve on the board and that through their participation they would be serving their community. Under Resource Dependency Theory the rationale for individual participation on the board would be to secure scarce resources or some form or cooperation with another organisation through cooptation. The board members indicated that they were unpaid volunteers and committed a significant amount of time to conduct university business. Further, they indicated that they were not on the board to represent other organisations, with the possible exception of the internal board member who was elected from one of the staff groups within the university. However, this board member also indicated that s/he was there to serve the best interests of the university and not any particular group. Based on these responses, procuring scarce resources for their own benefit does not
appear to be the motivator for their participation. The question then is does Political Theory provide a lens for understanding why the external board members participate? Political Theory indicates that people participate in organisations to pursue individual, group or universal benefits. The responses from all the board members indicate that they felt their participation was a form of public service and that by participating they served their community. These responses would indicate that the board members participated to serve the community and were altruistically motivated.

Based on the interviews, the board members and the presidents believed that the role of the governing board should be a ‘policy’ board that sets broad objectives and priorities through a strategic plan. The board should not be involved in the day-to-day management oversight of the university. But the board should evaluate the president against progress in achieving the directions and priorities outlined in the jointly developed strategic plan. Within the context of Resource Dependency Theory, the board is comprised of part-time individuals who are dependent on the president and senior administration to provide them with information on what is happening within the organisation. Internal board members may have more information about what is happening within the university but they constitute a minority of the board. Therefore the board is dependent on the president for the comprehensive information it needs to assess the president’s performance. If the information is manipulated then the board cannot accurately or adequately understand what is happening with the university to gauge the president’s performance. The complexity within the university provides multiple potential conduits to the board about what is happening within the university, which probably prohibits an information-centric control strategy of manoeuvring or manipulating the board. This type of strategy would result in the loss of confidence in
the president by the board. Within Political Theory, both the board and the president would be exerting influence on each other, as would other stakeholders.

To maintain legitimacy, the president would have to minimise the use of power and continue to both build up and exert influence in the decision-making process. The use of influence rather than power is very important because the university believes itself to be a collegial organisation. The board evaluates the president’s performance against the objectives outlined in the strategic plan. This structure provides a level of transparency that the public and government expect in exchange for funding.

6.1.3. Overview of the Research Findings against Resource Dependency Theory and Political Theory

While the governing board controls the budget of the university, does it exert any influence on the higher education system? Two board members indicated that they had not been contacted by government nor had they been able to contact government. One board member lamented that the universities were not a system and were often pitted against each other. The former government official interviewed did not share this perspective and indicated that the government had not, but needed to, provide new board members with an orientation to the higher education system to better prepare them for their role.

Based on the various responses, it appears that the universities do not influence the higher education system. But is this latter point overstated? One example, which almost all of the board members referenced, was the initial Letters of Expectation received by the universities from the Ministry of Advanced Education. The universities were not happy with the language in the Letters of Expectation and worked together to effect a change in the language. The initial Letters were subsequently withdrawn and
revised Letters were sent out. It is important to note that government still implemented a new accountability structure, but the universities worked together to change the language within the Letters so that it was less directive. Within Resource Dependency Theory, government as the controller of the scarce resources was able to implement a new accountability structure, or contract, through the Letters of Expectation. The university boards were able to create a minor shift in government policy through collective action in order to create a more symmetrical power balance. However, the main point is that the government still implemented a revised outcomes based accountability structure. Within Political Theory, the actions of the government to implement a new accountability structure would be seen as the use of power. The universities’ response, similar to Resource Dependency Theory, utilised collective action to pool their influence to effect a change in government action. By working collaboratively, the universities were able to create a more symmetrical power-base necessary to influence government. While the universities were able to influence the language used by government in the revised Letters, government created a *de facto* and *de jure* contract between itself and the universities by formulating and sending out the Letters of Expectation. Explicit in the contract was that funding was based on the university achieving certain specified deliverables, and that if the university did not achieve those deliverables, it would be penalised through financial reductions or holdbacks.

Maton (2005), Middlehurst (2004), Mora (2001) and Scott (2006) show that the role of the governing board has ebbed and flowed, depending on the era. Prior to public funding, the universities were dependent on external benefactors to provide them with the resources to operate. These scholars show that these external benefactors had a significant level of influence on the university. However, with public funding, the
influence of the governing board and external benefactors waned. The period between the start of public funding and massification may have represented the period when universities had their greatest level of autonomy. After massification and the dominance of the neoliberalism, the autonomy of the universities has diminished. The question that this raises is: Are the universities still autonomous or are they extensions of the state?

Under Resource Dependency Theory, the university would be seen as an extension of the state since the university does not control the (scarce) resources or the environment in which it operates. The structure of the university is determined by legislation with the government appointing the majority of the governing board members and providing a substantial part of the annual operating budget. Since the government can control the universities through legislation, appoints the majority of its governing board, and funds it, it would appear that the universities are indeed subject to being used to further public policy. Yet the same legislation that created the universities also prohibits the Minister from interfering in the internal activities of the university. Political Theory would indicate a similar analysis with the proviso that, once created, the university exerts influence on government and the community. This exertion of influence results in government being reluctant to directly intervene and interfere with universities and provides them autonomy. As President 2 noted, “But it’s a limited autonomy; it’s a relative autonomy, as some theorists say”. This latter comment may reflect the use of both macro- and micro-influence by government. The University Act specifies that government cannot interfere or intervene at the macro-level so it uses influence at the micro-level to create the change it wants.
6.1.4. The University and Autonomy

The university is in a precarious position. It has tried to maintain a distance from the state necessary to be critical of society and autonomous. At the same time, it has become addicted to funding from the state to maintain its existence and for continued growth. The state has been able to increase its influence over the university through funding levers to partially recast the university as an engine of social and economic development. In other jurisdictions, such as Australia and the UK, government passed legislation that restructured the governance of the university so that the senate (Academic Council) reported to the board of Governors (Governing Council). This was applied to all the publicly funded universities in Australia and to the post-1992 universities in the UK. These governance changes were possible because the national government had constitutional authority over higher education. This has not happened in Canada, and as Shanahan and Jones (2007) note, would be much more difficult to achieve because of the constitutional structure where the provinces are responsible for higher education. However, the changes to the universities in these other Anglo-American style jurisdictions may reflect potential future changes and challenges which universities in Canada and, in particular, British Columbia may face.

For the universities to maintain some form of autonomy, they will need to demonstrate that they are good stewards of the public’s resources. The governing board members interviewed acknowledged the importance of their fiduciary responsibility in making sure that budgets are appropriately allocated for the intended purpose and that the needs of the students are being met, even though student academic need is a responsibility of the senate. University governing boards have challenges in exercising their formal responsibilities because of the bicameral governance structure of the university.
The fundamental problem, of course, is that they [the boards] have these enormous responsibilities, but they cannot independently affect the revenue base, because government controls grants and fees. They can affect the external income a little bit, but that will never be the major source of income. So, they have huge responsibilities, but very little actual power to influence the fundamentals of the budget with respect to revenue, and even with respect to expense, because so much of those decisions are contingent on senate authority. (President 2)

This perspective was shared by a former board chair who indicated:

One of the challenges for university government boards is the fact that they have all the responsibility and little authority. And if I have a complaint, that would be it. We have the right to veto what happens at the senate, but we have no control over decisions that are made or input to those decisions at any point. (BOG 2-1)

It appears that the board only has the authority to say “no” or veto proposed actions and can only influence the university on the periphery; it is the government that sets the ground rules through the governance structure and funding. The board is constrained by this structure. Regardless, it must exercise fiduciary oversight if the university is to retain some form of autonomy from more direct government involvement. The board must show leadership and be seen to show leadership. As the former government official interviewed recommended, “boards need to make more demands on their administration. I’m not sure that they’re demanding enough” (GOV 1).

Ultimately, the price of autonomy will be the need to demonstrate accountability. What autonomy and accountability mean changes over time and is constantly negotiated depending on shifts in the political climate, the economic circumstances, and the perceived future needs of the community. The boundary that exists between the university and the state is not static but it is a binary relationship. The boundary within a binary relationship shifts and is continuously negotiated. The universities must reinvent themselves to be current and relevant with their community, yet somehow maintain a necessary critical distance. But as Considine (2006) points out, the universities need
boundaries to retain their unique identity. In order to maintain these boundaries, the universities periodically need to reinvent themselves to show that they are still relevant and that the loss of their distinctiveness would be a loss to the society and the community.

Maintaining a level of autonomy provides one of the key bulwarks that ensures there is a boundary between the university and the state. For this boundary to continue, the board needs to be actively involved in planning the future direction of the university and must challenge the president and administration about the progress in achieving those goals. This point was strongly reiterated by the former government official, who stated:

So, it sort of comes back to the discussion about if they’re involved in strategic planning, then there are some targets and benchmarks to meet. So, I think the board needs to set, collectively, collaboratively with management, some targets and their accountability. (GOV 1)

Without being able to demonstrate that the board is governing the university, the level of government confidence in the university decreases. The consequences are increased government involvement that shifts and erodes the boundary line of the binary relationship. Autonomy must be earned, defended and negotiated through visible means such as the board holding the president and administration accountable and responsible for the activities and actions that occur within the university.

The role of the president to manage the university and ensure that it meets its targets cannot be over-emphasised. The president is the lynch-pin that binds the university together. The president is the formal linkage between the senate and the board and must unite these bodies in order to create a common shared vision of the future directions and priorities of the university. The president must also include the internal stakeholders in this process. If the university is not unified then it will not be able
to achieve the outcomes required by the funder. This would result in an erosion of public confidence and autonomy in the university because it would be seen as dysfunctional and require some form of government intervention. The board needs to make sure that the president is providing leadership and that the university is carrying out its core functions of teaching and research as well as continuing its community service. For the university to have some form of autonomy, albeit limited, the board must exercise its fiduciary requirements and hold the president accountable. The board achieves this accountability by making sure that the university has met its requirements to government and achieved the outcomes of the negotiated strategic plan. In one sense, this represents two contracts, one between the university and the government and the other between the university and the internal community. The president must make sure that the board and senate understands their role and carries it out so that the contract between the university and the government can be fulfilled.

Both the board and the president exist in a symbiotic relationship that requires each to meet their responsibilities. Failure to properly exercise their responsibilities increases the likelihood of government intervention. Government intervention erodes the boundary between the university and the state and results in a loss in autonomy. Consequently the identity of the university shifts to look more like another appendage of the state. The university’s ability to serve a critical role within society is undermined as it is increasingly viewed and may in fact become an agent of the state.

While the president plays a crucial role, the president has been groomed for that role through progression within the administrative structure of the university. This provides the president exposure to the bicameral governance structure and to multiple stakeholders of the university. Board members typically have not received this type or
level of exposure and, therefore, may not clearly understand the inner workings of the university. One way to address this is to look at a more formalised education program for board members. During the interviews, two governing board members indicated that they had completed the program offered by the Institute of Corporate Directors. This type of formal training may better prepare the governing board members so that they can ask the tough questions that demonstrate that the board is exercising its governance oversight and holding the president and administration accountable.

The university has a difficult challenge if it is to keep its autonomy. Government increasingly sees the university as a means to ensure economic competitiveness and prosperity. Government has used funding as the micro-lever to affect the behaviour of the university and encourage it to play a greater role in economic development through more vocationally oriented programs and applied research linked to industrial competitiveness. The university has responded by offering such programs and by increasing applied research activities.

However, while the university has responded to government’s economic agenda, government does not see the actions as being sufficient. The university is slow to respond because of the multiple stakeholders and the governance structure that is designed to ensure stability and continuity and prevent radical changes from occurring. In this sense the university is trapped. Its structure prevents the university from being whipsawed in different directions as the political parties that form the government change. However, the university does change; slow evolutionary change rather than radical revolutionary change. The university continues to show resiliency and adapts to meet the needs of its society and community, but the pace of change may no longer be sufficient to meet the desires of its main funder—government. The university must show
governments that it has used the funding it received appropriately and that it is supporting the government’s economic agenda. Yet at the same time, it needs to actively be engaged in negotiating with government to maintain a critical distance that allows it to sustain the boundary and identity needed to have some form of autonomy and credibility within society.

In looking at what the implications of these findings are to the board and the presidents at the three universities, there are several inferences that can be drawn. It is clear that neoliberalism has changed the way in which government views the university. Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the university was seen as means of bolstering the nation-state against the economic and political influences of the Soviet Bloc. But after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the ascendency of neoliberalism, the university became viewed as a tool for national economic development and competiveness necessary for survival under a new globalisation regime. Governments increasingly expect publicly funded universities to support national economic policy objectives. Universities in Australia and the post-1992 universities in the UK were restructured by government to make them more entrepreneurial with the end result being that these universities are now agents of economic development and more corporate in their organisational structure. For Canadian universities to avoid this same legislative restructuring, the universities must walk a delicate line between ensuring that it meets government’s objectives while trying to maintain a negotiated space for autonomy.

The board has an essential role to play in maintaining this negotiated space. On the surface, this means board members play an important role in university governance by providing oversight and acting as stewards of the annual operating grant from government and the tuition received from students. However, the shadow agenda has
to be to show government that they are not rubber-stamping the requests from presidents but rather holding them to task to ensure that objectives and goals are being met. The board must be able to demonstrate to government that it holds the president and administration accountable otherwise boards runs the risk of losing the confidence of government. This potential loss of confidence may well lead to legislative changes similar to those taken in Australia and the post-1992 universities in the UK. At the same time, it is clear that board members need to take a more proactive role in ensuring that the universities are seen as being responsive to government policy directions and overall public expectations. To that end, they must play a more substantial public role in defining and crafting the meaning of the institution in society.

The role for the president is similar and as critical to that of the board. The president must ensure that the alignment between the negotiated strategic goals of the board and the senate are aligned to the goals set by government through the annual Letter of Expectation. This means that government becomes a defacto agent of the strategic planning process and their goals must be factored into the planning process. This internal (and external) alignment is essential if the university is to be seen as being responsive by government and the community. The balancing act that the president plays between the various stakeholders and constituencies is critical as they become the nexus between the various groups. They should publically define and create an articulation of the collected shared goals and objectives. Failure to maintain this negotiated balance means that the university will not meet its societal commitments. This will increase the chance that government will intervene to force the university to act in the manner wanted by government or that the university will loose its legitimacy within the academy itself.
While the binary relationship continues to exist between government and the university, the negotiated space within the binary relationship is increasingly constrained and will require active attention by both the board and the president if the university is to maintain any form of autonomy from governmental encroachment. This will not be an easy task but it is essential if the university is to retain its unique role as the conscience of society.

6.2. Recommendations and Considerations

This research study has been based on a small sample and care should be taken in making or reaching any conclusions about the applicability of the findings outside of the sample group within the three universities. With this limitation in mind, here are some recommendations and further considerations follow.

6.2.1. Recommendations

The literature review made it quite clear that more research and further studies are needed about university governance. The universities are old institutions that predate the modern nation-state. They have survived, adapted and thrived. Their mission and role has changed and they have redefined themselves to maintain currency with their community. The growth associated with massification in the universities in the latter half of the 20th Century provides one of the major challenges for the universities in the 21st Century. The universities still have the same basic governance structure that they did historically, yet the current size of the universities may make that governance structure impractical. In some jurisdictions, such as the Australia and the UK, government has intervened legislatively to recast the structure of the university so that the board is preeminent over the senate and that the university functions as a publicly
owned corporation. This has not happened yet in Canada and may not given our constitutional structure that has created 13 higher education jurisdictions. But government holds the trump cards—legislation and funding—and daring the government to act may not be wise. While macro-level restructuring is unlikely, the focus should be on what mimetic micro-level policy levers provincial governments may borrow, adapt, implement and use from these other jurisdictions to effect change to their universities. Further studies are needed to examine the types of policy tools used by government in higher education and how those tools affect governance.

The relationship between the board and the president is critical if the university is to be able to function and additional studies of this relationship are needed. This raises several potential issues. How do you create an effective board of both internal and external stakeholders who understand their fiduciary responsibilities in a broader context? Should the provincial government provide a comprehensive orientation to the higher education system to better prepare all new board members, or only provide this to external board members? Would this type of orientation be an attempt by government to influence the future actions of board members by defining the scope of the board members responsibilities? One specific question this raises is: Would the perception of external board members about their role be different prior to their initial orientation by the university? It is clear that there are still many questions to be examined to better understand the role of governance within the universities.

The first two recommendations relate to the need for additional studies on the role of the board and the president in the governance structure of the university. However, the role of the senate within the governance structure should not be forgotten since it is the equal of the board through its power over academic governance of the
university in Canada. The role of the senate has been recast to be subordinate to the board in Australia and in the post-1992 universities in the UK. A few studies have been conducted by scholars in Australia and the UK of the affect of these legislated changes on the universities in those jurisdictions. This provides an opportunity to conduct a comparative analytical study to determine if the senate still has a voice in the academic directions of the universities in those jurisdictions and to what extent, if any, is that different than the role of the senate at Canadian universities. Understanding the differences in the role of the senate at the universities may provide additional critical insight into the macro- and micro-level policy tools that government uses to influence the universities.

Another major area of study is that while the main role of faculty within the university still continues to be the same—teaching and research—the relationship of the faculty to the governance structure has changed. The senate reflects the historic self-imagined collegial role of the faculty in the co-management of the university, yet the formation of faculty unions by definition implies that the faculty are employees and not co-managers of the university. This point speaks to one of the concerns within the literature about the faculty becoming “proletarianised” knowledge workers toiling in the fields of academe. Given the size of the universities, is it even practical to have a small group through the senate claim to represent the entire faculty that provides the academic leadership of the university? Furthermore, if the university is collegial and co-governed, does the collective agreement, or should the collective agreement, override the authority of the senate who are the representatives of the faculty in academic matters? The responses to these questions will help to understand the role of one of the main internal stakeholder groups and how their desires and wishes affect the future direction of the university.
6.2.2. Considerations

I have two considerations that emerged from the research process. The first consideration pertains to the amount of time committed by external governing board members, especially board chairs, to conduct and transact the business of the university. While the governing board members have volunteered their time, the questions that must be asked are: “Is this fair?”, and “Does this exclude other members in the community from participating on the board?” Should government and the universities continue to have an expectation that participation on the board continues to be voluntary and based on a sense of public service and altruism? This latter notion is a noble sentiment and does negate potential criticism that board members benefit from their participation. Yet it is clear that for the past and present board chairs interviewed as part of this research project, they were able to participate because four of the five were retired or semi-retired and had the financial wherewithal to do so since board chairs spent approximately 15-20 hours per week engaged in university business. Fairness would dictate that there should be some form of compensation but public service indicates that participation is a means of supporting the needs of the community. These two positions seem opposed but there should be further discussions about whether board members, at least board chairs, should be compensated based on their time and commitment to conduct the business of the university.

The final consideration I posit supports the recommendation made by Rytmeister (2009) that research into university governance should be linked together to provide a more comprehensive picture of how governance works and is changing in the universities. There have not been very many studies to date and the more effective studies in university governance have been qualitative research studies with relatively small sample sizes that make it hard to draw broader conclusions. Linking these various
studies together into a more comprehensive structure would start to build a more systematic approach to understand university governance. It provides the potential to develop an international collaborative structure between researchers at different universities so that similar research methodologies and questions can be used and shared. Each research study could then be fitted into a meta-synthesis mosaic about university governance that would help to better understand the university and its relationship with its various stakeholders. This is a complex task worthy of the attention of the academy.
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APPENDICES
Appendix A:

University Act (R.S.B.C.)

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UNIVERSITY ACT

[RSBC 1996] CHAPTER 468

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Part 1: Interpretation

Definitions

1 In this Act:

"alumni association" means the association of graduates of a university, membership in which is open to all graduates of the university;

"board" means the board of governors of a university;

"chancellor" means the chancellor of a university;

"convocation" means the convocation of a university;

"council" means the council of senates of the University of British Columbia described by section 38.1;

"director of continuing education" means the officer of a university whose duty it is to direct the university's continuing education program;

"faculty" means,

(a) in the case of a university named in section 3 (1), an academic administrative division of a university constituted by the board as a faculty under section 39, or the dean and faculty members of a faculty, as the context requires, or

(b) in the case of a special purpose, teaching university, an educational administrative division of a university constituted by the board as a faculty under section 39, or the dean and faculty members of a faculty, as the context requires;

"faculty member" means a person employed by a university as an instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, professor, or in an equivalent position designated by the senate;

"Okanagan senate" means the senate responsible for academic governance and powers under section 37 for purposes of the parts specified under section 3.1;

"president" means the president of a university;

"registrar" means the registrar of a university;

"senate" means

(a) for a university other than the University of British Columbia, the senate of the university, and

(b) for the University of British Columbia, as circumstances require, the Okanagan senate or the Vancouver senate;

"special purpose, teaching university" means a university referred to in section 3 (1.1) and designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under section 71 (3) (a);

"student" means a person who is presently enrolled at a university in a credit course or who is designated by resolution of the senate as a student;

"student society" means an organization incorporated as a society under the Society Act whose purpose is to represent the interests of the general undergraduate or graduate student body, or both, but does not include a provincial or national student organization;

"university" means
Analysis of University Governing Boards

(a) each of the universities named in section 3 (1), and
(b) a special purpose, teaching university;

"Vancouver senate" means the senate responsible for academic governance and powers under section 37 for purposes of the parts of the University of British Columbia not specified under section 3.1.

Part 2: Power to Grant Degrees

Power to grant degrees

2 Each university has in its own right and name the power to grant degrees established in accordance with this Act.

Part 3: University Structure

Continuation of universities

3 (1) The following corporations continue to be universities in British Columbia:
   (a) The University of British Columbia;
   (b) University of Victoria;
   (c) Simon Fraser University;
   (d) University of Northern British Columbia.

   (1.1) An institution that is designated as a special purpose, teaching university by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under section 71 (3) (a) is continued as a university in British Columbia.

   (2) Each university is composed of a chancellor, a convocation, a board, a senate and faculties.

   (2.1) Despite subsection (2), the University of British Columbia is composed of a chancellor, a convocation, a board, an Okanagan senate, a Vancouver senate, a council and faculties.

   (3) Each university continues as a corporation.

   (4) The Business Corporations Act does not apply to a university, but on the recommendation of the minister, the Minister of Finance, by regulation, may declare that all or part of that Act applies to a university.

   (5) [Repealed 2003-48-30.]

Parts for the Okanagan senate of the University of British Columbia

3.1 The board of the University of British Columbia must specify the parts of the university for which the Okanagan senate has responsibility for academic governance and powers under section 37.
Part 4: Convocation

Convocation required
4 Each university must have a convocation.

Composition of convocation
5 (1) The convocation of a university is composed of the following persons:
    (a) the chancellor, who is the chair;
    (b) the president;
    (c) the members of the senate;
    (d) all faculty members;
    (e) all persons who are graduates of the university;
    (f) all persons whose names are added to the roll of the convocation by the senate;
    (g) all persons not previously referred to in this section who are named on the roll of the convocation of that university immediately before July 4, 1974.
(2) Twenty members of a convocation constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Meeting of convocation
6 A meeting of a convocation may be held for one or more of the following purposes:
    (a) [Repealed 2008-24-4.]
    (b) conferring degrees, including honorary degrees;
    (c) awarding diplomas and certificates of proficiency granted by the university;
    (d) additional purposes the senate may specify.

Roll of convocation
7 The roll of the convocation must be continued and kept up to date by the registrar.

Member's expenses of convocation
8 The convocation may set a fee to be paid by its members to defray the necessary expenses of convocation.

Rules by senate
9 (1) The senate is to make rules governing procedure for the transaction of business by the convocation.
    (2) The senate may add names to the roll of the convocation under section 5.

Secretary of convocation
10 The registrar is the secretary of the convocation.
Part 5: Chancellor

Chancellor

11 (1) There must be a chancellor of each university, who is to be appointed by the board on nomination by the alumni association and after consultation with the senate or, in the case of the University of British Columbia, after consultation with the council.

(1.1) The chancellor holds office for 3 years and after that until a successor is appointed.

(2) A retiring chancellor is eligible for reappointment.

(3) A person may not hold the office of chancellor for more than 6 consecutive years in addition to the period of office held by the person as a result of having been appointed for the unexpired term of the person's predecessor.

(4) The chancellor must not be employed by a university.

Vacancy in office of chancellor

12 (1) If the office of chancellor becomes vacant for any reason before the expiration of the chancellor's term of office, the vacancy must be filled as soon as practicable as described in section 11 (1).

(2) A person appointed under subsection (1) holds office for the unexpired term of the predecessor in office.

Vice chancellor

13 The president of the university holds the office of vice chancellor.

Election of senate

14 (1) [Repealed 2008-24-7.]

(2) All nominations of candidates for membership in the senate must be signed by at least 3 persons entitled to vote in the election of the senate.

(3) The registrar must immediately send a written notice of nomination to each person nominated as a candidate for membership in the senate, with a request that the candidate forward to the registrar information about the following:

(a) the candidate's degrees and the dates of them;
(b) the candidate's occupation;
(c) offices held by the candidate at a university or in any other organization;
(d) the candidate's other professional or business interests;
(e) the candidate's publications.

Acclamation

15 If only as many candidates are nominated for the senate as are required to be elected, the candidates are declared to have been elected.
Report of election
16  (1) The registrar must report the results of the election to the senate at its first meeting following the election.
(2) If there is a tie vote between 2 or more candidates for an office, the senate must cast the deciding vote.
(3) If there is a tie vote between 2 or more candidates for an office at the University of British Columbia,
   (a) if the office is as a member of a senate, the senate must cast the deciding vote, and
   (b) if paragraph (a) does not apply, the council must cast the deciding vote.

Chancellor to confer degrees
17  The chancellor is to confer all degrees.

Part 6: Board of Governors

Board of governors
18  The board of governors for each university is continued.

Composition of board
19  (1) The board of a university, other than the University of British Columbia, is composed of 15 members as follows:
   (a) the chancellor;
   (b) the president;
   (c) 2 faculty members elected by the faculty members;
   (d) 8 persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, 2 of whom are to be appointed from among persons nominated by the alumni association;
   (e) 2 students elected from students who are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society;
   (f) one person elected by and from the employees of the university who are not faculty members.
(2) The board of the University of British Columbia is composed of 21 members, as follows:
   (a) the chancellor;
   (b) the president;
   (c) a faculty member who works through a part specified under section 3.1, elected by the faculty members who work through the part;
   (d) 2 faculty members who work through a part not specified under section 3.1, elected by the faculty members who work through the part;
   (e) 11 persons, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, 2 of whom are to be appointed from among persons nominated by the alumni association;
(f) a student who studies through a part specified under section 3.1, elected from the students who
   (i) are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society, and
   (ii) study through any part specified under section 3.1;
(g) 2 students who study through a part not specified under section 3.1, elected from the students who
   (i) are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society, and
   (ii) study through any part not specified under section 3.1;
(h) one person who must work through a part specified under section 3.1, elected by and from the employees of the university who
   (i) are not faculty members, and
   (ii) work through any part specified under section 3.1;
(i) one person who must work through a part not specified under section 3.1, elected by and from the employees of the university who
   (i) are not faculty members, and
   (ii) work through any part not specified under section 3.1.

**Term of office**

20 1 Each member of the board elected under section 19 (1) (c) and (f) and (2) (c), (d), (h) and (i) holds office for 3 years and after that until a successor is elected.

1.1 Each member of the board appointed under section 19 (1) (d) and (2) (e) holds office for a term of up to 3 years and after that until a successor is appointed.

2 Each member of the board elected under section 19 (1) (e) or (2) (f) or (g) holds office for one year and after that until a successor is elected.

3 The chancellor and president are members of the board for so long as they hold their respective offices.

**Reappointment or re-election**

21 The appointed members of the board are eligible for reappointment and the elected members are eligible for re-election, but those members must not hold office for more than 6 consecutive years.

**Removal from office**

22 1 The Lieutenant Governor in Council may, at any time, remove from office an appointed member of the board.

2 Unless excused by resolution of the board, a member who does not attend at least half of the regular meetings of the board in any year is deemed to have vacated his or her seat.
Persons not eligible
23 (1) The following persons are not eligible to be or to remain members of the board:
(a) members of the Parliament of Canada;
(b) members of the Executive Council or of the Legislative Assembly;
(c) [Repealed 2006-15-45.]
(d) a member of the public service in the ministry;
(e) a member of the public service designated by the minister.
(f) [Repealed 2003-48-32.]
(2) A member of the board who ceases to be eligible during his or her term of office immediately ceases to be a member of the board.

Vacancies on the board
24 (1) If a vacancy arises on the board because of the death of a member or for any other reason before the end of the term of office for which a member has been appointed or elected, the secretary of the board must enter a declaration of the vacancy in the minutes of the board.
(2) A declaration under subsection (1) is conclusive evidence of the vacancy.

Method of filling vacancies and effect of vacancy
25 (1) If a vacancy exists in respect of an appointed member, the Lieutenant Governor in Council must appoint a person to fill the vacancy.
(2) If a vacancy exists in respect of an elected member, the appropriate body must elect a replacement.
(3) A person appointed under subsection (1) or elected under subsection (2) holds office for the remainder of the term for which the person's predecessor was appointed or elected.
(4) A vacancy on the board does not impair the authority of the remaining members of the board to act.

Meetings of board
26 (1) The board must meet as often as is necessary to transact the business of the board, and in any event at least once every 3 months.
(2) Fifty-one percent of the members of the board constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business of the board.
(3) The chair has the same right to vote as the other members of the board, and, in the case of a tie vote on a motion, the motion is defeated, and the chair must so declare.

Powers of board
27 (1) The management, administration and control of the property, revenue, business and affairs of the university are vested in the board.
(2) Without limiting subsection (1) or the general powers conferred on the board by this Act, the board has the following powers:

(a) to make rules for the meetings of the board and its transactions;
(b) to elect from among its members a chair, and, when necessary, an acting chair;
(c) to appoint a secretary and committees it considers necessary to carry out the board’s functions, including joint committees with the senate, and to confer on the committees power and authority to act for the board;
(d) in consultation with the senate, to maintain and keep in proper order and condition the real property of the university, to erect and maintain the buildings and structures on it that in the opinion of the board are necessary and advisable, and to make rules respecting the management, government and control of the real property, buildings and structures;
(e) in consultation with the senate, to provide for conservation of the heritage sites of the university, including any heritage buildings, structures and land of the university;
(f) with the approval of the senate, to establish procedures for the recommendation and selection of candidates for president, deans, librarians, registrar and other senior academic administrators as the board may designate;
(g) subject to section 28, to appoint the president of the university, deans of all faculties, the librarian, the registrar, the bursar, the professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers, instructors and other members of the teaching staff of the university, and the officers and employees the board considers necessary for the purpose of the university, and to set their salaries or remuneration, and to define their duties and their tenure of office or employment;
(h) if the president is absent or unable to act, or if there is a vacancy in that office, to appoint an acting president;
(i) to consider recommendations from the senate for the establishment of faculties and departments with suitable teaching staff and courses of instruction;
(j) subject to section 29 and with the approval of the senate, to provide for the establishment of faculties and departments the board considers necessary;
(k) to provide for chairs, institutes, fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries and prizes the board and the senate consider advisable;
(l) to receive from the president and analyse and adopt with or without modifications the budgets for operating and capital expenditure for the university;
to set, determine and collect the fees
(i) to be paid for instruction, research and all other activities in the university,
(ii) for extramural instruction,
(iii) for public lecturing, library fees, and laboratory fees,
(iv) for examinations, degrees and certificates,
(v) for the use of any student or alumni organization in charge of student or alumni activities, and
(vi) for the building and operation of a gymnasium or other athletic facilities;

(n) to pay over
(i) the fees collected for a student or alumni organization that the organization may request, and
(ii) in accordance with section 27.1, the fees collected for a student society or a provincial or national student organization;

(o) to administer funds, grants, fees, endowments and other assets;

(p) to select a seal and arms for the university and have sole custody and use of the seal;

(q) to provide for student loans;

(r) with the approval of the senate, to determine the number of students that may in the opinion of the board, having regard to the resources available, be accommodated in the university or in any faculty of it, and to make rules considered advisable for limiting the admission or accommodation of students to the number so determined;

(s) to enter into agreements on behalf of the university;

(t) to control vehicle and pedestrian traffic on the university campus;

(u) to acquire and deal with
(i) an invention or any interest in it, or a licence to make, use or sell the product of an invention, and
(ii) a patent, copyright, trade mark, trade name or other proprietary right or any interest in it;

(v) to require, as a term of employment or assistance, that a person assign to the board an interest in an invention or an interest in a patent, copyright, trade mark, trade name or other proprietary right resulting from an invention
(i) made by that person using the facilities, equipment or financial aid provided by the board, or
(ii) made by that person while acting within the scope of the person's duties or employment, or resulting from or in connection with the person's duties or employment as an officer or employee of the university;

(w) to pay to a municipality incorporated under an Act a grant in a year not exceeding the lesser of
(i) the amount that would be payable as general municipal taxes in the year on property of the university within the municipality if the property were not exempt from these taxes, and
(ii) the amount specified by the minister or calculated in the manner specified by the minister;
(x) to make rules consistent with the powers conferred on the board by this Act;
(y) to do and perform all other matters and things that may be necessary or advisable for carrying out and advancing the purposes of the university and the performance of any duty by the board or its officers prescribed by this Act.

(3) A person appointed under subsection (2) (h) has, during the period for which he or she is appointed, all the powers, rights and privileges of the president.

(4) The board may require a student to provide the university with
(a) the personal information that relates directly to and is necessary for an operating program or activity of the university, and
(b) the personal information necessary to obtain a personal education number for the student.

(5) The board must submit the personal information collected under subsection (4) (b) to the minister responsible for the administration of the School Act to obtain a personal education number for the student.

(6) The board may use the personal education number obtained under subsection (5) for the following purposes:
(a) carrying out its responsibilities in respect of an operating program or activity of the university;
(b) research and statistical analysis of personal information in the possession of the board;
(c) facilitating the provision of personal information under section 49.

(7) In subsections (4), (5) and (6):
"personal education number" means a unique identification number for a student obtained under section 170.2 of the School Act;
"student" includes a person applying to enrol in a credit course at a university.

Student society fees
27.1 (1) Subject to subsection (2), on annual notice from a student society, the board must collect student society fees and remit them to the student society if
(a) the board collected fees on behalf of the student society between June 1, 1998 and June 1, 1999, or
(b) the student society has been designated by regulation and the amount of the student society fees has been approved by a majority of the members of the student society who voted in a referendum of that student society.

(2) If a student society referred to in subsection (1) (a) or (b) changes student society fees, the new amount or the rate of change must be approved, before a notice is issued under subsection (1), by a majority of the members of the student society who vote in a referendum of that student society.
(3) On annual notice from a student society, the board must collect fees on behalf of a provincial or national student organization, and remit them to the student society or directly to the provincial or national student organization, as may be agreed by the board and the student society, if
(a) the board collected fees on behalf of the provincial or national student organization between June 1, 1998 and June 1, 1999, or
(b) the student society has held a referendum and the majority of the members of the student society voting in that referendum voted in favour of joining the provincial or national student organization.

(4) The board may cease to collect or remit student society fees to a student society if one of the following applies:
(a) the student society fails to do one of the following in a timely manner:
   (i) make available to its members annual audited financial statements and a report on those financial statements by an auditor who meets the requirements of section 42 of the Society Act;
   (ii) inform the board in writing that the requirements set out in subparagraph (i) have been met;
(b) the student society is struck off the register in accordance with section 71 of the Society Act.

Tenure, appointment and removal of teaching staff and others

28 (1) Unless otherwise provided, the tenure of persons appointed under section 27 (2) (g) is during the pleasure of the board.

(2) A person must not be appointed a member of the teaching staff of the university or of any faculty of the university unless the person is first nominated for the position by the president.

(3) A member of the teaching staff of the university or of any faculty of the university must not be promoted or removed except on the recommendation of the president.

Limit on expenditures

29 (1) The board must not incur any liability or make any expenditure in a fiscal year beyond the amount unexpended of the grant made to the university and the estimated revenue of the university from other sources up to the end of and including that fiscal year, unless an estimate of the increased liability or over-expenditure has been first approved by the minister and Minister of Finance.

(2) [Repealed 1998-6-18.]
Reduction of grant
30 (1) If the services of employees of a university are withheld, or the university locks out the employees, as a consequence of a dispute or other disagreement between the university and employees of the university
(a) the total of unexpended amounts of the grant made to the university in the fiscal year is reduced by the value of the benefits, and
(b) the amount of the reduction calculated under paragraph (a) is a debt due and owing to the government and must be
(i) paid by the university to the government, or
(ii) withheld by the minister from future grants to the university in the fiscal year or a future fiscal year.
(2) In subsection (1) (a) the "value of the benefits" is the value of the benefits the employees would receive for the period of the withholding or lockout in the fiscal year if the employees had worked, less the costs necessarily incurred by the university as a consequence of the withholding or lockout and approved by the minister.

Short term borrowing
31 (1) The board may, by resolution, borrow money required to meet the expenditures of the university until the revenues of the current year are available.
(2) Money borrowed under subsection (1) must be repaid out of current revenues and may be secured by promissory notes of the university.

Annual report
32 (1) The board must make an annual report of its transactions to the minister, in which it must set out
(a) a balance sheet and a statement of revenue and expenditure for the year ending on the preceding March 31, and
(b) other particulars the minister may require.
(2) A copy of the annual report must be sent promptly to the senate.

Audit
33 Unless the Auditor General is appointed in accordance with the Auditor General Act as the auditor of the board, the board must appoint an auditor to audit the accounts of the board at least once each year.

Advisory boards
34 (1) The board may
(a) appoint advisory boards, consisting, either wholly or partly, of persons unconnected with the university, on terms and for purposes the board may consider advisable, and
(b) refer to an advisory board for advice and report any subject or matter that the board considers advisable.
(2) The advice and report of an advisory board appointed under subsection (1) must be considered and weighed by any body in the university to which the board directs the advice to be given or report to be made.
Part 7: Senate

Senate of a university other than University of British Columbia or special purpose, teaching university

35  (1) The senate for each university other than the University of British Columbia or a special purpose, teaching university is continued.

(2) The senate of each university other than the University of British Columbia or a special purpose, teaching university is composed of the following:

(a) the chancellor;
(b) the president, who is the senate's chair;
(c) the academic vice president or equivalent;
(d) the deans of faculties;
(e) the chief librarian;
(f) the director of continuing education;
(g) a number of faculty members equal to twice the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), to consist of 2 members of each faculty elected by the members of that faculty, and the remainder elected by the faculty members in the manner that they, in joint meeting, determine;
(h) a number of students, equal to the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), elected from the students who are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society, in a manner that ensures that at least one student from each faculty is elected;
(i) 4 persons who are not faculty members, elected by and from the convocation;
(j) one member to be elected by the governing body of each affiliated college of the university;
(k) additional members, determined by the senate, without altering the ratio set out in paragraphs (g) and (h).

Senates of the University of British Columbia

35.1 (1) The University of British Columbia must have a Vancouver senate and an Okanagan senate.

(2) The Vancouver Senate is composed of the following:

(a) the chancellor;
(b) the president, who is the senate's chair;
(c) the academic vice president who must work through a part not specified under section 3.1 or equivalent;
(d) the deans of faculties who must work through a part not specified under section 3.1;
(e) the chief librarian or a person designated for the purpose by the chief librarian;
(f) the director of continuing education or a person designated for the purpose by the director;
(g) a number of faculty members equal to twice the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), to consist of 2 members of each faculty elected by the members of that faculty, and the remainder elected by the faculty members in the manner that they, in joint meeting, determine, but only faculty members employed through parts not specified under section 3.1 can vote or be elected;

(h) a number of students, equal to the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), elected from the students who are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society, in a manner that ensures that at least one student from each faculty is elected, but only students studying through parts not specified under section 3.1 can vote or be elected;

(i) 4 persons who are not faculty members, elected by and from the convocation;

(j) one member to be elected by the governing body of each affiliated college of the university;

(k) additional members, determined by the senate, without altering the ratio set out in paragraphs (g) and (h).

(3) The Okanagan Senate is composed of the following:

(a) the chancellor;

(b) the president, who is the senate's chair;

(c) the academic vice president who must work through a part specified under section 3.1 or equivalent;

(d) the deans of faculties who must work through a part specified under section 3.1;

(e) the chief librarian or a person designated for the purpose by the chief librarian;

(f) the director of continuing education or a person designated for the purpose by the director;

(g) a number of faculty members equal to twice the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), to consist of 2 members of each faculty elected by the members of that faculty, and the remainder elected by the faculty members in the manner that they, in joint meeting, determine, but only faculty members employed through parts specified under section 3.1 can vote or be elected;

(h) a number of students, equal to the number of senate members provided in paragraphs (a) to (f), elected from the students who are members of an undergraduate student society or a graduate student society, in a manner that ensures that at least one student from each faculty is elected, but only students studying through parts specified under section 3.1 can vote or be elected;

(i) 2 persons who are not faculty members, elected by and from the convocation;

(j) additional members, determined by the senate, without altering the ratio set out in paragraphs (g) and (h).
Senate of a special purpose, teaching university

35.2 (1) A special purpose, teaching university must have a senate.
(2) The senate of a special purpose, teaching university is composed of the following:
   (a) the chancellor;
   (b) the president, who is its chair;
   (c) the academic vice president or equivalent;
   (d) the deans of faculties;
   (e) the chief librarian;
   (f) the registrar;
   (g) two faculty members for each faculty, elected by faculty members of the faculty;
   (h) four students elected by the students;
   (i) one alumni member who is not a faculty member, appointed by the president on nomination by the alumni association;
   (j) two support staff elected by the support staff;
   (k) one non-voting member of the senate, if appointed to the senate by the board to serve for one year.
(3) For the purposes of subsection (2) (j), "support staff" means employees of the special purpose, teaching university who are not
   (a) officers of the special purpose, teaching university, or
   (b) deans or faculty members.
(4) The senate of a special purpose, teaching university must make bylaws for the conduct of the business of the senate, including bylaws specifying the duties of members of the senate in conflict of interest situations.
(5) The senate of a special purpose, teaching university has the power and duty to do all of the following:
   (a) regulate how its meetings and proceedings are conducted, including determining
      (i) the quorum necessary for the transaction of its business, and
      (ii) how a vice chair, who is to chair meetings in the absence of the president, is annually elected;
   (b) set criteria for awarding certificates, diplomas and degrees, including honorary degrees;
   (c) set curriculum content for courses leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees;
   (d) set qualifications for admission;
   (e) set policies concerning examinations and evaluation of student performance;
   (f) set residency requirements for awarding credentials for courses and programs;
   (g) set policies concerning student withdrawal from courses, programs or the special purpose, teaching university;
   (h) set criteria for academic standing, academic standards and the grading system;
   (i) set criteria for awards recognizing academic excellence;
(j) set policies and procedures for appeals by students on academic matters and establish a final appeal tribunal for these appeals;

(k) set policies on curriculum evaluation for determining whether
   (i) courses or programs, or course credit, from another university or body are equivalent to courses or programs, or course credit, at the special purpose, teaching university, or
   (ii) courses or programs, or course credit, from one part of the special purpose, teaching university are equivalent to courses or programs, or course credit, in another part of the special purpose, teaching university.

(6) The senate of a special purpose, teaching university must advise the board, and the board must seek advice from the senate, on the development of educational policy for the following matters:

(a) the mission statement and the educational goals, objectives, strategies and priorities of the special purpose, teaching university;

(b) the establishment, revision or discontinuance of courses and programs at the special purpose, teaching university;

(c) the preparation and presentation of reports after implementation by the special purpose, teaching university without prior review by the senate of
   (i) new non-credit programs, or
   (ii) programs offered under service contract;

(d) the priorities for implementation of new programs and courses leading to certificates, diplomas or degrees;

(e) the establishment or discontinuance of faculties at the special purpose, teaching university;

(f) the evaluation of programs and educational services;

(g) the library and resource centres;

(h) the setting of the academic schedule;

(i) the qualifications for faculty members;

(j) the adjudication procedure for appealable matters of student discipline;

(k) the terms for affiliation with other post-secondary bodies;

(l) the consultation with community and program advisory groups concerning the special purpose, teaching university's educational programs;

(m) other matters specified by the board.

Term of office

36 (1) The term of office of a member of the senate, other than one elected under section 35 (2) (h), 35.1 (2) (h) or (3) (h) or 35.2 (2) (h) or appointed under section 35.2 (2) (k), is 3 years and after that until a successor is appointed or elected.

(2) The term of office of a member of the senate elected under section 35 (2) (h), 35.1 (2) (h) or (3) (h) or 35.2 (2) (h) or appointed under section 35.2 (2) (k) is one year and after that until a successor is elected.
(3) Members of a senate who remain eligible under section 35, 35.1 or 35.2 may be reappointed or re-elected in the manner provided under section 35, 35.1 or 35.2 for further terms.

(4) If a vacancy arises on the senate, the vacancy must be filled,
(a) in the case of an appointed member, by the body possessing the power of appointment, or
(b) in the case of an elected member, in the manner specified by the senate.

(5) A person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy holds office for the remainder of the term for which the person's predecessor was appointed or elected.

(6) The secretary of the senate must enter a declaration of the vacancy in the minutes of the senate.

(7) A declaration under subsection (6) is conclusive evidence of the vacancy.

Powers of senate of university named in section 3

37 (1) The academic governance of the university is vested in the senate and it has the following powers:
(a) to regulate the conduct of its meetings and proceedings, including the determination of the quorum necessary for the transaction of its business, and the election of a vice chair at least annually, who is to chair meetings in the absence of the president;
(b) to establish committees it considers necessary and, by 2/3 vote of its members present, to delegate to one or more committees those of its powers as it may determine;
(c) to determine all questions relating to the academic and other qualifications required of applicants for admission as students to the university or to any faculty, and to determine in which faculty the students pursuing a course of study must register;
(d) to determine the conditions under which candidates must be received for examination, to appoint examiners and to determine the conduct and results of all examinations;
(e) to establish a standing committee to meet with the president and assist the president in preparing the university budget;
(f) to consider, approve and recommend to the board the revision of courses of study, instruction and education in all faculties and departments of the university;
(g) to provide for courses of study in any place in British Columbia and to encourage and develop extension and correspondence programs;
(h) to provide for and to grant degrees, including honorary degrees, diplomas and certificates of proficiency, except in theology;
(i) to recommend to the board the establishment or discontinuance of any faculty, department, course of instruction, chair, fellowship, scholarship, exhibition, bursary or prize;
(j) to award fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries and prizes;
(k) to determine the members of the teaching and administrative staffs who are to be members of each faculty;
(l) to make rules for the management and conduct of the library;
(m) to establish policies regarding the conservation of heritage objects and collections that are owned by or in the possession of the university or any of its faculties, divisions, departments or other agencies;
(n) to provide for the preparation and publication of a university calendar;
(o) to make recommendations to the board considered advisable for promoting the interests of the university or for carrying out the objects and provisions of this Act;
(p) to deal with all matters reported by the faculties, affecting their respective departments or divisions;
(q) to establish a standing committee to consider and take action on behalf of the senate on all matters that may be referred to the senate by the board;
(r) subject to the approval of the board, to enter into agreements with any corporation or society in British Columbia entitled under any Act to establish examinations for admission to the corporation or society, for the purpose of conducting examinations and reporting results, and those corporations or societies have power to enter into the agreements;
(s) to make rules respecting the conduct and financing of examinations referred to in paragraph (r) and other examinations conducted by the senate under any other Act;
(t) to make rules respecting the reporting of results of examinations referred to in paragraphs (r) and (s);
(u) to set the terms of affiliation with other universities, colleges or other institutions of learning, and to modify or terminate the affiliation;
(v) to establish a standing committee of final appeal for students in matters of academic discipline;
(w) to establish a standing committee on relations with other post secondary institutions in British Columbia;
(x) to require any faculty to establish an advisory committee consisting of students of the faculty and members of the community at large.

(1.1) For the purposes of subsection (1), the academic governance and powers at the University of British Columbia are vested in
(a) the Okanagan senate for the purposes related to the parts specified under section 3.1, and
(b) the Vancouver senate for the purposes related to the parts of the university not specified under section 3.1.

(2) A vice chair elected under subsection (1) (a) must not serve more than 2 consecutive terms.

(3) No part of the cost of examinations referred to in subsection (1) (r) or (s) may be a charge on or be paid out of university funds.

(4) In this section, "university" means a university named in section 3 (1).
Approval by board

38. (1) A certified copy of every resolution or order of the senate or council, providing for any of the matters or things mentioned in section 37 (1) (i), (p) and (u), must be sent to the board within 10 days of the resolution or order being passed.

(2) A resolution or order referred to in subsection (1) has no effect until approved by the board.

Council of senates of the University of British Columbia

38.1 (1) A council of senates of the University of British Columbia is established for the University of British Columbia and is composed of the following:
(a) the chancellor;
(b) the president, who is the chair;
(c) the academic vice president or equivalent, for the parts specified under section 3.1;
(d) the academic vice president or equivalent, for the parts of the university not specified under section 3.1;
(e) 4 persons, who are not referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), (c) or (d), elected by the Vancouver senate from among its members;
(f) 4 persons, who are not referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), (c) or (d), elected by the Okanagan senate from among its members;
(g) one or 2 persons designated by the president and, if 2 are designated, one must be designated for the Okanagan Senate and one must be designated for the Vancouver Senate;
(h) up to 10 chairs of the standing committees of the Vancouver senate elected by the persons referred to in paragraphs (a) to (g);
(i) up to 10 chairs of the standing committees of the Okanagan senate elected by the persons referred to in paragraph (a) to (g).

(2) The vice chair of the council is the member of the council specified by the president and serves as chair in the absence of the president.

(3) The term of office on the council of a person referred to in subsection (1) (e) or (f) is 3 years from the date of their election and they may continue in office after that date until another person is elected to the position.

(4) The fact that persons referred to in subsection (1) (e) or (f) cease to be members of the Vancouver senate or the Okanagan senate does not disqualify them from completing their term of office on the council of senates of the University of British Columbia.

Powers of the council of senates of the University of British Columbia

38.2 (1) The president, the board, the Vancouver Senate, the Okanagan Senate or the council may direct that a matter that the Vancouver senate or the Okanagan senate might consider, is considering or has considered in the exercise of that senate's powers under section 37 is referred to the council for consideration and disposition.
(2) If a direction is made under subsection (1),
   (a) the council may act to consider and dispose of the matter under section 37 as though it were a senate,
   (b) the Vancouver senate or the Okanagan senate involved must cease to act under section 37 concerning the matter insofar as the council may act under paragraph (a), and
   (c) the council may substitute its disposition in respect of the matter for any disposition the Vancouver senate or the Okanagan senate may have made.

(3) The council may regulate the conduct of its meetings and proceedings, including the determination of the quorum necessary for the transaction of its business.

(4) Sections 37 (1) (e), (o) and (u) and 43 (1) do not apply to the Vancouver senate or the Okanagan senate and the council may act under those sections as though it was a senate.

Part 8: Faculties

Faculties

39 (1) The faculties of each university may be constituted by the board, on the recommendation of the senate.

(2) A dean of a faculty is the chair of the faculty of which he or she is the dean.

Powers and duties of faculty

40 A faculty has the following powers and duties:
   (a) to make rules governing its proceedings, including the determining of the quorum necessary for the transaction of business;
   (b) to provide for student representation in the meetings and proceedings of the faculty;
   (c) subject to this Act and to the approval of the senate, to make rules for the government, direction and management of the faculty and its affairs and business;
   (d) to determine, subject to the approval of the senate, the courses of instruction in the faculty;
   (e) subject to an order of the president to the contrary, to prohibit lecturing and teaching in the faculty by persons other than appointed members of the teaching staff of the faculty and persons authorized by the faculty, and to prevent lecturing or teaching so prohibited;
   (f) subject to the approval of the senate, to appoint for the examinations in each faculty examiners, who, subject to an appeal to the senate, must conduct examinations and determine the results;
(g) to deal with and, subject to an appeal to the senate, to decide on all applications and memorials by students and others in connection with their respective faculties;
(h) generally, to deal with all matters assigned to it by the board or the senate.

**Approval of rules**

41 A general rule made by a faculty is not effective or enforceable until a copy has been sent to the senate and the senate has given its approval.

**Advice to president**

42 Any of the faculties may advise the president in any matter affecting the interests of the university, whether academic or disciplinary, but that advice does not limit the powers and authority of the president.

**Part 9: Nominations, Elections and Voting**

**Rules for elections**

43 (1) The senate must make and publish all rules necessary and consistent with this Act in respect of nominations, elections and voting.

(2) The registrar must conduct all elections that are required.

**Nomination paper to registrar**

44 A nomination paper is not valid unless at least 4 weeks before the date of the election

(a) it is delivered at the office of the registrar, or

(b) if sent by mail, it is received by the registrar.

**Election register**

45 (1) In every year in which an election is to take place, the registrar must prepare an alphabetical list, to be called the election register, of the names and known addresses of all members of the convocation who are entitled to vote at an election.

(2) The election register must be open to inspection at all reasonable hours by all members entitled to vote.

(3) The registrar must similarly keep an alphabetical list of the names of all students who are members of the undergraduate student society or the graduate student society.

**Voters to be registered**

46 Only those persons whose names appear in the election registers are entitled to vote at an election.
Part 10: Powers and Duties of a University

Power and capacity of a natural person

46.1 Subject to this Act and for the purposes of exercising its powers and carrying out its duties and functions under this Act, a university has the power and capacity of a natural person of full capacity.

Functions and duties of university named in section 3

47 (1) In this section, "university" means a university named in section 3 (1).

(2) A university must, so far as and to the full extent that its resources from time to time permit, do all of the following:
   (a) establish and maintain colleges, schools, institutes, faculties, departments, chairs and courses of instruction;
   (b) provide instruction in all branches of knowledge;
   (c) establish facilities for the pursuit of original research in all branches of knowledge;
   (d) establish fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, prizes, rewards and pecuniary and other aids to facilitate or encourage proficiency in the subjects taught in the university and original research in all branches of knowledge;
   (e) provide a program of continuing education in all academic and cultural fields throughout British Columbia;
   (f) generally, promote and carry on the work of a university in all its branches, through the cooperative effort of the board, senate and other constituent parts of the university.

Functions and duties of special purpose, teaching university

47.1 A special purpose, teaching university must do all of the following:
   (a) in the case of a special purpose, teaching university that serves a geographic area or region of the province, provide adult basic education, career, technical, trade and academic programs leading to certificates, diplomas and baccalaureate and masters degrees, subject to and in accordance with regulations under section 71 (3) (c) (i);
   (b) in the case of a special purpose, teaching university that serves the whole province, provide applied and professional programs leading to baccalaureate and masters degrees, subject to and in accordance with regulations under section 71 (3) (c) (ii);
   (c) provide, in addition to post-secondary programs referred to in paragraph (a) or (b), post-secondary programs specified in regulations under section 71 (3) (c) (iii);
   (d) so far as and to the extent that its resources from time to time permit, undertake and maintain applied research and scholarly activities to support the programs of the special purpose, teaching university.
Minister not to interfere

48 (1) The minister must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university, its board, senate and other constituent bodies by this Act respecting any of the following:
(a) the formulation and adoption of academic policies and standards;
(b) the establishment of standards for admission and graduation;
(c) the selection and appointment of staff.
(2) Despite subsection (1), a university must not establish a new degree program without the approval of the minister.

Reports to minister

49 (1) At the request of the minister, a university must provide the minister with reports and any other information that the minister considers necessary to carry out the minister's responsibilities in relation to universities.
(2) Information requested under subsection (1) may include personal information about a student.
(3) Personal information obtained under this section or under section 170.2 of the School Act may not be used to make a decision respecting an individual student.
(4) For the purposes of subsections (2) and (3), "student" has the same meaning as in section 27 (7).

Property

50 (1) A university may acquire, by gift, purchase or any other manner, and hold, for the purposes of a university, property of any kind.
(2) Subject to the approval of the minister and to the terms of any grant, conveyance, gift or devise of land, a university may
(a) mortgage, sell, transfer, lease for not more than 99 years, or otherwise dispose of its land, and
(b) lease for any term any of its land to a college affiliated with the university.
(3) Subject to the terms of any grant, conveyance, gift or bequest of any personal property, a university may mortgage, sell, transfer, lease or otherwise dispose of its property.
(4) Despite this or any other Act, The University of British Columbia may lease portions of land described in a grant made on or about December 4, 1924, under section 5 (a) of the British Columbia University Site Act, 1918, S.B.C. 1918, c. 94, for a term not exceeding 999 years to any incorporated theological college affiliated with The University of British Columbia, subject to the following provisions:
(a) a lease must not be made under this subsection except with the prior approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council;
(b) the rental reserved by the lease may be less than fair rental for the land leased, or may be a nominal rental;
(c) every lease made under this subsection must contain provisions, satisfactory to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, for re-entry and taking possession by The University of British Columbia of the land leased and all buildings on it, if
(i) the land or any part of it ceases to be occupied and used by the incorporated theological college to which the land is leased, or
(ii) the land or any part of it is occupied or used for a purpose other than college purposes.

Expropriation of land
51 A university may expropriate any land that it considers necessary for its purposes.

Perpetuities
52 The rule against perpetuities and other rules restricting the holding of land do not apply to property of a university.

Exemption from expropriation
53 (1) Land that is vested in a university is not liable to be entered, used or taken by any municipal or other corporation, or by any person possessing the right of taking land compulsorily for any purpose.

(2) A power to expropriate land under an Act enacted after July 4, 1974 does not apply to land vested in a university, unless, in the Act, the power is, in express terms, made to apply to that land.

Exemption from taxation
54 (1) Unless otherwise provided in an Act, the property vested in a university and held or used for university purposes is exempt from taxation under the Community Charter, the Local Government Act, the School Act, the Vancouver Charter and the Taxation (Rural Area) Act.

(2) If land vested in a university is disposed of by lease to a college affiliated with the university, so long as it is held for college purposes, the land continues to be entitled to the exemption from taxation provided in this section.

Powers regarding certain property
55 A university may acquire, take and hold all property that may be in good faith
(a) mortgaged or pledged to it by way of security,
(b) foreclosed, or conveyed to it in satisfaction of debts previously contracted, or
(c) purchased at judicial sales on levy for the indebtedness, for the purpose of avoiding a loss to the university or to the owners.
Execution of documents
56 All deeds, transfers, mortgages, instruments or documents required to be in writing, and to which a university is a party, are deemed to be properly executed by the university if
(a) the corporate name and seal of the university are affixed to them by an officer authorized by the board, and
(b) the corporate name and seal are witnessed by the signature of an officer authorized and the chair of the board or other person authorized by the board.

Investments
57 Subject to a contrary intent expressed in a gift, devise, bequest or trust, section 15 of the Trustee Act does not apply to investments made by a board of a university and each board
(a) may invest money belonging to the university and available for investment, and
(b) must, when investing under paragraph (a), make investments that a prudent person would make.

Borrowing
58 (1) With the approval of the minister and Minister of Finance, a university may borrow money for the purpose of
(a) purchasing or otherwise acquiring land for the use of the university, or
(b) erecting, repairing, adding to, furnishing or equipping any building or other structure for the use of the university.
(2) The board may
(a) enter into any agreement that it may consider necessary or advisable for carrying out the purposes mentioned in this section, and
(b) execute in the name of the university all agreements, deeds and other instruments considered necessary or advisable to carry into effect the provisions of the agreement.
(3) [Repealed 1998-6-19.]

Part 11: President and Registrar

President and powers
59 (1) There must be a president of the university, who is to be the chief executive officer and must generally supervise and direct the academic work of the university.
(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the president has the following powers:
(a) to recommend appointments, promotions and removal of members of the teaching and administrative staffs and the officers and employees of the university;
(b) to summon meetings of a faculty when the president considers it necessary or advisable to do so, and at his or her discretion to convene joint meetings of all or any of the faculties;
(c) to authorize lectures and instruction in any faculty to be given by persons other than the appointed members of the teaching staff;
(d) to establish the committees the president may consider necessary or advisable.

**Suspension of staff member**

60 (1) The president has power to suspend any member of the teaching and administrative staffs and any officer or employee of the university.

(2) On the exercise of the power, the president must promptly report the action to the board with a statement of his or her reasons.

(3) A person who is suspended under this section has a right of appeal to the board.

**Suspension of student**

61 (1) The president has power to suspend a student and to deal summarily with any matter of student discipline.

(2) On the exercise of the power, the president must promptly report the action to the standing committee established under section 37 (1) (v) with a statement of his or her reasons.

(3) The action of the president is final and subject in all cases to an appeal to the senate.

**Duties of president**

62 (1) The president must
(a) prepare and publish an annual report on the progress of the university,
(b) make any necessary recommendations to the board and the senate, and
(c) report on any matter referred to the president by the board or the senate.

(2) The president must prepare and submit to the board an annual budget in consultation with the appropriate standing committee of the senate.

(3) The president must present the submissions of the university to the minister.

**Offices of president**

63 The president
(a) is a member of the board and must attend its regular meetings,
(b) is chair of the senate,
(c) is a member of all standing committees of the senate except the standing committee on appeals,
(d) is a member of each faculty, and
(e) in the absence of the chancellor, is chair of convocation and must confer degrees.

Registrar

64 (1) There must be a registrar, who must keep the records and perform the duties that the board or senate may require.
(2) The registrar is the secretary of convocation, the senate and of each of the faculties, but has no right to vote as such.

Acting registrar

65 If the registrar is unable to act or is absent, the board may appoint an acting registrar, who must perform the duties of the registrar and has all the powers of the registrar.

Part 12: General

Theological colleges

66 (1) A university must be non-sectarian and non-political in principle.
(2) Despite subsection (1), a theological college incorporated in British Columbia may be affiliated with a university under a resolution or order made by the senate and approved by the board.
(3) An incorporated theological college affiliated with a university may, despite that affiliation, have power to confer and grant degrees in theology, including honorary degrees.
(4) Despite any other provisions of this Act, an affiliated college may
   (a) make provisions it considers proper in regard to religious instruction and religious worship for its own students, and
   (b) require religious observance as part of its discipline.

Granting of degrees, use of name and coat of arms, etc.

67 (1) A person in British Columbia other than a university must not use or be known by the name of a university.
(2) A person must not in British Columbia hold itself out or be known as a university, or grant degrees in its own name except in accordance with powers granted under this Act.
(3) An institution under the College and Institute Act may grant the degrees it is entitled to grant under that Act.
(4) [Repealed 2004-33-31.]
(5) A person must not assume or use, in the course of trade, occupation or calling, or otherwise,
(a) the coat of arms of a university or used in the various offices or departments of a university,
(b) any design in imitation of that coat of arms, or calculated by its resemblance to deceive, or
(c) any paper or other material on which the coat of arms or any design in imitation, or resemblance calculated to deceive, is stamped, engraved, printed or otherwise marked.

(6) Despite subsection (2), the open university established under the Open Learning Agency Act may grant degrees in its own name in accordance with that Act.

(7) [Repealed RS1996(Supp)-468-1.]

(8) Despite subsection (2), the Royal Roads University established under the Royal Roads University Act may grant degrees in its own name in accordance with that Act.

(9) [Repealed 2002-35-15.]

(10) Despite subsection (2), a person to whom consent under the Degree Authorization Act is given to grant or confer a degree may grant the degree in its own name in accordance with the consent.

(11) Despite subsection (2), the Thompson Rivers University established under the Thompson Rivers University Act may grant degrees in its own name in accordance with that Act.

No liability for acts of students

68 An action, prosecution or other proceeding does not lie and must not be instituted against a university, the board, the senate or the members of the board or the senate, or any officer or employee of a university, in respect of any act or omission of a student arising out of an association or activity organized, managed or controlled, in whole or in part, by students of a university or of an affiliated college.

Limitation of liability

69 (1) An action or proceeding must not be brought against a member of a board, senate or faculties, or against an officer or employee of a university, in respect of an act or omission of a member of a board, senate or faculties, or officer or employee, of the university done or omitted in good faith in the course of the execution of the person's duties on behalf of the university.

(2) In an action against a university, if it appears that the university acted under the authority of this Act or any other Act, the court must dismiss the action against the university.

Jurisdictional disputes

70 (1) If a question arises respecting the powers and duties of the convocation, chancellor, president, faculties or an officer or employee of the university, that is not provided for in this Act, the board must settle and determine the question.
(2) A decision of the board under subsection (1) is final.

Provision of personal information

70.1 (1) In this section, "personal education number" and "student" have the same meanings as in section 27 (7).

(2) The minister must provide to the minister responsible for the administration of the School Act the personal information about a student that is in the possession of the minister if the minister responsible for the administration of the School Act requests that information and provides the minister with a valid personal education number for that student.

Part 13: Regulations

Power to make regulations

71 (1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations referred to in section 41 of the Interpretation Act.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations
   (a) defining any expression used but not defined in this Act,
   (b) for the purposes of section 27.1 (1) (b), and
   (c) prescribing conditions or limitations for the purpose of section 54.

(3) Without limiting subsection (1), the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations as follows:
   (a) designating as a special purpose, teaching university an institution that is designated under section 5 of the College and Institute Act, and specifying a name for the special purpose, teaching university;
   (b) specifying the geographic area or region that a special purpose, teaching university designated under paragraph (a) serves;
   (c) specifying the following:
      (i) in the case of a special purpose, teaching university that serves a geographic area or region of the province, the adult basic education, career, technical, trade or academic programs that the special purpose, teaching university must provide;
      (ii) in the case of a special purpose, teaching university that serves the whole province, the applied or professional programs that the special purpose, teaching university must provide;
      (iii) other post-secondary programs that the special purpose, teaching university must provide.

(4) On the designation of a special purpose, teaching university under subsection (3) (a), the special purpose, teaching university is continued as a corporation composed of a chancellor, a convocation, a board, a senate and faculties with the name given it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.
Appendix B:

Research Ethics Approval

October 23, 2008

Mr. Lane Trotter
Graduate Student
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Dear Mr. Trotter:

Re: Rebuilding boards: A review of university boards and their impact on higher education governance - Appl. #: 39283

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced Request for Ethical Approval of Research has been approved on behalf of the Research Ethics Board. This approval is in effect until the end date September 30, 2011, or only during the period in which you are a registered SFU student.

The Office of Research Ethics must be notified of any changes in the approved protocol. Request for amendments to the protocol may be requested by email to dore@sfu.ca. In all correspondence relating to this application, please reference the application number shown on this letter and all email.

Your application has been categorized as "minimal risk" and approved by the Director, Office of Research Ethics, on behalf of the Research Ethics Board in accordance with University policy R20.01, http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01.htm. The Board reviews and may amend decisions or subsequent amendments made independently by the Director, Chair or Deputy Chair at its regular monthly meetings.

.../2
"Minimal risk" occurs when potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms incurred by participating in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the participant in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the researcher, or the responsibility of the Student Supervisor if the researcher is a graduate student or undergraduate student, to maintain written or other forms of documented consent for a period of 1 year after the research has been completed.

If there is an adverse event, the principal investigator must notify the Office of Research Ethics within five (5) days. An Adverse Events form is available electronically by contacting dore@sfu.ca.

All correspondence with regards to this application will be sent to your SFU email address.

Please notify the Office of Research Ethics at dore@sfu.ca once you have completed the data collection portion of your project so that we can close this file.

Best wishes for success in this research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

c: Dr. John LaBrie, Supervisor

/jmy
Appendix C:

Initial Letter to the Universities Seeking Their Support for the Research

November 21, 2008

Dear [Name],

I am a doctoral graduate student studying governance in higher education institutions, in particular, in universities. The purpose of my research is to examine the role of individual lay-governors who were appointed by government to serve on university governing Boards. Only a limited amount of research has been conducted on the role of governing Boards within the university governance framework. Most research has focused on the role of the President within the governance framework. My research will attempt to build a greater understanding of the role of the individual lay-governor appointed by government who serve on the university Board of Governors. Specifically my research will be examining the perception of lay-governors and their understanding of the role they play. It will also ask the question whom does the lay-governor think they represent within the governance process.

My population of study is government appointed lay-governors serving on university governing Boards. My proposed sample group will be comprised of three government appointed lay-governors from three universities in British Columbia. The specific sample will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of the governing Board along with the lay-governor with the least amount of time served on the Board of Governors. I also wish to interview the current President of the three universities selected for study to ask them their understanding and perception of the role of the Board of Governors within the university governance structure and of the role of individual lay-governor serving on the governing Board. Finally, I also will seek to interview a past President from each of these universities to provide additional perspective of the role of lay governors.

The proposed research study is being conducted under the auspices and approval of Simon Fraser University and has received approval.
from the Office Of Research Ethics. I am seeking permission from your institution to conduct research. The proposed group I would like to interview as part of my research will include three lay-governors along with the President of your university. The composition of which lay-governors I seek to interview are lay-governors appointed by the government and includes the Chair and Vice-Chair of the university Board of Governors and the newest member serving on the Board. In the event that these individuals were not appointed by the government, then the selection will be based on the two longest serving eligible lay-governors appointed by government. This rule will also be applied in the case for the newest lay-governor serving on the Board so that the newest serving government appointed lay-governor will be selected. If one of the eligible lay-governors does not wish to participate then the selection, based on the rules indicated above, will be to the next lay-governor with the greatest or least amount of time. The President has been included as part of the sample because of the critical role they play in university governance and because they provide a juxtaposition for triangulating the views of the lay-governors. This structure should provide for a balance between the views of experienced lay-governors and new lay-governors to see if there are any difference in their understanding of their roles.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and confidentiality will be protected to the full extent permitted by law. Please be aware that given the small sample size, there may be a risk that your institution may be identified as one of the universities being studied. However, I will attempt to ensure the confidentiality of responses from those who are interviewed by this study to the full extent permitted by law. Please note that any information with respect to child abuse or the threat or physical harm has to be reported to the relevant authorities.

With respect to how the research will be conducted, each of the participants will be interviewed and asked a series of questions pertaining to their understanding of their role as lay-governors on the university governing Board. Each interview should take approximately one hour and a digital audio recording device will be used. Once the information is collected and transcribed, the participants will have an opportunity to review the transcript and correct any misstatements to ensure that their intended responses have been accurately captured.

The information that is collected will be used for my doctoral dissertation. The information could also be presented in other scholarly formats such as articles in research journals. The dissertation will be kept in the Library at Simon Fraser University.

I will also keep an electronic copy of the dissertation and would be
protect your confidentiality as described above.

I greatly appreciate your participation in the research study. The study will be conducted by interview and take approximately one hour of your time. You may need to allocate another hour of additional time to review the draft transcript and make changes.

Thank you for your interest in this study. I genuinely appreciate your time.

Yours sincerely,

Lane D. Trotter
Doctoral Graduate Student
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

pc: Dr. John LaBrie
Senior Supervisor
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
Appendix D:

Informed Consent by Participants

Dear [Name],

I am a doctoral graduate student studying governance in higher education institutions, in particular, in universities. The purpose of my research is to examine the role of individual lay-governors who were appointed by government to serve on university governing Boards. Only a limited amount of research has been conducted on the role of governing Boards within the university governance framework. Most research has focused on the role of the President within the governance framework. My research will attempt to build a greater understanding of the role of the individual lay-governor appointed by government who serve on the university Board of Governors. Specifically, my research will examine the perception of lay-governors and their understanding of the role they play in university governance. It will also ask the question who do the lay-governor think they represent within the governance process.

My population of study is government appointed lay-governors serving on university governing Boards. My proposed sample group will be comprised of three government appointed lay-governors from three universities in British Columbia. The specific sample will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of the governing Board along with the lay-governor with the least amount of time served on the Board of Governors. I also wish to interview the current President of the three universities selected for study to ask them their understanding and perception of the role of the Board of Governors within the university governance structure and of the role of individual lay-governor serving on
the governing Board. Finally, I also will seek to interview a past President from each of these universities to provide additional perspective of the role of lay governors.

The proposed research study is being conducted under the auspices and approval of Simon Fraser University. Your participation in this research is voluntary and your confidentiality will be protected to the full extent permitted by law. Please be aware that given the small sample size, there may be a risk that your institution may be identified as one of the universities being studied. However, I will attempt to ensure the confidentiality of your responses to the full extent permitted by law. Please note that any information with respect to child abuse or the threat or physical harm has to be reported to the relevant authorities.

With respect to how the research will be conducted, you will be asked series of questions pertaining to your understanding of the role of government appointed lay-governors serving on university Boards of Governors through an interview process. Once the information is collected and transcribed you will have an opportunity to review the transcript and correct any misstatements to ensure that your responses have been accurately captured. This information can be sent to you through registered mail for a paper-based draft transcript or electronically through e-mail. Once you have made any changes those changes can be mailed back to me or sent by e-mail. Any costs you incur in this process will be reimbursed. Please note that although e-mail is convenient, it may create a breach in the confidentiality of your responses. If you wish for me to e-mail the transcript of the interview to you, then I would request that you provide your written consent at the bottom of this page.

The information that is collected will be used for my doctoral dissertation. The information could also be presented in other scholarly formats such as articles in research journals. The dissertation will be kept in the Library at Simon Fraser University. I will also keep an electronic copy of the dissertation and would be pleased to send it to you upon request. The raw data will be kept by me in a secured encrypted format on my
home computer to protect your confidentiality as described above.

I greatly appreciate your participation in the research study. The study will be conducted by interview and take approximately one hour of your time. You may need to allocate another hour of additional time to review the draft transcript and make changes.

Thank you for your interest in this study. I genuinely appreciate your time.

Yours sincerely,

Lane D. Trotter  
Doctoral Graduate Student  
Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University

pc: Dr. John LaBrie  
Senior Supervisor  
Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University
Notice of Consent to use e-mail

I ____________________________ agree that the researcher can e-mail me the draft transcript of the interview even though there may be an increased risk that this may breach my confidentiality.
I understand the risks and contributions of my participation in this study and agree to participate:

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<td>Participant Last Name:</td>
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<th>Participant Signature (for adults):</th>
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Appendix E:

Interview Questions for Board Members

Interview Questions for SFU EdD Research

For Board Members:

How long have you been a member of the university governing Board? Have you ever served on any other university of post-secondary governing Boards? Can you please indicate the types of organizations you have served as a Board member and for how long?

- What is your profession or occupation? Have you ever served in a supervisory or managerial role in your work life?

Are you currently a member of any other governing Boards in the public or private sector? Has this helped you in your role as a lay-governor on the university governing Board. Please describe how.

What are the key components of Board member education for your board? Please describe the initial orientation you received when you were selected to serve on the Board? What types of additional training or education have you received since your initial orientation? Was this done for the entire Board and was it voluntary or mandatory?

What types of actions or activities could the senior administration do to help the Board be more effective in its role and be more effective in governing the university?

What are the types of activities the Board engages in to better understand the university? Does this include meeting with students, faculty, staff and administration? Are these structured events, unstructured events, group or single activities? Please provide some examples.

Please describe what you see as the three most important goals of the Board and of the President. How does the Board establish its priorities and how often does it review those priorities?

What is the leadership development/succession planning process for the Board and who is responsible for overseeing that this carried out?

What are the written procedural governing rules and where are they kept? Do you have your own copy? How often do you refer to them?

What are the unwritten rules and how did you learn of or about the unwritten rules when you first joined the Board?
Who are the Board’s key internal and external constituencies? What are the legitimate claims of each of these constituencies on the governing process (i.e., what areas or domains should these groups reasonably expect to have a voice in the decision-making process)?

What do you think the faculty think of the role of the Board and the effectiveness of the Board in helping them in their day-to-day activities in the university? Do you think the faculty leadership would have a different perspective than the ordinary faculty member? Why?

Can you describe a situation when the Board was able to anticipate a problem and act before that issue became urgent or critical?

Do you see the Boards role as providing day-to-day oversight or for helping the university plan for the future? What do you think are the top five issues that the university will face or need to address over the next 10 years? How can the Board help the university face those issues?

As a Board member who do you think you represent? Is it the government, the general public, the local community, the university, the governing party in power, a constituency group (i.e. business, labour, etc), the university, some other group or a combination of the above? Please explain your rationale for this perspective.

Can you describe the process that you went through in being identified as a prospective candidate to be appointed to the Board? Did you receive any orientation about the role of a lay-governor on a university governing Board? Were there any other expectations for you to be selected and can you please describe those expectations?

What do you think might improve the selection or appointment of new lay-governors to university governing Boards?

What do you think is the most urgent or critical challenge to governing Board performance/effectiveness?

Should governing Boards be evaluated or rewarded? How should this be done?

How knowledgeable are board members concerning the issues facing higher education institutions?

Has your viewpoint changed since you were appointed to the Board about who you think you represent as a lay-governor of a university? How?
Additional Questions—Subject to Time

What do you see as the three key traits that best describe the organisation’s culture or personality and three values that are at the core of the college’s belief system?

Does the Board provide opportunities for the lay-governors to interact with each other outside of formal board meetings? Please indicate the types of social activities and if these have helped the Board to function more cohesively.

What should be and what is the quality of communication between the Board and other university constituents?

How often and through what mechanism does the Board communicate with each of its internal and external constituencies? How would you rank the effective of each of these communication methods? How does this help the Board with carrying out its role?

What happens when there is a conflict between these constituent groups? Does the Board attempt to resolve the conflict and if so how? Who on the Board were involved in addressing this situation?
Appendix F:

Interview Questions for Presidents

Interview Questions for SFU EdD Research

For Presidents:

How long have you been the President of this university? What other administrative roles have you served in and for how long?

Are you currently a member of any other governing Board in the public or private sector? Has this helped you in your role as a lay-governor on the university governing Board? Please describe how.

What are the key components of trustee education for your board? Please describe the initial orientation provided for new lay-governors selected to serve on the university Board? What types of additional training or education have they received since their initial orientation? Was this done for the entire Board and was it voluntary or mandatory?

What types of actions of activities could the Board do to help the President/Senior Administration be more effective in their role and helping the university achieve its goals?

How well do you think the Board understands the role of the university and what are the types of activities the Board engages in to better understand the university? Does this include meeting with students, faculty, staff and administration? Are these structured events, unstructured events, group or single activities? Please provide some examples.

Please describe what you see as the three most important goals of the Board and of the President. How does the Board establish its priorities and how often does it review those priorities? What is the President’s role in this process?

What is the leadership development/succession planning process for the Board and who is responsible for overseeing that this carried out?

What are the written procedural governing rules and where are they kept? Do you as President have you own copy or is this kept with the Board secretary? How often do you refer to them?

Are there unwritten rules for your university’s Board and how did you learn of or about the unwritten rules when you became the President? Do you think the Board members would agree with this assessment?
Who do you think are the Board’s key internal and external constituencies? What are the legitimate claims of each of these constituencies on the governing process (i.e., what areas or domains should these groups reasonably expect to have a voice in the decision-making process)?

What do you think the faculty think of the role of the Board and the effectiveness of the Board in helping them in their day-to-day activities in the university? Do you think the faculty leadership would have a different perspective than the ordinary faculty member? If so, why?

Can you describe a situation when the Board was able to anticipate a problem and act before that issue became urgent or critical?

Do you see the Boards role as providing day-to-day oversight or for helping the university plan for the future? What do you think are the top five issues that the university will face or need to address over the next 10 years? How can the Board help the university face those issues? How do those priorities relate to your own priorities as President?

Who do you think the Board member represent? Is it the government, the general public, the local community, the university, the governing party in power, a constituency group (i.e. business, labour, etc), the university, some other group or a combination of the above? Please explain your rationale for this perspective and do you think that this perspective changes over time the longer individual Board members serve?

Can you describe the process that the university uses to identify prospective candidates to be appointed to the Board? Is there a difference between the government appointed and the internal candidates? Did you receive any orientation about the role of a lay-governor on a university governing Board? Were there any other expectations for you to be selected and can you please describe those expectations?

What do you think might improve the selection or appointment of new lay-governors to university governing Boards?

What do you think is the most urgent or critical challenge to governing Board performance/effectiveness?

Should governing Boards be evaluated or rewarded? How should this be done? How knowledgeable are board members concerning the issues facing higher education institutions? Does this change over time?

Do you think that the viewpoint of lay-governors changes once they were appointed to the Board about who they think they represent as a lay-governor of a university? How?
Additional Questions—Subject to Time

What do you see as the three key traits that best describe the organisation’s culture or personality and three values that are at the core of the college’s belief system?

Does the Board provide opportunities for the lay-governors to interact with each other outside of formal board meetings? Please indicate the types of social activities and if these have helped the Board to function more cohesively.

What should be and what is the quality of communication between the Board and other university constituents?

How often and through what mechanism does the Board communicate with each of its internal and external constituencies? How would you rank the effective of each of these communication methods? How does this help the Board with carrying out its role?

What happens when there is a conflict between these constituent groups? Does the Board attempt to resolve the conflict and if so how? Who on the Board were involved in addressing this situation?
Appendix G:

Interview Questions for Former Government Officials

Interview Questions for SFU EdD Research

For Former Government Officials:

How long have you been involved in government and/or higher education?

Are you currently a member of any other governing Boards in the public or private sector? Have you ever served on any university or post-secondary governing Boards? Can you please indicate the types of organizations you have served as a Board member and for how long?

What is your profession or occupation? Have you ever served in a supervisory or managerial role in your work life?

Have you been involved directly or indirectly in the selection or approval of externally appointed university governing Board members? If so what criteria was used in making the selection of a prospective Board member?

What do you think might improve the selection or appointment of new lay-governors to university governing Boards?

What types of actions or activities could the senior administration do to help the Board be more effective in its role and be more effective in governing the university?

What are the types of activities the Board should engage in to better understand the university? Does this include meeting with students, faculty, staff and administration? Are these structured events, unstructured events, group or single activities? Please provide some examples.

Please describe what you see as the three most important goals of the Board and of the President. Do you see these aligning with Government policy?

Are you aware of what the leadership development/succession planning process is for university Boards in BC and who is responsible for overseeing that this carried out? Is it the Board Resourcing Office or the university?

Board members who have been interviewed have indicated that they have not received any direction from government once appointed? Is this your experience? Does government use any indirect means to influence the President or the Board members to carry our government policy direction and objectives?
Should the Board, or does the Board, have direct access to the government or Ministry representatives, or should this be through the President?

Who are the Board’s/universities key internal and external constituencies? What are the legitimate claims of each of these constituencies on the governing process (i.e., what areas or domains should these groups reasonably expect to have a voice in the decision-making process)?

What do you think the faculty think of the role of the Board and the effectiveness of the Board in helping them in their day-to-day activities in the university? Do you think the faculty leadership would have a different perspective than the ordinary faulty member? Why?

As a former/government official, are you aware of any situations when the Board was able to anticipate a problem and act before that issue became urgent or critical for one of the universities?

Do you see the Boards role as providing day-to-day oversight or for helping the university plan for the future? What do you think are the top five issues that the university will face or need to address over the next 10 years? How can the Board help the university face those issues?

Who do you think that the externally appointed Board members should represent? Is it the government, the general public, the local community, the university, the governing party in power, a constituency group (i.e. business, labour, etc), the university, some other group or a combination of the above? Please explain your rationale for this perspective.

What do you think is the most urgent or critical challenge to governing Board performance/effectiveness?

Should governing Boards be evaluated or rewarded? How should this be done?

How knowledgeable do you think board members concerning the issues facing higher education institutions and do they need to be?
Appendix H:

Sample of BC Government Letter of Expectation to Universities

GOVERNMENT LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS
BETWEEN
THE MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT (AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)
AND

APRIL 1, 2008 – MARCH 31, 2009

1. PURPOSE

This Letter of Expectations between the Government of British Columbia and the (the Institution) is an agreement of the accountabilities, roles and responsibilities of both parties. This Letter articulates the performance expectations and strategic priorities, and is the basis for the Institution’s Accountability Plan and Report to Government.

This Letter does not create any legal or binding obligations on the part of Government or the Institution, but rather is intended to define and promote a positive and co-operative working relationship.

2. MANDATE

The mandate of the Institution, defined by the University Act, is to provide instruction and perform other functions as designated by the Act. The Institution’s plans will reflect the mandate as defined in the Act.

... /2
3. ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Institution is accountable for ensuring its planning and operations contribute to the successful achievement of its mandate and Government goals and priorities as outlined in this letter.

3.1. Alignment with Government Priority Initiatives

The Ministry, institutions and system partners have shared responsibility to achieve British Columbia's priorities for post-secondary education. The Ministry is responsible for achieving the performance measures and targets described in its annual Service Plan, and the Institution is responsible for achieving the performance measures and targets described in its annual Institutional Accountability Plan and Report.

Programming Priorities

In 2004, Government announced a plan to expand the size of the post-secondary education system. The goal was to ensure that any student with a 75 percent grade point average in high school has access to university. To a large extent, this goal has been achieved. Government now wishes to redirect its focus from general growth to targeted growth in high priority areas, as follows:

- Health programs;
- Graduate programs;
- Programming for Aboriginal students; and,
- Other program areas in high demand to support the labour market.

The increased focus on labour market demand reflects the seriousness of the labour supply shortages that exist in some locations and occupations.

Government expects institutions to continue to strive for efficiencies and effectiveness through increased collaboration and cooperation. Institutions also need to be responsive to economic, student and labour market requirements, and the needs of the province. Government and institutions acknowledge a shared interest in enhancing course transfer and program articulation to support student mobility.

The progress of the Institution toward achieving Government’s priority objectives for the post-secondary education sector will be monitored through the measures articulated in this document and in Attachment 1 (and in other Ministry instruction documents that may be issued to the Institution during the term of this Letter).
Articulation and Transfer
Government and the province’s post secondary institutions remain committed to the preservation and enhancement of British Columbia’s effective transfer and articulation system. Work will continue to expand the credit transfer system and to facilitate improved seamless mobility for students.

Deficits
In keeping with legislation, should the Institution project that it will be unable to achieve its objectives within the financial resources available to it, Government approval by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Advanced Education is required. Should a deficit be projected, the Institution is required to develop a deficit management plan. This plan will be reviewed by the Ministry and form the basis of a recommendation to the Ministers.

Tuition Limit Policy
The Institution will adhere to the Government tuition policy to limit tuition and mandatory fee increases. For 2008/09, tuition fee increases will be limited to two percent.

The tuition limit applies to Professional programs, Cost Recovery/Continuing Education credentialed programs, all other credentialed and open enrolment programs and mandatory fees, including capital construction support (e.g. building fees), consumable fees (e.g. fees charged for field trips and consumable supplies) and other mandatory fees (e.g. application fees and technology fees).

A copy of the 2008/09 tuition limit policy is available at the following website:

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/tuition/welcome.htm

Climate Action
Government has set an ambitious goal for reducing the Province’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and is committed to achieving that goal through action across all sectors of the economy. The following page contains a list of key components of British Columbia’s provincial strategy on climate action:
- 4 -

- Make all Provincial Government operations carbon-neutral by 2010;
- Reduce GHG emissions by 33 percent below 2007 levels by 2020; and,
- Reduce GHG emissions by at least 80 percent below 2007 levels by 2050.

Actions and progress toward GHG emission reductions are to be reported in June 2009. For more information, please visit the Climate Action Secretariat website at:

http://www.climateactionsecretariat.gov.bc.ca/

On September 28, 2007, the Premier outlined several new steps to address climate change. One of the actions outlined was that all new Government Buildings shall be built to a minimum LEED Gold or equivalent certification. The Ministry has advised all post-secondary education institutions’ capital planning staff that business cases being submitted as a part of the Capital Management Asset Framework requires that facilities be designed to these standards.

**Capital Procurement Guidelines**

Regardless of the nature of the funding or accounting treatment, Government public tender policy requires that capital projects be competitively tendered through a fair, open and transparent process, and awarded to the lowest cost, qualified, legal bidder.

Institutions will be expected to demonstrate that they are following the Government Capital Procurement checklist through their own internal audit processes and random reviews initiated by the Ministry.

As you are aware, on October 27, 2006, the Premier announced a new capital standard for public sector bodies, including post-secondary institutions which include projects that exceed $20 million for the capital cost of a project. The focus of this new policy is to ensure a rigorous examination of options in the planning stage to provide the best value for taxpayer’s money. A public private partnership will be considered the base case for procurement where the province contributes more than $20 million to the capital cost of a project.

**Executive Compensation**

The Ministry of Finance conducted a review of public sector Chief Executive Officer (CEO) compensation of all public sector employers, including post-secondary presidents. As a result, new caps on total compensation amounts paid to CEO’s, and a requirement for full public disclosure of CEO employment contracts, were introduced in 2007. In September 2007, the Minister of Advanced Education provided information concerning the maximum cap, and informed the Board Chairs of public post-secondary institutions that new rules for public disclosure was forthcoming. Please see Appendix 1 for information regarding the CEO compensation proposal process and the new rules on public disclosure.
Naming Privileges Policy
Government’s Naming Privileges Policy governs the naming of physical assets in recognition of financial, or in-kind, contributions from individuals, businesses, organizations and others. The policy is administered by the Intellectual Property Program (IPP) of the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services and applies to all ministries and public sector bodies, including public post-secondary institutions. Further information, including contact information for IPP, is available on the following website:

http://www.bcsolutions.gov.bc.ca/ipp/popt/B4_1_1_9naming_policy.htm

Healthier Choices
Government’s Healthier Choices in Vending Machines in British Columbia Public Buildings Policy requires that public sector bodies report annually on the vending machines under their responsibility. This year’s reporting form is to be completed by July 31, 2008, and further information is available at the Reporting Requirements website link.

In addition, the policy provides that where there are vending machines not under contract, public bodies should develop a procurement strategy as soon as possible to ensure that contracts are formalized and in line with the Nutritional Guidelines. If your institution has any vending machines that are covered by the policy and for which a contract is not in place, please ensure that a procurement strategy is in place by October 1, 2008. Note that this timeline applies only to vending machines without contracts, and that current contracts may continue until their expiration date, after which time compliance with the policy will be required.

Please note that post-secondary residences are excluded from this policy. The policy is administered by the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services. Further information is available at:

http://www.lcs.gov.bc.ca/HealthierChoices/

3.2 Operational Management Accountabilities
The Institution will conduct its affairs to fulfill its mandate and the performance expectations of Government.
3.3 Planning and Reporting:
The Institution is expected to conduct its operations and financial activities in a manner consistent with the legislative, regulatory and policy framework established by Government. Government has developed policies for ministries and public bodies (including post-secondary institutions). Institutions are expected to comply with these policies. Government has also issued Best Practice Guidelines for board governance and disclosure, which can be found at:

http://www.lcs.gov.bc.ca/brdo/governance/index.asp

Reporting Requirements
The Institution will provide Government with comprehensive, accurate and timely reporting (financial, statistical, program-related and individual/population-based), as requested by the Ministry. For a list of the Ministry’s reporting requirements, including those related to the Accountability Framework, the enrolment targets contained in this letter, and other critical data elements (e.g., quarterly financial reports, etc.) please see Reporting Requirements 2008/09 at the following website link:

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/budget/

The Institution agrees that it will meet these financial and performance reporting requirements. If Government determines that changes to the reporting requirements are necessary, these changes will be communicated to the Institution.

In addition to these financial, service and performance reporting requirements, the Institution agrees to provide information to Government related to risks and opportunities anticipated in achieving financial forecasts and the actions proposed by the Institution to meet these targets while preserving public post-secondary education services.

4. GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES
Government is responsible for the legislative, regulatory and public policy framework in which the Institution operates. In order to meet these responsibilities and support achievement of performance expectations, the Ministry, acting as a representative of government, will:

- Work collaboratively with the Institution to develop performance measures, targets and goals for annual performance monitoring to support the implementation of Government’s strategic priority initiatives;
- Collect and review 2008/09 institutional enrolment plans and provide advice and direction as required;
- Provide the Institution with guidelines and timelines for the preparation of required plans and reports;
- 7 -

- Provide comment, advice and approval of required plans and reports, as appropriate;
- Advise the Institution of Government’s priorities, strategic decisions and public policy and performance objectives and expectations that may impact the Institution; and,
- Provide to the Institution annual operating and capital funding allocations (see Attachments 2 and 3) for inclusion in the Institution’s planning activities.

During the term of this Letter, Government may provide additional policy direction to the Ministry. The Ministry will work with the Institution to achieve such policy direction.

5. OPERATING TRANSFERS

The focus of this agreement is fiscal 2008/09. Information for 2009/10 and 2010/11 is provided for planning purposes and is subject to approval of the Legislature on an annual basis.

The total operating transfer funding for public post-secondary institutions in 2008/09 is $1,654,665,642, a 3.8 percent increase over the previous year. The total funding available for the Annual Capital Allowance (ACA) is $65,800,000. The total student FTEs funded for the system is 177,767, excluding Industry Training Authority seats.

Your Institution’s specific transfers and FTE allocations over the next three fiscal years are provided in Attachments 2 and 3. Additional details regarding operating transfers, other funding allocations and government policies affecting your Institution are provided in Appendix 1.

In the fall of 2008, post-secondary institutions will be asked to express their interest in program expansion in priority health programs. Decisions regarding health program FTE allocations for 2009/10 will be made in collaboration with the Ministry of Health Services and based on priorities and availability of funding.

Aboriginal space allocations for 2009/10 will be determined through an Expression of Interest process.

Your Institution’s ACA allocation is provided in Attachment 2. As a component of each institution’s operating transfer, the ACA is for maintenance, minor renovations and upgrade projects as defined in the Ministry’s ACA policy. Treasury Board requires that the Ministry be able to demonstrate accountability with regard to ACA...
expenditures. Within the parameters outlined above, ACA spending is generally at the discretion of institutions. The use of capital reserves to fund large ACA projects that can not be completed in a fiscal year is encouraged. However, any unspent funds accumulated from ACA projects should be exhausted before any emergent requests for capital project funding is referred to the Ministry.

Maintenance of Life Safety Systems is considered the highest order of priority for ACA funding, as these are key facility components for safeguarding the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, and provide for a safe and secure campus. Institutions will be expected to continue to provide annual ACA reports as identified in *Reporting Requirements 2008/09*. The Ministry may, from time to time, undertake random audits of more detailed ACA project reports maintained by the institutions for Ministry supported projects.

6. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The performance targets for the Institution are overall utilization rates for Ministry funded specific priority spaces. The priority space targets are based on the total numbers of seats allocated to the institution. These spaces have generally been determined through an application process. The following is a summary of the performance targets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure (See Appendix 1 for details)</th>
<th>2008/09 Target</th>
<th>2009/10 Target</th>
<th>2010/11 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total AVED funded Student Spaces*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Space in Nursing and other allied health programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization Rate Target &gt;=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Spaces in Graduate Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization Rate Target &gt;=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Spaces in Aboriginal Programs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization Rate Target &gt;=</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*To be reviewed in conjunction with detailed enrolment plans.

The Ministry will be developing performance measures for 2009/10 and future years that are more relevant to the outcomes produced by the Institution.

Supporting these operating transfers and performance targets are program specific enrolment allocations outlined in Attachment 2 and 3. In addition, program specific information is provided in Appendix 1.
6.1. Monitoring
Monitoring service delivery performance is key to knowing whether adjustments to services and programs must be made to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery and financial management. The Ministry and the Institution will continue to monitor performance on a regular basis.

Government and the Institution will review the risks and challenges related to unmet expectations. The Institution, in consultation with Government, will develop contingency plans to ensure that measurable improvements are made should expectations not be met.

7. CONSEQUENCES
Should it become evident that the Institution’s performance outcomes are at risk of falling below the performance targets, the Ministry will work with the Institution to address areas of concern. Persistent and substantial failure to achieve targets and complete deliverables may result in more formal action being taken, as deemed appropriate by the Minister, with the Board Chair, following formal written notice of the issue or concern being forwarded to the Institution. All future growth allocations are tied to past performance as part of the allocation criteria.

8. TERM
The Government Letter of Expectations will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect any changing priorities and expectations.

9. REVIEW AND REVISION OF THIS LETTER
If deemed necessary by either party, Government and the Institution will discuss any issues and may agree to amend this Letter.

Honourable Murray Coell
Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

Date: 10/08

pc: Distribution List Follows
pc:  Honourable Gordon Campbell  
Premier  

Ms. Jessica McDonald  
Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary  

Ms. Robin Ciceri, Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Advanced Education  
and Labour Market Development
Appendix 1

Programs and Initiatives

On-Line Learning
For 2008/09, institutional operating transfers include provision for incremental online program delivery. Institutions' 2008/09 full-time equivalent (FTE) targets were adjusted for increased online programming by either allocating a portion of their new general growth FTEs to online FTEs, or if general growth was not provided, by converting base FTEs to online FTEs.

Higher Education Database
During 2008/09, Government intends to establish processes to create a consolidated higher education database containing case level student data for all students enrolled in public post-secondary institutions. This database will be used for system reporting on student enrolments. It is Government’s expectation that your Institution will assist in the development of this project.

Nursing and Allied Health Programs
In 2008/09, institutional operating transfers and student FTE targets include provision for an increase of __________ student FTEs for nursing and allied health programs. Attachment 2 includes the list of all nursing and allied health programs for your institution. There is some flexibility to revise targets among health programs based on demand, provided that each institution meets its overall student FTE targets for nursing and allied health programs. Institutions are requested to consult with the Ministry prior to making any major shifts in student FTEs among health programs during the year.

Increase in the Number of Medical Spaces
For 2008/09, the Ministry has allocated $42.138 million to the University of British Columbia and $1 million each to the University of Victoria and the University of Northern British Columbia in support of the Medical School Expansion. This transfer includes $24.768 million in operating funding for the initial expansion to 224 first year spaces, an adjustment to University of British Columbia’s base allocation of $8.082 million, and $4.128 million operating funding for an additional 64 spaces as part of the subsequent expansion to complete the doubling of medical spaces in British Columbia. Also included is $3.5 million for clinical faculty and $842,000 for third year clerkship stipends for the original expansion and $553,000 for completion of the doubling clerkship stipends.
Additional information on one-time funding of $6.137 million for start-up costs associated with the additional 64 seats, as well as funding for the cost pressures identified in the Phase 2 Medical Funding Review report, will be forwarded under separate cover. This funding is not included in the University of British Columbia’s operating transfer. Funding is to be held in trust by the University of British Columbia and managed by the three universities through the Implementation Planning Sub-Committee for Medical Expansion. Also forwarded under separate cover will be $2.678 million for the start-up costs associated with the new Southern Medical Program.

A funding review of the medical program expansion will be conducted by the Ministry and the three universities when the actual results of 2008/09 are available. This review will consider funding levels provided to the universities, actual costs of delivering the program, and future funding requirements needed to sustain the program.

**Graduate Spaces**

In keeping with Government’s commitment to increase graduate spaces by over four years beginning in 2007/08, the operating transfers include funding for graduate spaces as communicated in correspondence dated March 25, 2008. Information on the allocations of the remaining FTEs held back for 2009/10 and 2010/11 will be communicated at a later date.

**Aboriginal Education Initiatives**

In 2008/09, the Ministry will continue to implement initiatives in the Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Strategy to support government’s goal to ‘close the gap’. AVED will continue to provide targeted funding for the Aboriginal Special Projects Fund, and year II funding for institutions participating in Aboriginal Service Plans.

**BCNET**

Funding in the amount of is provided to the for the annual circuit cost for a lightpath linking the with the to accommodate the operation of within BCNET. This lightpath forms part of the BCNET Optical Regional Advanced Network.

**Student Financial Assistance**

Affordability is a key component in increasing access to post-secondary education. The Province and the Federal Government continue their efforts to make progress in this area by addressing unmet student need through increased lending limits, and addressing excess graduating debt through targeted grants and loan reduction and loan forgiveness...
programs. Over the next three years, the Ministry is committed to investing approximately $410 million for a comprehensive student financial assistance system including loan reductions for students most in need, grants for students with disabilities, debt relief programs and loan forgiveness programs. For the 2008/09 program year, the Ministry has budgeted an additional $250 million for British Columbia Student Loans. To protect the integrity of this investment made by taxpayers, institutions must continue to comply with the legislative and policy requirements of Student Aid BC. Further, institutions in British Columbia have played an important role in ensuring that family finances do not prevent eligible students from pursuing a post-secondary education. It is critical that this support be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. The Ministry continues to monitor this investment through the student outcomes survey, the accountability framework and institution financial statements because equality of opportunity remains an important principle guiding its post-secondary education policies.

A related initiative, the monitoring of repayment rates for government student loans of students of public and private post-secondary institutions, has been implemented Canada-wide as an additional indicator of institutional investment in administrative, academic and financial assistance to high needs students. Institutions whose former students have an unacceptably high rate of default are notified and expected to articulate and implement a Student Loan Repayment Improvement Plan. To assist institutions in helping their students to avoid defaulting, the Ministry has instituted a Default Prevention Grant with the goal of making students aware of programs and strategies that they can use to keep their loans in good standing. As a result of this funding, several public institutions will be implementing communications initiatives, the results of which will be able to be shared with all other institutions.

**Executive Compensation**

**Compensation Proposal Process**

Under the new CEO Compensation Framework, all compensation proposals (new, amended, or renewed) for presidents of public post-secondary institutions now require approval from the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. Institutions should continue to consult with their employers' association in advance of submitting a compensation proposal, particularly on matters such as market comparators. The formal submission should include the draft employment contract and costing. In the event that the proposal requests a compensation increase, the proposal should articulate the rationale for the increase so that it may be assessed from the point of view as to whether it is reasonable and justifiable. As a preliminary step, prior to formal submission, institutions are encouraged to send the package to Ms. Ruth Wittenberg, Assistant Deputy Minister, Post Secondary Education Division, to determine if there are areas of concern or provisions that require clarification.
Disclosure
Bill 33 - 2008 (The Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act) was introduced on April 17, 2008. The Act requires (in part) public sector organizations to proactively disclose the major elements of compensation (base salary, benefits, employer pension contributions, and performance payments) for the president and the four highest ranking/paid executives (if they have an annual base salary of $125,000 or more). The Public Sector Employers’ Council Secretariat (PSEC) has developed a draft Reporting Form with input from a working group of employer association representatives. By July 2008, it is expected that public sector employers will post this information on their websites, and that the PSEC website will contain links to it. Eventually, three years of data for each employer will be posted.
### Attachment 1
University of Victoria
Accountability Framework 2008/09 - 2010/11 Performance Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Performance Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student spaces in public institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Total Student Spaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Student spaces in nursing and other allied health programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total credentials awarded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and percent of public post-secondary students who are Aboriginal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number (#)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree completion rate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct Entry Students (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Students (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate graduate assessment of quality of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Satisfaction with Education(%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Skill Development (avg. %)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn on your own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate graduate outcomes – unemployment rate</td>
<td>Maintain unemployment rate of former UVIC students below rate for persons with high school credentials or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Sponsored research funding from all sources (0003)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Attachment 1

**University of Victoria**

**Accountability Framework 2008/09 - 2010/11 Performance Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Performance Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iii. Number of highly qualified personnel (H)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of licences, patents, start up companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Licence/Option agreements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total US patents issued</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total start up companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total licence income received</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of annual education activity occurring between May and August

University admissions GPA cut-off

Direct Entry Admission

Transfer Student Admissions

Baccalaureate graduate assessment of quality of instruction

Student satisfaction with transfer

Baccalaureate graduate assessment of usefulness of knowledge and skills in performing job

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1 Data from 2006/07 Academic Year
2 Data from 2005/06 Academic Year
### Attachment 2

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA**

**2008/09 - 2010/11 Operating Transfers**

and Overall Student FTE Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Victoria Operating Transfers</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTEs</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVED FTEs Operating Grants *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change From Prior Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Capital Allowance (ACA) **</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student FTE, Graduate and Undergraduate Targets</th>
<th>FNS Code</th>
<th>CIP Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Student FTE Targets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The overall student FTE targets for the AVED Operating Grant include specific student FTE targets as follows.

** ACA is determined on an annual basis, so is shown as TBD in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

#### Priority FTE Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Victoria</th>
<th>FNS Code</th>
<th>CIP Code</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Learning***</td>
<td></td>
<td>ONLI</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td>TECH</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
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*Online funded as top up only for 2009/10. Institutions are expected to convert existing general growth.
### Attachment 3

#### 2008/09 to 2010/11 Operating Transfers and Student FTE Targets

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<td>2009/10</td>
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*1 The 2010/11 starting base budget is held constant at 2009/10 levels.

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#### 2008/09 Budget Letter *2

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<tr>
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<td>$/FTE</td>
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*2 Operating grants are based on student FTEs x $/FTE provided by AVED for each program plus the additional funding provided for non-program related issues.

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Z:\GENERAL\SubjectBudget\Budget Letters\2008-09\Attachment 3 - Cheatsheets - Changes to Budget Allocations 07-08 to 10-11.xls