

**Crossing Borders and Contesting Values:
Negotiating British Columbia's University Sector**

by

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ABSTRACT

In 2008, the Province of British Columbia (BC) created five new universities, precipitating several questions regarding the composition of BC's public university sector. Previously, four research-intensive universities provided the *de facto* definition for the sector. With the addition of five teaching-intensive universities through re-designation of the three university colleges, an art and design institute, and a community college, the university sector is now comprised by more institutions than not that challenge, through many of their historic and current educational practices, the established prevailing idea of the university in BC: an institution focused primarily on liberal arts education and research specialization.

The conceptual framework for this study suggests legitimation and identity dynamics are recursive processes of interpretation and integration across external normative expectations and internal institutional contexts. Although normative university practices are always being negotiated and may be enacted differently in individual universities, as a whole they represent common sector boundaries within which member universities are expected to operate. Institutional legitimacy and integrity are dependent upon an appropriate level of alignment across a matrix of practice boundaries that delimit the university as an idea without unduly limiting individual institutions.

This study follows a social constructionist approach, employing grounded theory processes in the collection, organization, and analysis of assertions from various published documents, including quality assurance guidelines and legislation, as well scholarly opinions and analyses. The document analysis suggests three core qualities and conditions and six major criterion categories of normative university practices informing the university. These findings guide development of six hypotheses on practice boundaries within the current BC university sector. Finally, the overall significance of this study emerges in the identification of significant cultural dynamic, operational practice, and institutional capacity considerations concerning the creation and operation of BC universities.

*To Michele and Paris,
for the belief, support, and consideration they provide in making all things possible.*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	x
List of Tables	x
List of Appendices	x
Chapter 1: Overview of the Study	1
<i>Questioning the University in British Columbia</i>	
Context for the Study.....	1
Purpose for the Study.....	5
Significance of the Study.....	6
Literature Review and Conceptual Framework.....	9
Research Design.....	13
Structure of the Dissertation.....	16
Endnotes.....	18
Chapter 2: Historical Context	19
<i>University Adaptation in the United Kingdom, Australia, and British Columbia</i>	
Introduction.....	19
The University Idea in Historic Contexts.....	21
Contemporary Ideas of the University.....	23
Higher Education in the United Kingdom.....	28

Higher Education in Australia.....	35
Higher Education in Canada.....	41
Higher Education in British Columbia.....	45
Implementing a Binary Higher Education Model.....	46
Parallel Developments in California (1960-1990)	48
Towards a Unitary University Sector in BC.....	53
Parallel Developments in California (1990-2009).....	56
Creation of a Unitary University Sector in BC.....	61
Conclusion: Challenges of Adaption for Universities and Sectors.....	63
Endnotes.....	65
Chapter 3: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework.....	69
<i>Remembering Culture: Understanding University Legitimation and Identity Dynamics</i>	
Introduction.....	69
Philosophical Considerations: Institutions as Individuals.....	70
Organizational Culture: Literature Review.....	75
Organizational Learning and Remembering.....	82
Institutional Legitimation and Identity.....	87
A Conceptual Framework for Study on University Boundaries.....	91
Conclusion: Pursuing Legitimation as Universities.....	102
Endnotes.....	104
Chapter 4: Research Design.....	107
<i>University Practice Boundaries in British Columbia: A Constructivist Approach</i>	
Introduction.....	107
General Research Purpose and Question.....	108
General Delimitations of the Study.....	109
Considering Methodology.....	111
Assumptions of the Researcher.....	114

Premises Concerning University Practice Boundaries.....	119
Detailed Research Approach.....	122
Purpose and Question.....	122
Research Methods.....	123
Research Sources.....	124
Collection and Analysis.....	127
Research Limitations.....	128
Conclusion: Necessary Specific Research on Institutions	129
Endnotes.....	131
Chapter 5: Research Analysis and Key Findings.....	133
<i>Delimiting the University Idea in British Columbia</i>	
Introduction.....	133
Information Collection and Organization.....	134
Information Analysis and Key Findings.....	140
Core Qualities and Conditions Informing the University Idea in BC....	141
Institutional Autonomy.....	141
Academic Rights and Responsibilities.....	143
Organizational Capacity.....	144
Core Qualities and Conditions for University Recognition.....	146
Major Criterion Categories of Normative University Practices.....	147
Institutional Autonomy.....	147
Bicameral Governance.....	150
Degree Programming.....	153
Research.....	156
Faculty Roles.....	158
Quality Assurance.....	163
Conclusion: University Recognition through Alignment.....	167
Endnotes.....	168

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study	173
<i>Reconfiguring the University in British Columbia</i>	
Introduction.....	173
Hypotheses on University Practice Boundaries.....	174
Hypothesis #1.....	175
Hypothesis #2.....	176
Hypothesis #3.....	177
Hypothesis #4.....	178
Hypothesis #5.....	179
Hypothesis #6.....	180
Some Questions for BC Universities and the University Sector.....	182
Autonomy and Governance.....	183
University Mandate.....	184
Degree Programming.....	186
Faculty Roles and Responsibilities.....	187
Quality Assurance.....	188
Recommendations for Further Specific Research on Institutions.....	190
University Identity and Integrity within a Post-Secondary Systems Context....	195
Conclusion: Remembering the University.....	201
Endnotes.....	204
References	206

List of Figures

Figure 1: Narrative Context of the Individual..... 74
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework: General Model..... 92
Figure 3: Conceptual Framework: Context-Specific Variables Model..... 101

List of Tables

Table 1: Scholarly Opinion and Analysis..... 125, 136
Table 2: Legislative, Policy, and Professional Association Documents..... 126, 137

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Document Specific Value / Criteria Assertion Quotations..... 225
Appendix B: Integrated Documents Value / Criteria Assertion Quotations
for Research Detailed Sub-category..... 232
Appendix C: Integrated Value and Criteria Assertion Data Analysis..... 239

Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

Questioning the University in British Columbia

So our own experience of the university . . . draws on a rich and remarkably stable tradition, while reflecting the evolution that has occurred over generations. My point is that while respecting our traditions, there are . . . opportunities in our generation to add strength to what we have inherited. Those opportunities relate to the crossing of borders . . . [but] I suspect that we are collectively afraid to cross some borders because we are reluctant to enter into the no-man's land of contested values.

- Stephen J. Toope (2008)

Context for the Study

In September of 2008, the Province of British Columbia (BC) enacted regulations, pursuant to a revised *University Act*, creating five new universities. This action, although anticipated to some extent as a likely outcome resulting from a key recommendation of the 2007 Provincial report, *Campus 2020* (Plant, 2007), on the future of BC's post-secondary education system, has raised several questions regarding the composition and integrity of BC's public university sector¹. Almost doubling in size overnight from six to eleven institutions, the university sector changed dramatically. Previously, four established research-intensive universities (University of BC, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of Northern BC) that focus primarily on academic programming through the doctoral level provided the *de facto* definition for the university sector. This remained the case despite relatively recent additions to the sector of two affiliated outliers, focused respectively on career-focused, partially online degree

programs (Royal Roads University (1995)) and integrated preparatory, trades, vocational and academic programs (Thompson Rivers University (2004)). Since September 2008, the now unitary university sector has been comprised by more institutions than not that challenge, through many of their historic and current educational practices, the most established prevailing idea of the university in BC—that being an institution focused primarily on liberal arts education and research specialization.

Further compounding the questions for BC’s university sector is the fact that the five new universities are not uniform in their historical development or educational mandates. Three of the new universities—Kwantlen Polytechnic University, University of the Fraser Valley, and Vancouver Island University—are former university colleges, and as such share similar histories and mandates with Thompson Rivers University (formerly University College of the Cariboo). These three institutions are the same ones that the *Campus 2020* (Plant, 2007) report recommended be re-designated as universities, in keeping with their established programming and capacity. Another, Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECUAD), is exclusively focused on undergraduate and graduate degree programming in art and design. Notably, its provincial mandate is the same now that it is a university as it was previously when it was an institute. The fifth institution, Capilano University, is somewhat distinct in that formerly, as a community college, it lacked both the broader academic degree programming mandate and history of the university colleges and the provincial mandate of ECUAD. Although it has historically offered some degree level programs, on its own and in conjunction with other universities, it offers relatively few and currently does not offer any degree programs in liberal arts and science programs. What the future holds for any of these institutions is

open to speculation, but the present for the university sector as a whole is marked institutional differentiation within a unitary model.

As destabilizing as these recent changes in BC's university sector may be, the broader consideration for all the universities is the delimitation of university boundaries in keeping with appropriate normative expectations, and the negotiation of a requisite balance between legitimacy and integrity within each distinct institution and across the sector as a whole. If one presumes that there is merit in doing so, that in reconfiguring the university comes an opportunity both to challenge its borders and strengthen its traditions in the face of increasingly greater contestation of the idea of the university, then both courage and respect are necessary. Speaking in direct relation to the promise of the university at the 2008 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Stephen J. Toope, president of the University of British Columbia (UBC), implored faculty, students, staff, and the institution itself to cross borders—disciplinary as well as societal—in order to extend the limits of current thinking and respond more effectively to the great challenges of our era. In order to do so, in order “to add strength to what we have inherited,” Toope maintains we must have the courage to “cross some borders . . . [and] enter into the no-man's land of contested values” (p.6).

In extension of Toope's (2008) argument, I would claim that the university, not only in BC, but also across most jurisdictions around the world, has already entered “the no-man's land of contested values.” Our responsibility, as educators—momentary keepers of its ongoing yet dynamic traditions—is to engage with this contestation of the university, not for fear of losing what has been, or what we think has been, but with commitment to strengthen what may yet be, in a manner that not only challenges, but also

respects and extends the values and traditions of the university itself. In so doing, we may be well-advised to adopt anew, across the BC post-secondary system, the commitment John B. Macdonald offered in his 1962 UBC inaugural address: “We will do what is wise and practical to meet the needs . . . of students . . . and help to develop other institutions of higher learning, not in our image, but to meet the demands and challenges of a growing and adventurous community” (Macdonald, 1962a, pp. 28-29).

Macdonald’s (1962b) commitment was given perhaps its fullest expression through the development of a community college sector and two new universities that emerged substantially in response to his 1962 report, *Higher Education in British Columbia and a Plan for the Future*. By any estimation, these changes represented a complete restructuring of BC’s post-secondary system, requiring the contributions and commitments of many to foster the continual development of a successful system expanding from one public university, one two-year college, and a few vocational schools, to a system now comprised of eleven universities, eleven colleges, and three institutes. Relatively speaking, the university sector expansion and post-secondary system reconfiguration BC is experiencing at present may not be of quite the same scale; however, these changes may well prove to be just as significant over time, not only to the institutions themselves but also to society as a whole. In keeping with the spirit of both Macdonald’s commitment and Toope’s entreaty, I suggest that all educators must remain mindful of our responsibility both to meet the “demands and challenges” of our communities and to ensure institutional legitimacy and integrity across BC’s university sector.

Purpose for the Study

This study has two general and interrelated purposes. The first is to construct an understanding of the historical development of the university as an idea and an institution in order to inform perspectives and analyses on the dynamics shaping its contemporary expression in multiple jurisdictions, but specifically BC. The second is to develop a rubric on the requisite university practice boundaries that shape institutional determinations of whether or not existing and / or new paradigm universities² in BC are credible. The phrase, university practice boundaries, signifies the normative expectations relating to core practices by universities in any given jurisdiction. Examples of such core practices may include the following: mission and mandate inclusive of broad-based degree programs, breadth and depth of study within educational programs, bicameral governance, tripartite faculty roles and responsibilities, peer review and quality assurance.

Although expectations relating to these practices may shift somewhat across jurisdictions and may be interpreted somewhat differently in individual institutions, as a whole they represent a set of commonly held sector boundaries within which individual institutions must operate in order for their peer institutions to view them as legitimate. Development of a robust set of hypotheses on university practice boundaries can provide a basis for further specific research on institutions that examines not only the manner and means by which individual new paradigm universities attempt to attain legitimation among their peer universities and retain their own unique identity, but also the extent to which they are successful in doing so.

Significance of the Study

Several important outcomes emerge from this study in three general areas. First, this study contributes to theoretical and contextual knowledge of universities as complex and dynamic institutions composed by and dependent upon shared as well as unique institutional histories, traditions, and practices. Second, this study posits a matrix of university practice boundaries in application to the contemporary iteration of the BC university sector. Third, this study identifies significant cultural dynamics, operational practices, and institutional capacity issues and questions that can inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities. As a result of drawing examples primarily from the BC context, this study is most directly relevant to the university sector in BC; however, its significance may well extend to jurisdictions sharing related historical experiences and similar social, cultural, political and economic circumstances.

Theoretical and contextual knowledge of universities as complex and dynamic institutions is developed in various ways throughout this study. An historical review of the university from its origins in the Middle Ages and through developments in the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, and Canada, specifically, the Province of British Columbia, over the last century or so reveals an institution marked by continual change and an increasing focus on meeting the social and economic needs of the state and international networks. This knowledge, applied to the rich research and theoretical literature drawn from organizational culture, institutional, and neo-institutional fields, informs and contextualizes the dynamics of organizational change and development

occurring in existing and new paradigm universities. These institutions are adapting to remain broadly relevant in contemporary settings while also trying to retain their historic identities within the contested idea of the university. The importance of understanding universities through these historical and theoretical lenses is emphasized repeatedly by scholars, such as Barnett (1993, 2000), Readings (1993), Scott, P. (1993), Bloland (2005), and Scott, J. (2006)—all of whom recognize that the university can survive as an institution only if it continues to adapt and to retain its diversity, without compromising its integrity.

To represent the field of contestation within which university boundaries are negotiated, this study develops a conceptual framework comprised of institution, sector, practice, tradition, and society variables (Refer to Figure 3, Context-Specific Variables Model, in chapter 3) that shape normative expectations on universities both in general as well as in their specific jurisdictions. The framework provides an understanding of how and why existing and new paradigm universities adapt to meet the expectations of peer universities while striving to retain their unique identities. Legitimacy and integrity as institutions are dependent upon an appropriate level of alignment across a matrix of practice boundaries that delimit the university as an idea without unduly limiting the institution in a prescriptive manner. The matrix of university practice boundaries developed in this study draws from policy documents, scholarship, and professional opinions offered by practitioners and academics across BC's university sector, and beyond. As such, it articulates a set of normative expectations influencing the quest for legitimation by BC's new paradigm universities.

The overall significance of this study emerges in the identification of key cultural dynamics, operational practices, and institutional capacity considerations concerning the creation and operation of universities. In positing three core qualities and conditions as well as six major criterion categories of practice, the key findings of this study inform the construction of hypotheses delineating the current boundaries of the university sector as well as delimiting the university idea in BC. Notwithstanding the fact that normative expectations are always being negotiated within and across institutions in keeping with their specific historical and jurisdictional contexts and the social, political, and economic forces that influence them, practice boundaries do and must exist to ensure institutional integrity. Neither legitimacy nor identity is possible without defining parameters. In this regard, the hypothesized practice boundaries, their elaboration in specific institutional processes, and the detailed follow up considerations they prompt concerning the actual as opposed to theoretical operations within BC's well-established and new paradigm universities provide tangible and necessary topics for discussion and analysis among educators, policy-makers, and society as a whole when considering not only the creation of new universities but also the ongoing conditions requisite for their legitimate functioning.

Although coming after the fact in the case of the five new BC universities created in 2008, this study remains relevant in many respects for them and their precursors, Royal Roads University and Thompson Rivers University, and can help guide deliberations on the creation of other universities that may well occur in the future. As BC's new universities were created by the Province in advance of detailed analysis of the requisite university practice boundaries arising from normative expectations, the practical

questions raised by this study may yet aid these institutions, government, and other stakeholders in responding to outstanding issues related to their credibility and success as universities. Most importantly, engaging with the university as an institution of substance—a compilation of values, traditions, and practices integral to its pivotal role in society over its history—enables the university idea to retain its integrity even as the institution adapts to changing times and contexts. Not engaging with the university as an institution of substance threatens to reduce the university idea, indeed all universities whether well established or new, to being a label of convenience, subject to re-framing by whatever prevailing socio-political interests and forces are dominant at any given moment. In an era that many scholars, such as Barnett (1993), Bloland (2005), and Marginson (2007b), characterize as being dominated by instrumental thinking and economic pragmatism even pertaining to education, discussion on the substance of the university as a core societal institution responsible for serving the public good even as it facilitates private goods seems vital in BC, as it does around the world.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The literature review for this study falls into two broad categories: 1) history and development of the university; and 2) organizational culture, institutional, and neo-institutional research. These categories are intertwined in that the ongoing development of the university as an idea and an institution, as well as the practices that delimit it, is more holistically understood through organizational culture, institutional and neo-institutional theoretical frames that appreciate the diverse and shifting states of being within complex institutions that share a common yet tenuous identity.

Numerous scholars, including Neave and Rhoades (1987), Scott, P. (1993), Rothblatt (1997), Scott, J. (2006), and Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin (2007), have pointed out that the university both as an idea and an institution has never been singularly defined by any particular paradigm, notwithstanding the persisting influence of conceptions by Newman and Humboldt, focusing respectively on the liberal arts curriculum and research specialization. Further, since its origin as an institution in the Middle Ages, the university has been a dynamic idea, transforming its mission to meet the context and expectations of any given era or place. Scott (2006) describes in considerable detail the shifts that have occurred over three significant periods: before the nation state, during the pre-eminence of the nation-state, and in the current era of global societies and economies. Broadly speaking, these eras demarcate corresponding university boundaries that arise in response to shifting societal, economic, and intellectual contexts: the development of scholasticism and academic autonomy; the affiliation of academic teaching, research and service with national interests and nation building; and the internationalization of the university in response to the demands of knowledge generation and transfer across more permeable global borders (Scott, 2006).

In several contemporary jurisdictions, common trends are apparent. Over the past half-century or longer, the UK, Australia, and BC have developed unitary higher education sectors³ to a great extent in response to expectations for mass access and more credible vocational education. These demands are driven largely by national and regional socio-economic goals to enhance opportunities for individuals and communities so that they can engage effectively in increasingly more competitive global contexts. Not surprisingly, these shifts in mandates and structures have added greater complexity to the

idea of the university. Given the conflation of mandates and institutions under the name “university,” some scholars feel the university is perilously close to lacking any definitive parameters. Others suggest a democratizing effect as a result of this most recent adaptation of the university to be more inclusive for a broader spectrum of the population and a broader range of academic, technical, and vocational programs. Regardless, reaching an appropriately sophisticated understanding of the forces driving and the effects emanating from contemporary shifts in the university in any specific jurisdiction, or institution, requires a more sophisticated understanding of the university as an organizational culture.

Organizational Culture scholars such as Pettigrew (1979), Tierney (1988) and Schein (1986, 1993, 2002, 2003, 2004), and Hofstede et al. (1990) recognize that organizations are dynamic and that their cultures are complex social constructions drawing from shared histories and beliefs. As such, not only are they diverse within and across related institutions, but also very difficult to change through external action alone. Organizational culture literature acknowledges the difficulty in adequately representing the broad array of views and identities within institutions, suggesting that organizations, like individuals, are cultural constructions shaped by both internal and external influences.

Building upon this observation, institutional and neo-institutional scholars such as Scott (1987, 1995), Scott and Meyer (1991, 1994), DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1992), Dobbin (1994), and Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) conclude that organizations pursuing legitimacy often emulate behaviours and practices of more established peers. But, in doing so, they must also be mindful of their internal cultural norms, for integrity is lost if

institutional identity is wholly sacrificed in the pursuit of legitimacy. For this reason, a reflexive isomorphic-polymorphic perspective is useful in understanding organizational cultures within any complex institution, including universities. Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) note, “the formation of identity through uniqueness and the construction of legitimation through uniformity [is a] dual process constituting [an] organization” (p. 901). For any university, but most assuredly for any new university, legitimation and identity are interrelated—emerging not from either external normative expectations or internal self-conception alone, but through the interpretation and integration of each within the practices and beliefs of both the individual university and its peers.

Implications for BC’s new paradigm universities clearly emerge from an understanding of organizational culture and the dynamics that shape institutional legitimation and identity. In order to be sustainable as credible universities, they must negotiate university practice boundaries such that their individual institutional practices and values are in alignment with those of the sector as a whole. This is not to suggest that they need necessarily comply absolutely with reductive or singular expectations relating to institutional mission and mandate, breadth and depth of study, governance, faculty roles, or quality assurance, but they must, as Dennison (2006b) points out, engage in practices that are related and, at the very least, defensible to their peer universities. Additionally, in order to be sustainable as unique universities, they must negotiate their individual institutional practices and values so that they are not wholly subsumed by normative expectations or singular interpretations of university practice boundaries, yet they must also accommodate these expectations within the context of their own unique cultures and educational practices. In this respect they may very well meet Toope’s

(2008) challenge to contest values and cross borders in an effort to strengthen “a rich and remarkably stable tradition” (p. 6).

Research Design

My research study on university practice boundaries in BC proceeds from a conceptual framework that understands identity formation and change within institutions as an ongoing process of self-reconstruction in relation to others. In developing this framework, I have drawn upon theoretical assertions from Taylor (2004), Ricoeur (1999), and MacIntyre (1997a, 1997b) regarding the *a priori* situation of individuals and institutions within cultural and historical contexts, and from organizational culture, institutional and neo-institutional literature regarding the recursive internal-external dynamic shaping institutional legitimation and identity. My methodological approach is largely interpretivist, relying primarily on a social constructivist paradigm (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Williamson, 2002) to develop a rubric on university practice boundaries from which further future investigation on the specific practices of new paradigm universities may proceed.

In considering a range of scholarly, governmental, and administrative documents, as well as my own understanding as an academic administrator in one of the new BC universities, I develop initial premises on requisite university practice boundaries that I assess and adapt, as necessary, through an approach that addresses the following research question:

What are the normative university practice boundaries for traditional universities and new paradigm universities in BC?

To pursue this question and gather information on expectations concerning university practice boundaries, I employ several grounded theory processes in the collection, organization, and analysis of direct quotations from the research documents (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Glaser, 1992; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Although my specific purpose in this research is to develop hypotheses on the normative practice boundaries delimiting the university in BC at present, my extended purpose for further research is to develop an understanding of how and why institutions interpret these boundaries in their efforts to confirm both their legitimacy and unique identities within BC's university sector.

In framing this process as an ongoing negotiation of the very idea of the university, my ontological assumption is that the university sector in BC is not “a concrete structure . . . and . . . human beings [and the institutions they form] . . . actively contribute to its creation”(Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498). For this reason, although university practice boundaries are necessary, I view them as normative phenomena rather than rigid practices. Proceeding from the assumption that reality—in this case the university sector in BC and the practices which delimit its boundaries—is a social construction, my research suggests that the ongoing negotiation of these practice boundaries is the method “through which [universities] make sense of their situation” (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 497).

My research reviews two sets of documents that articulate real or perceived university practice boundaries in BC: 1) scholarly opinion and analysis, and, 2) legislative and policy documents from post-secondary system quality assurance bodies. In seeking scholarly opinions, I am cognizant that limited research has been conducted on university practice boundaries in general, and very little has been focused on the jurisdiction of BC. To supplement for this gap in the literature, I adopt a purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 1990) by focusing on scholars and documents that provide considerable, focused thought on this subject. Scholars and policy-makers whose works are based in ongoing research and / or relevant professional experiences facilitate a fuller understanding of university practice boundaries by challenging and strengthening my initial premises and contributing to the development of robust hypotheses.

The most significant limitation of my research is that the documentary evidence constitutes a small, theory-focused sample (Creswell, 2008). A large, maximal variation sample would no doubt yield more diverse perspectives (Creswell, 2008) through questionnaires or surveys, but these instruments could not be adequately developed in advance of the construction of evidence-supported hypotheses, such as are the focus of this study. As Creswell (2008) notes, grounded theory research processes can offer a “macropicture of educational situations rather than a detailed microanalysis” (p. 448). Fittingly, my research is focused on developing an initial “macropicture” of normative university practice boundaries so that future “detailed microanalyses” of institutions and their practices can proceed from a relatively stable, if never complete, theoretical foundation. Despite my caution in not seeking too many perspectives too quickly, I acknowledge that more expansive and ongoing research on university practice boundaries

is necessary, for practices are co-constructed within communities, and communities are sites of shifting, rather than static practices, traditions, and identities. University practice boundaries, and their interpretation within institutions, are context dependent.

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is developed through six chapters leading to the identification of significant cultural dynamics and practice boundaries that should be considered in relation to the creation and operation of universities in BC, and elsewhere, as appropriate. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study, including a description of its purpose and significance. Chapter 2 develops an historical overview of the development of the university as an idea and institution since the Middle Ages. This general overview provides a context in which the relatively recent development of the unitary university sectors in the UK, Australia, and BC, can be understood as specific jurisdictional responses to changing societal expectations on the university. Chapter 3 develops theoretical perspectives arguing that institutions, like individuals, are expressions of their cultural and historical situation. In keeping with this perspective, a detailed review of organizational culture literature informs development of a conceptual framework for understanding legitimation and identity dynamics within new paradigm universities. Chapter 4 describes the constructivist research approach, grounded theory processes, and research limitations in detail. It further provides a description of the information collection and analysis methods pertaining to the document review. Chapter 5 describes the key findings from the document review, providing analyses of value and criteria assertions indicative of the major categories of normative university practices in BC.

Building upon the major criterion categories as well as the core qualities and conditions informing the practice boundaries for BC universities, chapter 6 develops hypotheses on university practice boundaries and considers implications for the university sector. Additionally, it identifies questions that can inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning universities in BC, and makes recommendations for further specific research on institutions.

Endnotes

¹ Notwithstanding the fact that BC's university sector is comprised of several new and one longstanding private university, Trinity Western University, in referring to the university sector throughout this study I am referring to the eleven public universities constituted by specific government legislation: *University Act*, *Thompson Rivers University Act*, and *Royal Roads University Act*. The context and mandates of the private universities are sufficiently different as to warrant separate consideration outside the scope of this study. As a group, at present the eleven public institutions enroll the overwhelming majority of university students in the Province.

² I am adopting the phrase "new paradigm universities" to describe those general degree-granting, teaching-focused universities in BC that offer a comprehensive program mix including academic, preparatory, vocational and / or trades. Refer to endnote #1 in chapter three for a fuller explanation of how and why I apply this phrase, in whole or in part, to all the new public universities in BC.

³ The phrase "higher education sectors" refers to the university or general degree-granting institution sectors, as the case may be, in different jurisdictions. Refer to endnote #3 in chapter two for a fuller explanation of how and why I apply this phrase across British, Australian, and British Columbian jurisdictions.

Chapter 2: Historical Context

University Adaptation in the United Kingdom, Australia, and British Columbia

Introduction

Musing on the writing of university history at the end of the twentieth century, Rothblatt (1997) observes that the “history of universities has always been a restless genre, a subfield whose focus is mercurial and whose loyalty to a single discipline is suspect” (Rothblatt, 1997, p. 151). In making this claim, Rothblatt (1997) argues that universities and their histories are entangled with multiple discourse communities representing disparate ideological perspectives. Proceeding from this understanding, investigation of the university is necessarily an investigation of a contested discursive field rather than of a singular idea or institutional form.

In order to step into this contested discursive field, I must situate my discussion on the university within an appropriate historical frame. Therefore, in this chapter I shall provide an overview of the development of the university from its medieval origins as an autonomous institution increasingly dedicated to scholastic pursuit independent of state or religious influence to one integrally tied to the national and international contexts of states and global economies. Following this general overview, I will examine the development of the university in three specific jurisdictions—the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, and Canada (specifically, the Province of British Columbia (BC)). These three

jurisdictions, like many others across Europe and around the world, provide related stories of university adaptation to meet demands for mass access as well as technical and vocational education so necessary for economic development in industrial and post-industrial societies. In accommodating these adaptations, the university sectors of the UK, Australia, and BC have shifted between binary and unitary higher education models, producing a conflation of university mandates and practices, and, arguably, considerable confusion about the idea of the institution itself. Each jurisdiction has emerged, at present, with a unitary university sector typified by a broad range of institutions and mandates, such that the common name, university, describes those that are more research-intensive and almost exclusively focused on academic and professional programs; those that are more teaching-intensive, and broadly inclusive of preparatory, vocational, technical and academic programs; and those that situate themselves at different points along this continuum.

Although not wholly exclusive to the UK, Australia and BC¹, the common experience in Anglophone countries with a shared commonwealth history provides a broad and directly relevant context for studying the dynamics shaping the credibility and integrity of universities in a jurisdiction such as BC. Additionally, in relation to historic institutional values and structures in BC, the parallel development of the tripartite California higher education system—comprised of community colleges and two levels of public universities—has exerted significant influence on the idea of both the community college and the university in BC and their respective places within its higher education system (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Dennison, 2006a). Therefore, an understanding of the California model from its initial expression in 1960 through 2009 is helpful in

developing an understanding of the BC higher education system, which, to some extent, has looked to California as a point of reference over this period, while forging its own path toward a unitary university sector within a binary higher education system.²

The University Idea in Historic Contexts

As a totality, the university does not fit wholly into any dominant paradigm, such as those famously propounded by Newman—that the essential idea of the university is manifest in academic study within the liberal arts (Scott, 2006)—and Humboldt—that the essential idea of the university is manifest in free inquiry and research by a community of scholars (Neave and Rhoades, 1987; Scott, 2006; Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007). In considering the university as a dynamic rather than a static idea since the origin of the institution in the Middle Ages, Scott (2006) identifies six distinct yet appropriately responsive transformations in the mission of the institution over three periods he identifies as “pre-nation-state, nation-state, and globalization (body of nation-states)” (p. 3). A “teaching” mission with an emphasis on the liberal arts and scholasticism for the purpose of bringing rational investigation to the predominant Christian world-view in the latter part of the Middle Ages typifies the pre-nation state era (Scott, 2006). Interdisciplinary teaching and research in the arts and emergent science fields was characteristic of the curriculum prior to the development of highly specialized disciplinary fields within a focused research environment—which has its origins within universities of the Italian Renaissance, is further refined through Humboldt’s German university model of the nineteenth century, and continues in most contemporary universities around the globe (Scott, 2006).

As the nation-state era develops, three distinct missions emerge, each of which is intertwined with the “teaching” and “research” missions. The “nationalization” mission gains formal force through the creation of nation-states and the nationalization of universities in service to the state (Scott, 2006). Extending from the “nationalization” mission, in democratic states a “democratization” mission develops in recognition of the university’s obligation to help fulfill the needs of individuals and society (Scott, 2006). A further refinement of the university service mission emerges in the late 1800s with the creation of land grant, state universities in the United States and the formalization of “public service” as a core component of a tripartite university mission that also includes teaching and research (Scott, 2006).

In the current globalization era, an “internationalization” mission has emerged in which universities are extending their missions for teaching, research and public service to international contexts as befits this era of rapid and borderless information movement (Scott, 2006). The “internationalization” mission requires of universities that they adopt more flexible and permeable structures in order to engage shifting global networks. Although Scott (2006) notes the sequenced progression of university missions he presents is unavoidably reductive in that it sets aside the fact that university missions are often layered across time, institutions, and systems, the foundational observation is no less valid: “University missions are dynamic and fluid; they reflect the ever-changing philosophical ideals, educational policies and cultures of particular societies or learned institutions” (p. 3).

Notwithstanding the pluralism that characterizes the history of the university as both an idea and an institution, it is true that the overwhelming majority of universities in

existence today have been established in the past one hundred years (Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova, and Teichler, 2007), and have proceeded, at least in part, from university conceptions offered by Newman and Humboldt. However, the perception that the world is a unified cultural and linguistic space has long since passed, and so too has the idyllic notion that the university is the repository of universal values, enlightened knowledge, and shared understanding beyond the delimitations of personal, cultural, and societal values, traditions, and beliefs. Moreover, in the latter half of the twentieth century, profound shifts have occurred within universities in response to the intensified demands for mass access and socio-economic relevance (Rothblatt, 1997; Bleiklie, 2007; Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007; Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova, and Teichler, 2007). For public institutions in particular, a pervasive sense has emerged that the university should function as a market-driven organization more directly connected with and responsive to the interests of local and global communities, governments, business and industry as a condition of both the funding that it receives and the societal service mandate that it espouses (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Clark, 1998; Bleiklie, 2007). As both an idea and an institution, the university has become so contested by vested political, market and academic interests, so complex in the configurations of programs and research priorities it adopts, that “generalizing about universities today is an enterprise fraught with peril” (Rothblatt, 1997, p. 153).

Contemporary Ideas of the University

In partial response to questions posed by contemporary society in aggregate about the university and knowledge development in general, Barnett (1993) conceptualizes an

interactive triangular rather than linear relation between knowledge, higher education and society:

We have . . . a triangular relationship between knowledge, higher education and society, with each element interacting with the other two. Furthermore, in each relationship, the traffic is two-way. Higher education . . . takes account of the signals it receives about the knowledge capacities society seeks; and the wider society consumes . . . often in unpredictable ways. (p. 33)

Identifying the “two-way” flow and often “unpredictable” applications of knowledge relationships between higher education and society, Barnett (1993) emphasizes that knowledge is the basis of contemporary society and that higher education is still the dominant knowledge producing and disseminating institution, but that higher education is not the sole arbiter of knowledge. In a related manner, Marginson (2007b) identifies universities as “socially distinctive [in] that they are self-reproducing, knowledge-forming organizations . . . defined by the binary between the known and the unknown” (Marginson, 2007b, p. 126). He asserts the primacy of knowledge creation and dissemination—an intermixing of both public and private goods—through teaching and research within universities (Marginson, 2007a). The internal conditions of universities must prevent private goods from displacing public goods altogether, for “advancing the broader collective good remains at the core of what universities do and is crucial to the public support that they receive” (Marginson, 2007b, p. 127).

Barnett (1993) further contends that as contemporary society focuses on economic rationalism and favours operational or strategic knowledge over other forms, the role of higher education has become bifurcated, for it must necessarily produce and critique

instrumental reasoning. While higher education has developed a predilection for empirical rather than hermeneutic forms of knowing, it must also validate diverse forms of knowing. Although these two impulses are in tension, Barnett suggests they are also complementary, for higher education can preserve a “unifying educational idea” by functioning as sites of critical commentary resistant to singular rationalizations of knowledge within society (Barnett, 1993, p. 45). Marginson (2007b) makes a similar assertion: “Universities must support . . . plurality, except that they must exclude values and ethical regimes that would undermine . . . universities as knowledge-forming organizations” (p.127). The critical project of validating plural forms of knowledge must shape alternate conceptions and approaches necessary to resist domination by any single form of knowledge. In particular, pluralist understandings of knowledge must effectively challenge societal over-valuation of instrumental reasoning through narrow frames that position democracy solely within the exchange nexus of the market economy and which threaten to circumscribe knowledge and learning. Such a critical project remembers the promise of the university as an historic site of values and structures “rooted in the institutional constraints that shape [it] and intellectual imperatives that drive” it (Scott, 1993, p. 23).

As Barnett (1993, 2000) and Bloland (2005) suggest, within such a milieu that blends conceptions of educational institutions, perhaps the most that can and must be expected of all universities is that they engage continuously in self-reflective debate about their mission, purpose and composition. This commitment alone may serve to extend what is, arguably, the primary purpose of universities—to observe and critically question the assumptions and relational dynamics that shape understanding in any given

era or context. To commit to this pursuit, without succumbing to a misplaced notion of the university as an authoritative institution within which value-neutral and unifying discourse on society, culture, politics, and identity should take place, is to support the legitimate, non-totalizing role of the “posthistorical University” Readings (1996) identifies in *The University in Ruins* (p. 192). As one site among many wherein “thinking is a shared process without identity or unity,” the university in ruins “[offers] us an institution in which the incomplete and interminable nature of the pedagogic relation can remind us that ‘thinking together’ is a dissensual process . . . [belonging] to dialogism rather than dialogue” (Readings, 1996, p.192). Marginson (2007b) concurs, suggesting the contemporary idea of the university is vested in “ethical regimes” within domains of “communicative association” and “secular intellectual practices” (p. 128). Conceived as such, and increasingly focused on market responsiveness rather than its modernist compact with the state to build nations and national culture (Dale, 2005), the university in this era of globalization must necessarily assume different forms to address diverse and competing frameworks of knowledge and value.

Scott (2006) notes in his study of shifting university missions that “resilience and adaptability” and “multiplicity of missions” are constitutive features that “will assist parties who seek to reinvent or revitalize the university to meet the needs of our time” (p. 33). Since the latter half of the twentieth century in English-speaking jurisdictions such as the UK, Australia and BC, significant efforts, albeit with mixed results, have been undertaken to facilitate shifts in university forms, missions, and mandates in an effort to address changing societal and governmental expectations on the university to reach a broader spectrum of people in an age in which mass access to post-secondary education is

both expected and necessary for social and economic prosperity. One significant, commonly shared trend within the post-secondary systems³ in the UK, Australia, and BC has been the development of what have been termed by Garrod and Macfarlane (2009) as “dual sector” universities within a traditionally academic-only university sector.

Dual sector institutions are conceptualized as a new form of comprehensive university, offering a range of college preparatory and vocational programs integrated with a range of university degree programs. Their comprehensive focus is on supporting multiple access pathways through more integrated vocational and academic curricula that permits students to bridge from one program to another. Arguably, such models are more enabling for students who wish to engage in lifelong learning no matter what their starting point. This purposeful integration of programs and courses credits is still rather atypical in university environments, and quite rare in the more traditional comprehensive universities, wherein comprehensive connotes professional program areas, such as law and medicine, which follow more prescriptive discipline-specific undergraduate program models in arts and sciences. Notably, with competition for students on the rise in most jurisdictions, higher education institutions and systems are increasingly more reliant on program proliferation and tuition revenues to maintain competitiveness and solvency. Recent developments suggest that these two distinct notions of comprehensiveness may conflate as the university adapts to meet societal needs and student demand.

A review of the historical development of the university as an institution in the three jurisdictions of the UK, Australia, and BC reveals at least partially overlapping stories of higher education sectors that have shifted between binary and unitary models in adapting to meet mass access demands, to accommodate increased technical and

vocational education needs, and to adjust to declining state funding. The UK, Australia, and BC are now replete with institutions sharing the university name despite pursuing a “multiplicity of missions” (Scott, 2006, p. 33). While the name itself seems, on the surface, to confer legitimacy on each of the institutions in these jurisdictions, in reality the quest for legitimacy remains at the forefront for many of the new universities. They do not comply readily with the prevailing forms and normative expectations of the more established universities, and as such seem out of sync with what Scott (1993) has described as an “authoritative constitution” of the university, “a fundamental text . . . [that is] a prisoner of its own time and categories” (p. 4). Of course, Scott’s (1993) critique is leveled against any narrow attempt to “impose some overarching idea, or principle” on the university for such attempts “[fail] to capture the historically determined diversity of university practice . . . or . . . they limit the university’s capacity to adapt and survive” (p. 4). Still, the quest for legitimacy remains a very real challenge for the new universities as they are unavoidably situated within history, within national and international contexts, within categories that shape them.

Higher Education in the United Kingdom

In considering developments in the UK higher education system over the past one hundred or so years as it has reinvented itself to become more responsive to social and economic needs, Pratt (1992) reminds us that the originating purpose of British universities was indeed vocational, “to produce the clerics and other educated dignitaries of mediaeval society” (p. 42). Tapper and Palfreyman (2009a) argue in a related manner that the pre-eminence of Oxbridge in UK higher education has been directly related to its

ability to adapt so that it continues to address the paramount perspectives, values, and needs of both the nation and society as a whole. They note further that Oxbridge has established its indispensability in distinct manners over the years: “Oxbridge as part of a network of interacting institutional interests (the cement binding ‘church and state’), Oxbridge and the reproduction of class interests and national culture, and Oxbridge at the leading edge of the production of world class research” (Tapper and Palfreyman, 2009a, p. 304).

With industrialization in full force by the mid-nineteenth century, and increasing competition emerging across European countries for economic dominance, Oxbridge and the British higher education system came under considerable criticism for not being responsive to the nation’s socio-economic needs to enhance industrial capacity through more relevant technical and scientific education and to reach a broader spectrum of people across the emergent working and middle classes (Pratt, 1992; Tapper and Palfreyman, 2009a). Against this backdrop, reforms to existing universities emerge from Royal Commission recommendations and new universities are created, usually in keeping with the scientifically and technically focused German universities and polytechnics (Pratt, 1992). With respect to Oxbridge, the challenge mounted by these new institutions, those that become the civic universities of the twentieth century, prompted a shift toward professional education. However, a class distinction remained embedded in a dual approach to professional education in that Oxbridge was to remain “connected with the national elites of politics, administrations, business, and the liberal professions . . . and [the other technical colleges and institutes] aimed at providing the provincial middle class

with utilitarian training in preparation for careers in the newer technological and professional occupations” (Barnes, 1996, pp. 289-90).

This shift from education exclusively for the wealthy to education for the mass population, from education more for “character formation” and as “ a rite of passage for those of a certain class” within “the structure of elite national institutions and social networks” (Tapper and Palfreyman, 2009a, p. 304), to education for career preparation so that people could improve their conditions and contribute more fully to the economy and society, was at times met with resistance based both in a fear of working class ascendancy (Pratt, 1992) and of compromising idyllic notions of the university. In fact, Scott (1993) argues that Newman’s *The Idea of the University* (1853) is first and foremost a reaction to the emerging professional education focus in British universities. Scott (1993) further suggests that although Newman’s conception of an idyllic liberal arts university—one that rejects professional education and research motivated by the technological and scientific interests of industrial society—has entered the lexicon shaping the idea of the university, it has had relatively little influence on the development of the university as an institution since the mid-nineteenth century. Most universities “grew up alongside the industrial revolution” and have been “profoundly functional institutions” regardless of their ancient origins (Scott, 1993, p. 9). Pratt (1992) corroborates this claim, arguing that by the end of the nineteenth century the structure of British higher education in the twentieth century is effectively established: on the one hand, relatively autonomous universities focusing mainly on theoretical study in the arts to prepare the professional elite and, on the other, locally responsive (to education authorities) technical colleges focusing mainly on vocational programs accessible to a

fuller spectrum of people preparing to improve their socio-economic condition by acquiring “intermediate and high skills” (Scott, 1993, p. 9).

During the first half of the twentieth century, higher education in the UK was subject to much of the same debate as occurred in the nineteenth century, effectively an argument against expansion of the system by those who felt such expansion would adversely affect the quality of graduates and an argument for expansion (particularly in science and technology areas) by those deeming such expansion essential to economic development of the nation (Pratt, 1992). During this same period up until World War II vocational programming in the technical colleges expanded rapidly in response to demand, and at the conclusion of the war public outcry and government reports advocating “for expansion in economically relevant and vocationally oriented higher education” (Pratt, 1992, p. 31) culminated in a 1956 White Paper “[announcing] the creation of eight (later ten) colleges of advanced technology (CATs), leading the development of advanced technological education outside the universities” (Pratt, 1992, p. 32). Although, at the insistence of the universities, the CATs did not become degree-granting institutions, their Diploma in Technology credential was, in most respects, equivalent, and could be awarded across a wide variety of programs, so that by the time the government issued the Robbins Report (1963) on higher education, “it was clear that the CATs were so much like universities that they should be granted university status and this they achieved” (Pratt, 1992, p. 32).

Arguing for expansion of the higher education system in the UK on the basis that access should be more widely available to those with ability and to meet the needs of British society, the Robbins Report (1963) validated earlier decisions to create six new

universities as well as the CATs, and advocated for the removal of arbitrary limitations on the new institutions that prevented them from offering degrees despite the similarity of their programming with that in established universities (Pratt, 1992). Notwithstanding the opportunity this presented for the CATs to achieve university status, the Robbins Report (1963) articulated a hierarchical, dual status vision for the UK higher education sector that was refined through the binary policy of Secretary of State, Anthony Crosland, in 1965 and given formal expression in a Department of Education and Science White Paper in 1966 (Pratt, 1992; Watson and Bowden, 2002; Scott, 2009). Responding to the Robbins Report (1963) challenge, Crosland's binary policy was a deliberate attempt to differentiate between universities and other higher education institutions within a single system in a manner that validated both university and non-university institutions and graduating professionals (Robinson, 1968; Pratt and Burgess, 1974; Pratt, 1992; Watson and Bowden, 2002; Scott, 2009). Over the next 25 years, over 30 polytechnics in the UK were created through merger or re-designation of technical colleges, art colleges and other institutions as a distinct but complementary sub-sector of British higher education with a mission to serve a diverse range of full- and part-time students, to be regionally responsive, and to develop work-related skills under the auspices of local education bodies (Robinson, 1968; Pratt, 1992; Scott, 2009). Essential to the resounding success of the polytechnics, which expanded access at a much higher rate than the universities, was the establishment in 1964 of the Council for National Academic Awards, which had the authority to award degrees and other credentials to non-university institutions, enabling them to develop and issue a great number of popular degree programs over a short time frame (Pratt, 1992; Watson and Bowden, 2002).

Despite Crosland's intent that the polytechnics would address the technical and professional educational access needs of the UK, they were hardly singular in their mission. In fact, there were relatively few restrictions on their programming and the university and non-university sectors were not stringently differentiated. Many exceptions emerged to the general trend of polytechnics offering a greater concentration of vocational and professional programs and universities offering a greater concentration of academic and scientific programs (Scott, 2009). Scott (2009) argues that the differentiation among the institutions was less educational and more legal and administrative: the universities being autonomous and the polytechnics subject to regional educational authorities. The public sector, as the polytechnics and colleges were known, grew in government esteem throughout the 1970s and 1980s, largely because they were more responsive to societal and labour market needs and were more efficient in doing so than the universities (Pratt, 1992). Several forces, the relative efficiency and responsiveness of the non-universities, the "fuzzy educational differentiation" (Scott, 2009, p. 44) between universities and non-universities, and the establishment under the 1988 Educational Reform Act of the polytechnics as independent corporations, inform the dissolution of the binary system in the early 1990s (Pratt, 1992; Scott, 2009). Following White Papers in 1987 and 1991 that promoted expansion of a higher education sector through competition, greater autonomy from public control, and reduced dependency on public funding for a mass higher education system, the polytechnics and other merged colleges gain university status in the early 1990s, thereby returning the UK to a unitary, albeit stratified, higher education sector (Pratt, 1992; Watson and Bowden, 2002; Scott, 2009).

What has emerged in the intervening years across the UK higher education sector has been a shift away from “systemic differentiation” to “institutional diversification” as market forces have intervened and “reputational differentiation” has become more important than “functional differentiation” in determining an institution’s role and its success (Scott, 2009, pp. 48-49). The Dearing Report (1997), *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, was silent on the question of sector differentiation and subsequent initiatives by Secretary of State, David Blunkett, in 2000 confirmed a “radical shift toward homogenization of the sector” (Watson and Bowden, p. 23). By most accounts this has produced a convergence of sorts with more traditional universities offering vocational and applied programs and more new universities offering expanded humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences programs (Watson and Bowden, 2002). However, while the two formerly distinct sectors seem to have evened out in terms of programming, size and growth, a clear division still remains in terms of research funding, with the traditional universities continuing to outpace the new universities and thereby maintain their reputational ascendancy (Watson and Bowden, 2002). Forces of internationalization have also exerted considerable influence on the UK system and individual institutions, which are increasingly conscious of reputational brand as a means of securing international students and the revenue they generate for an underfunded system (Scott, 2009). Although the UK higher education system has shifted “from an elite and sharply segregated system in the mid-1960s . . . to a mass and fluidly differentiated system in the first decade of the twenty-first century” (Scott, 2009, p. 54), the shift has been anything but systematic. The future seems likely to unfold in an equally complex

and unpredictable manner as the university adapts to address present conditions and thereby retain its relevance.

Higher Education in Australia

Just as the story of the UK higher education system has been one characterized by a shift from elite to mass access and by transformation from unitary to binary and then back to a unitary higher education structure, so too has the story of the Australian higher education system. The foundational institutions of Australian higher education, the University of Sydney (1853) and the University of Melbourne (1854), were established in the nineteenth century under British colonial rule and together with four others created prior to World War I are still labeled pejoratively as the “sandstones” in reference to the stone composition of their main structures (Harman, 1977; Marginson, 2009). A group of eight universities, including all the sandstones save the University of Tasmania, and three others created after World War II (The Australian National University (1946), the University of New South Wales (1958), and Monash University (1958)) now constitute the elite core of Australia universities renowned for excellence in research, in particular (Marginson, 2009). In response to chronic under-funding and an ongoing pattern of Australian families of stature sending their children abroad to be educated, the Murray Report (1957) informed national government policy development in the 1960s, leading to the creation of the Australian Universities Commission, significant increases in public funding for universities through the mid-1970s, greatly expanded student access and participation, an enhanced research mandate for universities, and the establishment of eight new universities by 1975 (Mahony, 1993; Marginson, 2009). Notably, despite

having no direct constitutional authority over post-secondary institutions, which, with the exception of The Australian National University, have all been created under state legislation, the federal government has been the driving force behind expansion of the university, and, later, the college systems in Australia in the post-World War II era—eventually taking over direct responsibility for capital and operational funding and eliminating student fees in 1974 (Harman, 1977; Harman,1986).

A binary model for the Australian higher education sector developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s through the creation of the Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE). By 1981, seventy-three CAEs had been established through the expansion of existing technical, agricultural, teachers, and other specialist colleges with an initial mandate to offer vocational and technical programming aimed mostly at the diploma and certificate level (Harman, 1986). Unlike the universities the CAEs did not receive research funding and they were generally less autonomous, but in most other respects they soon began to resemble universities very closely as they expanded their programming to the baccalaureate degree and even graduate degree level in response to increasing demand and their own success in serving their communities through expanded post-secondary access across Australia (Harman, 1977; Harman, 1986; Mahony, 1990; Mahony, 1993). With the recognition of a third post-secondary sector in the early 1970s, the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions which focused on preparatory and vocational sub-degree programming, the distinctions between the CAEs and the universities seemed less and less, and the justification for distinct treatment under a binary higher education system became increasingly tenuous (Harman, 1989; Mahony, 1990; Mahony, 1993).

By the mid-1970s, the period of rapid expansion and funding increases in the Australian post-secondary system came to an abrupt end with the advent of a more conservative government increasingly concerned with keeping the costs of public education under control and worried about over-supply of student spaces in teaching and engineering programs, among others, primarily but not exclusively within the CAE sector (Harman, 1986; Marginson, 2009). By 1981, the federal government, working in parallel with its delegated body, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC), which sought to influence policy direction across the post-secondary system, had set a clear course for the reintroduction of tuition fees and institutional rationalization through merger of up to thirty CAEs under threat of discontinued funding (Harman, 1986). In total, thirty-nine CAEs and two universities were engaged in mergers of up to five distinct institutions through 1983 (Harman, 1986). Significant outcomes of the mergers included a radically reconfigured higher education sector—one more in keeping with a world trend toward larger, multi- rather than single-Faculty institutions—and a further blurring of the already unclear distinctions between CAEs and universities in terms of government mandates and objectives (Harman, 1977; Harman, 1986).

As the CAEs developed through the late 1960s and 1970s, their originating mandate to be teaching-only institutions staffed largely by individuals drawn from and retaining ties to industry and business evolved considerably (Harman, 1977). Harman (1977) observes that by the mid-1970s the Commission on Advanced Education clearly recognized the “important role” of research in the colleges and encouraged research by both students and staff, particularly if of an applied nature relevant to industry or government (p. 330). Within this evolving CAE context, it is not surprising that a shift

toward university curriculum and structures emerged (Harman, 1977; Harman, 1989; Mahony, 1993) or that a 1987 Green Paper issued by the Federal Minister for Employment, Education, and Training, John Dawkins, noted the lack of funding for research in the CAEs and the greater emphasis on graduate degrees in universities as the only distinctions still evident between the two higher education sub-sectors (Mahony, 1990). In keeping with this view, and following the Dawkins White Paper (1988), the binary sub-sectors of Australian higher education were effectively merged to form a single unitary system of higher education in January of 1989 (Harman, 1989).

Although many people, as Marginson (2009) notes, “saw the absorption of the colleges of advanced education into a unitary university sector as an opportunity to secure a more egalitarian order” (Marginson, 2009, p. 239), funding reductions for all universities, the annexation of some CAEs by existing universities, and the creation of new but less credible universities through mergers and subsequent assessment and re-designation of CAEs gave rise to a highly competitive environment in which larger, well-resourced institutions would benefit at the expense of others (Mahony, 1990; Mahony, 1993). Further, within the higher education sector a binary sentiment lingered and was given specific expression through criteria for membership (and credibility) established by an Australian Vice Chancellor’s Association intent on preserving the integrity of “its member institutions as well as the international reputation of Australian universities” (Mahony, 1990, p. 462).

In addition to prompting the development of a unified higher education sector through amalgamations, the Dawkins (1988) reforms carried several other far-reaching implications, including expanded student access; greater emphasis on applied, technical

and business fields; more targeted approaches to funding research; enhanced efficiency and flexibility expectations on institutions; strengthening of managerial boards and corporate practices; and more direct attribution of educational costs onto individuals and institutions (Harman, 1989; Marginson, 2009). As a totality, these reforms and their motivations are commensurate with those shaping the UK higher education sector during roughly the same period. Both systems, indeed many systems across industrialized Western nations, were reacting to many of the same influences shaping an increasingly inter-connected global economy and society: instability in more competitive economies shifting from reliance on resource manufacturing to knowledge generation; escalating public expenditures on social security, education and health; public expectations of a mass rather than an elite higher education system; and equity for diverse populations as necessary to facilitate social and economic stability (Harman, 1989). Still, despite their reacting to similar influences, Mahony (1993) notes that the unification of the UK university system achieved through the re-designation of institutions as universities without the necessity of amalgamation, or prior to amalgamation, is less apt to produce the kind of institutional uniformity likely to result from the forced unification of the Australian system.

Writing almost twenty years after Dawkins (1988), Marginson (2009) seems to confirm Mahony's (1993) concerns, arguing that the singular model of "a public university with a comprehensive mission in teaching and research, providing degrees at all levels . . . in both professional programs and general" arts and science fields could not help but produce a stratified national system wherein "Newer universities tend to produce themselves as inferior copies of the elite institutions, and are seen as such" (Marginson,

2009, pp. 241-42). Resulting from this shift away from a structurally diverse higher education sector are some potentially serious consequences, including a loss of programmatic range and institutional distinctiveness. To ensure this did not occur, Mahony (1993) maintained that each university must engage in “greater reflection” and in “[continual] evaluation of its mission . . . including the nature and uses of knowledge with which it is concerned . . . [for] the development of a research hegemony over the activities of the consolidated universities, who have extensive undergraduate commitments, is inappropriate” (p. 480). Mahony (1993) also questions whether or not the established and the new universities are equal to the task.

The current lines of demarcation within the unified Australian higher education sector are clear in Marginson’s (2009) estimation—the long-standing group of eight elite institutions being set apart from the rest. Their status is evident through such measures as public perception, student demand, professional esteem, and research profile (Marginson, 2009). As a result, their ability to generate further capacity and capital is greatly enhanced. Despite the clear reputational differentiation of the university sector, diversity of mission seems to have been increasingly set aside, due in large part to the imposition of common government funding and assessment models across institutions, as well as the tendency of each institution to charge the highest levels of tuition in an effort to maintain their solvency (Marginson, 2009). To some extent, however, diversity has been reintroduced in the Australia post-secondary system through another means, the expansion and development of the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector in response to continued strong demand for post-secondary education. Somewhat prophetically, given the increase within the TAFE sector of advanced diploma and pre-

degree credits transferable to university degree programs, Mahony (1993) anticipates the “awakening [of] a binary system of tertiary education” in Australia even as it brings “closure [to] a binary system of higher education” (p. 482). Perhaps not surprisingly, although the preponderance of TAFE colleges and institutes require Higher Education Accreditation Committee approval for the degree level courses they offer, several have now begun to offer full degree-level credentials on their own. In keeping with Mahony’s (1993) prediction drawing from “recent history of tertiary education, both in Britain and Australia,” the evolving mandate of the TAFE sector institutions demonstrates the truism “that established systems need alternatives, who may become competitors, to cope with continually evolving and highly pluralist demands of modern societies for tertiary education” (p. 482).

Higher Education in Canada

As in Australia, post-secondary education in Canada, as stipulated in the *Constitution Act* of 1867, is under provincial rather than national jurisdiction (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Fisher et al., 2005; Shanahan and Jones, 2007; Fleming and Lee, 2009). Regardless of legal jurisdiction, however, Fisher et al. (2005), in their study of federal policy in relation to post-secondary education, point out that for the first one hundred or so years following Confederation the federal government exerted direct influence over post-secondary education as it pursued “nation-building” (p.14). With the Confederation of Canada in 1867, post-secondary education emerged from its nascent colonial history of “private and sectarian” institutions in Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes dating back to the seventeenth century to become a priority of the nation and its provinces (Fisher et al.,

2005, p.14). In the 1870s, direct federal involvement occurred through the establishment of the Military College in 1874 and a land grant for the newly created Universities of Manitoba (1877) (Fisher et al., 2005). In the ensuing years following Confederation, universities, or at least one provincial university, developed in all the provinces and operated with both private and provincial funding (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Fisher et al., 2005).

Federal responsibility over national defense and security, Indian affairs, foreign relations, the non-provincial territories, and economic development has often intersected with post-secondary education (Fisher et al., 2005; Shanahan and Jones, 2007). In particular, federal concerns regarding economic, technological, and social development has precipitated a long history of support for vocational education and skills development, as well as scientific, technical, and arts research through the establishment of federal funding agencies, regulatory bodies, and granting councils (Fisher et al., 2005; Shanahan and Jones, 2007). These indirect and direct federal forays into the legislative, regulatory and coordinating authority that the Provinces have over post-secondary education have constituted a tenuous federalism by consent over the years, but that consent has by no means been continuous or universal (Jones, 1996; Fisher et al, 2005).

In the mid-1960s, facing increasing public expectations for expanded post-secondary access that seemed likely to exceed the capacity and resources of the systems across the nation, the federal government initiated a major policy shift by creating an Education Support Branch responsible for consulting directly with all the Provinces on federal funding contributions through transfer payments in support of university and vocational education (Fisher et al., 2005). This change in relationship reversed a one

hundred year pattern of federal encroachment on provincial jurisdiction through direct grant funding to institutions and reconfirmed provincial authority over and coordination of their own uniquely developing post-secondary systems (Fisher et al., 2005; Shanahan and Jones, 2007). After thirty years of relatively robust transfer funding in support of system expansion, in the mid-1990s the federal government began to significantly reduce education transfer payments in response to competing national priorities, rising health care costs, and seemingly unsustainable federal budgets. This change in policy has prompted diverse provincial responses in addressing common issues of increased costs, inter- and intra-sector coordination, institutional and programmatic diversification, and market competition (Shanahan and Jones, 2007).

In recent years, unlike in Australia and the UK, Canadian federal involvement in post-secondary education has been more distant, limited mainly to provincial transfer payments for education, distribution of national research funding on a competitive basis, and targeted resources for vocational and skills development programs and facilities (Fisher et al., 2005; Shanahan and Jones, 2007; Fleming and Lee, 2009). Within the context of less direct federal involvement in provincial post-secondary system matters, the historic binary structure of Canadian post-secondary with relatively autonomous, degree-granting universities on the one hand and highly regulated, non-degree-granting community colleges on the other (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Shanahan and Jones, 2007) has experienced some conflation. Increasingly, the university sector, which commentators (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Shanahan and Jones, 2007) describe as traditionally lacking in both vertical and horizontal differentiation as a result of common funding rates, shared quality standards, and widely adopted comprehensive missions that include graduate

programs and research mandates, has come under pressure to diversify. These initiatives are manifest both within individual institutions, through the narrowing and refining of missions, and across former sub-sector groupings as legislation changes in some provinces have expanded degree granting-authority to specifically designated colleges (Shanahan and Jones, 2007).

To consider the implications arising from the conflation that has begun to occur in the form of new hybrid institutions that cut across the university and college sectors, it is helpful to have an understanding of some distinct features of the provincial post-secondary systems that have emerged in the absence of centralized education policy and practice in Canada. As Dennison (2006b) points out, although the ten provinces share “many common values,” they have created distinct post-secondary models in keeping with the “different historical, religious and linguistic traditions” they embody (p. 108). In all provinces the community colleges have an explicit mandate to provide vocational training focused on meeting labour market needs, but beyond this common feature they vary considerably. The British Columbia and Alberta community colleges and the Quebec Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnelle (Cegeps) have also developed university transfer programming to facilitate student movement into university degree programs, whereas the colleges in other provinces have traditionally run distinct programming without a university transfer function (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Shanahan and Jones, 2007).

Representative examples of this post-secondary differentiation are evident in the systems of the two largest provinces, Ontario and Quebec. The former developed disparate university and community college sectors with relatively little program

articulation between them. At the undergraduate level, the university sector has offered three and four year baccalaureate degrees and the community college sector one, two, and three year vocational and technical certificate, diploma, and applied degree programs. Although inter-institutional articulations have developed in recent years, the alignment of programs and movement of students (and course credits) between them has been limited because they do not share a common and transferable university curriculum (Shanahan and Jones, 2007). The latter, extending from its historic ties to French traditions, has developed a unique system within Canada. The Cegeps in Quebec offer both university preparation and technical diploma programs for students who enter after completion of grade 11 (Skolnik and Jones, 1992; Shanahan and Jones, 2007). Whereas in the remainder of Canada, high school students must complete grade 12 to graduate and gain entry into a four-year university degree program, in Quebec, students following an academic pathway are required to complete a two-year Cegep program as a prerequisite to a three-year university degree program. As a result of the disparate provincial post-secondary systems, students moving from a Quebec Cegep to a university in Ontario or elsewhere in Canada can experience course credit articulation problems.

Higher Education in British Columbia

In British Columbia (BC), where perhaps the most dramatic illustration of higher education sector conflation has occurred to date (in the form of dual sector general degree granting university colleges, and applied degree granting community colleges), inter-institutional articulation across the university and community college sectors has been relatively seamless for several decades since the development of community colleges in

the 1960s and 1970s. Previously, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, BC's higher education system was comprised of one public university, the University of British Columbia (UBC), and Victoria College, which offered some introductory university courses in the Provincial capital on Vancouver Island. Subsequent to an amendment to the *Public Schools Act* in 1958, which permitted school boards to create two year colleges, and a seminal report, by John B. Macdonald (1962b), then president of UBC, the system began to develop along a binary model (Fleming and Lee, 2009).

Implementing a Binary Higher Education Model

Intently focused on creating greater access to university in regions throughout BC and developing the educational capacity of the Province in general, Macdonald (1962b) “described a model for colleges—autonomous, teaching-focused and locally responsive institutions offering primarily academic courses that would facilitate student access to UBC after two years of study” (Fleming and Lee, 2009, p. 97). He also advocated for two new four-year colleges, one in Victoria and one in Burnaby, as part of an overall plan to increase university participation rates by young adults (18-21), which, at 17.7%, lagged considerably behind the United States rates of 39.5% (Macdonald, 1962b, p. 8). Macdonald's report (1962b) was both visionary and pragmatic, recognizing the need for the Province to educate its citizenry in order to contribute more fully to and compete more effectively in the information-focused society and economy of the future.

Although the 1958 legislation did not stimulate action by local school boards, by the mid-1960s Vancouver City College was formed through the merger of a vocational institute, a school of art, and a continuing education centre” (Fleming and Lee, 2009, p.

97). As a result of local plebiscites, thirteen additional colleges, many in relatively remote rural areas, came into being over the next decade (Fleming and Lee, 2009). Additionally, Macdonald's (1962b) recommendation for two new four-year colleges led to the development of two new universities, during the same period. The development of the community colleges as regional transfer institutions facilitating entry into one of now three provincial universities in Vancouver (UBC), Victoria (University of Victoria (UVic)), and Burnaby (Simon Fraser University (SFU)) contributed to a highly developed provincial course credit transfer system covering the first two years of university study, despite the significant differences in orientation within each sector. The university sector was comprised of research-driven, autonomous institutions serving select students. The community college sector was comprised of teaching-focused regional institutions more directly managed by government and by a mandate to provide open educational access.

The history of BC's community colleges has been one of continual change. Over time, the Provincial government expanded Macdonald's (1962b) vision of a university transfer focus for the community colleges by joining them with existing vocational institutes, resulting in dual programming mandates: academic and vocational, including trades training. Initially beholden to a provincial Academic Board comprised of University Senators who had authority to determine curriculum, transfer credit, and quality standards, the colleges and their faculty had little opportunity to exercise their own professionalism (Dennison, 2002; Fleming and Lee, 2009). This parochial oversight, along with the community college faculty focus upon classroom instruction at the introductory level only and the absence of research expectations (Dennison, 1984), prompted questions by detractors about the legitimacy of the community colleges and

their programs, particularly in the early years. Despite this initial skepticism, the BC community college system thrived through the 1970's and 1980's. Fittingly, in keeping with their distinct place within the post-secondary system as a whole, community colleges continued to develop institutional values, educational practices, and organizational structures distinguishing them from the universities. Characteristic features of the community colleges have been their generally smaller class sizes at the introductory level; lower tuition rates; focus on granting certificates, diplomas and associate degrees; bridging of developmental, vocational, and academic programs; and open access mandate (Fleming and Lee, 2009). In addition, they have always been under more direct control of the government by virtue of both their more restrictive legislative and governance frameworks (Shanahan and Jones, 2007; Fleming and Lee, 2009)

Parallel Developments in California (1960-1987)

To place Macdonald's (1962b) recommendations in a more specific Western North America context that, in part, informed them (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Dennison, 2006a), the California experience demonstrates similar pressures on higher education for access expansion and system redesign, producing related, but neither the same actions nor the same results over time. Recognizing that California would be facing huge increases in demand for higher education from a rapidly expanding population seeking access to the state colleges and the University of California, in 1959 the State Assembly adopted Resolution No. 88 requesting that the Board of Education and the Regents of the University prepare a report with recommendations for higher education in California. The resulting document, *A Master Plan for Higher Education in California*,

1960-1975, acknowledged several key motivations for developing a holistic plan for the future of California Higher Education: an anticipated three-fold increase in full time student enrolment to 661,350 (and over 1,000,000 students in total) between 1958 and 1975 (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. 46), uncertainty about the State's capacity to pay for expanded higher education given its forecasted budgets, and concern that increasing "competition and unnecessary, wasteful duplication between the state colleges and the University of California might cost the taxpayers millions of dollars" (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. xi). Enabled by an established history of collaborative higher education planning within the State and since 1945 through a Liaison Committee of the University and the State Board of Education, a Survey Team assembled to review six key areas: anticipated enrollments through 1975 and their distribution across the colleges (junior, state, and private)⁴ and the University of California; clear mandate distinctions between the junior colleges, state colleges and the University in order to support system expansion; priorities, timelines, and location for new state college and university campuses; estimated capital and operational costs as well as fee structures attendant with a revitalized system in which many more students would begin their academic studies at a local junior college; State capacity to pay for the system; and organizational, administrative, and governance structures for publicly supported higher education in California as a whole, as well as for each sector (*Master plan 1960-1975*, 1960, pp. 22-23).

Over sixty recommendations are offered in the *Master Plan, 1960-1975*, and the overwhelming majority of these were enacted in one form or another in 1960 through the addition of Division 16.5 Higher Education to the existing *Education Code*, and

subsequent resolutions and bills (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960; *Toward a unified state system*, 1998). Key among these recommendations are the creation of a tripartite higher education system comprised of junior colleges, a State College system, and the University of California, each of which “shall strive for excellence in its sphere” (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. 2 and p. 41). The junior colleges were to remain part of the public school system, to be governed by district boards, and to be supervised by the State Board of Education. Their programming was restricted to two-year university transfer curriculum in liberal arts areas as well as two-year vocational and technical studies leading directly to employment. The State College system was constituted as a public trust, with a bicameral governance structure akin to that of the University of California. Their mandate was later expanded to the graduate level, including doctoral programs if offered in conjunction with the University of California; however, their primary programming focus was to be on undergraduate study in arts, science, and professional areas. Notably, the State College system, like the University of California system, was expected to concentrate increasingly on the final two years of baccalaureate study and not to duplicate two-year undergraduate programming in applied fields. The University of California was recognized as having the exclusive mandate for graduate programming in professional areas like law and medicine, as well the primary mandate for research across the system; however, the State Colleges could engage in research “using facilities provided for and consistent with [their] primary function” (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, pp. 41-43, p. 2 and p. 42).

Arising from the report was a higher education system comprised of state-controlled, relatively autonomous, and autonomous institutions—delineated sectors with

quite distinct mandates. To make the tripartite system operational, and not readily prone to competition, duplication, or ineffectiveness through inadequate resources, several other measures would be key. Foremost amongst these was the creation of a Co-ordinating Council for Higher Education, comprised of members of each sector and the State Board of Education, and charged with reviewing budgets, ensuring the requisite institutional differentiation in keeping with programming mandates, and developing plans for orderly growth across the system (*Master plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. 3 and pp. 43-44). Others included admission standards by institutional type, such that the University of California admitted the top 12.5%, the State College system the top 33.3%, and the junior colleges the remainder of California high school graduates pursuing higher education (*Master Plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. 4 and p. 72), and the development of plans by the University of California and State College systems to reduce the percentage of lower division students in their programs by approximately 10% from the 1960 estimate of 41% (*Master Plan, 1960-1975*, 1960, p. 6). The system redesign and shift in enrolment patterns was to be facilitated in large part through oversight by the Co-ordinating Council, which would review credit transfer procedures and as well as admission and retention practices across the system. To ensure appropriate higher education resource utilization and coordinated growth over time, the *Master Plan, 1960-1975* provided demographic data as well as revenue and expenditure data in support of a host of other recommendations setting out principles and benchmarks for expansion. Of import were maximum institutional capacity targets, suggesting an upper limit for specific University of California, California State College, and junior college campuses. The clear goal was rational growth in support of

sustainable institutions providing learning environments requisite for their students—all within a tuition free environment for State residents.

In the years following the initial implementation of the main recommendations of the *Master Plan, 1960-1975* through its review and renewal in 1987, numerous studies, policies, and regulations focused on refinement of the tripartite higher education system. The overwhelming majority of studies focused not on the University of California system or the now renamed California State University system, but on the former junior colleges, which were to coalesce into the California Community College system with a balanced local and system-wide governance structure in keeping with key recommendations of *The Master Plan Renewed*, which was published in 1987 (*Toward a unified state system*, 1998). The main recurrent issues concerned funding and governance, prompting literally hundreds of changes in the *Education Code* in the ten-year period leading up to the recommendations of *The Master Plan Renewed*. Voter dissatisfaction with local taxation rates shifted primary funding responsibility to the State of California, prompting greater State (rather than local) influence on the community colleges as well as intense institutional competition between and individualistic lobbying by the institutions, which were still governed under the authority of the State Department of Education, and, therefore, consistently came second to the K-12 system in terms of budget priorities (*Toward a unified state system*, 1998; *Toward a state of learning: California higher education for the twenty-first century*, 1999).

So, whereas from the outset of its initial *Master Plan 1960-1975*, the California model envisioned and the State moved to implement a tripartite higher education system built around a two-year university transfer core and a high degree of coordinated

enrolment planning, BC enacted a binary system with very little centrally coordinated enrolment planning. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly given the common environmental challenges faced by BC and California community colleges, by the late 1980s the two systems were under increasing duress in terms of responding to access demand, attaining adequate operational and infrastructure resources, offering the appropriate range of credible vocational and academic programming required by their respective local communities, and establishing a cooperative governance model to address these issues effectively. In response to these circumstances, the two higher education systems in each jurisdiction diverged further.

Towards a Unitary University Sector in BC

Although the BC university sector and community college sector division was initially a binary one, the binary was already collapsing in terms of program offerings and student body by the time university colleges were introduced as a third component of the system in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In response to a rapidly expanding population, high demand for university access, and low post-secondary participation rates, in 1989 the provincial government created the *Access for All* policy, which recommended “the establishment of university colleges that would provide university degree programs through an upper level university college component . . .” (Levin, 2003b, p. 61). Five university colleges (Kwantlen University College, Malaspina University-College, Okanagan University College, the University College of the Fraser Valley, and the University College of the Cariboo) were designated between 1989 and 1995. Skolnik (2006) identifies this “transformation of some community colleges into university

colleges” as “the first major deviation from the binary design in North America” (p. 6). However, although the government’s intent for designating the university colleges was clear—to address continuing degree access for students (primarily in rural areas) who could not afford the time or the money or who simply could not access a seat to complete their degrees at one of the large universities in Vancouver and Victoria—they were established without thorough discussion on their mission and mandate or on how they would function as a sector within a post-secondary system also comprised by universities, community colleges and institutes (Dennison, 2006b).

Initially, the degrees conferred by the first four established university colleges⁵ were not in their own name, but in that of one or more of three supervising provincial universities—UBC, UVic, and SFU, or other degree-granting authority—with which they were affiliated and under whose aegis they developed and staffed their degree programs. Over time, the university colleges became more autonomous. By the late 1990s they were all offering traditional and professional degrees, some at the masters level, under their own names and institutional authority. However, the absence of a definitive legislative mandate⁶ distinguishing them from community colleges on the one hand, and equating them with universities on the other hand, left the university colleges somewhat ambiguous about their purpose and identity as dual sector institutions spanning two seemingly distinct traditions (Dennison, 2006b).

Seeking to establish their legitimacy as universities, in 1998 the university colleges enlisted the former president of University of Victoria, Howard Petch, to assess their practices and program quality. Petch determined not only “that the degree programs currently offered are academically strong and meet accepted Canadian university

standards,” but also that their mandate should include research, graduate studies, and a bicameral governance structure (Church, 2002, p. 2). Drawing upon this validation, the university colleges created the University Colleges of British Columbia (UCBC) consortium to represent their specific interests to government (Fleming and Lee, 2009). In 2001, the UCBC issued a “draft position paper calling for university colleges to become regional comprehensive universities with a mandate including research, graduate programs and new legislation” (Church, 2002, p. 3).

In partial keeping with this desire, in 2004 Okanagan University College was dissolved by the provincial government, and its faculty, staff and programs redistributed across two distinct institutions, Okanagan College and UBC Okanagan, on separate campuses. As the now separated descriptors college and university suggested, for the most part the new college adopted the preparatory, vocational, career, and university transfer programming, while the university adopted the academic degree programming. Subsequently, the University College of the Cariboo was reconstituted as Thompson Rivers University, designated as such within its own legislation, the *Thompson Rivers University Act*. Unlike the former Okanagan University College, however, the University College of the Cariboo remained intact. The full range of programming—preparatory, vocational, career and academic degree—that distinguished the university college remained integral to the new university mandate:

Thompson Rivers University will continue to deliver a complete range of university and college programs, including ESL and university degrees as well as trade and technology programs. (“The University College of the Cariboo is Now Thompson Rivers University,” 2005)

For many within the university college sector as well as their regional communities who supported their case, the creation of Thompson Rivers University was a long-awaited first step in what they deemed an inevitable movement toward university status for all given their shared history, mandate, programming, and educational practices. That is not to suggest, however, that the re-designation of the university colleges as universities was eagerly anticipated in either the community college or the university sectors. Such a development would, at the very least, prompt a recalibration within the system that could not be and still is not fully understood.

Parallel Developments in California (1987-2009)

In response to the ongoing challenges of meeting ever-increasing access demands for degree level education and utilizing limited infrastructure and resources fully, separate strategies developed in BC and California during the 1980s and have continued to do so to the present day. Notwithstanding the absence of clearly outlined plans and public policy directions, BC was pursuing mandate shifts for several of its university colleges such that they might be conceived as more institutionally independent versions of California State University campuses. Additionally, in recent years piecemeal mandate expansion for several BC community colleges has been occurring through Ministerial permission to offer applied degrees in vocational and career areas—provided the institution can demonstrate clear labour market demand for a given baccalaureate program as well as institutional capacity to sustain it on an ongoing basis.

California, on the other hand, has been focused on maintaining its tripartite system. However, in order to do so it has been trying to address several substantive

shortcomings increasingly apparent in the rigidly segmented sectors. The higher education system lacked regional program cooperation, efficient credit transfer, and facilities sharing across sectors and institutions, in large part because the funding and governance approaches were so distinct (*Toward a state of learning*, 1999, p. 24). More effective influence by the State in encouraging the institutions to address these issues for the benefit of students would require that the community colleges be brought into greater alignment with the other two sectors in terms of State funding practices and cooperative governance, and that institutions from all three groups develop regional associations focused on program and transfer linkages across the sectors in an effort to increase credential completion by students (*Toward a state of learning*, 1999).

In support of these goals, and as a culmination of sorts to innumerable reports and studies on the higher education system since the implementation of the *Master Plan, 1960-1975*, California issued a new plan, *The California Master Plan for Education*, in 2002. Like the original, the new plan is sweeping in scope and vision, considering education and institutions along an integrated school through university continuum “that prepares all students for learning and for transition to and success in a successive level of education, the workplace, and society at large . . .” (*Master Plan for Education*, 2002, p. 4). Like the original plan, the new plan is concerned with access, quality, efficiency, affordability, and accountability; however, in specific relation to the tripartite higher education system, it recommends new directions for the community colleges. Although their primary educational mandate remains largely unchanged and they are not permitted degree-granting authority, they are permitted to offer upper division curriculum in collaboration with the public Universities and other accredited degree-granting

institutions (*Master Plan for Education*, 2002, p. 99). This shift is clearly in keeping with goals of greater regional collaboration across sectors in support of student access and success. More significantly, their recommended governance model is more in keeping with that of the State University, functioning as a public trust with a Board of Governors overseeing a multi-campus system (*Master Plan for Education*, 2002, p. 99). This shift is supportive of the goal of a more sustainable and independent system less prone to competition and extreme campus differentiation by local region. In combination with a recommendation to enhance articulation and transfer between levels, institutions, and sectors through more clearly aligned curriculum and programmatic pathways, collectively these shifts in direction are integral to the attempt to bring coherence to a system that had become more and more differentiated over time. To date, the jury is still out on whether or not the system can or will work as well as other systems within the US or that of BC. A recent report, *Crafting a Student-Centered Transfer Process in California: Lessons from Other States* (2009), issued by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy at the California State University, Sacramento, suggests that in relative terms many challenges remain in relation to student transfer across a still highly differentiated and fragmented California higher education system:

The decentralized, segmental structure of California higher education and the strong tradition of local faculty autonomy over curriculum have set the framework for transfer policies and made it difficult to engage in comprehensive, state-level planning Such a complex process is . . . confusing . . . [and] . . . community colleges do not have a robust network of support services . . . to help

students navigate through the complex transfer process. (*Crafting a student-centered transfer process in California, 2009, p. i*)

Notwithstanding its similar challenges in coordinating across highly differentiated institutions within a fragmented system, students in BC colleges, institutes, and universities have benefited from a long-standing, well-developed, publicly accessible course credit Transfer Guide centrally maintained by the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer. The BC Transfer System has been made possible through the participation of and resourcing by all BC public post-secondary and other participating institutions in ongoing, multi-level articulation meetings to establish course credit transfer agreements that facilitate student mobility and progression toward educational credentials at any of the member institutions. Still, in the BC system as in the California system persistent issues are of increasing concern.

Most notable is that course credit transfer—whether through institution-to-institution agreement or across the system as a whole—does not directly address the fundamental challenge of program-to-program credit recognition and transfer. As each individual institution often has differing pre-requisite and general education requirements, even in common program or subject areas, students face a confusing array of options and requirements (*Crafting a student-centered transfer process in California, 2009; Credit transfer: Models in BC and beyond, 2009*). Regardless of how much specific information is made available for review in advance, many students transferring credits between institutions and / or programs can and do amass more than the required number to complete their credentials. In extreme instances they discover too late that the credits

they have completed within a program in one institution are not applicable at all within a program at another.

Of course, there are sound curricular reasons why not all course credits, even if articulated between institutions, should apply in lieu of others within any given program. However, a singular institutional and system-wide focus on the articulation of individual course credits de-contextualized from more holistic program-to-program curricular bridging and greater alignment of pre-requisite and general education requirements seems likely to amplify student mobility and credential completion challenges in post-secondary environments characterized by a high degree of institutional autonomy and differentiation. Within the overall contemporary context of decreasing governmental funding capacity both in BC and California, and increasing public and governmental concern that higher education be not only accessible and of a high quality but also efficient, imperatives for change should not be unexpected.

In BC, a business practice review of the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer led by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development is one such response that may lead to recommendations for change. In California, some criticism of the *Master Plan for Education* (2002) and its implementation suggests “recent reform efforts have seen little success and have arguably added more complexity to the transfer process because they have been limited to the traditional paradigm of local agreements rather than statewide patterns” (*Crafting a student-centered transfer process in California*, 2009, p. i). Recommendations from this report focus on legislative changes in support of policies ensuring guaranteed credit transfer through recognized community college associate degree structures, “standardized general education and major

preparation requirements . . . with allowances for minimal variations across institutions,” guaranteed admission to universities at the third year level for the holders of community college associate degrees, and a state-wide degree audit system (*Crafting a student-centered transfer process in California*, 2009, p. ii). Such a centralized approach seems in keeping with the ethos of California’s approach to higher education over its history.

Whether or not such alignment can or should be regained within the California system is a significant question, however, as the extent of curricular differentiation by institution, sector, and region is already considerable. Further, as Tapper and Palfreyman (2009b) point out, despite having several highly structured state systems US higher education in general has lacked “structural rigidity . . . [and accepted] that institutions can both be founded and closed” (p. 5). Given this reality and the many challenges relating to student access and institutional funding, Tapper and Palfreyman (2009b) question the endurance of California’s approach to higher education system design: “(perhaps California’s Master Plan has run its course?)” (p. 5).

Creation of a Unitary University Sector in BC

Although BC has facilitated considerable curricular alignment between the community colleges and universities through articulated lower division course credit transfer agreements under the auspices of the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, the higher education system has struggled somewhat with issues relating to program articulation and access. Specifically, province-wide program-to-program bridging to the degree level, responsiveness to local demand, and efficient use of resources have been consistent concerns. In part, the recent creation of five new universities in BC may be

viewed as an attempt to deal with some of these issues within the context of single institutions rather than across a more rigidly segmented and / or centrally guided higher education system.

Following the publication of the *Campus 2020* (Plant, 2007) report on the future of post-secondary in BC, in 2008, the remaining three university colleges, along with Capilano College, and Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, were designated, through the *University Amendment Act* (a supplement to the existing *University Act*) and subsequent regulation, as special purpose universities by the government of BC. Like Thompson Rivers University, the three new universities (Kwantlen Polytechnic University, University of the Fraser Valley, and Vancouver Island University) created from the former university colleges are required by legislation to continue the full range of preparatory, vocational, career and academic programming they offered previously. Well in advance of their formal re-designation as universities, Levin (2003a), in conducting research on organizational change within the university colleges, observes that they had begun to “resemble universities with their new emphasis upon research and scholarship, academic rank, and application for membership in a national association for universities” (p. 454-455).

Dennison and Schuetze (2004) further suggest that the creation of the university colleges also awakened aspirations within the colleges to become degree-granting institutions. This, too, has come to pass over the past few years in BC, as well as in Alberta and Ontario, through legislated approval extending degree-granting authority, predominantly but not exclusively in applied fields such as Business and Nursing, to selective public colleges (Shanahan and Jones, 2007). More recently, in 2009, the

Province of Alberta, through Order in Council pursuant to the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, granted its two largest baccalaureate degree-granting urban colleges, Mount Royal in Calgary and MacEwan in Edmonton, the authority to rename themselves universities. Each of these institutions had been lobbying for university status for several years; a lingering question is whether substantive mandate change will follow in future.

Unavoidably, perhaps, with degree-granting authority now dispersed across the college and university sectors, latent tendencies toward academic drift have been encouraged through both the internal commitment of institutions to ensure high quality programs and external expectations that these programs are credible in the view of peer institutions—which often means that they resemble those within the more established universities. Regardless, the net effect at present—given the range of institutions newly designated as universities, the community college mandate to offer applied baccalaureate degrees, and the continuance of three provincial institutes⁷ with widely varying mandates—is that BC has created a higher education system, comprised in part by a unitary community college sector and a unitary university sector, each of which is characterized by a high level of institutional differentiation.

Conclusion: Challenges of Adaptation for Universities and Sectors

In BC, the university colleges were the most readily apparent sites overlaying educational practices and programs that community colleges and universities have not traditionally shared. The continuing challenge for BC's new universities, a challenge common to those in the UK and Australia, is one of connecting varied practices and programs across the institutional traditions of diverse colleges and universities in a

manner that permits them both to retain their institutional integrity and establish their legitimacy as universities within their unique national context and intersecting international contexts. As Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova and Teichler (2007) point out, the “diversity of higher education systems in each national context depends on . . . external and internal boundaries that portray its horizontal and vertical structure . . .” (Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova and Teichler, 2007, p. 375). The extent to which the new universities are able to occupy a credible space within the higher education sectors and post-secondary systems in their jurisdictions is dependent upon the extent to which they are viewed as belonging to a unitary, albeit stratified, university sector and / or defining for themselves a distinctive sub-sector position within a binary or more pluralist post-secondary system. Arguably, this task has become even more difficult now, under the university name, for the highly contested label may over-determine the values ascribed to the institutions, and the traditions, practices, and programs by which they are identified and assessed.

The following chapter focuses on developing a fuller understanding of the interrelated dynamics of institutional credibility, identity, and change facing these new universities and the newly configured, unitary university sector they occupy. Drawing upon theoretical conceptions of institutions as organic entities comprised of complex and shifting organizational cultures, I shall develop a conceptual framework to inform further study on how, through what means, and within which practice boundaries, the legitimacy and integrity of BC’s new universities are negotiated across the university sector as a whole and within the individual institutions, themselves.

Endnotes

¹ In chapter 3, I introduce literature that speaks to similar institutional mandate and sector conflation experiences occurring within various European as well as New Zealand and South African jurisdictions. Although there are parallels that can and should be drawn across these jurisdictions, I have limited my detailed review to development of the university in the UK, Australia, and BC because their shared history as commonwealth nations, similar political systems, and relatively common societal structures and values invite more direct comparison. As the New Zealand experience parallels the Australian experience in many ways, and New Zealand itself is relatively small in terms of population, I have chosen not to review it in detail within the parameters of this study. South Africa also presents important parallels, but as study on higher education sector design and change in this jurisdiction should be considered within the rather unique context of social, political and economic forces at play in a post-apartheid era, I have set aside detailed discussion on the South African experiences for another time.

In addition to the jurisdictions mentioned above, I have also omitted detailed discussion on the United States (US) higher education sector as a whole in this study. My reasons for doing so are several. Notably, to my knowledge, the US has not undergone a similar systematic conflation of academic and vocational mandates in its universities, nor has it experienced a shift from a binary to a unitary university sector model. Also, the US system is extremely large and diverse, with influences and oversight at many levels: state, regional, and national. Tapper and Palfreyman (2009b) contend that “*the distinctive virtue of American higher education [is] that it lacked a narrow understanding of the idea of the university*” and so has developed a “pluralist

model” of high and low prestige private and state-funded universities “designed to meet very different needs and serve a range of interests” (p. 3). This is not to suggest that the US higher education system is impervious to forces of reduced government funding, massification, globalization, and societal need, but that a history pre-dating the establishment of the nation, informed by multiple competing traditions from overseas, typified by market responsiveness to “changing needs of constituents” (Fairweather, 2009, p. 14), and relatively free of inflexible institutional structures seems to have contributed to more adaptive systems across its many jurisdictions (Tapper and Palfreyman, 2009b; Fairweather, 2009). US higher education presents multiple stories unto themselves. One story I will draw upon to inform understanding of BC higher education system developments over the last 50 years is that of the California system, as guided by its higher education master plans.

² For the purposes of this study, I am focusing exclusively on the collection of publicly funded institutions as constituents of the California and BC higher education systems. Although each jurisdiction has numerous private post-secondary institutions that play significant and varied roles warranting study on their own, the publicly funded institutions engage the overwhelming majority of students and, I would argue, are readily identifiable by the general citizenry as the primary constituents of the higher education systems in both California and BC.

³ The terminology used by British, Australian, American, and Canadian academics and policy-makers to describe their post-compulsory education systems varies somewhat.

For the purposes of my study and this chapter in particular, the higher education sector refers to the university and / or general degree-granting sector, the further education sector to the college or institute certificate- and diploma-granting sector, and the post-secondary or tertiary system to the complete range of post-compulsory education sectors in a given jurisdiction.

⁴ California's junior colleges are the pre-cursor to the current California Community College system and the state colleges are the pre-cursor to the California State University system.

⁵ Kwantlen University College was the last to be established in 1995. Unlike the other university colleges, Kwantlen and its degree programs were not initially affiliated with those of an existing university or other degree-granting authority.

⁶ The university colleges were identified as a degree-granting subset within the same legislation, the *College and Institute Act*, which also defines the pre-degree and vocational mandate for the community colleges.

⁷ The three provincial institutes are the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC), Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), and the BC Institute of Technology (BCIT). All are designated under the *College and Institute Act*, the same legislation that governs the community colleges. However, their mandates are varied in that JIBC focuses for the most part on non-degree programming in relation to justice and policing, NVIT on non-

degree programming and services facilitating access for aboriginal students, and BCIT on province-wide programming to the degree level primarily in trades, technology and vocational areas. BCIT is by far the largest institute and has second highest number of annual enrolments in BC, following UBC. Given the diversity of these institutions, discussion about them as a sector seems misplaced. For this reason, notwithstanding their important roles in the BC higher education system, they fall outside the primary focus of this study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Remembering Culture: Understanding University Legitimation and Identity Dynamics

It's not that we remember events; we simply remember.

- Patrick Friesen (2006)

Introduction

MacIntyre's (1997b) analysis of the interrelationship of institutions, traditions, and virtuous practices leads him to the assertion that discourse on identity within a university, a "bearer of a tradition of practice or practices," is essential to "its common life, [which is] constituted by a continuous argument as to what a university is and ought to be" (p. 222). MacIntyre's understanding is that institutions are always already embedded in contiguous yet dynamic traditions. Similarly, Ricoeur (1999) notes that within discourses of individual or institutional identity a narrative "dialectic of cohesion and dispersal" (p. 53) shapes and reshapes an "historically extended, socially embodied argument . . . about the goods which constitute" a living tradition (MacIntyre, 1997b, p. 222). Further, because traditions subsist inside broader cultural frames in which societal beliefs, values, and practices are commonly held, MacIntyre's and Ricoeur's analyses are relational to Taylor's (2004) observations on the socio-historic situation of individuals and institutions within social imaginaries. To remain relevant, social imaginaries must enable constancy of traditions while accommodating adaptations of beliefs, values, and

practices in accordance with shifting perspectives over time and contexts. Self-understanding—identity—is not a static state, but an ongoing interpretive process emerging from the paradoxical condition of coherence and change inherent to an individual or institutional life (Ricoeur, 1999).

In order to extend these philosophical conceptions of institutions, traditions, and social imaginaries, and to consider their relevance to study on dynamics of legitimation and identity within diverse post-secondary institutions, I shall elaborate their expression in the work of Taylor, Ricoeur, and MacIntyre, and then demonstrate their continuity with organizational culture and neo-institutional theory and research. Drawing upon two key concepts—learning and remembering—I shall construct a conceptual framework for understanding institutional legitimation and identity dynamics in new paradigm universities¹ in British Columbia (BC), which are distinguishable as a group through their primary focus on teaching rather than research, their authority to grant both general liberal arts and career-focused degrees, and their comprehensive mix of preparatory, vocational and academic programs.

Philosophical Considerations: Institutions as Individuals

Considering processes of identity formation, change and stability, Ricoeur (1999) explains that what imbues each person with meaning and purpose is the “dialectic of change and maintenance of self cohesion” attained through acting in time within “the narrative unity of a single life” (p. 53). Within a perpetually self-(re)conceiving narrative, “the philosophy of the person can be freed from false dichotomies . . . either the immutability of an atemporal core or else dispersal in impressions . . .” (p. 54).

Ricoeur's conception of a dialectically-driven narrative of the individual person recognizes that acts of "retrospective reinterpretation" establish contiguous links between the changing forms and expressions of our self-understanding within the dynamic traditions— beliefs, values, and practices—that bound us (Taylor, 2004, p. 129).

On a societal rather than an individual level, Taylor (2004) demonstrates how an iterative process of "creative misremembering" (p. 128) enables the alteration of beliefs, values and practices while maintaining continuity with preexisting beliefs, values, and practices in a social imaginary that is in flux. Taylor's (2004) analysis situates individuals in the modern western world within a social narrative that articulates our dominant sensibility that we are autonomous agents operating within a set of commonly held beliefs, values, and practices relational to "an ethic of freedom and mutual benefit" (p. 21). An important corollary is that the beliefs, values, and practices inherent in the modern western social imaginary are not culturally transcendent, for the "order of mutual benefit is an ideal to be constructed" (Taylor, 2004, p. 21) and is only one conception among many throughout the world and history. Realization that the imaginary within which one acts is neither universal nor timeless yet undeniably present is enabling, for one must recognize both one's belonging to a tradition—a narrative larger than oneself—and that the tradition is but one of many ongoing narratives that exist in temporal relation to each other. This is not to suggest that one's identity is hopelessly relativistic, but that how one understands oneself in relation to others is through dialectical and dialogical interchange. An apt analogy for this process of "creative misremembering" within a cultural milieu is a palimpsest, a simultaneous multi-layered script comprising a single text.²

Ricoeur (1999) elaborates by pointing out that a precondition for the assertion of identity in narrative is the recognition of a necessary alterity. One cannot articulate self without also recognizing others—events, circumstances, actions—that have impact upon the individual. Ricoeur (1999) notes that “every life story, rather than closing in on itself, is entangled with all the life stories of those with whom one mixes” and the stories of those who precede and follow (p. 54). This entanglement of stories is as evident in the narratives of individuals as it is in the narratives of institutions. In considering institutions, by which he means complex systems comprised of diverse roles and responsibilities, Ricoeur (1999) asserts that they can only have narrative identity for they exist as an amalgam of practices operating within a tradition that is constantly reconstituting itself across time. Therefore, in trying to understand institutions like a university, one “should not seek any fixed substance behind these communities, but neither should [one] refuse them the capacity to maintain themselves by means of a creative fidelity to the foundational events that established them in time” (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 54). Institutions, like individuals, exist in the “dialectic of cohesion and dispersal that the plot mediates,” and the traditions they embrace are at once historical and trans-historical (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 53).

In a related manner, considering institutional traditions and the practices of which they are comprised, MacIntyre (1997b) comments, “at any given moment what a practice is depends on a mode of understanding it which has been transmitted often through many generations. And thus . . . they have to sustain relationships to the past—and to the future—as well as the present” (p. 221). The integrity of a practice is dependent upon maintaining its relevance in a present that is linked to a past and a future within a

tradition. This does not suggest that practices are based on singular interpretations or universal principles, for one must acknowledge the particularities of one's material reality while "trying to achieve . . . standards of excellence . . . with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved are systematically extended" (MacIntyre, 1997a, pp.124-5). Although standards of a practice are subject to criticism and change, the condition for engaging in a practice is acceptance of the authority situated in the best standards achieved to date:

To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice It is thus the achievement, and *a fortiori* the authority, of a tradition . . . from which I have to learn. (MacIntyre, 1997a, p. 131)

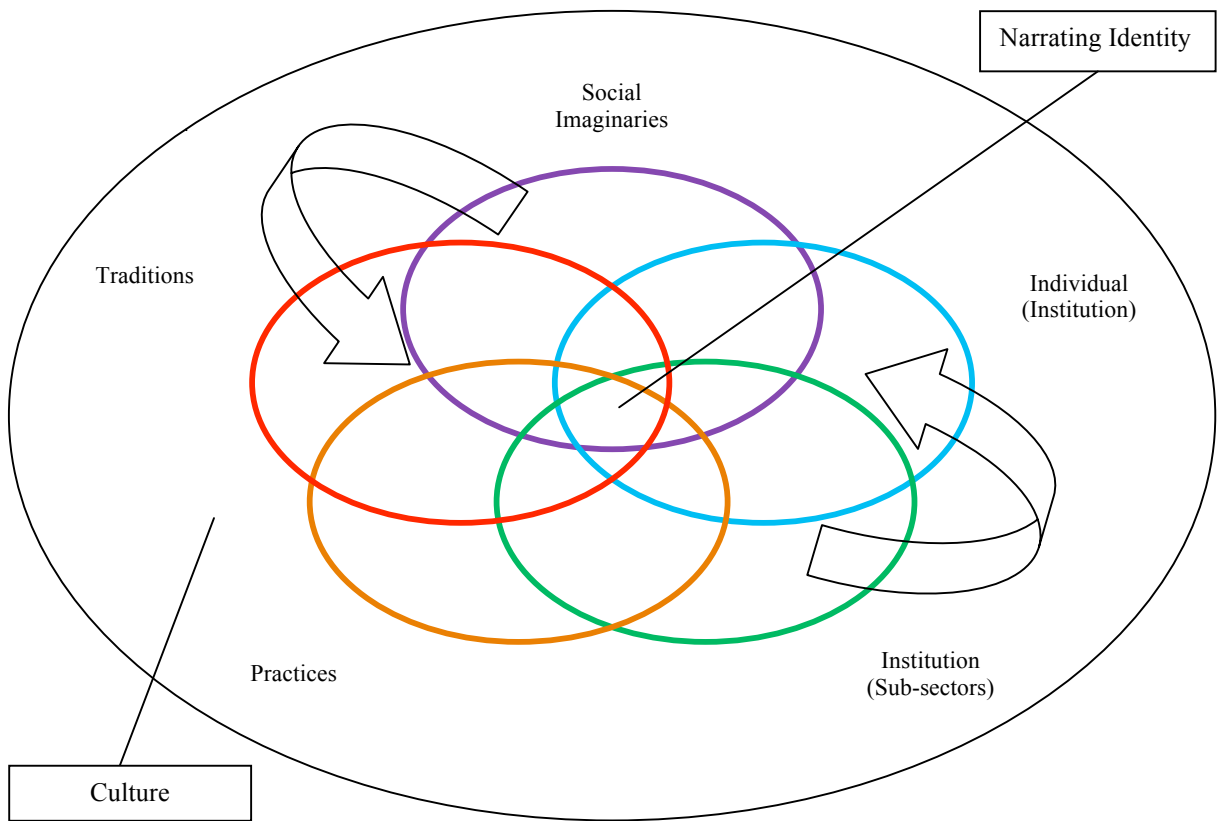
The achievement of the goods internal to a practice results when one subordinates oneself to standards of excellence and the authority of other practitioners. In so doing, MacIntyre (1997a) asserts, "we define our relationships to each other, whether we acknowledge it or not, by reference to standards of truthfulness and trust . . . [and] to standards of justice and courage" (p. 129). Such standards are maintained within a tradition of practice which, although it stands apart from and reaches beyond the institution in which it is situated, is also necessarily dependent upon the institution that provides the site in which the practice is performed, and "the traditions through which particular practices are transmitted and reshaped never exist in isolation for [*sic*] larger social traditions" (MacIntyre, 1997b, p. 221).

A utility of MacIntyre's and Ricoeur's arguments is that they consider institutions as individuals within a cultural milieu that both shapes them and is shaped by them.

Institutions are not only subjective, but also subject to culturally influenced traditions and perceptions. Therefore, an institution’s responses—physical and cognitive—to disruptive external and internal forces impinging upon its self-conception should be examined through an organizational culture lens that understands institutions as complex human systems constituted by dynamic, interrelating sets of “underlying assumptions,” “espoused beliefs and values,” and “artifacts” (Schein, 2004, p. 26). Such an understanding situates the self-narrating actor within a nexus of shifting variables—social imaginaries, traditions, practices, institutions, and individuals—that offer context for identity.³ This narrative context is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Narrative Context of the Individual



Organizational Culture: Literature Review

Among many others, Pettigrew (1979), Wilkins and Ouchi (1983), Hofstede et al. (1990), Schein (1993, 2004), Fjortoft and Smart (1994), March (1996), Pedersen and Dobbin (2006), and Locke (2007) argue that theories and research on organizational culture emerge as social constructionist responses to rationalist theories of organizational action that seek to attribute universal laws rather than acknowledge the sociological act of creating meaning within organizations. Organization theory's "functionalist determinacy" is unable "to capture the roles of explanation, interpretation, emotion, values, and belief in organizations" (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006, p. 899). Against this functionalist tradition which views culture as a tangible and uniform commodity, interpretivist views acknowledge culture as "a holistic, contextual, and paradoxical phenomenon," a recursive process at the core of any organization: "In a functionalist view, an organization *has* a culture; in an interpretivist view, an organization *is* a culture (Smircich, 1983)" (Owen, 1995, p. 161). Within the broader field of organizational theory, organizational culture emerges as an integrated construct of various characteristics of organizations that had previously only been considered separately. Hofstede et al. (1990) assert that "[organizational culture] is (1) holistic, (2) historically determined, (3) related to anthropological concepts, (4) socially constructed, (5) soft, and (6) difficult to change" (p. 286). The traits they identify resonate with other key descriptions of organizational culture—as a concept and a process of study—offered by leading scholars in the field, such as Pettigrew (1979), Tierney (1988) and Schein (1986, 1993, 2002, 2003, 2004).

Pettigrew (1979) introduces the contemporary study of organizational culture by incorporating anthropological concepts and methods into long-term, process-focused study on schools. Pettigrew (1979) offers a vision for the study of organizational culture that is rooted in understanding “language systems of becoming rather than of being, of processes of structural [development] rather than . . . structural form, of mechanisms that create . . . and dissolve power . . . rather than [codifications of momentary distributions of power]” (p. 570). Organizational culture is a complex human system of meaning construction situated within the nexus of symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual and myth. This nexus also shifts in time, emerging from a past and looking to a future as a means of legitimizing identity and purpose in the present.

Similarly, Tierney (1988) articulates organizational culture as an “interconnected web” of shared interpretations:

Organizational culture exists . . . through the actors’ interpretation of historical and symbolic forms . . . [and] is grounded in shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization. Often taken for granted . . . these assumptions can be identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from individual and organizational behaviour. (p. 4)

Tierney’s (1988) organizational culture framework covers six areas: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. Although deemed essential to the study of organizational culture, these areas do not suggest a set of normative expectations or behaviours, for expectations and behaviours are always at least partially context-dependent.

Schein (1993) argues that culture is best understood “as the sum total of what a given group has learned as a group, and this learning is usually embodied in a set of shared, basic underlying assumptions that are no longer conscious, but are taken for granted as the way the world is” (p. 705). These assumptions, and the artifacts that give them tangible form, must be observed and investigated by researchers if they are to engage with cultural dynamics in any organization. Schein (2004) further notes that even though there are definitely concrete and observable “behavioural and attitudinal consequences” attendant with culture, culture itself is fundamentally an abstraction (p. 8). In this regard, culture is similar to personality or character in an individual, and can be conceptualized as a shifting amalgam of learning one accumulates through interactions with others. Given that culture is a social construction dependent upon the specific contexts within a group, Schein (1993) asserts that responsible researchers must engage reality as it exists within an organization rather than circumscribe that reality through survey instruments drawing upon pre-existing organizational culture theory.

Schein’s (1993, 2004) comments reinforce two problematic limitations apparent in organizational culture theory and research: the conceit of cultural homogeneity and the inexactitude of measuring unstable, partially representative cultural traits. Pettigrew (1979) argues that within the dynamic human system of any given organizational culture, the entrepreneur leader must embody the language (belief systems and their artifacts) of the organization and its members in order to maintain coherence and shared meaning amidst the ongoing process of organizational change and development. The extent to which the leader is able to do so determines the extent to which coalescence around a common vision will occur and the extent to which a cohesive organization will emerge.

Similarly, Vaill (1984) offers a leader-centered conceptual model for what he terms high-performing systems. Such institutions demonstrate clarity of purpose within the paradigm of leadership and within a stable belief system throughout the organization even during periods of change. To facilitate stability amidst change, Vaill (1984) argues that leaders must engage in “purposing,” by which he means becoming wholly entangled with the beliefs, structures, and identity of the organization (p. 93). The leader must become a mythic figure in the story of the institution. A purposeful organization is the result not of objective input measures, but of shared subjective interpretations.

To the extent that each of these scholars situates organizational culture study in the subjectively interpreted assumptions, values, and artifacts of a particular group, they offer responsive and responsible approaches to studying culture. However, in locating the identity of a group or organization primarily within the role and actions of a single leader, these approaches imply a cultural uniformity that runs contrary to the experience of cultural plurality in diverse organizations, such as post-secondary institutions. This is not to suggest that the role of leaders and leadership is unimportant in considering organizational culture, but that many factors comprise organizational cultures, and depending upon the organization type, history, and characteristics, the role of the formal leader will be of lesser or greater relevance. Hofstede et al. (1990) reinforce this view, noting that while the values of leaders are influential, shared practices within an organization are more influential determinants of organizational culture.

Through case study analysis of twenty organizations deemed to have relatively homogeneous cultures, Hofstede et al. (1990) test three hypotheses: that organizational culture can be measured, that a discrete number of dimensions of organizational culture

can be identified, and that measurable differences among organizational cultures can be attributed to the uniqueness of the organizations as determined by nationality, industry, task, organizational structure, and distinct organizational histories. In considering why different practices emerge in different organizations (even though they share similar values), the authors speculate that the place and time of socialization are the distinguishing features. The result is that common values are interpreted within different practices. Therefore, to understand variable practices across similar organizations, knowledge of the distinct history of an organization is important, for “organizational cultures are gestalts, wholes whose flavour can only be completely experienced by insiders and which demand empathy . . . by outsiders” (Hofstede et al., 1990, p. 313).

Taking a somewhat different approach in measuring organizational culture and effectiveness through detailed case study analysis of five companies, Denison and Mishra (1995) develop a matrix of four traits of organizational culture: adaptability, involvement, mission and consistency. Through interviews with hundreds of executives, the authors test four hypotheses of organizational culture traits and their relation to organizational effectiveness. Although they reach the conclusion that culture may affect effectiveness, they are not able to say definitively that the traits are directly linked to effectiveness. They also note that the few traits they identify are only “summary characteristics of an organization’s culture and the processes by which culture may have an impact on effectiveness” (Denison and Mishra, 1995, p. 220). In pursuing organizational culture research, one needs to consider carefully the relation between meaning and practice, not only within specific organizational contexts but also in relation to the broader cultural contexts that come to bear on organizational identity.

In their study on the organizational culture of colleges and universities, Fjortoft and Smart (1994) assert the centrality of organizational culture as a construct and note various typologies that have been developed to classify organizations. Regardless of the typologies utilized and despite their acknowledgement that diverse value systems are common in complex organizations, Fjortoft and Smart (1994) assert that dominant culture types can be determined. However, a key finding of their research is that the level and effect of mission agreement on organizational effectiveness varies considerably by institution type, suggesting a normative approach to enhancing organizational effectiveness would be inappropriate. This observation also suggests that traits such as mission agreement are best understood not as fixed characteristics but as variables that are necessarily negotiated within the shifting cultural milieu of a given organization. As well, by extension, the overall situation of an organizational culture within a typology is equally problematic, for the categories are also variables, subject to the limiting and shifting interpretations groups are likely to have based upon their shared interpretation of beliefs, values, and practices—traditions. The fundamental challenge is one of fullness and stability of cultural representation within institutions that are of their very nature highly differentiating and differentiated, whose constitutive groups are linked as strongly to extra-institutional traditions as they are to internal ones.

The utility of typologies and traits is not in imposing a classification system, but in positing a vocabulary of variables for negotiation within an organization, which is bounded by specific practices and traditions that have come to frame the interpretation of beliefs and values within it. Stated another way, choice and change are acts of “retrospective reinterpretation” (Taylor, 2004, p. 129) in response to “external adaptation

problems” (Fjortoft and Smart, 1994, p. 443). Through this process of self-re-conceptualization, institutions, like individuals, accommodate both “dialectic of change and maintenance of self cohesion” (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 53). Within the context of an organization, therefore, the role of story tellers is terribly important for they are charged with the task of maintaining continuity, of forgetting what is no longer believed and remembering new interpretations “connecting [the organization] to a chain of coherence that began long before . . . and will continue long after . . .” (March, 1996, p. 287).

Considering Canadian community colleges, Owen (1995) notes that to some degree all share an originating culture based upon common values, which Levin and Dennison (1989) identify as “democratization of opportunity, accessibility, adaptability, and comprehensiveness” (p. 41). Community colleges, by virtue of their relatively common points of origination, mandates, and practices, may be perceived as a group of institutions belonging to a coherent tradition, and they may more readily yield common traits. However, as Owen (1995) points out, each institution is unmistakably unique as a result of variables, such as location, history, mergers with vocational schools, and “institutional dynamics,” which shape identity over time (p. 146). As a result, the label community college is also a variable rather than a stable category of meaning. In alignment with Schein (1993), Owen (1995) perceives culture as a set of context-based interpretations about the environment and one’s place within it.

Similarly, Kezar and Eckel (2002) offer a middle ground response to conventional wisdoms that suggest institutional change strategies are either universally applicable or unique to the context of a single institution. Drawing from Bergquist’s (1992) typology of academic cultures and Tierney’s (1991) individual institutional framework, the authors

posit a hybrid approach that locates post-secondary institutions within one of four cultural archetypes prior to examining individual institutional cultures as unique variants on the archetypes. The underlying assumptions that culture shapes change processes and is identifiable within the artifacts of an organization are supported by their conclusions: that a cultural approach to studying change is richer than others, that the distinctiveness of organizational cultures and processes cannot be encapsulated in archetypes, and that a hybrid approach can help determine appropriate strategies for change in a given institution (Kezar and Eckel, 2002). Considering post-secondary institutions both in their unique contexts and in relation to broader typologies seems appropriate.

Organizational Learning and Remembering

Organizational culture questions are difficult to answer not only because they introduce a potentially endless array of differing viewpoints, but also because even framing these questions in a manner that can lead to relatively stable, yet non-reductive consideration is elusive. With remarkable consistency, organizational culture literature identifies that the primary challenge is one of adequately representing diverse and shifting states of being within institutions. As Ricoeur (1999), Taylor (2004), and MacIntyre (1997a, 1997b) suggest, identity formation is a socially mediated, historically extended, future-oriented dialectical and dialogical process of self-recognition through engagement with others. Organizations and cultures, like individuals, are not objects of another's cognition, but sites of self-(re)construction through learning and remembering.

Levitt and March (1988) assert that learning takes place through a process of encoding (or not) historical experience in the routines of an organization. Routines come

to function as memory within an organization, and change occurs not as a result of an internal assessment, but as a result of importing external experience with other organizations through a process of interpretation and integration with internal beliefs, values, and practices—traditions. In considering types of change that occur in organizations, Schein (2002) asserts that systems seek “quasi-stationary equilibrium” as a result of the contestation of multiple forces pushing in different directions (p.35). To effect change, the agent must understand the forces in play throughout the change process, which Schein (2002) conceptualizes as proceeding through three stages: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. This model acknowledges the immeasurable complexity of local forces and individual experiences in determining cultural belonging, for processes of change are inseparable from the activity of “personal reintegration,” the re-establishment of stability and belonging in and through relationships with others (Schein, 2002, p. 39). The process of unfreezing, cognitive change, and refreezing is similar to the process of “creative misremembering” articulated by Taylor (2004) in that both account for disruption and reinterpretation internalized as a contiguous narrative of an individual or a group. The “narrative unity of a single life” remains stable even while its plot is disrupted (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 53).

Levitt and March (1988) also offer conceptual frameworks for understanding learning as an act of organizational interpretation of routine and history. A significant ecological challenge is one of adapting behaviour from other organizations while simultaneously nurturing change from within. Learning even simple concepts or practices becomes a complex interpretive act that can lead to very different outcomes at different times and with different groups. Pre-existing organizational stories, paradigms and

frames play considerable, often competing roles in interpreting and encoding change experience in relation to “the transformation of givens, the redefinition of events, alternatives, and concepts through consciousness raising, culture building, double-loop learning or paradigm shifts” (Levitt and March, 1988, p. 324).

In considering the negotiation of meaning and identity within heterogeneous organizational cultures, Schein (2003) proposes a practice of dialogue that enables genuine communication and learning through the development of shared conceptions that mitigate insular cultural rules of self-understanding. Schein’s explanation of dialogue as an exploration of “underlying assumptions . . . that automatically determine . . . what we choose to say” and of “how our perceptions and cognitions are preformed by our past experiences” (p. 30) respects the complex forces of culture that must be negotiated in multi-faceted organizations. For dialogue to be meaningful, participants must be insiders willing to engage others in the process of reinterpreting themselves. Ideally, dialogue facilitates exploration unrestrained by overriding cultural training to maintain the current social order and one’s sense of belonging within it. Schein’s (2003) understanding of dialogue as a reflective process of examining the cultural frames of one’s thoughts and language is relatable to MacIntyre’s (1997a, 1997b) understanding of tradition as reflection by practitioners on their practice. Both assert that critical self-awareness of one’s own cultural assumptions and acknowledgement of the authority of others are essential.

To engage in the practice of organizational learning, one must be attentive to the variability of learning, which is best understood as a dynamic process of encoding experience and history with the purpose of maintaining organizational memory and

identity. Still, Levitt and March (1988) caution that a highly systematized process for recording and retrieving memories offers routine-based stability within an organization at the cost of truncating interpretations of experience and “[underestimating] the conflict of interest and ambiguity about preferences in an organization” (p. 329). In such an environment, learning as a process is compromised and organizational practices become stagnant, for innovation arises not from consistency of memory and socialization, but from the gaps which permit renewal through reinterpretation and recognition. Levitt and March (1988) forewarn that processes of organizational learning are seriously flawed if they prevent organizations from responding to the opportunities of the future while looking to extend continuity from the past.

In response to what they deem to be organization theory’s inappropriate objectification of organizational memory, Feldman and Feldman (2006) conceptualize organizational remembering as an ongoing, collective practice of meaning and identity creation within tradition. As such, remembering is an iterative, dialogic act of self-becoming through interaction with people, language, and objects within an organization. The role of remembering is to define the present in relation to a past and a future that impinge upon each other. Philosophers Derrida (1986) and de Man (1983), speak, in turn, of memory as a recognition act that draws forward “traces of a past that has never been present” (p. 58) and that is “oriented toward the future of its own elaboration” (p. 93). The future is held forth as a promise from the past, mediated by the present.

Feldman and Feldman (2006), like Derrida (1986) and de Man (1983), perceive organizational remembering within culture, embodied by and inseparable from contexts of both the individual (e.g. personal beliefs, values, morality, history, etc.) and the

collective (e.g. social forces of politics, economics, society, history, etc.). Unlike the conception of organizational memory as efficiently managed storage units, the practice of remembering is an act of meaning construction and change, of negotiating identity in “imagined communities” (Feldman and Feldman 2006, p. 874). As such, remembering is a process of extending tacit knowledge and emotions of interpretive communities who enact traditional beliefs and values within historically interpreted routines and protocols.

Traditions are culturally situated frames of meaning operating within a hermeneutic circle in which routines—physical and interpretive—shape and are shaped by historical, cultural and individual enactments in accordance with stable and changing expectations. Given that traditions are “varied, partially integrated systems” rather than idealized ahistorical frames, they do not unduly circumscribe organizational remembering in relation to a singular interpretation of the past carried forward to the future (Feldman and Feldman, 2006, p. 875). Therefore, remembering, or “creative misremembering” (Taylor, 2004), is a learning act in which new meanings, practices, and routines emerge through processes of translation, interpretation, and integration within the culture of an organization. Arising from the hermeneutic circle of traditions is an always stable, but ever-shifting consensus on good practice sustained through “relationships to the past—and to the future—as well as the present” (MacIntyre, 1997b, p. 221).

This same negotiation of consensus on good, or at least appropriate, practices is necessary to delimit the requisite but shifting boundaries for BC’s new paradigm universities and across the Province’s newly configured university sector. The manner of this negotiation takes various forms in relation to different institutional practices such as those Dennison (2006b) and Levin (2003a) identify (academic appointments, research

and scholarship, educational programming, governance), but core to all negotiations on appropriate university practice boundaries is the conferring of legitimacy and the preservation of integrity for both individual institutions and the sector as a whole. These organizational dynamics are not peculiar to universities, and, therefore, are given greater elaboration in the research and theory on organizational culture and change that has emerged from institutional and neo-institutional studies.

Institutional Legitimation and Identity

A considerable body of literature by Scott (1987, 1995), Scott and Meyer (1991, 1994), DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1992), and Dobbin (1994) has contributed to the conception of isomorphism as mimicking behaviour within organizations seeking “legitimacy by adopting recognizable forms” (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006, p. 898). Drawing upon this research, Rusch and Wilbur (2007) describe three inter-related aspects of organizational isomorphism. Mimetic isomorphism speaks to the tendency of unrecognized organizations to adopt structures and norms of recognized organizations. Coercive isomorphism refers to the exertion of pressure on or within organizations under threat of de-legitimization. Normative isomorphism arises in response to the mimetic and the coercive through application of professional expectations and practices within a sector.

Morphy and Huisman (2002) utilize a similar framework in speculating on why higher education institutions seem to grow more similar over time. To describe this phenomenon, they employ the phrase academic drift: “the tendency of institutions . . . to copy the role and mission of the prestige universities” (Berdahl, 1985, p. 303). Academic

drift is only one aspect of institutional drift, the realignment of mission and objectives toward university norms. Both are exacerbated by policy drift—ambiguous policy that permits variable interpretation.

Through analysis of three European jurisdictions, Neave (1979) demonstrates that drift is often evident in second-generation institutions pursuing academic legitimation. Morpew and Huisman's (2002) research on the repetition of traditional degree programs across Dutch and American higher education institutions supports Neave's (1979) claims. Their data, although narrowly focused on identifying program repetition through program names, do seem to confirm the hypothesis that non-prestige institutions will mimic prestige institutions.

Notwithstanding the utility of theory on isomorphism and academic drift, it is limited in its capacity to understand the complex dynamics within post-secondary institutions that span increasingly blurred educational boundaries. Regardless of whether they have been created by merger, re-designation, or program development, the distinguishing features of many new universities and degree-granting colleges is their commitment to both further and higher education, and opportunities for seamless, two-way movement between programs along an educational continuum.⁴ Existing outside of and across the traditional binary typology, these dual sector institutions pose challenges to and face operational challenges posed by bureaucratic systems that frame them. Not surprisingly, they are as actively engaged in preserving core aspects of their unique institutional identities as they are in seeking legitimation amongst the university community through mimicry of programmatic and professional practice norms.

In seeking a balanced approach to understanding organizational identity as a composite of internal (institutional) and external (extra-institutional) forces, Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) argue that theories of neo-institutional and organizational culture are closely aligned. Although the former considers meaning in organizations to be derived from shared practices reinforcing a collective sense of rationality across institutions, and the latter considers it to be derived from unique practices reinforcing a collective sense of identity within an institution, they are very much alike in that they locate legitimacy and identity within the socially constructed milieu of the organization. As such, Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) maintain that institutional legitimation and identity act in recursive isomorphic-polymorphic relation: “organizations create legitimacy by adopting recognizable forms and create identity by touting their uniqueness” (p. 898).

Fittingly, Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) contend that more comprehensive research on culture within organizations might be achieved through combining research approaches in a manner that bridges the “dual processes of identity formation and isomorphism” (p. 902). To this end, the authors indicate four social transformation mechanisms that provide a helpful framework for study on organizations. Imitation is the reproduction of a complete range of detailed practices from one institution in another. Hybridization is the adaptive strategy of combining unique institutional practices with general extra-institutional practices. Transmutation is an interpretive process of imbuing existing traditions and practices with new meanings. Immunization is the self-conscious enactment of existing conventions despite awareness of the validity of new practices outside the organization. Pedersen and Dobbin’s (2006) typology of social transformation mechanisms seems particularly well suited to organizational culture study

focusing on institutions, which, despite having unique mandates, practices and histories, are deemed (through public, governmental and / or self-perception) to comprise a common group with relatively similar goals and responsibilities. Within such institutions questions of legitimacy and identity seem likely to be directly informed by self-reflective processes of recognizing similarities with and differences from others. An unavoidable paradox informing the assertion of identity is that an institution shares “characteristics that are constructed in [an] interorganizational field” (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006, p. 904), for one cannot recognize oneself without remembering others.

Feldman and Feldman’s (2006) conception of organizational remembering helps explain and inform the complex identity and legitimation dynamics that Pederson and Dobbin (2006) recognize within complex human systems, such as post-secondary institutions. Reflective researchers seeking to understand organizational cultures must critically engage the various traditions and routines in play within a specific organization and across the various groups, which constitute it. In his role as a consultant for two art and design colleges seeking to merge, expand, and subsequently gain university status in the United Kingdom (UK), Locke (2007) takes on the responsibility advocated by Feldman and Feldman (2006). Locke engages in reflective dialogue with staff, faculty, students, and administrators at both institutions, and with external stakeholders and experts in order to offer advice on the implications of the merger. Drawing from his case study research, Locke (2007) claims that existing values and practices are core elements through which attempts to alter identity must proceed because organizational culture is a “continually recreating and revising . . . phenomena” (p. 85). However, he also notes that actual behaviour may contradict values, and that change takes place and new identities

emerge only if practices and routines within an institution are reinterpreted and reintegrated in accordance with those of the new or transformed institution. Locke (2007) further observes that organizational cultures are not uniform, for any complex organization is comprised of alternate cultural forces whose “competing definitions of organizational reality may seek to frame and shape the debate(s)” (p. 88) relating to institutional identity, change and stability.

With respect to the phenomena of merged, re-designated, and / or substantively transformed institutions such as Locke (2007) describes, legitimating institutional identity is particularly challenging as both internal and external forces are likely to be engaged in disrupting a cohesive institutional narrative. Further, identity reinterpretation and reintegration could never take place within the confines of a single group because organizational cultures are comprised of many diverse groups and individuals—all of whom are actors “entangled with all the life stories of those with whom [they mix]” inside and outside the organization (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 54). In any organization—and to a great extent within post-secondary institutions—traditions inevitably extend into and from communities of practice more expansive than the institution itself.

A Conceptual Framework for Study on University Boundaries

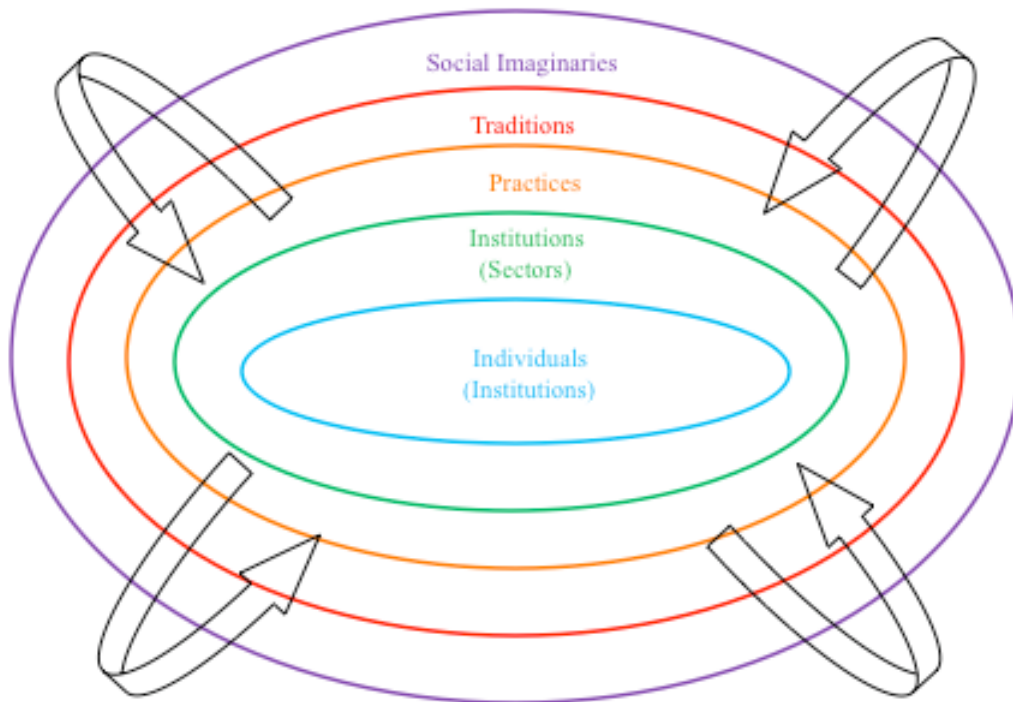
In integrating ideas from Taylor (2004), Ricoeur (1999), and MacIntyre (1997a, 1997b) on the narrative identity of institutions with key concepts of learning and remembering drawn from organizational culture research and theory, I suggest that a dual isomorphic-polymorphic perspective is useful in understanding organizational cultures within post-secondary institutions. That is to say, in agreement with Pedersen and

Dobbin (2006), that “the formation of identity through uniqueness and the construction of legitimation through uniformity [is a] dual process constituting [an] organization” (p. 901). Institutional identity emerges from neither an internally derived self-conception nor an externally imposed categorization, but through ongoing self-reinterpretation and self-reintegration in relation to others with whom we interact.

In Figure 2 variables of narrative context—social imaginaries, traditions, practices, institutions, individuals—are repositioned such that each fits inside the other in shifting relation. To understand identity and legitimation dynamics within any given

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework: General Model



post-secondary institution, one must understand the interrelation of these variables as conceived by practitioners both internal and external to the given institution. Further, institutional identity and legitimation is negotiated across practices and traditions that are in keeping with the broader beliefs and values of the society in which the institution is situated. Therefore, the general model represents the variables not only as contiguous with (as in Figure 1) but also as substitutive of each other, such that any given variable derives or confers meaning in remembrance of the others.

In order to fill out and apply a context-specific variables model representative of the conceptual framework for understanding institutional identity and legitimation dynamics in new paradigm universities, a detailed account of the histories, traditions, and practices of individual institutions, sectors and sub-sectors (community colleges, institutes, university colleges, and universities) within a given post-secondary system is necessary. Specific research questions focused on the adaptive practices and social transformation mechanisms adopted by a given institution must consider the socio-historic context in which the institution operates. Although such specific accounts fall outside the scope of this study, as one example of many possible applications of a context-specific variables model, the new paradigm universities context in BC offers a point of departure to inform future study on individual institutions in this jurisdiction.

As is explained in fuller detail in the previous chapter, “the transformation of some community colleges into university colleges in British Columbia” in the early 1990’s represented “the first major deviation from the binary design in North America” (Skolnik, 2006, p. 6). In trying to address degree access issues for students around the province, the BC government created five university colleges “before any extensive

consideration of . . . their role within the postsecondary system” (Dennison, 2006b, pp. 109-110). The result was a certain ambiguity of purpose and identity:

The general view had been that . . . university level programs would . . . undermine the essential values of the community college, such as comprehensiveness of curriculum . . . open access, a focus on teaching rather than research . . . and a strong community orientation. (Dennison, 2006b, p. 110)

At the outset, the university colleges found themselves at the nexus of multiple traditions serving multiple communities: of vocational schools, colleges, and universities.

Now almost twenty years since the creation of the first university college in BC, boundaries are collapsing with increasing frequency, not only between educational programs (preparatory, trades, vocational, academic, professional) and the institutions that have traditionally housed them, but also between the post secondary sector and the market. Arguably, this blurring of boundaries is a democratic response to a market that is broadly conceived not only as the world of business, but also as multivariate segments of society. Within this context, Levin (2003a) asserts that the BC university colleges (now special purpose teaching universities) are a unique form of university that reaches across the roles of colleges and research-intensive universities. Specifically, they, like dual sector institutions in Australia, the UK, New Zealand, South Africa and parts of Europe, represent an attempt to provide greater access to integrated preparatory, trades, and / or vocational, with academic and professional programming to the degree level within local communities requiring this educational continuum to participate fully in globally-focused societies and economies.

To realize these goals, Doughney (2000) suggests that educational focus has necessarily shifted from education before employment to education throughout one's working life. The diverse program foci and integrated curricular pathways of duals offer some promise for restructuring the binary divide between further and higher education by providing a more coherent learning experience for a fuller spectrum of people. Kraak (2003) echoes this point in noting the beneficial academic drift in South African technikons that has led to a richer variety of duals, facilitating greater access and greater social justice. However, for the potential of duals to be realized, systemic, bureaucratic, and cultural barriers must be overcome. Most important to overcoming these barriers may be a well-considered re-drawing of the boundaries of the university to ensure the institution retains its historic capacity to adapt and remain relevant:

Once the university had clear if permeable boundaries. Now these boundaries are dissolving – physically as the interpenetration of academy, society, economy, culture becomes more intense; and intellectually as truth, reason, even science shimmer (Scott, 1993, p. 23)

Still, in the absence of commonly held and appropriate standards of practice, blurred boundaries continue to present many challenges.

Recognizing the reality of blurred boundaries between further and higher education sectors in England in relation to legislation and degree granting authority, Burns (2007) illustrates how poorly articulated further and higher education practices within a dual sector institution can significantly affect student experiences. Responses of higher education students from a dual sector institution that offers predominantly further education programming demonstrate their discomfort with physical and social structures

that assume the age, experience, and values of a youth-oriented further education institution (Burns, 2007).

Garrod and Macfarlane (2007) extend study on the effects of blurred boundaries within duals to English-speaking countries around the world, taking note of the unitary and / or binary approaches in the academic management of the further and higher education components within the institutions. In terms of academic structure, most duals facilitate student mobility across education programs, but maintain separate provisions for higher education staff, particularly in relation to research expectations. Although duals that have developed from further education roots tend to have uniform contract provisions with few explicit research expectations for any faculty, those that have developed from higher education roots tend to have differentiated contract provisions with explicit research expectations for higher education faculty only (Garrod and Macfarlane, 2007). With respect to the bifurcation of faculty roles, disparate institutional histories, and integrated programming in a newly merged Thames Valley University, Macfarlane et al.'s (2007) research reveals extensive challenge areas—cultural differences, student experiences, and institutional identity—that pose threats to the institution's mission to offer an educational continuum. In reply to the notion that an integrated further-higher institution could increase student progression opportunities, most manager-academic respondents in this study indicated that retaining boundaries between institutions and programs would be more effective in fostering aspirations to higher education by further education students (Macfarlane et al., 2007).

Importantly, the quest for institutional legitimacy and identity as a university is not one that should be restricted to duals, for the notion of the university is fiercely

contested today. Duke (2004) asserts that Australian universities are amidst a crisis of identity as traditional affiliation with nation building and a community of scholars has been largely supplanted. In its place has arisen a system level focus on a diverse range of institutions responsive to market expectations. Moreover, diversity seems to occur in name only as isomorphic pressure over-determines the development of new universities such that the idea of the university seems secondary to a label that is increasingly without learning-focused parameters.

In studying the intensifying global competition for status amongst universities, Marginson (2007a) notes that highly flawed but influential international university ranking systems narrowly based on reputation and / or research output threaten the idea of the university by homogenizing purpose and values, and thereby limiting the autonomy of institutions in determining their mission and identity. Such a dynamic creates vertical stratification amongst institutions that are falsely compared through normative behaviour without taking into account the complex differences across the diverse environmental contexts they inhabit. As a result, meaningful assessment of the quality of learning environments and local community engagement is neglected. Marginson (2007a) suggests universities must “regain and re-ground the identity and mission of the institutions, both within each individual institution and jointly across the sector” by focusing on the “conduct of activities that are unique to universities and enable their distinctive social contributions” (pp. 125-126). Similarly, in considering the specific quality assurance regulations determining university designation and degree-granting authority in the UK, Australia, USA, Canada, and New Zealand, Moodie (2007) identifies two reasons for government to regulate the university title: to protect students from

institutions that do not meet jurisdictional standards, and to protect universities from an overly narrow interpretation of defining characteristics; namely, the expectation that universities are research-intensive institutions only. Still, a fundamental question remains for universities, and would-be universities: what framing boundaries are appropriate in support of more flexible institutions with greater heterogeneity of mission and practice?⁵

While some commentators fear that the term university may soon become entirely generic and universities may become simple subsidiaries within a system, Scott (1993) reminds us that the idea of the university has never been universal or static, and that its continued existence over the centuries is “tribute not so much to its transcendent virtue but its ceaseless adaptation” (p. 4). Notwithstanding this fact, Scott (1993) and many others in jurisdictions around the world (Kraak, 2003; Teichler, 2006; Duke, 2004; Considine, 2006; and Marginson, 2007a, 2007b) recognize that the higher education landscape has altered significantly through massification, dissolution of binary systems with further education, significant growth in the university sector, reduced state funding, and increased accountability expectations. Still, rather than attempt to define or defend a narrow theoretical conception of the university outside historical context, Scott (1993) suggests “[constructing] ‘an idea of the university’ that is rooted in practice but has normative force” (p. 8). Such an approach reflects the path the university has taken throughout its history as an institution responsive to its social, economic, and intellectual environments. Within a societal context in which mass access to higher education is understood as a democratic right and a socio-economic imperative, the proliferation of universities is hardly surprising, and the quest for legitimation and identity may be more appropriately cast as a tension between “integrity and pluralism” (Scott, 1993, p. 22).

Considering the re-designation of BC's university colleges as regional universities, Dennison (2006b) offers a vision for the university colleges as "'new' institutions in which neither the university nor the community college component is predominant," in which "all programs collectively contribute to . . . unique culture" (p. 111). In offering this vision, Dennison also points out the difficulty of realizing it, for the institutions are attempting to span traditions that are quite distinct. While Dennison's argument is undoubtedly valid, ongoing changes in the post-secondary sector have brought disparate traditions into closer accord where appropriate. Already it is difficult to delineate differences between many professional degrees offered in business, nursing, design, and education in colleges, institutes, university colleges, and universities. Slowly, but increasingly, research and teaching solitudes are being conflated to support student learning. Many universities have started to experiment more broadly with small cohort program models similar to those commonly found in colleges and university colleges. Further, most post-secondary institutions have focused attention more directly on their local communities. As a result, widely held assumptions of only a decade ago—that community colleges serve society, that universities tend to be removed from society, and that university and college programs within the same institution will threaten institutional integrity—are proving quite tenuous.

In fact, pervasive forces of neo-liberalism and globalization, not the conflation of distinctions between institution types, pose the more significant challenge to historic roles and identities of all post-secondary institutions, which risk becoming simply one of many knowledge producing institutions in a world in which knowledge is just another commodity crossing borders (Dale, 2005). Considine (2006) argues that the identity of

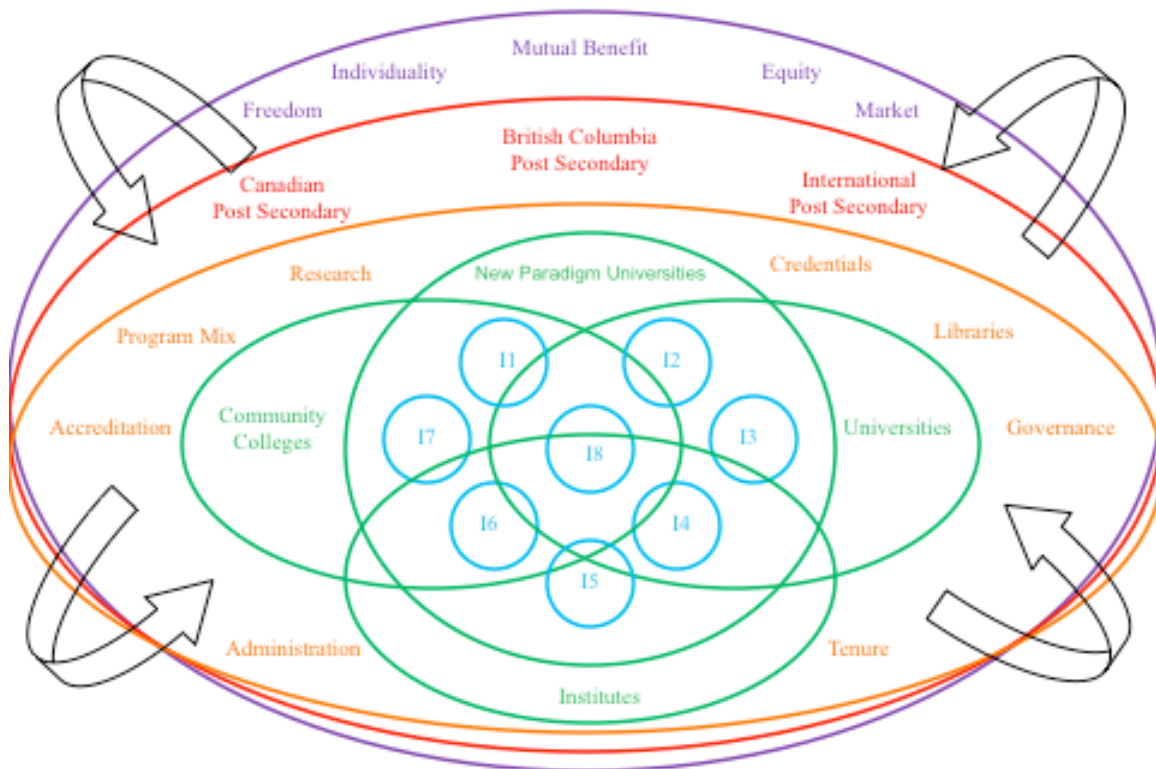
universities is challenged as never before by public demands for relevance and accountability in an era where universities are no longer automatically afforded the primary role of producing and distinguishing types of knowledge. In response to this challenge, Considine (2006) calls for a re-inscription of university identity through the re-establishment of boundaries with other cultural systems of learning. Considine's (2006) core boundary objects include job selection procedures, libraries, and physical space, which are sites of defining but not normative translation for different actor groups within the university. If boundary objects do not remain recognizable as vehicles distinguishing the university from other systems, identity crises will arise through the inability to agree on the identity of the institution to an extent necessary to retain a cohesive whole and avoid dispersal into other networks of meaning (Considine, 2006).

The challenge for all institutions is one of connecting, or reconnecting, a narrative “dialectic of cohesion and dispersal” (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 53) with an “historically extended, socially embodied argument . . . about the goods which constitute” (MacIntyre, 1997b, p. 222) the living tradition of the institutions. Dennison (2006b) argues that university colleges, and, by extension, the newly designated universities in BC, are likely to develop unconventional approaches to “issues relating to their credibility as legitimate degree granting institutions” (p. 115). He further argues that they “must defend their decisions to find new ways to protect both the academic and performance integrity of faculty, students and administration” (Dennison, 2006b, p. 122). The core practice issues he identifies include accreditation, academic freedom, tenure, governance, and administrative and faculty credentials, but there are likely several others, such as research, program mix, and faculty roles.

To model a conceptual framework for understanding identity and legitimation dynamics within BC's new paradigm universities, Figure 3 replaces generic variables with several context-specific variables such as symbolically represented names of new paradigm institutions (individuals), sector and sub-sector groupings (institutions), university practice boundaries drawn from Dennison (2006b) and Considine (2006), post-secondary systems (systemic traditions of practice) in various jurisdictions, and foundational yet contestable societal values drawn from the modern western social imaginary.⁶

Figure 3

Conceptual Framework: Context-Specific Variables Model



Notwithstanding the fact that all educational institutions now need to defend their decisions to the public to a greater extent than previously, Dennison's (2006b) insights

point to the importance of closely examining specific practice variables to understand identity and legitimation dynamics in new paradigm universities.

Conclusion: Pursuing Legitimation as Universities

Dennison's (2006b) contention that in order to gain legitimation as universities, new paradigm universities must defend any unconventional practices they may adopt is doubly relevant. If these institutions are to retain their integrity, they will have to continue to engage in interpretive acts of learning and remembering that focus on establishing contiguity with the general values, practices, and traditions of the collective groups with whom they seek belonging, and on retaining contiguity with the unique values, practices, and traditions by which they are historically constituted. In so doing, they may retain "a creative fidelity to the foundational events that established them in time" (Ricoeur, 1999, p. 54), accede to "the achievement, and *a fortiori* the authority . . . of a tradition which [they] then confront and from which [they have] to learn (MacIntyre, 1997a, p. 131), and maintain a "profound and tenuous balance" between "rootedness and vision" (Green, 1985, p. 25).

Undoubtedly, the success or failure of any given new paradigm university in maintaining this "tenuous balance" between identity and legitimation will vary significantly depending on the particular contexts of the institution. Drawing upon Pedersen and Dobbin's (2006) social transformation mechanism framework, future case study research on these institutions would no doubt yield diverse and interesting stories. However, a necessary first step prior to assessing the effectiveness of adaptive practices in any given institution seeking identity and legitimation within university traditions in

BC is detailed research on appropriate university practice boundaries (and their many interpretations) in this jurisdiction. The next chapter explains the process I shall follow in conducting this study.

Endnotes

¹ The phrase “new paradigm universities” most readily describes those general degree-granting, teaching-focused universities in BC that offer a comprehensive program mix including academic, preparatory, vocational and / or trades: Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Thompson Rivers University, University of the Fraser Valley, and Vancouver Island University. However, other relatively new universities in BC, Royal Roads University, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, and Capilano University, although more narrowly focused in their programming than the aforementioned institutions, can also be conceptualized as new paradigm universities in BC to the extent that they are atypical in comparison to the established research university model represented by the University of BC, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and the University of Northern BC.

All of these institutions are distinct from BC colleges for a variety of reasons, but two, in particular are notable. First, BC colleges can seek approval only for degrees that are applied in their focus and which often lack the liberal arts breadth that is commonly expected of general undergraduate degrees in Canada. Most of the applied degree-granting colleges offer a narrow range of degree programs and maintain a primary focus on vocational and / or two-year university transfer programs. Second, the new paradigm universities in BC have clearly defined mandates to offer general degrees with a broad liberal arts focus, and all, with the arguable exception of Capilano University at present, are doing so.

² In applying the notion of a palimpsest beyond its originating context of script written, erased, and rewritten on velum, Galpin (1998, February) explains that the “palimpsest introduces the idea of erasure as part of a layering process. There can be a fluid relationship between these layers. Texts and erasures are superimposed to bring about other texts or erasures. A new erasure creates text; a new text creates erasure” (chap. 3). For the purpose of conceptualizing the process of “creative misremembering,” Galpin’s notion of simultaneous, self-generating layers of texts and erasures, the palimpsest, signals a continually changing yet contiguous rewriting of tradition and identity. The partially overlapping circles of the Venn diagram in Figure 1 and the concentric and overlapping circles in Figures 2 and 3 evoke a palimpsest.

³ In conceptualizing educational organizations as specific individuals, I am also conceptualizing distinct sectors and sub-sectors of colleges, institutes, university colleges, and universities as institutions within a complex post-secondary system.

⁴ Further education refers to vocational and / or preparatory pre-degree programming and higher education to university degree programming. Institutions that offer a comprehensive array of integrated further and higher education programs are often labeled dual-sector institutions, or duals.

⁵ University practice boundaries may be derived from expert opinion, mandate and quality assurance documents, and interviews with institutional leaders in senior academic roles. In the subsequent chapter I shall outline in greater detail a process for

determining and cross-referencing core university practice boundaries through published opinions from experts and quality assurance documents.

- ⁶ The context-specific variables in Figure 3 are only a representative sample, and different contexts will necessitate different variables. However, in any given context, each variable is comprised of multiple phenomena that may be considered in relation to one other, or across the variables.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methods

University Practice Boundaries in British Columbia: A Constructivist Approach

Introduction

In this contemporary era of supercomplexity, Barnett (2000) asserts, “the university has the dual responsibility not only of compounding uncertainty, but also of helping us to live with uncertainty” (p. 172). Such a task requires an “inversion of much of our present thinking and practices in our universities” and must necessarily be accompanied by epistemological and ontological doubt as pedagogic, research, disciplinary, governance and civic engagement practices all are subject to critical scrutiny (Barnett, 2000, p.171). What universities do and how they understand themselves are in question.

As was explained in the previous chapter, in British Columbia (BC), the quest by new paradigm universities for institutional legitimation and identity as universities is a local manifestation of a global struggle by the university to maintain integrity amidst the plurality of competing roles, values, knowledge structures, and institutions that frame its context. To understand the jurisdiction-specific university practice boundaries that constitute the normative expectations with which BC’s new paradigm universities must engage in order to gain legitimation with their more established peer universities, my

research focuses on articulating commonly held expectations of what these practice boundaries are across BC's university sector.

General Research Purpose and Question

Considering the broader critical examination of the university—as both an idea and an institution—that is the subject of dialogue around the world between educators, politicians, business leaders, and many other segments of society (Refer to chapters 2 and 3.), development of general hypotheses on university practice boundaries in traditional universities and new paradigm universities in BC is a daunting task. Rather than rely solely and uncritically on perceived common practices in core areas, educators and institutions should consider the appropriateness of any established general practices as well as the diverse variations on them that individual institutions likely have adopted and / or will adopt in response to their unique contexts (Refer to the Context-Specific Variables Model of the conceptual framework in chapter 3.).

Building upon the assertions of Dennison (2006b) and Considine (2006), my conceptual framework for understanding institutional identity and legitimation dynamics, and my own assumptions as an academic administrator in a BC post-secondary institution, my research process for this study is to develop initial premises on university practice boundaries, which I shall subsequently test and adapt as necessary in keeping with information on current normative boundaries emerging from a representative sample of key documents pertaining to the BC post-secondary sector. Published comments by expert scholars as well as legislative and policy guideline documents from authoritative governmental and non-governmental post-secondary system oversight bodies, primarily

in BC, shall provide the textual evidence informing the construction of hypotheses on the normative practice boundaries delimiting BC universities at present. Although these hypotheses may well inform future investigation on the various interpretations of boundaries in the educational practices of individual new paradigm universities in particular, and post-secondary institutions in general, my research focus concerns only the identification of the current normative practices and hypotheses on practice boundaries for BC universities. Fittingly, the research question for this study is as follows:

What are the normative university practice boundaries for traditional universities and new paradigm universities in BC?

General Delimitations of the Study

As suggested above, the body of research necessary to develop a fuller understanding of institutional identity and legitimation dynamics in new paradigm universities requires a sequenced approach. Through analysis of institution-specific practices in relation to university boundaries, research may assess if and / or to what extent boundaries have been or should be re-drawn to support reinterpretation and reintegration of the university as an idea within a couple of the many new institutional forms it may assume in response to changing societal contexts and expectations. As demonstrated in the conceptual framework, institutional legitimation and identity are iterative, dialogic processes occurring within a cultural milieu that is both internal and external to an organization. By drawing upon this conceptual framework when

conducting textual analysis of documentary records, interviews, surveys, and direct observation, one could consider both the changing practices within institutions in response to internal and / or external expectations, and the effects of these changes on institutional identity and legitimation. Studying these phenomena through the doubly-focused isomorphic-polymorphic lens of Pedersen and Dobbin's (2006) social transformation mechanisms typology could also inform discussion on the extent to which institutional, academic, and / or policy drift (Neave, 1979) has occurred and contribute to thoughtful consideration on the future of these institutions.

Important to understanding the context in which my research question is being posed is an understanding of the institutional identity and legitimation dynamics in play within new paradigm universities in BC at present. The delineation of normative university practice boundaries as derived from "theoretical sampling" (Creswell, 2008, p. 442) of documents written by several expert scholars and practitioners, as well as legislative and policy guidelines currently delimiting the university sector, is an important first step facilitating further research questions for sector, sub-sector and institution-specific case study analyses, such as the following:

What unique limitations and / or elaborations of these university practice boundaries are occurring in new paradigm universities in BC and are they deemed credible by well-established universities in BC?

How is the pursuit of institutional legitimation as a university manifest in the educational practices of specific new paradigm universities in BC?

How has the pursuit of institutional legitimation as a university affected the institutional identity of specific new paradigm universities in BC?

Considered together, my initial research on university practice boundaries within this study and proposed subsequent research on individual institutions operate within the same conceptual framework. Perhaps most important, they offer the promise of understanding and assessing the roles and responsibilities of post-secondary institutions not by their labels alone and without consideration of their specific contexts, but through the beliefs, values, and practices—traditions—of which they are constituted. Follow up research that explores potential areas and degrees of belief, value and practice conflict between hypothesized external normative expectations across the sector and actual internal practices specific to any given university, shall necessitate detailed analyses of distinct institutional environments.¹ *At this point, however, the implications of such research could only be speculative, and as the relevant general questions (as indicated above) are outside the scope and focus of this study, no determinations can or shall be made concerning the practices of any specific institutions or groups of institutions.*

Considering Methodology

In drawing upon philosophical and theoretical assertions from Taylor (2004), Ricoeur (1999) and MacIntyre (1997a, 1997b) as well as an established body of literature in the fields of organizational culture and neo-institutionalism, I have developed a conceptual framework situated in an understanding of identity formation and change as

an ongoing process of self-construction and reconstruction in narrative over time. Methodologically speaking, my approach is largely interpretivist, relying primarily, but not exclusively, on a social constructivist paradigm to inform interpretation (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Williamson, 2002). In relying on this paradigm, however, I am steadfastly maintaining that the identity of an individual or an institution does not emerge in self-referential isolation. Identity is an ongoing co-constructive process, the mediation of self in relation to others. Similarly, Gergen (2001a, 2001b) contends, “social constructionism moves beyond [the] modernist view of self with agency at its core and embraces the postmodernist view that incorporates the role of context in the construction of identity” (Gergen (2001a, 2001b) in Darlaston-Jones, 2007, p. 21).

Considering the identities of post-secondary institutions, I concur with Fisher (2006) that “identity is connected to practice” (p. 12), but note that the traditions of university practices have become increasingly dispersed such that identity confusion seems to have emerged in both traditional, well established universities and new paradigm universities. If practice boundaries are dependent upon “the formation of a community whose members can engage with . . . each other as participants . . . the formation of a community of practice is also the negotiation of identities” (Wenger (1998) in Fisher, 2006, p. 12). Importantly, this negotiation is neither static nor universal. Rather, it is bounded by shifting temporal and societal contexts such that “Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged . . . the distance in time [is] a positive and productive possibility of understanding . . . filled with the continuity of custom and tradition . . .” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 264+). To maintain coherence within shifting relational

contexts requires that institutions reinterpret and reintegrate their practices and traditions in accordance with beliefs and values contiguous with their pasts and their futures. The extended focus of my research is to understand the normative contexts of traditional and new paradigm universities through the practices and traditions they extend as well as the beliefs and values they maintain. New communities of practice are emerging through which institutions “understand [themselves] and find meaning from [their] roles and place within the collective;” however, this collective identity should neither subsume nor delegitimize individual identities without regard to their unique contexts, for “society is constructed by the individuals that comprise it” (Darlaston-Jones, 2007, pp. 22-23).

By compiling, cross-referencing, and thematically categorizing textual evidence from documents relating perceived and real expectations on university practices, my study shall adopt some flexible processes of a grounded theory research approach (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Glaser, 1992; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, my goal is not to affirm theoretical pre-conceptions or absolute categories on normative university practice boundaries, but to develop research-informed hypotheses on the current norms. While establishing these hypotheses may help inform discussion and understanding within the university sector, individuals and institutions can and will challenge, extend, and re-establish the limits of current university practice boundaries as appropriate in conferring institutional legitimation on each other and in maintaining unique institutional identity for themselves. These adaptations will, in turn, necessitate revision of hypotheses concerning university practice boundaries, *ad infinitum*. In this regard the ontological assumption in my methodological approach is that the world, like the post-secondary system in BC, is

not “a concrete structure . . . and . . . human beings . . . actively contribute to its creation”(Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498). For this reason, although university practice boundaries are necessary for negotiating institutional legitimation and identity across institutions or sectors, I view them as time bound normative phenomena rather than fixed practices. Within an epistemological frame “that views reality as a social construction . . . [and that analyzes] the specific processes through which reality is created,” the ongoing negotiation of these phenomena as interpretive practices within post-secondary institutions comprise “the methods through which [they] make sense of their situation” (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 497).

Assumptions of the Researcher

As a researcher who is also a faculty member and academic administrator within the post-secondary system of BC, I am relying upon many assumptions that inform my understanding of institutional identity and legitimation dynamics in relation to university practice boundaries. In keeping with principles of a social constructivist research approach (Creswell, 2008; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Glaser, 1992), I do not assume an objective stance in relation to the phenomena I am studying. Rather, my stance is reflexive in that I am located within the information I collect and the interpretations I apply, for what researchers “see and hear depends upon their prior interpretive frames, biographies, and interests as well as the research context . . . and modes of generating and recording empirical materials” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 509). Based in the theoretical conceptions I hold and practice-based experiences I have had, my assumptions will necessarily limit my understanding of the textual evidence I gather and organize.

Although critical observers will probably identify my assumptions through the assertions I have made in developing a conceptual framework for my research study, I have itemized groups of assumptions below for the purpose of acknowledging that they place limitations on my research and my interpretations.

Several of my assumptions concern the theoretical conceptions of identity and organizational culture that I hold. The first group conveys my understanding of individual and institutional identity as a dynamic process of reinterpretation and reintegration:

1. Self-understanding is a recursive narrative process emerging from dialectical and dialogical interactions with others across time and contexts.
2. Identity is socially co-constructed within a cultural milieu.
3. Identity is static and dynamic, material and ideal.
4. Identity is an ongoing interpretive process within a nexus of shifting variables: social imaginaries, traditions, practices, institutions, and individuals.

The second group conveys my understanding of organizational culture as an amalgam of commonly held assumptions, experiences, and interpretations within an institution:

1. Shared beliefs and values take on a normative force when expressed in practices and traditions of an institution.
2. Cultural learning is a process of interpreting and integrating external experiences in relation to internal practices.

3. Cultural remembering is a narrative process of self-recognition through dialectical and dialogical relation to others.
4. Cultural learning and remembering comprise a process for identity formation and change within an individual or an institution.
5. Organizational culture considers dual forces of external legitimation (isomorphism) and internal identity (polymorphism) that shape institutional self-understanding.

My assumptions on identity and organizational culture are in keeping with my interpretivist research methodology. Together, they form the theoretical basis for my understanding of how identity and legitimation is socially constructed through the practices and traditions within and across post-secondary institutions and sectors.

A third group of assumptions is based both in my theoretical conceptions and my practical experiences as an educator, researcher, and administrator within the BC post-secondary system. These concern my belief that the university—encompassing both the traditional university and the new paradigm university—is a deeply contested institution in its contemporary socio-historic contexts. My assumptions are as follows:

1. Universities are not generally perceived as the primary arbiter of knowledge in society.
2. Universities have become less pluralistic and more instrumental in the forms of knowing they validate and privilege.

3. Universities adopt appropriate new institutional forms and structures to remain relevant across diverse frameworks of knowledge.
4. Universities conceptualize themselves as dialectical and dialogic sites.

My assumptions on the role of universities in their contemporary contexts draw upon twenty years of interaction with students, colleagues, and community members affiliated with many post-secondary institutions. Over the period of my career, I have experienced a general shift in societal perspectives on the purpose of post-secondary education. On the whole, the expectation seems to have moved increasingly in the direction of valuing education as a private more so than as a public good (Marginson, 2007b).² One of the ways in which this value shift is reflected is in the changed balance of funding for post-secondary education in many jurisdictions. Direct government grants as a proportion of institutional operating budgets have decreased while student tuition and institutional revenue-generation activities have increased. Many public institutions have responded to this shift by adopting more corporate approaches to engaging with segments of society through international education, patentable research, and industry partnerships, among many other initiatives. These activities are not necessarily problematic on their own, and may indeed enhance any given institution's connection with its diverse communities. However, to the extent that institutional missions and purposes have or may become more focused on sustaining the institution and less focused on sustaining an idea of the university, they may become problematic. The ongoing relevance of the institution shall likely continue to be questioned if educators do not attend to the idea in a manner that sustains it intrinsically as well as extrinsically.

In this regard, I am in full agreement with Barnett (2000, 2003), Bloland (2005), and Marginson (2007a) in maintaining that the contemporary university must support plurality: plurality of knowledge, plurality of programmatic structures, plurality of pedagogical approaches, and plurality of institutional forms. While recognizing and fulfilling its responsibility to engage meaningfully with multivariate external communities, the contemporary university should also resist the predominance of excessive economic and intellectual rationalism. Recalling Reading's (1996) earlier assertions, I concur that the contemporary university should be but one site among many wherein "thinking is a shared process without . . . unity," and which "can remind us that 'thinking together' is a dissensual process . . . [belonging] to dialogism" (p.192).

A fourth group of assumptions concern my experience-based understanding that new paradigm universities have occupied an increasingly untenable space dislocated from established and quite distinct college and university traditions within BC and across Canada. In particular, emerging in response to local university access needs, five colleges were re-designated as degree-granting university colleges in BC between 1989 and 1995. These university colleges (now teaching-focused universities) have adapted their missions and roles over time to respond to local degree access needs. Attendant with these shifts and in the absence of a unique sector or sub-sector tradition, these new paradigm universities face many institutional legitimation and identity challenges. My assumptions concerning these institutional challenges are as follows:

1. New paradigm universities often lack peer credibility within the university sector.

2. New paradigm universities currently comprise a university sub-sector group by virtue of their comprehensive programming mandate.³
3. New paradigm universities struggle in establishing identities distinct from yet relational to that of the university and college sectors.
4. New paradigm universities have to reinterpret and reintegrate their beliefs, values, and practices—traditions—in a manner that invites external legitimation and extends internal identity if they are to retain their integrity.

In terms of organizational culture, the challenge facing these institutions is that of realizing Dennison's (2006b) vision for them as "institutions in which neither the university nor the community college component is predominant," in which "all programs . . . contribute" to a unique identity (p.111). If they cannot, they will likely disperse into other institutional networks of understanding and identity.

Premises Concerning University Practice Boundaries

Considering my conceptual framework, research focus, and research questions, as well as the assumptions and professional experiences that underpin them, I propose the following four initial premises concerning university practice boundaries in BC. The premises cover broad, but interrelated areas: Institutional Mission and Mandate; Institutional Governance; Faculty Roles; and Educational Programming and Quality Assurance.

1. Institutional Mission and Mandate

University mission and mandate should include a commitment to liberal arts and professional degree level programming as well as research activity.

Considerations:

- Legislation and resources supporting institutional mission and mandate
- Critical mass of degree-level programming
- Research practices supportive of faculty interest, program currency, and community needs

2. Institutional Governance

University governance should be bicameral, vesting educational responsibility in a Senate led by academic staff and fiduciary responsibility in a Board.

Considerations:

- Legislation and infrastructure supporting bicameral governance
- Collegial appointment and governance processes for Faculties, Senate and the Board
- Tenets of academic freedom

3. Faculty Roles

University faculty roles should be tripartite in nature, encompassing teaching, scholarship, and service to the institution and its communities.

Considerations:

- Appropriate physical, financial, and academic policy infrastructures
- Faculty work provisions necessary to sustain tripartite roles
- Faculty peer review assessment and / or tenure provisions

4. Educational Programming and Quality Assurance

University degree programming should be broad in scope and be supported by systematic professional peer review to ensure quality.

Considerations:

- Range of degree programs in liberal arts and professional fields
- Breadth and depth of study in degree programs
- Peer review program evaluation and / or institutional accreditation to support student mobility

These initial premises are intended as informed starting points for a research approach that shall test their validity and inform changes, additions, deletions, and / or a complete re-conceptualization altogether. Proceeding in this manner, I am employing aspects of grounded theory research procedures—systematic, emerging, and constructivist (Creswell, 2008)—in a qualitative approach to document analysis.

Throughout the stages of my study, my goal shall be to contribute the research-informed development of hypotheses on the current normative university practice boundaries for

traditional, well-established universities and new paradigm universities in BC. Operating within an overall conceptual framework for understanding legitimation and identity dynamics in post-secondary institutions, these hypotheses should provide a foundation from which one might initiate interrelated criteria models for assessing institutional variations on university practice boundaries. In relation to future detailed case studies in specific institutions, one can then consider the effectiveness of the social transformation mechanisms (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006) new paradigm universities utilize to gain external legitimacy while maintaining internal identity.

Detailed Research Approach

Purpose and Question

My research purposes are three-fold. First, I review and assess research, legislation, and policy documents to establish hypotheses on university practice boundaries in response to my research question:

What are the normative university practice boundaries for traditional universities and new paradigm universities in BC?

Second, by extrapolating from the hypotheses I identify some key considerations for the BC university sector that may inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities in BC. Third, I make recommendations for further specific research on institutions necessary to test, extend,

and / or further refine my research findings on normative practice boundaries in the BC university sector.

Research Methods

During my research I review two categories of documents pertaining to university practice boundaries in BC: 1) scholarly opinion and analysis, and, 2) legislative and policy guidelines from authoritative post-secondary system oversight bodies. In seeking scholarly opinions, I am cognizant that very little research has been done in the area of university practice boundaries in Canada, and even less has been focused on the jurisdiction of BC. Therefore, my purposeful sampling strategy focuses on publications by “information rich” scholars who have given these matters considerable thought (Patton, 1990, p.169). In particular, I take a theory or concept sampling approach by choosing scholars whose ongoing research and / or relevant professional experiences help me develop a fuller understanding of university practice boundaries, challenge and strengthen my premises, and contribute to robust hypotheses⁴ (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Glaser, 1992; Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Further, as I have presented early versions of my research at conferences, and because the post-secondary system has been undergoing rapid change in BC, I engage in opportunistic sampling in response to a dynamic environment (Creswell, 2008; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Since I began considering my research approach several months ago, an amended *University Act*, an amended *College and Institute Act*, and new regulations governing teaching-focused universities have been approved in BC. In addition, papers at

the Canadian Society for Studies in Higher Education conference in June 2008 have introduced new opinions on aspects of university practice boundaries, such as requisite degree level programming and institutional capacity.

Research Sources

I consult several scholars through their published comments in relation to university practice boundaries in BC. Although only J. D. Dennison has focused on this specific topic in a sustained manner over an extended time period, all offer direct contribution through related research or recent professional experiences. In recognition of their extensive, ongoing work on the development of Canadian community colleges and their shifting relation to Canadian universities, I consult works by J.D. Dennison and J. Levin. To garner historical perspectives on BC community colleges, university colleges, and universities, I consult works by R. Barnsley and J. Starks, H. Petch, and R. Church. For contemporary insight in relation to post-secondary experiences across Canada, I consult works by D. Marshall, T. Shanahan and G. Jones. A list of relevant works is included in Table 1 (Refer to subsequent page).

In addition to consulting these scholars, I review significant legislative and policy guideline documents published by influential governmental, quasi-governmental, and academic authorities with jurisdictional responsibility in BC, and, to a lesser extent across Canada. To gain an overall sense of the legal frameworks within which traditional universities and new paradigm universities are operating, I review the current legislation that determines their mandates. To develop a more detailed understanding of the expectations governing operational practices, I review quality assurance

Table 1

Scholarly Opinion and Analysis

Group	Source
1.1	Barnsley, R., and Sparks, J. (2009). Governance.
2.1	Church, R. (2002). <i>A brief history of the university college mandate issue.</i>
3.1	Dennison, J.D. (2006a). A commentary on selected aspects of higher education in British Columbia: A presentation to Campus 2020.
3.2	Dennison, J.D. (2006b). From community college to university: A personal commentary on the evolution of an institution.
3.3	Dennison, J.D. (1995). Organization and function in postsecondary education.
4.1	Levin, J. S. (2003a). <i>Organizational paradigm shift and the university colleges of B.C.</i>
5.1	Marshall, D. (2008, June). <i>Differentiation by degrees: System design and the changing undergraduate environment in Canada.</i>
6.1	Petch, H.E. (1998, July). <i>Degree programs at the university colleges: A B.C. success story.</i>
7.1	Shanahan, T, and Jones, G.A. (2007). <i>Shifting roles and approaches: government coordination of post-secondary education in Canada, 1995-2006.</i>

guidelines issued by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) in BC and agenda-setting documents issued by influential national agencies or groups: the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC) and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). Finally, I shall review J. B. MacDonald's (1962b) agenda-setting plan for BC post-secondary design, *Higher Education in British Columbia*; G. Plant's (2007) recent government-commissioned report on the future of BC post-secondary education,

Campus 2020; and a critical response by the Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training at UBC. A list of relevant works is included in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Legislative, Policy, and Professional Association Documents

Group	Source
8.1	Association of Universities and Colleges. (2008a). <i>Criteria to become an institutional member of AUCC.</i>
8.2	Association of Universities and Colleges. (2008b). <i>Principles of institutional quality assurance in Canadian higher education.</i>
9.1	Centre for Studies in Higher Education and Training. (2007). <i>Campus 2020: Critical responses and policy perspectives.</i>
10.1	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. (2007). <i>Ministerial statement on quality assurance of degree education.</i>
11.1	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2008). <i>Degree program review criteria and guidelines.</i>
11.2	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2006). <i>Exempt status criteria and guidelines.</i>
11.3	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2009). <i>BC public institutions: Applied degrees policy framework.</i>
12.1	Macdonald, J.B. (1962b). <i>Higher education in British Columbia and a plan for the future.</i>
13.1	Plant, Geoff. (2007). <i>Campus 2020: Thinking ahead: The report.</i>
14.1	Province of BC. (2009). <i>College and institute act.</i>
14.2	Province of BC. (2010). <i>Royal Roads university act.</i>
14.3	Province of BC. (2009). <i>Thompson Rivers university act.</i>
14.4	Province of BC. (2009). <i>University act.</i>

Collection and Analysis

In reviewing opinions and analysis expressed by expert scholars and expectations outlined in legislative and policy guideline documents, my focus is on cross-referencing value and criteria assertions pertaining to normative expectations of practice within universities and / or institutions offering university degree programs. In terms of organizing the information for the purpose of developing hypotheses on normative university practice boundaries, I designate each of my four initial premises as a general reference category in relation to which I develop thematic sub-categories informed by relevant information in the research documents (Creswell, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). However, in terms of process, and in keeping with constructivist approaches (Creswell, 2008; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Glaser, 1992), I draw quoted information from documents first, determine detailed sub-categories second, and relate them to reference premise categories third. The thematic sub-categories generated by the textual evidence may or may not bear resemblance to the itemized “Considerations” I have identified in relation to each of my initial premises. Therefore, the quotations inform the sub-categories, which I then cross-reference with the four initial premises. Topic overlap and / or differentiation between the quoted information, thematic sub-categories, and reference premise categories may inform the development of more detailed and specific hypotheses on normative university practice boundaries than are suggested by the initial premises.

Within the scope of this research study I shall not try to delineate institution-specific practices that may be occurring as variations on any perceived university practice boundary. However, later research that building on this study may seek to ascertain the

perceived limits on institutional interpretations of commonly accepted university practice boundaries, perhaps through interviews with academic staff. Such research may well ask the following question in relation to any hypothesized university practice boundary: *At what point do unique practices within any specific institution cross over the shared practice boundaries delimiting the university in BC to such an extent that it is deemed illegitimate by peers?*

Research Limitations

Beyond the general limiting assumptions of the researcher that I have mentioned previously, one clear limitation of my study is that the expert opinions, analysis, and documentary records that I propose to consult constitute a small, theory-focused sample rather than a large, maximal variation sample that would no doubt yield a broader range of perspectives (Creswell, 2008). I recognize that there are many other credible scholars who likely could offer informed views on the topic of university practice boundaries even though they are not actively engaged in, or at least not directly focused upon, research in this area. My expectation is that this study will contribute to dialogue among academics and practitioners within Canadian post-secondary education such that a more robust body of published commentary shall emerge. As it stands, I have focused my review of expert opinions on a few who have considered the issues in a sustained manner over time in relation to the evolving post-secondary system in Canada. I would argue that BC has led the way in conferring degree-granting authority on a broader array of institutions than in most Canadian jurisdictions, with the possible exception of Alberta, and for this reason constitutes an appropriate focus for my research. In contrast, the Province of Ontario,

which has by far the most post-secondary institutions of any Canadian jurisdiction, maintains a clear delineation between degree granting universities and colleges, whose programming is generally focused on vocational diplomas. Still, university / college degree program partnerships have been developing in recent years.

A second limitation is that the experts I consult are heavily representative of those who have studied the BC context mainly. The almost twenty-year history of the university colleges in BC no doubt has contributed to a certain coalescence of expertise as these unique institutions have been studied in considerable depth by leading scholars on the community colleges and their development. Notwithstanding this fact, I believe a balance of perspective is established through the inclusion of policy or policy-related literature that has emerged in recent years. Although these documents are issued primarily from governmental bodies, quasi-governmental agencies, and / or university member organizations, they are generally created through consultation with experts in the field and are drafted by oversight boards drawing their membership from the post-secondary community. As such, they represent broad-based quality assurance expectations within post-secondary communities. However, they certainly remain contestable. Gaining greater understanding of the scope of contestation and the implications these contestations may present for arriving at an understanding of normative university practice boundaries in BC is a topic for further research.

Conclusion: Necessary Specific Research on Institutions

The purpose of my research at this stage is to test the validity of my initial premises on university practice boundaries in order to develop robust hypotheses, which

may then inform future research outside the scope of this study. Subsequent broader-based and ongoing research on how university practice boundaries are interpreted and enacted in individual institutions would be necessary in order to delineate a conceptual and / or practical range of unique institutional adaptations to university practice boundaries, and to determine whether or not they are deemed legitimate by the sector as a whole. As university practices are co-constructed within communities, and communities are sites of shifting, rather than stable traditions and identities, I am particularly mindful of the fact that my research approach attempts to offer a current “macropicture” and not “a detailed microanalysis” (Creswell, 2008, p. 448). Detailed microanalyses must necessarily take place within the socio-historic contexts of specific institutions, sectors, and systems, and these microanalyses will, in turn, reshape the hypotheses conveying the macropicture. *By engaging in ongoing self-reflection on our practices, members of the university community in BC can facilitate a stable, but never static, understanding of university practice boundaries that can accommodate appropriate diversity without compromising legitimacy.*

Endnotes

¹ In conducting future case study research on individual universities or sub-sector groups of universities, direct interviews with individuals from representative constituents (such as students, faculty, professional staff, and academic administrators) and analyses of key documents (such as missions and mandates, policies, senate and board committee terms of reference, collective agreements, and departmental practice guidelines) will no doubt be informative in constructing a comprehensive picture of an institution relative to normative expectations across the sector. Further, the array of actual institutional conditions, contexts, and practices may well invite refinement of the hypothesized normative expectations as derived from published scholarly opinion and analysis as well as legislative and policy documents. However, the purpose of this study is not to describe and / or analyze specific institutional contexts, but rather to develop a macro view of the normative practice boundaries across the BC university sector and construct a conceptual framework that will be facilitative for such future *in situ* research.

² In offering my own reflections here, I do not want to suggest that the public value of education is altogether good and the private value of education altogether bad. I refer to Marginson's (2007b) work exploring the complex and inter-dependent relation of the private (individual) and public (social) good of education for a fuller discussion.

³ As explained in chapter 2, in referring to a comprehensive program mix within new paradigm institutions, I mean a combination of general undergraduate arts and science

degrees; professional degrees in areas like health, business and design; and a broad array of preparatory, vocational and / or trades credentials.

⁴Following “flexible analytic guidelines” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 507) of emerging and constructivist grounded theory approaches through “intentional and focused” (Creswell, 2008, p. 442) theoretical sampling for the purpose of collecting criteria and value assertions useful in constructing informed hypotheses on and a conceptual understanding of university practice boundaries, my study treats published scholarly opinions and analyses as well as legislative and policy documents as primary source material. Although several of the documents, notably those by Petch (1998), Levin (2003a), and Marshall (2008), are largely analyses based upon primary data sources and / or empirical research on changing practices within university colleges or degree-granting colleges (and may be read as secondary sources arising from research studies), in this study the authors’ assertions function as informed statements on current normative practices pertaining to universities. In order to extend the scope of this study, subsequent interview and survey research focused on collecting views from practitioners within BC’s university sector is suggested as a follow up project. Such research will provide an empirical component in garnering a greater diversity of perspectives helpful in testing and refining the hypotheses on practice boundaries as well as the conceptual framework for understanding legitimation—identity dynamics within BC universities.

Chapter 5: Research Analysis and Key Findings

Delimiting the University Idea in British Columbia

Introduction

As I have argued in previous chapters, in order to be credible in the eyes of their peers and society as a whole, BC's new universities must achieve an appropriate measure of alignment between their individual institutional practices and those of the entire sector as a whole. While it is certainly true that they need not necessarily comply completely with all expectations of the more established universities, they must, as Dennison (2006b) points out, engage in practices that are generally related and defensible. At the same time, in order to be sustainable as unique universities, they must also negotiate their individual institutional practices so that they are neither subsumed by nor dismissive of normal university practice boundaries. To engage in such negotiation, these institutions, indeed the entire sector, should proceed from a relatively common understanding of the normative practice boundaries shaping the traditions and identity of the university in BC. Developing several enabling hypotheses on university practice boundaries in British Columbia (BC) has been the focus of my research. In keeping with this objective and emerging from my document analysis, the key findings I present in this chapter identify several current normative expectations influencing the practices of BC universities. These normative expectations provide a foundation for the hypothesis development discussed in chapter 6.

Information Collection and Organization

As outlined in chapter 4, in order to address my research question and develop hypotheses on requisite university practice boundaries for traditional, well-established universities and new paradigm universities in BC, I composed initial premises relative to perceived normative expectations in four broad categories: Institutional Mission and Mandate; Institutional Governance; Faculty Roles; and Educational Programming and Quality Assurance. Each of these premises is reproduced as a separate assertion below:

1. Institutional Mission and Mandate

University mission and mandate should include a commitment to liberal arts and professional degree level programming as well as research activity.

2. Institutional Governance

University governance should be bicameral, vesting educational responsibility in a Senate led by academic staff and fiduciary responsibility in a Board.

3. Faculty Roles

University faculty roles should be tripartite in nature, encompassing teaching, scholarship, and service to the institution and its communities.

4. Educational Programming and Quality Assurance

University degree programming should be broad in scope and be supported by systematic professional peer review to ensure quality.

In developing each of these initial premises, I drew upon my understanding arising from a broad array of scholarly opinion and research findings pertaining to my literature review of the university in historical contexts and specific jurisdictions—the United Kingdom, Australia, British Columbia, and California—(Refer to Chapter 2) and my literature review of organizational culture in relation to institutional identity dynamics within universities (Refer to Chapter 3). Further informing my initial premises are my own observations as a faculty member and academic administrator in a new paradigm university.

Considered together, these premises inform a set of general categories and a conceptual frame for collecting, organizing, and analyzing information on university practice expectations drawn from scholarly opinions and from legislative, policy, and professional association documents. As outlined in Chapter 4 and referenced again in Tables 1 and 2 (below), I reviewed twenty-two sources in detail: nine scholarly opinions, arranged into seven groups based upon authorship (Groups: 1 – 7); and thirteen legislative, policy, and professional association documents, arranged into seven groups based upon authorship (Groups: 8 – 12).

Table 1

Scholarly Opinion and Analysis

Group	Source
1.1	Barnsley, R., and Sparks, J. (2009). Governance.
2.1	Church, R. (2002). <i>A brief history of the university college mandate issue.</i>
3.1	Dennison, J.D. (2006a). A commentary on selected aspects of higher education in British Columbia: A presentation to Campus 2020.
3.2	Dennison, J.D. (2006b). From community college to university: A personal commentary on the evolution of an institution.
3.3	Dennison, J.D. (1995). Organization and function in postsecondary education.
4.1	Levin, J. S. (2003a). <i>Organizational paradigm shift and the university colleges of B.C.</i>
5.1	Marshall, D. (2008, June). <i>Differentiation by degrees: System design and the changing undergraduate environment in Canada.</i>
6.1	Petch, H.E. (1998, July). <i>Degree programs at the university colleges: A B.C. success story.</i>
7.1	Shanahan, T, and Jones, G.A. (2007). <i>Shifting roles and approaches: government coordination of post-secondary education in Canada, 1995-2006.</i>

Table 2

Legislative, Policy, and Professional Association Documents

Group	Source
8.1	Association of Universities and Colleges. (2008a). <i>Criteria to become an institutional member of AUCC.</i>
8.2	Association of Universities and Colleges. (2008b). <i>Principles of institutional quality assurance in Canadian higher education.</i>
9.1	Centre for Studies in Higher Education and Training. (2007). <i>Campus 2020: Critical responses and policy perspectives.</i>
10.1	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. (2007). <i>Ministerial statement on quality assurance of degree education.</i>
11.1	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2008). <i>Degree program review criteria and guidelines.</i>
11.2	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2006). <i>Exempt status criteria and guidelines.</i>
11.3	Degree Quality Assessment Board. (2009). <i>BC public institutions: Applied degrees policy framework.</i>
12.1	Macdonald, J.B. (1962b). <i>Higher education in British Columbia and a plan for the future.</i>
13.1	Plant, Geoff. (2007). <i>Campus 2020: Thinking ahead: The report.</i>
14.1	Province of BC. (2009). <i>College and institute act.</i>
14.2	Province of BC. (2010). <i>Royal Roads university act.</i>
14.3	Province of BC. (2009). <i>Thompson Rivers university act.</i>
14.4	Province of BC. (2009). <i>University act.</i>

In terms of collecting and organizing the textual evidence, I proceeded inductively by identifying within each document value and criteria assertions pertaining to normative practice expectations within universities or other institutions offering university degree level programming. In keeping with constructivist research approaches (Creswell, 2008; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2006; Glaser, 1992), I extracted representative quotations from each document group separately and arranged them in detailed thematic sub-categories emerging from the quotations. Considerable commonality of detailed thematic sub-categories quickly became apparent across most document groups. However, only one of the detailed thematic sub-categories (Research) was informed by criteria and value assertions from every document group. Also, several document groups suggested provisional detailed thematic sub-categories that were not readily apparent across more than one or two document groups and for that reason are not directly reflected as discrete thematic sub-categories, but rather are subsumed under others. The ten detailed thematic sub-categories emerged from the value and criteria assertions within the documents through an iterative process of considering and reconsidering the quoted information across document groups to develop and refine relatively stable and discrete themes under which each value and criteria statement could be categorized: Institutional Autonomy, Bicameral Governance, Degree Programming, Research, Legislation, Academic Freedom, University Recognition, Resources, Quality Assurance, and Faculty Roles.

As a final step in my collection and organization of information for each of the document groups and then across all document groups, I related detailed thematic sub-categories and the specific value and criteria assertions pertaining to them to one or more of the four reference categories constituted by my initial premises (Refer to Appendices

A and B for illustration of the information collection and organization process.). The results, given that the quotations often cross-reference value and criteria assertions that cut across the four general categories set forth by my initial premises, were informative in suggesting both the interrelation and the discrete form of university practice boundaries as expressed by the detailed sub-categories. For example, in relation to the sub-categories of Institutional Autonomy and Bicameral Governance, the quoted information suggests that although they are discrete practice categories—the former a state of being autonomous and the latter a structure and process of governance—neither could proceed legitimately in a university context without an appropriate form of the other in place. Barnsley and Sparks (2009) clarify this point quite succinctly in considering the significant differences in practice despite the relative similarity of language relating to bicameral governance in both the *University Act* and the *College and Institute Act*. They note “that governance under the two structures is conducted in significantly different manners . . . related to the level of autonomy that an institution is accorded from government” (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009, p. 149).

Setting aside the details of the foregoing example, what my analysis suggests is that any prospective hypotheses relating to university practice boundaries should demarcate not only discrete practice criteria where possible, but also the interrelated core qualities or conditions necessary to their legitimate expression. In keeping with this observation—and as a result of collecting and arranging well in excess of four hundred value and criteria assertions from twenty-two different sources in relation to ten detailed sub-categories under four general and often overlapping initial premise categories—I suggest that the textual evidence supports the development of more discrete hypotheses

than originally anticipated by the four initial premises. Specifically, a greater number of more refined hypotheses drawing from the ten detailed sub-categories warrant consideration as the volume and sophistication of supporting quotations suggests that several function as major criteria demarcating normative practice boundaries of universities in BC.

Information Analysis and Key Findings

As is indicated on the Integrated Value and Criteria Assertion Analysis chart (Refer to Appendix C), of the ten detailed sub-categories itemized, in my estimation, six seem to function as major criterion categories of normative university practices: Institutional Autonomy, Bicameral Governance, Degree Programming, Research, Quality Assurance, and Faculty Roles. Arguably, these are areas of measurable operational practice rather than general principles or contextual conditions. The other four—Legislation, Academic Freedom, Resources, and University Recognition—while also clearly significant to the university as an institution, are broader in scope and not, specifically speaking, discrete areas of practice. Before discussing each of the six major criterion categories in relation to my analysis of the textual evidence, I will posit a set of interrelated core qualities or conditions that seem necessary to legitimate practices in a university environment. These qualities or conditions draw upon and encompass most aspects of the value and criteria assertions relating to the Legislation, Academic Freedom, Resources, and University Recognition sub-categories.

Core Qualities and Conditions Informing the University Idea in BC

Institutional Autonomy

Fundamentally, as set forth in both legislation¹ and established traditions and practices of universities, the university in BC is expected to function as an autonomous natural person exercising its rights and responsibilities in pursuit of its full capacity as an idea: “a university has the powers and capacity of a natural person of full capacity” (*University Act*, 2009, 46.1). Further, with respect to self-governing authority, the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (Ministry) “must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university, its board, senate and other constituent bodies” (*University Act*, 2009, 48 (1)). Notwithstanding the fact that the Minister has the right to approve or not any new degree program proposed by any university, the Minister’s role in relation to the university is considerably removed from direct operational oversight or influence (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009; Dennison, 2006b). This is not necessarily the case in relation to colleges and institutes in BC, which are “for all [their] purposes [agents] of the government and [their] powers may be exercised only as [agents] of the government” (*College and Institute Act*, 50 (1)). Additionally, under the legal authority of sections 2 and 3 of the *College and Institute Act*, the Minister has direct and discretionary power over educational operations within a college or institute, and under the authority of section 41 may appoint a public administrator “to discharge the powers, duties and functions of a board and education council” (*College and Institute Act*, 2009, 41 (1)).

Therefore, a core quality or condition demarcating the university from other public post-secondary institutions in BC is that of relative autonomy set forth in legislation and practice (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009; Dennison, 2006b; Shanahan and Jones, 2007). Notwithstanding this fact, university autonomy is necessarily relative, rather than absolute, because the Ministry and society as a whole can and do exert external influence on the institution through funding decisions and public policy development in relation to social and economic priorities. For its part, the university, although relatively autonomous, as a publicly-funded institution must remain responsive to society's needs even while it exercises its rights as a natural person, or risk becoming irrelevant as an idea to those who sustain it extrinsically.

In analyzing the value and criteria assertions relating to university legislation, I noted that institutional autonomy was strongly interrelated with bicameral governance² and significantly interrelated with degree programming and quality assurance. Combined with the high number of references overall, the quoted information suggests that university legislation is an important sector boundary demarcation document necessary for the establishment and legitimation of university authority, practices, and traditions within an institution. Levin (2003a), Barnsley and Sparks (2009), and Dennison (2006b) all offer similar insight. In particular, Dennison (2006b), considering “the task of conversion from ‘university college’ to ‘regional university,’” asserts that “to be completed satisfactorily, the former will have to be incorporated either under new legislation like Thomson Rivers University, or under the *University Act*” (p.121). In fact, this has now occurred.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

The relation between institutional autonomy and academic freedom is intricately intertwined through the university's legislated rights and responsibilities as a natural person, as well as its governance structures and professional practices. In analyzing the value and criteria assertions relating to academic freedom, I noted a strong interrelationship with bicameral governance as well as significant interrelationship with faculty roles and institutional autonomy. The relatively low number of references overall does not seem to suggest that academic freedom is unimportant, but rather, as evident through cross-referencing with faculty roles and institutional autonomy, that academic freedom is a principle that informs the core qualities and conditions of the university as well as the practices demarcating its boundaries. This sentiment is expressed directly by Barnsley and Sparks (2009), who note that "academic freedom . . . is generally considered to be central to institutions of higher education and of lesser importance to institutions of further education" (p. 150). Similarly, Dennison (2006a) asserts, "a university in Canada would embrace academic freedom, institutional autonomy with respect to its relations with government, and normally award tenure to faculty . . . to ensure freedom of enquiry" (p. 3).

Notably, with the exception of the *Acts* constituting the universities, colleges and institutes in BC, all the other policy or guideline documents make value and criteria assertions concerning academic freedom. As previously discussed, the *University Act* enables academic freedom through its provisions for institutional autonomy, shared governance practices, and the rights and responsibilities of professional faculty. On the

matter of institutional autonomy, however, the *College and Institute Act* is considerably less robust. This differentiation suggests that academic freedom, or, more precisely, academic rights and responsibilities pertaining to the autonomous role of the university and its professional academic staff, is foundational to legislated mandate of the university in BC in a manner that it is not to that of the colleges and institutes.

Organizational Capacity

In order for the core qualities or conditions of institutional autonomy and academic rights and responsibilities to be realized, the infrastructure, operating, and human resources of a university must be in alignment with its mandate. In particular, my analysis of the value and criteria assertions indicates a strong interrelationship between resources and legislated university mandate for degree programming, quality assurance, research, and faculty roles. Although the total number of references is moderate, the cross-referencing with degree programming, quality assurance, research, and faculty roles suggests that university resources do not function as a major criterion category, but should be related to capacity requirements of legislated mandate. In effect, universities are comprised of very different resources depending upon their mandate, size, and focus. However, the resource base of a university in BC must be adequate to carry out its necessary practices as an autonomous institution or it will likely be unable to function in a manner deemed legitimate by peer institutions. Dennison (2006a) offers some parameters:

By traditional standards and accepted convention the term “university” connotes a specific form of higher education. Apart from its emphasis upon high standards of post secondary education, it would assure a high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level, it would place a great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination, it would enroll a high percentage of students in academic programs, and it would maintain well equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services. (p. 3)

In keeping with these parameters, the guidelines and standards set forth for degree programming by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) (2008), the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (2007), and the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC) (2008b) reinforce similar expectations. Although the documents corresponding to each body go into great depth, the following statement from the DQAB’s (2008) *Degree Program Review Criteria and Guidelines* captures the expectation succinctly: “The institution must demonstrate that the program . . . [is] comparable to similar programs at the proposed degree level offered by recognized provincial, national and international post-secondary institutions” (DQAB, 2008, p. 26). As well, the institutional membership criteria set forth by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (2008a) and the criteria for exempt institution status set forth by the DQAB (2006) emphasize that the institutions must demonstrate that they have the structures, resources, and practices to maintain program quality assurance on an ongoing basis through systematic internal and external peer review processes. For BC exempt status³ institutions, this means the new programs they develop are generally not subject to DQAB review as they are deemed to have demonstrated the organizational capacity for

self-governance among a community of universities and professional academic staff.

In Canadian and BC jurisdictions membership in the AUCC or exempt status to the degree level through the DQAB constitutes acknowledgement that the institution operates in a manner in keeping with normative practice expectations. Speaking directly to the issues of organizational capacity for degree programming, Marshall (2008) argues that the Canadian standard in “the university-level degree environment is defined by membership in AUCC” (p. 12). Marshall (2008) summarizes the membership criteria as follows: “legislated authority to offer university-level degrees . . . appropriate qualifications of faculty . . . support for scholarly work by faculty and students, and . . . appropriate educational (library and labs) facilities . . . [as well as] academic freedom policies . . . majority of the students . . . enrolled in programs leading to university credentials, and . . . [autonomous academic governance processes]” (p. 12). The DQAB (2006) makes a similar capacity assessment in determining exempt status for institutions to a specific degree level. Institutions must have a “history of successfully offering quality degree programs at a given level . . . established organizational capacity for degree granting (including faculty) sufficient to ensure that quality degree level education; and rigorous, ongoing program and institutional quality assessment processes, both internal and external” (DQAB, 2006, p. 1). Further, “Only institutions with proven track records . . . and appropriate governance mechanisms in place may apply for ‘Exempt Status . . .’” (DQAB, 2006, p. 1).

Core Qualities and Conditions for University Recognition

Taken together, institutional autonomy, academic rights and responsibilities, and

organizational capacity comprise core qualities and conditions underlying the idea of the university in BC. In part, they are validated by appropriate legislative frameworks, such as provided by the *University Act*, but they are given form through their execution in legitimate university practices that are adequately resourced and professionally responsible. In analyzing value and criteria assertions relating to university recognition, I observed a strong interrelationship with institutional autonomy, bicameral governance, degree programming, research, quality assurance, and faculty roles. The high number of total references and cross-referencing suggest that university recognition is not a major criterion category unto itself, but is an outcome contingent upon credible university practices within an institution. The six major criterion categories of normative practice boundaries—Institutional Autonomy, Bicameral Governance, Degree Programming, Research, Faculty Roles, and Quality Assurance—emerging from my analysis of scholarly opinions and legislative, policy, and professional association documents offer a generalized understanding of the necessary structures, attitudes, and practices that are expected to find expression within a university in BC.

Major Criterion Categories of Normative University Practices

Institutional Autonomy

Building upon Garrod and Macfarlane's (2007) observations, Barnsley and Sparks (2009) assert that while the structure of governance in new comprehensive post-secondary institutions throughout English-speaking jurisdictions is similarly constituted by a "corporate board and a single academic senate," the practice of governance varies in

accordance with the “level of autonomy that universities have from government” (p. 147). Indeed, they argue, “autonomy is an important criterion that separates universities from other post-secondary institutions (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009, p. 147). These claims reinforce Dennison’s (2006b) observation that “universities in [Canada] have enjoyed a remarkable measure of institutional freedom and independence” (p. 117) and Shanahan and Jones’ (2007) assertion that “community colleges are generally subject to greater government . . . control than universities” (p.2). For Dennison (2006b) the implication is clear, to be successful, new universities⁴ must “operate at a level of autonomy comparable to [existing] universities” (p. 118).

A key distinction being made by these scholars concerns the operational practice of institutional autonomy within institutions whose enabling legislation limits the direct influence of government on the academic affairs of the university. Vitally important is “organizational culture with regard to autonomy,” which, Barnsley and Sparks (2009) assert, “is markedly different at the universities governed by the *University Act* than it is at institutions governed by the *College and Institute Act*” (p. 150). So important is the role of organizational culture that despite relatively similar bicameral governance structures set forth in both the *University Act* and the *College and Institute Act* “governance under the two structures is conducted in significantly different manners” (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009, p. 149). In part, as argued previously, differences in practice between universities and colleges, or university colleges for that matter, are attributable to expectations pertaining to governmental influence; however, an attitudinal disposition towards academic autonomy within an institution, perhaps manifest most significantly in its faculty, is essential. In keeping with both AUCC (2008a) membership criteria and

CMEC (2007) guidelines, Marshall (2008) maintains that bicameral governance and faculty engagement in scholarship are necessary features ensuring both academic autonomy and quality assurance. Dennison (2006) and Barnsley and Sparks (2009) further suggest an interrelationship between academic autonomy and an institutional mandate for research. Central to these ideas is the university practice of professional peer review, both of curriculum and scholarship. Professional authority and responsibility vested in the broader collegiums of the academy are foundational.

In a related manner, Levin (2003a), Dennison (2006a, 2006b), and Barnsley and Sparks (2009) point out that a significant challenge faced by the former university colleges was their inability to exercise academic autonomy through their bicameral governance structures as a result both of operational and cultural barriers. The former was primarily a result of their inclusion within the *College and Institute Act* and ongoing treatment by government as if they were colleges (Levin, 2003a), and the latter a by-product of their institutional histories as university transfer institutions without any formal mandate for research and scholarship. Petch (1998), in reviewing degree program quality at BC's university colleges, noted that the institutions must "maintain the flexibility and freedom to carry out their comprehensive mandate" (Executive Summary, p. 2). Implicit in this assertion is the CMEC (2007) imperative that credible degrees require that the "academic integrity and governance autonomy of the individual institutions . . . be protected and preserved" (p. 1). In considering conditions necessary for an institution to be granted exempt status within BC, meaning their new degree programs are generally exempt from review by the Board, the DQAB likewise identifies

“appropriate governance mechanisms” (2008, p. 3) as well as “rigorous, ongoing program and institutional quality assessment processes” as key criteria (2006, p. 1).

These expectations all speak to the requirement that institutional autonomy occurs in practice as well as in principle, for “it is virtually impossible to build a strong institution of higher education unless it is given the maximum of self-determination in its operations” (Russell in Macdonald, 1962b, p. 22). Like Macdonald (1962b), Plant (2007) argues that in order “to ensure British Columbians have the maximum opportunity to learn close to where they live, using the best tools available essential institutional autonomy” must be maintained within a more coordinated system (p. 27), for while “it is government’s responsibility to establish goals for the higher education sector It is the responsibility of educators . . . to make decisions about how those goals can best be achieved” (p. 14). In this regard, institutional autonomy seems not only to be a core quality or condition, but also to function as a major criterion category of normative practices in BC universities. The strong interrelationship I observed between value and criteria assertions relating to institutional autonomy and bicameral governance, as well as between assertions relating to institutional autonomy and a mandate for degree programming and research, suggests that these are key practice areas giving expression to institutional autonomy.

Bicameral Governance

At a macro level shaping institutional decisions and operations, bicameral governance—carried out through the balancing of academic authority vested in a senate, or similar educational body, and fiduciary responsibility vested in a board of governors,

or similar corporate body—seems to function as another major criterion category of normative practice boundaries in BC universities. The large number of value and criteria assertions referencing bicameral governance that I observed across the preponderance of research documents suggests that this mechanism is essential to the academic autonomy and credibility of a university. Dennison notes that academic governance within university traditions “[embraces] respect for collegiality, including a significant role for faculty” (Dennison, 2006a, p. 3) and is “based upon the principal of bicameral management” (Dennison, 2006b, p. 118).

So fundamental is the principle of bicameral governance to the legitimate functioning of a university, or an other institution with university level programming, that legislative changes were introduced in the early 1990s bringing about the creation of education councils as senate-like bodies with jurisdictional authority over academic matters within BC colleges, university colleges, and institutes (Petch, 1998; Church, 2002; Levin, 2003a). Church (2002) and Levin (2003a) argue that a key purpose of these legislative changes was to extend to the university colleges a necessary level of academic authority (and, by extension, credibility) akin to that of degree-granting institutions throughout Canada. Despite this intent, and the fact that the “1994 amendments to the *College and Institute Act* produced a big improvement in the governance of the university colleges,” Petch (1998) maintained that “the roles of Education Council . . . require further development” (Executive Summary, p. 2).

Notwithstanding variations in composition among education councils, senates and related bodies⁵ across the college and institute sector and the university sector in BC, the academic jurisdiction and advisory capacity to the board of both educational councils and

senates are similar in many respects. However, a couple of significant distinctions are notable. The powers of an educational council are subject to “policy and directives” established by the Minister responsible for post-secondary education (*College and Institute Act*, 2 (1) (a)). Such circumscription does not exist for university senates, and, in this respect, they seem to have much greater autonomy than education councils. Further, within the *University Act*, educational Faculties are accorded formal, self-governing status in relation to senate authority, and each Faculty is guaranteed two seats on senate. Within the *College and Institute Act*, educational Faculties are not accorded any jurisdictional status. As a result, a university Faculty seems likely to function with considerably more autonomy as a distinct academic unit within a larger institution. Arguably, such practice is in keeping with normative professional expectations and standards linking peers by disciplines and programs, regardless of institutional affiliation.

On the broader matter of academic governance, AUCC (2008a, 2008b), CMEC (2007), and DQAB (2006, 2008) guidelines are consistent. Each emphasizes the necessity within institutional governance structures of an independently elected “body competent to either make decisions or give advice on academic matters” (CMEC, 2007, p. 11). The DQAB (2006) criteria for exempt status further stipulate that an institution must “have a governance structure and administrative capacity appropriate to that of an academic institution of high standard, with an acceptable level of faculty involvement in governance” (p. 5). Within a university context, this involvement is precipitated by the formal jurisdiction of Faculties as integral academic units operating under the auspices of senate authority. Through such structures individual faculty members would seem more readily to be engaged in relevant academic policy development and decision-making

necessary to the fulfillment of their professional and programmatic goals. This micro level involvement by faculty vested with the authority and responsibility to ensure curricular currency and quality is intertwined with the macro level commitment of academic governance to ensure the integrity of an institution's educational programs and operations. As Macdonald (1962b) notes, "to develop an excellent system of higher education for British Columbia, individual institutions must be self-governing in respect to their academic program" (p. 21).

Degree Programming

With respect to programming, the unqualified authority to offer baccalaureate degrees seems to function as another major criterion category of normative practice in BC universities. In addition to a large number of value and criteria assertions referencing degree programming directly, strong interrelationships with institutional mandate assertions suggests that degree programming should be a significant, if not the primary, focus of a university. Further, some interrelationship with faculty research and quality assurance assertions suggests that each is shaped by degree level programming in a manner that they may not be at the pre-degree level.

In considering the implications arising from the recent escalation in degrees being offered by non-universities in Canada, Marshall (2008) asserts, "the gatekeepers of the degree experience have been the publicly-funded universities" (p. 5). He further notes that non-university and / or applied degrees⁶ leave "many universities uncertain that these degrees provide the outcomes necessary . . . [such as] depth and breadth of study" (Marshall, 2008, p. 10). Dennison (2006a) concurs, noting that the baccalaureate degree

“has normally involved a component of general education . . . followed by a coherent package of courses or other requirements designed around a major or specialty” (p.2). Both Marshall (2008) and Dennison (2006a) suggest that the credibility of baccalaureate degrees and the legitimacy of institutional authority to offer them are intertwined with broader organizational capacity concerns, which, historically at least, have been readily addressed only by universities in Canada. These entail a full complement of faculty with terminal credentials, active engagement of faculty in research and scholarship, autonomous academic governance structures facilitative of program quality assurance, and necessary library infrastructure (Dennison, 2006a; Marshall, 2008).

Fully in keeping with these expectations are the criteria set out by both the CMEC (2007) quality assurance guidelines and the DQAB (2008) standards for general baccalaureate degree level programming. In effect, degree programs, including the human and infrastructure resources necessary to offer them, must “be comparable to . . . [those] offered by other degree-granting institutions that meet recognized standards” (CMEC, 2007, p. 9). Stating the requirement for program quality comparability even more directly, the DQAB (2008) asserts that institutions must demonstrate that their programs are equitable to peer programs “offered by recognized provincial, national and international post-secondary institutions” (p. 26). Given the absence of federal jurisdiction over post-secondary education in Canada and the absence of a formal institutional accreditation system, a *de facto* function of AUCC membership, which is determined through peer review assessment, has become one of conferring legitimacy (Dennison, 2006b; Marshall, 2008) because “membership in AUCC . . . provides instant recognition to baccalaureate degrees awarded by the institution” (Dennison, 2006b, p.

112). For this important reason, the former university colleges, all of which were awarded degree-granting authority in their own right following amendments to the *College and Institute Act* in the mid-1990s, pursued and eventually attained AUCC membership status. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the criteria for membership, which are in keeping with normative university traditions and orientation toward research and scholarly activity, bicameral governance, and discipline-based programming, they all also sought mandate expansion to include graduate programming and research activity in support of their educational missions (Petch, 1998; Church, 2002).

Subsequent legislative changes first creating the *Thompson Rivers University Act* in 2004 and then amending the *University Act* in 2008 have brought to fruition the mandate expansion envisioned by Petch (1998) and, in many respects, echoed by Plant (2007). These changes suggest that degree programming is indeed a “core responsibility of universities in BC as these institutions “have processes and structures in place to maintain the levels of quality required for the provision of full undergraduate degree programs” (Plant, 2007, p. 72). Significantly, however, in BC degree-granting authority is not restricted to universities solely. Colleges and institutes are permitted to offer applied degrees in keeping with their mandate and areas of expertise, provided that they address labour market need, are vetted and recommended by the DQAB, and approved by the Minister. The challenge for the institutions offering these credentials is that many critics suggest along with Dennison (2006a) that “the term ‘applied’ degree . . . has become difficult to reconcile . . . with any established definition of the title ‘degree’” (p. 2). More broadly, as none of the BC colleges and institutes are members of the AUCC, and are currently unlikely to satisfy some membership requirements, such as those pertaining to

faculty research activity or critical mass of students in academic degree programs, the degree mobility of their graduates within Canada and elsewhere is considerably more restricted at present.

Research

The question of core responsibilities within the mandate of a university in BC extends beyond degree programming alone. My review of documents suggests strong interrelationship between institutional mandate, research activity, and faculty roles. The large number of value and criteria assertions directly referencing research and scholarship as an integral component of a university environment suggests that research functions as a major criterion category of normative practice in BC universities. Making the point in no uncertain terms, Barnsley and Sparks (2009) argue that there is a demonstrable “link between autonomy and the mandate of a university to engage in research and not just teach . . . as research seems to be a core attribute . . . of a university” (p. 155). They further suggest, and the *Thompson Rivers University Act*, the *Royal Roads University Act*, and the *University Act* support their findings, that there is “correlation in legislation in BC between an institution being given a legislated research function and its being given autonomy from government” (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009, p. 155).

The expectation that a university and its faculty engage in research and scholarship in support of knowledge generation and application necessary, in particular, to maintain the currency of degree programs and professional expertise seems well-established and generally acknowledged in the BC post-secondary environment. Dennison (1995) argues that all universities, including those “which emphasize

undergraduate teaching . . . maintain a research orientation” (p. 122). Recognizing the inadequacy of the *College and Institute Act* in remaining “silent on this task for faculty” (Dennison, 2006b, p. 121), Dennison (2006b) concurs with Levin (2003a) on both the necessity and the inevitability that within the degree-granting university colleges “research and scholarship became accepted and expected professional behaviours of faculty with formal workloads comprised of both” (Levin, 2003a, p. 457). In his earlier 1998 review of degree quality in the university colleges, Petch (1998) states that even though they lack a formal legislated mandate for research, the “university colleges have a responsibility to promote scholarly activities among their faculty . . . [as] such activities are essential to maintaining over the long term good teaching at the post-secondary level” (Overview, p. 4; Issues, pp. 6-7).

In terms of formal mandate, the AUCC (2008a) criteria for membership require that an institution must have a “mission statement and academic goals that are appropriate to a university and that demonstrate commitment to . . . research” (3 (1) (c)) and must “[expect] its staff to be engaged in externally peer reviewed research” (3 (1) (g)). The CMEC (2007) guidelines and DQAB (2006; 2008) standards echo the expectations expressed for AUCC (2008a) membership, requiring both appropriate levels of faculty research activity and the necessary institutional policy, infrastructure, and faculty work provisions to support and assess such activity. Recognizing the mutually supportive relationship between teaching and research, Plant (2007) calls for a statutory mandate for proposed new regional universities that is inclusive of “research and scholarly activities for the purposes of supporting teaching” (p. 67). In response to Plant’s (2007) report, the Centre for Studies in Higher Education and Training (CHET) (2007) presses the point

further, suggesting that “spatially-based distinctions between teaching and research universities construct a false and misleading dichotomy” (p. 14). Such a view recalls Macdonald’s (1962b) point nearly a half century earlier:

The character of universities everywhere has changed during this century. They have come to place increasing emphasis upon the quality and level of research and scholarly production In other words, they have recognized that their duty to provide new knowledge and to explore the unknown is as important as their duty to propagate existing knowledge.” (p. 54)

Fittingly, in alignment with these scholarly viewpoints and quality assurance guidelines provided by national and provincial bodies, the *Thompson Rivers University Act* and amended *University Act*, like the *Royal Roads University Act* that preceded them, address the perceived shortcomings of the *College and Institute Act* by acknowledging a research mandate for the new universities, even if the mandate is less expansive than that prescribed for the more well-established universities in the Province.

Faculty Roles

In terms of faculty roles and responsibilities, a key normative expectation established both within the traditions and formal work provisions of university faculty is that of engagement in research and scholarship in addition to teaching and service duties. As Dennison (1995, 2006a, 2006b), Levin (2003a), Marshall (2008), Macdonald (1962), Petch (1998) and the Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training (2007) all suggest, faculty research and scholarship is integral to the university environment, facilitating not only the ongoing development and dissemination of new knowledge and

understanding, but also the maintenance of curricular currency so essential for quality assurance in degree and other programming. Dennison (1995) argues not only that all universities must “maintain a research orientation,” but also “a culture in which teaching faculty are rewarded for scholarly activity, teaching, and service” (p. 122). This tripartite structure describing faculty work speaks to the necessary interrelation of roles and responsibilities in an academically autonomous university environment wherein faculty are subject content experts, program pedagogues, and managers of academic governance.

Fittingly, in keeping with this view that the academic leadership of the university is a professional responsibility of faculty, Dennison (2006b) also points out that “administrators in universities . . . are hired with the assurance that they have an academic ‘home’ and are always appointed to the appropriate department . . . to recognize [they] are essentially academics and will return to that role after serving a period of time in an administrative position” (p. 119). In considering the academic environment of the university colleges, Petch (1998) offers suggestions in keeping with Dennison’s (2006b) views, namely, that “university colleges should consider moving to term appointments for academic officers” so that they can “keep up their scholarly activities” (Issues, p. 11). Petch (1998) also reinforces the fact that “having faculty members do research is one of the most effective ways of helping them keep them current” (Issues, p. 7) and that “continuing efforts need to be made to integrate research and other scholarly activities into the institutional culture” (Executive Summary, p. 2). Not surprisingly, given Petch’s (1998) recommendations and university expectations in general as expressed by Dennison (1995, 2006a, 2006b), Levin (2003a) observes that soon after the university colleges’ received degree-granting authority “research and scholarship became accepted

and expected professional behaviours of faculty” (p. 457). Further, three of the institutions adopted “new formal titles for faculty, including ‘professor’” (Levin, 2003a, p. 457), and in 2001 Okanagan University College “[signed] a contract providing rank for faculty” (Church, 2002, p. 3). Clearly, in conjunction with the expansion of the university college mandate to include university degree level programming came both external and internal professional expectations for faculty roles and responsibilities that are concomitant with university traditions and practices. What each of the aforementioned scholars suggests is that these expectations were not only inevitable, but also required if the faculty, programs, and institutions are to be deemed credible.

Expectations that faculty, specifically those offering degree programs, should fulfill tripartite roles and responsibilities are both explicit and implicit in the institutional and degree program guidelines and standards articulated by the AUCC (2008a, 2008b), CMEC (2007), and DQAB (2006, 2008). In its criteria for membership, the AUCC (2008a) states that an institution must “demonstrate commitment to: (i) teaching . . . (ii) research . . . and (iii) service to the community” (3 (1) (c)). These commitments are expected both from the institution and its individual faculty members. Likewise, the CMEC (2007) guidelines require that institutions have appropriate “policies with respect to . . . qualifications of the academic faculty . . . appointment, evaluation . . . and policies / practices with respect to research and / or scholarship” (p. 11). The DQAB (2008) specifies even further, requiring that “the institution’s policies and practices on the type of academic appointment of faculty . . . be appropriate to sustain the degree program” and that “Faculty have an appropriate level of scholarly output and / or research or creative activity for the . . . program involved” (p. 31). Moreover, the institution must have

appropriate “policies pertaining to faculty that address issues such as the protection of academic freedom; academic / professional credentials; the regular review of faculty performance; [and] the means of ensuring that faculty knowledge of the field is current” (DQAB, 2008, p. 31). Finally, in keeping with Dennison’s (1995, 2006b) argument that faculty responsibilities within a university environment also must necessarily include academic governance, the DQAB (2008) insists that institutions have a “governance structure and administrative capacity appropriate to that of an academic institution of high standard, with an acceptable level of faculty involvement in governance” (p. 5).

In terms of university governance more generally, the question of faculty status—roles, responsibilities, and titles—within the institution is cast somewhat differently in the *College and Institute Act* and the *University Act* or *Thompson Rivers University Act*. Whereas in the former a faculty member “includes an instructor, librarian, tutor, counselor, research associate, program co-coordinator or other employee of the institution that a collective agreement . . . specifies” (*College and Institute Act*, p. 3), the latter two define a faculty member as a “person employed by a university as an instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, professor, or in a equivalent position designated by the senate” (*University Act*, p. 4; *Thompson Rivers Act*, pp. 1-2). The *Royal Roads University Act* seems to introduce a third approach by not defining faculty, but instead defining a professor as “an instructor or researcher employed at the university and recognized by the board as a professor for the purposes of this Act” (*Royal Roads University Act*, 1).

Two distinctions seem of importance in these definitions. Firstly, within the *College and Institute Act* a faculty member seems primarily to be an employment category

encompassing many different positions as determined through union-employer negotiation, while within the *University Act* and *Thompson Rivers University Act* a faculty member seems primarily to be an academic role that progresses along a rank structure in keeping with senate determined standards and peer adjudication practices. The *Royal Roads University Act*, which defines professor under the auspices of the board of governors rather than a senate, does acknowledge a consultative role of the academic council to the president, who has the authority “to recommend appointments, promotions and removal of professors” (12 (3) (a)). Although not directly in keeping with the recognized senate authority in the other university *Acts*, the *Royal Roads University Act* seems to conceive the professor more as an academic role that progresses along a rank structure than an employment category covering multiple positions. Secondly, while the *College and Institute Act* identifies a variety of positions within the category of faculty member without suggesting any hierarchical order, the *University Act* and *Thompson Rivers University Act*, at least implicitly through titles such as assistant professor, associate professor, and professor, suggests the university tradition of academic rank amongst faculty. Although less pronounced than is suggested by the aforementioned titles, the *Royal Roads University Act*, like the *University Act* and *Thompson Rivers University Act* (*University Act*, 28(3), 59(2)(a)) also suggests hierarchical order in the notion of “promotions.”

Traditional university practices concerning the assignment of academic rank are dependent upon peer review of faculty performance in keeping with senate standards and guidelines for promotion and / or tenure. As such they require, as Dennison (2006b) notes, that faculty “exercise responsible position in academic governance, [that] they are

entitled to teach and research . . . [and that they are governed by] policy respecting academic freedom and tenure” (p. 118). In keeping with the views expressed by Dennison (2006b), my review of research documents suggests strong cross-referencing between faculty roles and all other major criterion categories of normative university practices, placing particular emphasis on academic autonomy, currency of knowledge, and quality assurance in general. These interrelationships, as well as the high number of references overall, suggest that tripartite faculty roles and responsibilities function as a major criterion category of normative university practice. Further, the professional peer expectations attendant with tripartite faculty roles and responsibilities suggest they are vital to maintaining a university environment of high standards.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance seems to be a principle spanning across all normative practices and responsibilities of a university in BC. My review of research documents suggests strong interrelationship between quality assurance and degree programming and faculty research, as well as institutional autonomy, bicameral governance and legislated university mandate. The large number of value and criteria assertions directly referencing quality assurance as a primary concern within a university environment suggests that quality assurance through internal and external peer review mechanisms functions as a major criterion category of normative practice in BC universities. Indeed, the functioning of a university as an autonomous institution governing its own academic affairs in keeping with appropriate professional standards defines the university’s compact with itself, its peers, and society as a whole. As Dennison (2006a) notes, “the term ‘university’

connotes a specific form of higher education . . . [and] has a long and distinctive status in Canada and elsewhere. It has an aura which has commanded the respect of society at large and the educational community in particular” (p. 3). To fulfill the obligation implicit in the name requires that universities engage fully in self and peer assessment of their academic program design and delivery, research activities, and faculty credentials and currency, among others. Further, universities must be able to act with autonomy to ensure academic decisions relating to quality assurance are not unduly circumscribed by non-academic influences.

In considering degree program quality, Marshall (2008) suggests that faculty engagement in research and scholarship is an essential component. He notes, “existing universities and the various quality assessment bodies . . . clearly require faculty involvement in scholarship as requirement for the approval of any institution or of individual degrees” (Marshall, 2008, p. 18). Dennison (2006b) extends the argument further, identifying that “program quality largely depends upon leaders who maintain contact with their respective academic discipline, profession or trade” (p. 120). In assessing the state of degree programming in the university colleges in the late 1990s, Petch (1998) likewise points out that the “baccalaureate programs currently offered . . . are academically strong” (Executive Summary, p. 1) because the faculty are highly competent and have appropriate credentials, and many are engaged in research and scholarship to ensure currency. Petch (1998) also indicates that program quality has been and will likely continue to be maintained because all the institutions “have developed good internal procedures and processes for considering and approving new programs and / or major changes” (p. 2).

On all of the above points the quality assurance expectations set forth in AUCC (2008a, 2008b) membership and quality assurance guidelines, CMEC (2007) degree program guidelines, and DQAB (2006, 2008) degree standard and exempt status criteria are in agreement. Faculty are expected to hold an “appropriate terminal degree” and possess “relevant professional experience” (AUCC, 2008a, 3 (1) (e)), and the institution is expected to demonstrate that it has the capacity to ensure this is the case through adequate resourcing as well as systematic review of individual and program performance (AUCC, 2008a, 2008b; CMEC, 2007; DQAB, 2006, 2008). In terms of both policy and practice, AUCC member institutions are required to engage in cyclical assessment across all program areas through a “process that is based on self-evaluation and peer review . . . [and] includes, as a fundamental dimension, . . . external experts” (AUCC, 2008b, p. 2). The expectations set forth by the CMEC (2007) and DQAB (2006; 2008) similarly require a public peer review process involving external experts for new and existing programs in order to ensure quality is appropriately assessed and maintained in keeping with professional standards. The CMEC (2007) guidelines and DQAB (2008) standards for degree programs require that institutions demonstrate not only “sufficient breadth and rigour” (CMEC, 2007, p. 9), but also “ongoing currency . . . and the quality of learning outcomes” (DQAB, 2008, p. 36). Fundamental to all these assessment processes is a well-functioning policy infrastructure and operational environment subject to the “institution’s senior academic governance body . . . which has sufficient qualifications to ensure that the curriculum is current and reflects the state of knowledge in the field and the needs of the field in practice” (DQAB, 2008, p. 26).

The overriding expectation with respect to the specific quality assurance expectations discussed above and quality assurance within a university context in general is that institutions are self-governing in accordance with appropriate professional standards. The CMEC (2007) guidelines make this expectation explicit, stating that “primary responsibility for academic and institutional quality assurance rests with post-secondary institutions themselves” although “governments are responsible for assuring . . . appropriate forms of quality assurance are in place in all degree-granting institutions” (p. 1). In terms of AUCC membership or DQAB exempt status, institutions must demonstrate ongoing capacity and commitment, in terms of mission, resources, policies, and processes, to be responsive to and responsible for maintaining the high quality of their academic programming, research, and staff. The DQAB (2006) asserts that “Exempt Status represents an exceptional condition” in keeping with its expectations that institutions granted such status—to date only universities—conform to “the highest standards and expectations of quality” (p. 1). Fittingly, DQAB assessment of institutions applying for exempt status is not restricted to program development and review, but rather considers organizational capacity more generally, including areas such as mission, policies, governance, faculty, services, facilities, accountability, and finances (DQAB, 2006). In effect, exempt status approval functions as a *de facto* accreditation of sorts in a BC jurisdiction that lacks a formal institutional accreditation process applicable to all public and private post-secondary institutions. In many respects, AUCC membership and DQAB exempt status are the primary external markers that BC universities meet accepted professional standards for quality assurance, and, indeed, are deemed credible as degree-granting institutions.

Conclusion: University Recognition through Alignment

Although assessment of any given institution regarding its credibility as a university in BC should consider the enactments and interrelation of requisite practice boundaries in conjunction with the core qualities that currently define the university in BC, deliberation cannot be as simple as checking any given institution's practices against a list of normative practice boundaries, for lists will always be incomplete and no single institution can constitute itself as a compilation of normative expectations. *University recognition, and, by extension, legitimation, emerges through the alignment of an institution's unique values, traditions, and practices inside the boundaries demarcated by the shared—but always contested—values, traditions, and practices that delimit the university as an idea within any specific historical and / or jurisdictional contexts. Identity and legitimation are always being interpreted and negotiated.*

In keeping with this understanding, in the final chapter I shall draw upon my analysis of the major criterion categories of normative university practices to construct hypotheses on university practice boundaries in BC. Through extrapolation on these practice boundaries, I shall also identify questions that may inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities in BC. Finally, I shall make recommendations for further specific research on institutions that is necessary to assess, apply and / or extend my research findings on practice boundaries in the BC university sector.

Endnotes

¹ The *Thompson Rivers University Act* relates very closely to the *University Act*. In fact, the *Thompson Rivers University Act* is a much shorter document that corresponds in principle and language with the majority of sections in the *University Act* or cross-references them directly:

4 (1) Part 4, sections 13, 14 (2) and (3), 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.1, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, Parts 8 and 9, sections 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57 and 58, Part 11 and sections 68, 69, 70, 70.1 and 71 of the *University Act* apply for the purposes of this Act. (*Thompson Rivers University Act*, 4)

Like the *Thompson Rivers University Act*, the *Royal Roads University Act* corresponds in principle and language with many sections in the *University Act* or cross-references them directly, but to a lesser degree:

Sections 30, 31, 33, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 57, 58, 70, 70.1 and 71 of the *University Act* apply to the university. (*Royal Roads University Act*, 16)

All three *Acts* governing public universities in BC establish the autonomy of the institutions with respect to their academic self-determination by restricting the Minister from interfering with the “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” (*University Act*, 48 (a-c)). For these reasons, in speaking of the *University Act* on the issue of institutional autonomy, I am also referencing the *Thompson Rivers University Act* and the *Royal Roads University Act*.

² On the issue of collegial academic governance, the *Royal Roads University Act* offers a seemingly atypical model within the public university sector in BC. All the other public universities in the Province operate under the legislative authority of the *University Act* or the *Thompson Rivers University Act*, each of which articulates a bicameral governance model vesting both distinct and interrelated jurisdictional authority in the senate and board of governors, as well as the president of the university. Generally speaking, the senate has jurisdictional authority over academic matters and the board over business operations, with the president functioning in relation to both.

The *Royal Roads University Act* articulates what may be described as an unicameral model, with specific jurisdictional authority vested in the board of governors (in keeping with the powers outlined in the *University Act*, which are also referenced in the *Royal Roads University Act*, 10) but no direct jurisdictional authority vested in a senate, or related body. However, the authority of the board of governors is not absolute, but limited by the jurisdictional authority of the president over academic matters (*Royal Roads University Act*, 12 (2)). The delineation of presidential authority over academic matters bears resemblance to some, but certainly not all, of the powers ascribed to the senates of universities operating within the framework of the *University Act* or the *Thompson Rivers University Act*. Additionally, the president's authority is to be exercised in "consultation with the academic council" (*Royal Roads University Act*, 12 (2)), which is an academic body determined primarily through election, and requiring at least half the members to be professors (*Royal Roads University Act*, 15 (1-5)). Although this model is not bicameral in a traditional sense of both distinct and interrelated lines of jurisdictional authority, through the mechanism of the academic council and its consultative role to the

president as well as the provision for the delegation of authority by the president on academic matters, it does seem to address several principles of shared governance.

Given that the *Royal Roads University Act* presents an atypical unicameral model of governance practice relative to the bicameral model delineated in legislation for the other ten public universities in the province, it certainly warrants further study in its own right. Among many possible topics, such study might explore to what extent, if any, the historical context of the original 1996 legislation, the professional program focus, and / or instructional infrastructure of the university, are relevant factors informing its governance model. Such study might also be extended to the relatively similar *Technical University of British Columbia Act* that was legislated in 1997 with the creation of the now defunct Technical University of British Columbia.

³ Exempt status is conferred by the DQAB at various degree levels—baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral—in keeping with the demonstrated capacity of the applying institution. In effect, a panel of post-secondary experts (usually senior academic administrators and faculty from across Canada) appointed by the DQAB conducts a documentary and site review of the applying institution. Their task is to assess the rigour of an institution's quality assurance standards and processes, the institution's ongoing commitment to maintaining quality as determined by both internal and external adjudication, and its overall historical record and future capacity for sustaining a learning environment appropriate to the degree level for which it is seeking exemption. Although the general criteria are the same for each level of exemption—undergraduate, masters,

and doctoral—specific capacity requirements are determined in relation to requisite institutional standards for the various degree levels.

Any institution receiving exempt status to the baccalaureate level (or higher as the case may be) is exempt from the DQAB review of new degree programs it develops for implementation. In effect, their internal development, review and governance processes have been deemed adequate in the sense that they are at least equivalent to what the DQAB would require in adjudicating a proposal. Importantly, however, exempt institutions, like all non-exempt institutions, are still required to post their new degree initiatives on the public Degree Granting Authority website so that peer institutions may offer critical commentary for consideration and response. As per the *University Act*, the *College and Institute Act*, and the *Degree Authorization Act*, all institutions, exempt or not, require ministerial sign-off and an Order in Council before they are legally able to offer a new degree program.

To date (January, 2010), exempt status institutions in the Province include nine of the eleven BC public universities and Athabasca University, based in Alberta. Of the two remaining BC universities, University of the Fraser Valley and Capilano University, the former has applied for exempt status and the latter has not.

⁴ Dennison (2006b) refers specifically to BC's university colleges; however, as these institutions were all re-designated as special purpose, teaching-focused universities in 2008, I have adopted the nomenclature new paradigm universities, or new universities.

⁵ Royal Roads University does not have a senate with direct jurisdictional authority, but does have an academic council with consultative authority in relation to presidential powers on academic matters as set forth in the *Royal Roads University Act*. Refer to endnote #2 above for a fuller explanation.

⁶ Within the BC post-secondary context, applied degrees are generally understood to be more narrowly focused than general baccalaureate degrees, thereby providing less breadth of study and more concentrated development of professional and / or vocational skills necessary for entry to practice in career fields such as business, nursing, and allied health. In keeping with DQAB guidelines (2008, 2009), colleges in BC are permitted to develop and offer applied degrees provided they are able to demonstrate to the Minister that there is a labour market need and that the programs are peer reviewed and approved by the DQAB as meeting program quality expectations.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

Reconfiguring the University Idea in British Columbia

Introduction

As I indicated in chapter one, this study has focused on two general and interrelated purposes: 1) reaching an understanding of the historical development of the university in order to inform perspectives on the dynamics shaping its contemporary expression in British Columbia (BC), and 2) developing a rubric on the requisite university practice boundaries that are likely to inform institutional determinations of whether or not any given BC university is deemed credible among its peers. Building upon the historical review on the development of the university as both an idea and an institution that is chronicled in chapter two; the conceptual framework for understanding the university as a dynamic identity (derived through the intermixing of internal self-conception and external expectations) that is developed in chapter three; and the constructivist research design and key findings on normative expectations for BC universities that is presented in chapters four and five; in this final chapter I shall construct hypotheses on university practice boundaries in response to my research question:

What are the normative university practice boundaries for traditional universities and new paradigm universities in BC?

Subsequently, extrapolating from these hypotheses, I shall identify some questions for the BC university sector that may inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities in BC. Finally, I shall make recommendations for further specific research on institutions that is necessary to test, extend, and / or further refine my research findings on normative practice boundaries in the BC university sector.

Hypotheses on University Practice Boundaries

The six sub-categories of university values and criteria assertions—Institutional Autonomy, Bicameral Governance, Degree Programming, Research, Faculty Roles, and Quality Assurance—discussed in chapter five constitute the bases of current practice boundaries for the university in BC. All are informed by the three core qualities—Institutional Autonomy, Academic Rights and Responsibilities, and Organizational Capacity—underlying the idea of the university in BC, at present. That is, the university functions as an autonomous natural person exercising its institutional rights and responsibilities in pursuit of its full capacity as an idea (*University Act*).¹ As such, the university is conceptualized both as a collective institution corresponding to a common idea comprised by shared values and traditions, and an individual institution comprised by unique values and traditions pertaining to its own specific history. Therefore, although the normative practice boundaries requisite for university identity and legitimation in BC seem necessarily to be an integral whole relational to all universities, they could not be rigidly delineated in set proportions or singularly applied within each institution—at least not without compromising the diversity across the institutions comprising the sector and

the identity of each individual university. Having offered this caveat concerning the utility of university practice boundaries as independent assertions, for conceptual clarity I shall give them expression as six separate hypotheses.

Hypothesis #1: *BC universities are autonomous institutions.*

Elaboration:

Institutional autonomy is expressed in legislation ensuring the independence of the university from direct control by government, industry, and other societal organizations, particularly as concerns its academic affairs (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009; Macdonald, 1962b; Plant, 2007; *University Act*). To ensure relative autonomy from undue external influences that may narrowly limit their educational activities, BC universities require direct or indirect funding from government, or the means to generate funds independently, at a level necessary to fulfill successfully their legislated mandate and assure the quality of their educational programs and services.² To be autonomous in practice as well as principle, BC universities require a necessary critical mass of physical resources and well-qualified professional faculty and staff commensurate with their mandates. Such critical mass is necessary to ensure they can exercise their rights and honour their responsibilities: 1) to govern themselves in accordance with appropriately segmented jurisdictional authority over academic and fiduciary matters; 2) to provide breadth and depth of programming to the degree level; and 3) to maintain robust operational practices concerning educational program renewal and quality assurance.

Hypothesis #2: *BC universities govern themselves in accordance with bicameral principles and structures.*

Elaboration:

Bicameral governance is expressed in legislation directly through the division of authority, with the senate or similar body generally having jurisdiction over academic matters, and the board of governors generally having jurisdiction over business operations. Further, the senate, in conjunction with the president, shares authority through consultative or advisory relationships to the board on matters so delegated or crossing over jurisdictional concerns. For bicameral governance to operate in practice as well as principle, even when legislated bicameralism is not evident (as is the case in the *Royal Roads University Act*), the university requires both institutional autonomy set forth in legislation so that it may exercise its academic rights and responsibilities free from undue external influence, and robust internal governance structures, so that it may enfranchise and give voice to the professional collegiums that constitute the university (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009). Paramount elements contributing to effective bicameral governance are strong policy frameworks outlining the delegation of authority over academic standards to senate, its committees, and the faculties, and robust faculty participation in the committees and other governing bodies of the university. The latter further requires appropriate resources in support of meaningful participation and effective operation. As a whole, the principles and practice of bicameral governance create a necessary checks and balance system in relation to the authority of senate, the board, and the president for the

purpose of jointly managing the affairs of the university (AUCC, 2008a, 2008b; CMEC, 2007; DQAB, 2006, 2008).

Hypothesis #3: *BC universities have tripartite educational mandates, inclusive of teaching, research, and service.*

Elaboration:

In accordance with their self-governing authority as autonomous institutions, BC universities require legislated mandates permissive of the full range of their academic rights and responsibilities (Barnsley and Sparks, 2009). As institutions devoted to the development and dissemination of knowledge and understanding, they require an appropriate level of freedom and capacity to develop their educational programs, engage in research and scholarship supportive of their programs and / or other related educational activities, and provide service to community, industry, professional and governmental organizations—society as a whole—in keeping with their institutional missions (Dennison, 1995, 2006b; Levin, 2003a; Petch, 1998; Plant, 2007). Although both the legal mandate and individual mission of any given university shall vary, sometimes considerably, in general all universities require a tripartite mandate, the capacity to fulfill that mandate, and a clearly articulated mission setting forth institutional commitments to its internal and external communities. These commitments relate not only to teaching, research and service to the community—both internal and external to the university—but to the collegial governance principles and structures requisite to support the autonomy of the institution and its academic staff. The university can be autonomous and self-

governing only to the extent that its internal community members are willing and able to serve and sustain it in fulfilling its legislated mandate and institutional mission (Dennison, 1995).

Hypothesis #4: *BC universities focus primarily, but not exclusively, on broad-based degree level programming.*

Elaboration:

Broad-based degree programming constituted by curricular breadth and depth at the baccalaureate level or higher is integral to the university in BC (Dennison, 2006a; Marshall, 2008). As set forth both in university legislation and Degree Quality Assurance Board (DQAB, 2008) standards, general degree, as opposed to applied degree, programs are specific to the mandate of the universities. With this mandate also comes the expectation that the general degrees of universities are comprised by liberal arts and science breadth as well as depth of study in a field. To meet quality assurance expectations concerning depth of study at the degree level, universities require not only faculty specialists in cognate disciplines but also ongoing faculty engagement in research and scholarship requisite for ensuring currency of knowledge and understanding. Notwithstanding their mandate for professional, vocational, and / or pre-university programs, a key indicator of the mandate and capacity of a university in BC is a robust range of degree programs as well as other credentials in liberal arts and science disciplines. In terms of the general educational experience and environment it provides, a university, in keeping with Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC,

2008a) membership standards, demonstrates its capacity by ensuring that a majority of its students are studying in credential programs at the baccalaureate level or higher, and that its educational support services—library, counseling, advising, etc.—are commensurate with the needs of the students and faculty (Dennison, 2006a; Marshall, 2008).

Hypothesis #5: BC universities generally assign and support tripartite roles and responsibilities, inclusive of teaching, research, and service in varying ratios, for academic faculty and administrators.

Elaboration:

Tripartite roles and responsibilities for faculty, including academic administrators, are requisite for the university in BC so that it may develop and disseminate new knowledge necessary to sustain educational programs and to fulfill its general legislated mandate and specific institutional missions (Dennison, 2006b). Further, the autonomy of the university as an institution is expressed most directly in the autonomy of the faculty to exercise their academic rights and responsibilities free from undue external influence, but in keeping with professional standards of practice (Dennison, 1995, 2006a, 2006b; Levin, 2003a; Marshall, 2008; Macdonald, 1962). This entails that faculty have appointments with terms and conditions that are consistent with workload expectations for teaching, research, and service: to the institution, their profession, and society. Although not all faculty need necessarily engage in all three aspects of their tripartite roles and responsibilities, and not all faculty with tripartite roles and responsibilities need carry them out in the same proportions, a critical mass of faculty must exercise their tripartite

roles and responsibilities, particularly in degree program areas, if the university is to fulfill its educational mandate and exercise its rights and responsibilities as an autonomous institution committed to educational programming that is current and of high quality (AUCC, 2008a, 2008b; CMEC, 2007; DQAB, 2006, 2008). Importantly, since the institution and the faculty are mutually dependent, faculty service in the form of participation in the collegial academic governance of the university is critical to its success, (Dennison, 1995, 2006b).

Hypothesis #6: BC universities ensure ongoing quality assurance through internal and external peer review of educational programs, as well as faculty qualifications, currency and performance.

Elaboration:

Quality assurance concerning educational program standards, student success, and faculty qualifications, currency, and performance is manifest in BC universities through internal and external peer review activities. As autonomous, self-governing institutions constituted by professional collegiums situated both inside and outside of any individual university, BC universities require authoritative internal structures and adjudication mechanisms necessary for objective peer review of its core academic operations and standards (CMEC, 2007). In particular, systematic program development and review processes under the auspices of the senate or a similar academic governance body are integral to ensuring ongoing quality assurance that is thoroughly steeped in peer critique. To be successful, they must, of course, be adequately resourced and publicly accountable.

In conferring exempt status to the baccalaureate level or higher, the DQAB (2006), like the AUCC (2008a, 2008b) in granting institutional membership and recognizing quality assurance, expressly states that institutions are expected not only to be self-governing in terms of their quality assurance, but also to engage in operational practices that include systematic external review by appropriately qualified peers. The same principles hold true for faculty performance evaluation, regardless of the manner in which faculty roles and / or academic rank are structured in any given university. That is, as part of their quality assurance processes BC universities are expected to maintain appropriate standards in keeping with external professional expectations and to employ independent peer review processes in the assessment of faculty qualifications, currency, and performance. The integrity of a university as a peer member of the university sector and, by extension, the credibility of its programs and the degree mobility of its students are dependent upon this commitment (Marshall, 2008).

Although the six hypotheses articulated above give discrete expression to university practice boundaries, suggesting that they are separate and measurable on their own, this suggestion is not one of intent but rather of the limits concomitant with declarative statements concerning each major criterion category. It is important to note that the research literature suggests the opposite of discrete categorization, that the practice boundaries form an integrated set of normative expectations for BC universities rather than mutually exclusive criteria that can be applied or assessed in isolation. As such, no single practice boundary can be adequately examined in a specific or general institutional context without relation to the others. An understanding of how and to what

extent an individual university is in alignment with normative expectations may emerge from the study of the application of the entire set of practice boundaries within the unique traditions, structures, and practices of an institution.

Some Questions for BC Universities and the University Sector

The six hypotheses and their elaborations offer a succinct overview of what seem to be the current normative expectations concerning university practices in BC. However, many secondary considerations in relation to each merit further discussion by educators to explore the complexity of issues facing both individual institutions and the sector as a whole. Institutional capacity, cultural dynamics, operational practices, and inter- and intra-sector competition influence the ability and preparedness of each university to conduct its affairs in manners consistent with the current university practice boundaries in BC. A fuller understanding of how these complex issues play out within individual institutions and across the university sector as a whole would be informative to public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities. Considering pertinent issues arising from the implications that the hypothesized university practice boundaries present to both the new paradigm universities and traditional, well-established universities may also help facilitate appropriate decision-making concerning educational practices within the universities and across the sector. In support of this goal, and in relation to each of the major criterion categories of normative university practices that are identified in chapter five, I offer a few questions to contribute to discussion by educators across the university community in BC.

Autonomy and Governance

As institutional autonomy seems to be a core quality of the university in BC given expression through legislation and bicameral governance structures, universities should facilitate the fulfillment of the rights and responsibilities attendant with this autonomy through their policies and practices. Although the *University Act* offers parallel provisions outlining the institutional autonomy and academic governance of new paradigm and well-established universities, there is variation. For example, the former have a narrower mandate for research, are required to provide specific non-university programs, and are not guaranteed a faculty majority on senate. Perhaps more significantly, in well-established universities bicameral governance generally seems to be a robust practice reflective of long-standing cultural expectations of academic autonomy vested in the institution and individual faculty. Conversely, in many of the new paradigm universities bicameral governance generally seems to be a still developing practice emerging with their new legislation and mandate. Given the normative practice expectations concerning institutional autonomy and bicameral governance, new paradigm universities in particular, but also all universities in BC, face questions such as the following:

- 1. To what extent should all universities in BC have the same level of and legislated provisions for academic autonomy in determining their institutional mandates and exercising bicameral governance?*

2. *What are the requisite legislated provisions as well as institutional policies, structures, and practices to ensure appropriate levels of institutional autonomy and effective bicameral governance across all the universities?*
3. *On what basis and in what manner should differentiation in institutional autonomy and bicameral governance provisions occur among universities in British Columbia?*
4. *Regardless, what changes in institutional cultures and educational practices would be necessary and appropriate to support and sustain academic autonomy and bicameral governance in the new paradigm universities?*

University Mandate

If the normative expectations for university mandate in BC include teaching, research, and service to their communities, then institutional allocation of financial and infrastructure resources as well as academic staff time and focus requires an appropriate level of alignment with these expectations. Although new paradigm universities generally concentrate more of their resources and time on the teaching component of the tripartite mandate, in keeping with both their special designation as teaching universities and their institutional histories, they do engage in research and service to their communities to varying degrees. However, the new paradigm universities generally have fewer resources and less academic staff time dedicated for research and service to their communities than do the more well-established universities, so determining and enacting an appropriate

balance across all three core elements of the university mandate raises many questions and challenges³. Given their tripartite mandates for teaching, research and service to their communities, new paradigm universities in particular, but also all universities in BC, face questions such as the following:

1. *To what extent should all universities in BC engage in an expansive range of research and community service activity in fulfillment of their university mandate?*
2. *What are the appropriate system planning and funding parameters to ensure all three components of a university's tripartite mandate are adequately developed and sustained at a high level of quality in keeping with the responsibilities of and expectations for both research-intensive and teaching-intensive universities?*
3. *On what basis and in what proportions should differentiation in the balance of tripartite mandate components (and the resources necessary to support them) occur among universities in British Columbia?*
4. *Regardless, what changes in educational practices, public funding, and system planning would be necessary and appropriate to support and sustain an expansion of research and community service activity in the new paradigm universities?*

Degree Programming

Although degree level programming is a primary component of the mandate of all universities in BC, the capacity to develop and deliver degree programs varies considerably among the various universities at present. In general, the new paradigm universities have fewer resources available than do the well-established universities. Further, the majority of all the universities are located in the Lower Mainland of the Province and their programs often compete with one another for students and funding, particularly in traditional degree program fields such as arts, science, and business. Given their mandates as degree-granting institutions and normative expectations that they offer a critical mass of degree programs to support the requisite university educational experience, new paradigm universities in particular, but also all universities in BC, face questions such as the following:

- 1. To what extent should all universities in BC offer a fulsome range of liberal arts and science as well as other degree programs in fulfillment of their university mandate?*
- 2. What are the appropriate system planning and funding parameters to ensure both program quality and sustainability across both traditional (e.g., Arts and Science) and non-traditional university disciplines (e.g., Trades and Vocational)?*
- 3. On what basis and in what manner should differentiation of degree programming occur among universities in British Columbia?*

4. *Regardless, what changes in educational practices, public funding, and system planning would be necessary and appropriate to support and sustain an expansion of liberal arts and science as well as other degree programs in the new paradigm universities?*

Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

Although tripartite roles and responsibilities seem to be foundational expectations for the majority of tenured faculty appointments at well-established universities in BC, to date they seem not to have been for the majority of the continuing faculty appointments at many of the new paradigm universities in BC. In particular, the research / scholarship expectation has been less pronounced and less formally articulated as a component of workload for faculty in new paradigm universities. The absence of an explicit research mandate for these institutions when they were governed under the authority of the *College and Institute Act* as well as the range and volume of pre-university, vocational, and career programming that the majority of them offer are likely contributing factors. Given their new mandate to carry out research “so far as and to the extent that [their] resources from time to time permit . . . to support [their] programs” (*University Act*, 47.1 (d)), new paradigm universities in particular, but also all universities in BC face questions such as the following:

1. *To what extent should the roles and responsibilities for all faculty within all universities be tripartite, comprised by teaching, research / scholarship, and*

service components, albeit in varying proportions consistent with institutional and programmatic requirements?

2. *What are the appropriate parameters, practices and standards for teaching, research / scholarship, and service for faculty across both traditional (e.g., Arts and Science) and non-traditional university disciplines (e.g., Trades and Vocational)?*
3. *On what basis, to what extent, and in what manner should differentiation of faculty roles and responsibilities occur among universities in British Columbia?*
4. *Regardless, what changes in institutional cultures, educational practices, and public funding would be necessary and appropriate to support tripartite roles and responsibilities for all, or a substantial portion of, faculty in the new paradigm universities?*

Quality Assurance

A least two components seem integral to quality assurance in a university environment: autonomous academic governance and credible peer review. Each of these components requires robust institutional policy infrastructure and collegial participation. In well-established universities in BC, the practice of professional peer review is evident not only in the formal program review procedures, but also in the faculty performance review processes for the purpose of determining progress along scales of academic rank

and gaining tenure. In most new paradigm universities academic rank and tenure are not currently established practices. Given their mandates as autonomous, self-governing institutions responsible for the quality assurance of their programs, services, and academic staff, new paradigm universities in particular, but also all universities in BC face questions such as the following:

1. *To what extent should systems of academic rank and / or tenure exist for all faculty within all universities in BC?*
2. *What are the appropriate appointment and review parameters, practices and standards for distinct faculty groups across both traditional (e.g., Arts and Science) and non-traditional university disciplines (e.g., Trades and Vocational), and across both research-intensive and teaching-intensive universities?*
3. *To what extent and on what basis should differentiation of faculty groups occur, and in accord with what principles should alternate institutional appointment and review practices align?*
4. *Regardless, what changes in institutional cultures and educational practices would be necessary and appropriate to support academic rank and tenure, or other credible peer review driven appointment practices for all, or a substantial portion of, faculty in the new paradigm universities?*

Recommendations for Further Specific Research on Institutions

This research study has been focused primarily on the delineation of normative expectations of practice for BC universities, culminating in the expression of six hypotheses on university practice boundaries. In effect, these hypotheses suggest the bases of practice by which universities in BC may assess the legitimacy of their peers and the unique adaptations of university practice they enact. However, the hypotheses are untested in a broad manner as an expansive study has yet to be conducted through which the perspectives of a significant cross-section of the students, faculty and staff who comprise the university sector can be gathered and assessed in relation to the hypotheses. A helpful next step would be to conduct such a study in order to extend the current research for the purpose of revising and refining the hypotheses on university practice boundaries as appropriate.

In addition, this research study presents a conceptual framework for understanding university legitimation and identity dynamics in a more robust manner than suggested by six discrete hypotheses corresponding to major criterion categories of normative university practices. In fact, as indicated in Figure 3 (Refer to Chapter 3), I suggest that the hypothesized university practice boundaries are but one of five sets of context-specific variables across which legitimation and identity are negotiated among the institutions and within the society in which they are situated. In keeping with Pedersen and Dobbin's (2006) assertion that "the formation of identity through uniqueness and the construction of legitimation through uniformity [is a] dual process constituting [an] organization" (p. 901), the conceptual framework invites study on not only what the prevailing university practice boundaries are at any given moment, but also how and why they are adapted

within individual institutions. Further, the effects of these adaptations on an individual institution's sense of its own identity, its perceived legitimacy as a university among its peers within the sector, and on the ongoing negotiation of the sector's practice boundaries all require more detailed study. Three very broad questions appropriate for follow up research in application to individual new paradigm universities, the group as a whole, and / or a subset of the whole are as follows:

What unique limitations and / or elaborations of current university practice boundaries are occurring in new paradigm universities in BC and are they deemed credible by well-established universities in BC?

How is the pursuit of institutional legitimation as a university manifest in the educational practices of specific new paradigm universities in BC?

How has the pursuit of institutional legitimation as a university affected the institutional identity of specific new paradigm universities in BC?

For that matter, since underlying each of these broad research questions is an array of more focused research topics relating to the interpretation, enactment, and / or rejection of the prevailing normative practice boundaries as expressed in university operations, they are as relevant to the well-established universities as they are to the new universities. The broad research questions stated above could be adapted easily for application to well-established universities in BC. In fact, research that attempts to

combine findings from both sub-sets of the university sector might well yield intriguing information concerning how and to what extent the normative practice expectations are applied in similar or different manners across institutions, regardless of whether they are new paradigm universities or well-established universities. As I suggested in chapter 3, the boundaries, perceived or real, between universities and colleges (as well as the former university colleges), seem already to have collapsed considerably, particularly in relation to pre-university programming, undergraduate degree programming, and applied learning environments, which seem increasingly to be available at all institutions.

In terms of institutional rhetoric, it is at times difficult to discern differences between the espoused mission of a university and other institutions in the BC post-secondary system. Recent assertions by Simon Fraser University's president designate, Andrew Petter, and Douglas College's new president, Scott MacAlpine, offer one illustration. Both of the new presidents identify diversity of student body, undergraduate education, student-centredness, relevant scholarship, and community engagement as foundational to their educational visions, regardless of the fact that the former is a research university and the latter a community college, with mandates set forth in very different legislation.

“I don't know of a university that has more strengths right now and more potential going forward than Simon Fraser University,’ [Petter] said, citing its diversity, undergraduate education, research, scholarship and community involvement” (Nagel, 2010). Petter further asserts that, “SFU stands apart from other universities in the extent it's grounded in the community it serves” (Colley, 2010) and that “he was attracted to SFU because of its . . . student-centred undergraduate education, as well as connection to

community” (Smith, 2010, p.1). On the surface, at least, these statements seem to convey a somewhat different emphasis than the university’s branding phrase, as identified on its logo, “Simon Fraser University: Thinking of the World.” Is the university’s focus primarily on the local community or on global engagement? How is either manifest in the student body and the professoriate, and in core educational components such as program design, student services, and research agendas? And, more significantly, how does SFU distinguish itself from other universities in its approach to engaging the local community? Without having details pertaining to such questions it is difficult to draw inferences. Nevertheless, the conjoining of the local and the global, while retaining primary focus on students, certainly seems to be key to the university’s vision.

In a related manner, MacAlpine identifies similar features of Douglas College’s vision: “Douglas College has tremendous diversity of students and high-quality programs, and I’ll be working in a comprehensive degree-granting college that is dedicated to student success” (Douglas College, 28 April, 2009). MacAlpine further emphasizes how institutional “commitments to diversity, respect, instructional excellence and scholarship make Douglas College an exciting place to study” (President’s website, 2010). Moving beyond more traditional areas of college focus—on teaching excellence and student learning support within non-degree programs—MacAlpine reinforces the fact that “In many disciplines, [students] can earn [their] bachelor's degree at Douglas [and that a] reputation for community engagement also finds expression in much of the research and scholarly activity undertaken at Douglas College by our faculty and staff (President’s website, 2010). Once again, in the absence of detailed illustrations of how these assertions of institutional mission are manifest in the student body and the

professoriate, and in core educational components such as program design, student services, and research agendas, it is difficult to draw detailed inferences. Nevertheless, Douglas College's assertions of institutional vision and focus certainly seem to parallel those of SFU quite closely in many respects: diversity of student body, undergraduate education, student-centredness, relevant scholarship, and community engagement.

As Simon Fraser University's vision seems in substantial part to be focused on what are, arguably, traditional areas of community college focus in BC, namely, community involvement and close educational relationships between faculty, students and local communities, one might well ask how the vision is significantly different from that of the community colleges, the former university colleges, or the new paradigm universities. Conversely, as Douglas College's vision seems in substantial part to be focused on what are, arguably, traditional areas of university focus in BC, namely, degree programming and research relevant to local communities, one might well ask how the vision is significantly different from that of the comprehensive research universities, the new paradigm universities, or the former university colleges.

Of course, there are significant differences in legal mandate as well as principles and practices of autonomy and governance between universities and colleges in BC, as the research findings in this study point out. Notwithstanding this fact, a fundamental question that warrants study in relation not only to the university sector but also to the entire post-secondary system in BC concerns the ongoing reconstitution of normative practice boundaries for universities, perhaps for all post-secondary institutions: *Who is influencing whom, and what extra-institutional factors are key in prompting change?* Arguably, the conflation of programming and missions that has arisen across the BC

post-secondary system is at least in part a result of institutional responsiveness to the needs and interests of their communities and the learners who comprise them. However, with conflation comes considerable confusion throughout the system, within the institutions, and in the public understanding of both the system and its constituent sectors and sub-sectors.

University Identity and Integrity within a Post-Secondary Systems Context

In a manner that echoes Pederson and Dobbin's (2006) identity-legitimation dynamics, Considine (2006) frames the issue of uncertainty concerning university missions and practices as a question of both institutional identity and integrity. Universities in particular "are now under titanic pressure to reinvent themselves" in response to "environmental transformation," brought on by external forces such as massification and global competition (Considine, 2006, p. 255). The primary challenge facing universities is not funding shortfalls or competition, but that they "are finding it more and more difficult to explain what they do that is distinctive" (Considine, 2006, p. 256). That this scenario constitutes an "emergency" is evident in the reality that the university struggles in delineating its identity from that of "other proximate systems" as well as its uniqueness in "distinguishing certain kinds of knowledge from other types . . . [and, as a result,] . . . its capacity to mobilize a core value around which certain binary choices can be made" has been compromised (Considine, 2006, p. 256). In effect, a "state of emergency" arises through the loss of identity, the "cultural distinction that creates boundaries between the university and other systems" (Considine, 2006, p. 256).

Considering a broader question of system design in BC, a post-secondary education

network comprised by colleges, institutes, universities and university colleges (now special purpose universities), Plant (2007) raises similar concerns, although less directly focused on university identity issues and more directly focused on delineating mandate boundaries to facilitate operational coherence between the sectors and institutions that comprise the BC post-secondary system:

Most importantly, we cannot have a system of higher learning in which all institutions aspire equally to undertake all responsibilities with an equal measure of success. We must be willing to give our diverse institutions distinct responsibilities, and to maximize the possibility that we can achieve both the widest reach of opportunity and highest levels of excellence. (p. 64)

Plant's (2007) argument in support of "an effective categorization system or taxonomy of higher education institutions" is multi-faceted (p. 63). He acknowledges that there is no singular system model that can or should be exclusive to BC or any other jurisdiction; that circumstances can and will change over time, necessitating shifts in the operational frameworks of the sectors and institutions; and that "while there is a public interest in encouraging institutions to develop their own cultures, missions and purposes, the system as a whole must meet our collective objectives" (Plant, 2007, p. 64). The system must have an appropriate level of coherence if it is to function as a system, and coherence within the system is in large part reliant on the clarity and integrity of institutional identities. Identity, being contingent on the "cultural distinction that creates boundaries" between groups (Considine, 2006, p. 256), is given expression through the vision, values and educational practices that an institution carries out legitimately, in keeping with the normative expectations of its peers.

As Pederson and Dobbin (2006) point out, institutional identity is a doubled act, of internal self-conception and external legitimation, constantly performed. Considine (2006) suggests that to forget this tenet, to operate without the delimitation of appropriate yet contestable boundaries, carries the risk of extinction for any system or collective network, such as a university sector: “No system can survive once it has been universalized. To be a system of ‘everything’ is to be incapable of distinctions because all priorities become essential” (p. 258). In keeping with the findings of this study and its construction of six hypotheses on university practice boundaries in BC, Considine (2006) asserts that there must be “distinctions” in order for the university to exist as a system, by which he implies both a coherent idea and institutional form: “What establishes the system as a system are the distinctions actors use, and have others use, to define themselves, and this typically comes to light at the border of one system and another This, in turn, produces an identity-centering model of the university as a system” (p. 258). This is not to suggest that the university is a static idea and institution, but that amidst its myriad ongoing adaptations it must always posit boundaries in relation to other ideas and institutions if it is to retain integrity.

Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin (2007) explore similar integrity questions in considering the many extra-institutional forces influencing the university in an era when “Most countries no longer consider higher education as the training of an exclusive elite, that requires a specific treatment, and where students become members of the elite simply by attending a university regardless of what training they receive” (p. 365). However, their questions are focused less on the university as a singular institution type and more on higher education systems, for “in the face of massification countries started to

consider higher education as a whole, extending the concept to include all the components that today constitute post-secondary education” and to view individual institutions and / or groupings of institutions as interrelated constituent parts of a system (Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007, p. 365).

Considered from such a perspective, questions understandably emerge “at the global level of the system as a whole and at the local level of its different constitutive entities, universities and other higher education institutions” (Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007, p. 366). Central among these questions is whether or not national systems or, in the Canadian context, provincial systems, tend toward convergence. Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin (2007) suggest that this has not been the case to date, a claim that is certainly supported by the continuing post-secondary system diversity across Canada’s provincial jurisdictions. However, Bleiklie’s (2007) research reveals some significant patterns: “One of these is that most systems tend to mix . . . horizontal specialization associated with growing elements of hierarchization and vertical diversity driven by formal standardization: introduction of common degree systems across systems . . . , university ‘autonomy’ and the growing accountability requirements for public funding” (Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007, p. 367).

At an institutional level, Laredo (2007) maintains that universities are not simply adding new missions to an already established mix, but that three core missions of universities (teaching, research, public service) are all being re-conceptualized within institutions in relation to three primary areas of functional activity: mass tertiary education to the baccalaureate degree level, specialized training and applied research largely focused at the professional master degree level, and academic training and

research through the doctorate degree level. Laredo (2007) speculates that while all universities likely comprise a “unique mix” of these functional activities, their institutional positioning is “often mostly the result of contingent historical factors” (p. 454). For each university, institutional position requires development as “a ‘constructed’ choice” to facilitate meaningful “articulation of the university with its environment” (Laredo, 2007, p. 454). The profile—identity and legitimacy—of any given university corresponds not only to its specific amalgam of functional activities, but also to the realization of its core university missions in alignment with those activities.

Notwithstanding the considerable influences exerted by external forces and their effects on institutional missions, both the university and the educators that comprise it have very capably adapted and incorporated political and other socio-economic changes within their educational practices without compromising integrity (Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007; Bleiklie and Kogan, 2007). For this reason, scholars are advised to observe carefully “which of the numerous figures . . . will materialize this understanding of the university as a multiple missions organization with all the tensions linked to the different stakeholders that are associated with them” (Bleiklie, Laredo, and Sorlin, 2007, p. 372). In this scholarly caution, Scott’s (1993) observation on the university as a dynamic idea throughout its centuries-old history is resonant:

The university as an institution has escaped restriction by the university as an idea. If it had not been able freely to adapt—to succeeding socio-economic orders, to radical shifts in science and intellectual culture, it would have long ago passed into history. That it has not done so, that in the late 20th century the university remains a powerful and pervasive institutional form, not just in the West but throughout the

world, is a tribute not so much to its transcendent virtue but its ceaseless adaptation. So, attempts to impose some over-arching idea, or principle, that describes the university can be dangerous. Either they are irrelevant, failing to capture the historically determined diversity of university practice; or, if successful, they limit the university's capacity to adapt and survive. (p. 1)

A significant challenge for the BC post-secondary system, and its university sector in particular, seems likely to be the maintenance of necessary delimitating sector boundaries where and as appropriate to ensure ongoing relevance and recognizable institutional forms. To not maintain appropriate boundaries carries the risk of system dissolution and increasing difficulty for any given institution to convey a legitimate identity outside its own self-referential expression. This is not to suggest that there can be no overlap between aspects of the visions, values, and educational practices of institutions from different sectors, such as seems evident in the example of SFU and Douglas College discussed earlier in this chapter. However, as Laredo (2007) suggests, the functional activities of individual institutions must remain in keeping with their core missions as universities, or colleges, as the case may be, in order to ensure their integrity.

The necessity for integrity is foundational to Scott's (1993) general imperative that universities must remain "able freely to adapt" (p. 1) as well as Plant's (2007) specific imperative that the "BC higher education [system] . . . respond to . . . changes [in societal expectations] or become increasingly irrelevant" (p. 10). An institution cannot adapt or respond in a legitimate manner if it does not function from a basis of understanding concerning its core missions and practices. These are not constructed in isolation, but negotiated across the unique cultural dynamics and educational practices of the specific

institutions and the normative expectations delimiting the boundaries of the sector to which they belong. In effect, both in general and in relation to specific jurisdictions, the capacity of the university (and by extension the post-secondary systems of which it is part) to adapt to changing social, political and / or economic contexts is dependent upon maintaining a necessary level of institutional integrity through the enactment of educational practices deemed appropriate and legitimate by peers.

For universities to remain coherent as an institution, a sector in the sense of distinctiveness from other sectors, requires that they be “self-aware and self-limiting” (Considine, 2006, p. 258), that they have unique form and enact differences so that they remain able to establish and pursue priorities requisite to their missions and the cultural boundaries that shape them. Most assuredly, universities cannot restrict themselves to a narrow conception that prevents their reinterpretation and change over time, but they must also avoid becoming universalized such that no boundaries seem capable of containing them. If either of these precepts are overlooked across the sector and by individual institutions, it seems likely that the university as both an idea and an institution could become irrelevant or illegitimate, or both.

Conclusion: Remembering the University

In keeping with the general and interrelated purposes of my study, several important outcomes have emerged. First, through detailed review and analysis of literature on the history and development of the university in general as well as in specific jurisdictions such as BC, and on the idea and institution of the university as an organizational culture(s), this study extends contextual and theoretical understanding of

universities as complex and dynamic institutions composed by and dependent upon shared as well as unique institutional histories, traditions, and practices. Second, this study posits a matrix of university practice boundaries expressed as general hypotheses concerning normative educational practices within the contemporary iteration of the BC university sector. Third, this study identifies significant cultural dynamic, institutional capacity, and operational practice questions and considerations that can help inform public policy discussions and enactments concerning the creation and operation of universities.

In my estimation, the primary and ongoing “macropicture” (Creswell, 2008) questions to be asked and answered by each of the universities and by the university sector as a whole concerning the legitimation and identity—integrity—of its member institutions are two-fold:

What are the normative university practice boundaries for universities in BC?

At what point do unique practices within any specific institution cross over the shared practice boundaries delimiting the university in BC to such an extent that it is deemed illegitimate by peers?

Only by engaging in ongoing self-reflection on our practices, can members of the university community in BC facilitate a stable, albeit never static, understanding of university practice boundaries that can accommodate appropriate diversity without compromising legitimacy. Further, regardless of whether or not the university label is

officially granted to an institution, university recognition by one's peers emerges only through relative and appropriate alignment of an institution's unique values, traditions, and practices inside the boundaries demarcated by the shared but always contested values, traditions, and practices that delimit the university as an idea within any specific historical and / or jurisdictional contexts.

Just as university recognition can be found through alignment with appropriate normative practices, it can also be lost through misalignment. Identity and legitimacy are interpretative acts—ongoing negotiations of self-understanding with and through others across changing historical and situational contexts—that will necessarily challenge the limits of existing boundaries. To remain vibrant, any university, established or new, elsewhere or in BC, requires that the educators who comprise it engage with one another through reflection on and contestation of the university both as an idea and as an institution. Through reflection on and contestation of its delimiting practice boundaries, even as the institution continues to adapt in order to retain its relevance to and for the societies that sustain it, the integrity of the university is remembered and its past extends through the present to a promised future.

Endnotes

¹ As the *Thompson Rivers University Act* and the *Royal Roads University Act* cross-reference the *University Act* (46.1; 48 (1)) on the point of institutional autonomy, and many others, I intend the *University Act* references to represent appropriate sections of all university acts governing BC universities, unless otherwise indicated. The *College and Institute Act* is always referenced separately.

² In hypothesizing that universities are “autonomous institutions” I am not suggesting that they do or could function in a manner completely unfettered by social, political, and / or economic influences. However, the *University Act* indicates a clear principle of institutional autonomy for universities, which is in marked contrast to the expectation that colleges and institutes function as “[agents] of government,” as expressed within the *College and Institute Act* (50 (1)). In this regard, universities enjoy relative autonomy when compared with all other public post-secondary institutions in BC. As a result, I suggest they are more able to maintain their actual autonomy *vis-à-vis* external influences. Still, indirect influences, such as that which can be exerted by government and other societal forces through funding stipulations, board of governor appointments, and competitive pressures, for example, come to bear on the university as they do on colleges and institutes.

³ In the *Campus 2020* report, Plant (2007) anticipates the issue of balance between research and teaching components in the mandates of what he terms new regional universities (former university colleges). Whereas he envisions a new statutory mandate

for both teaching and research in the regional universities in keeping with the fact that these institutions are already widely engaged in research activity within their communities and beyond, their “teaching-intensive” focus is to be primary and their research activity is to be “*supportive, not fundamental*” (author’s emphasis; pp. 66-67). In this regard, Plant (2007) distinguishes the regional universities from the research-intensive universities, but without offering prescriptive parameters to inform 1) the appropriate balance between teaching and research activities, and 2) the corresponding requirement, allocation, and / or redistribution of resources to support that balance.

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Appendix A

Document Specific Value / Criteria Assertion Quotations

Research Document Group: 3 (3.1 – 3.3)		
<p><u>Information Collection and Organization Process</u>: Document Specific Value / Criteria Assertions are arranged by emerging detailed thematic sub-categories and then cross-referenced with initial premise(s). Relevant textual information is highlighted within each quotation. For convenience, initial reference premises are listed in a separate table below.</p>		
Reference Premise (1-4)	Detailed Sub-Categories	Value / Criteria Assertions
2	Institutional Autonomy	<p>“a university in Canada would embrace academic freedom, institutional autonomy with respect to its relates with government, and . . . tenure to faculty . . . to ensure freedom of enquiry” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“universities in [Canada] have enjoyed a remarkable measure of institutional freedom and independence” (3.2; p.117)</p> <p>“[university colleges and / or unconventional universities] need to operate at a level of autonomy comparable to universities” (3.2; p. 118)</p> <p>“the <i>College and Institute Act</i> provides for direct intervention, by the minister . . . into policies respecting programs offered by institutions Conversely, the <i>University Act</i> states that “the minister may not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university” (3.2; p. 121)</p>
2	Bicameral Governance	<p>“Governance would embrace respect for collegiality, involving a significant role for faculty” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“credibility as a legitimate degree granting institution with a claim to the title of ‘university’ [requires</p>

		<p>confronting] issues [that] may include accreditation, academic freedom and tenure, governance, and administrative and faculty credentials” (3.2; p.115)</p> <p>“Governance of universities . . . has . . . been based upon the principle of bicameral management” (3.2; p. 118)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . .; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
1, 4	Degree Programming	<p>“the designation ‘baccalaureate degree’ . . . has normally involved a component of general education . . . followed by a coherent package of courses or other requirements designed around a major or specialty . . . representing higher education with a specific expertise” (3.1; p. 2)</p> <p>“the term ‘applied’ degree . . . has become difficult to reconcile . . . with any established definition of the title of ‘degree” (3.1; p. 2)</p> <p>“there is a role for more work-place ready credential [sic] than a traditional baccalaureate degree, but to exclude an adequate academic component, and to de-emphasize structure, makes the ‘degree’ a questionable achievement” (3.1; p. 2)</p> <p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the equivalent of accreditation is . . . membership in [the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada] . . . [which] provides instant recognition to baccalaureate degrees awarded by the institution” (3.2; p. 112)</p> <p>“[Thompson Rivers University] . . . might be seen as an unconventional university with the inclusion of academic as well as applied programs along with adult basic education” (3.2; p. 114)</p> <p>“Conventional universities in Canada are essentially academic in their program orientation” (3.2; p. 114)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . . ; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
1, 3	Research	<p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition</p>

		<p>of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the university perspective was that [faculty in the university colleges] would be ‘scholar teachers’ with a present or planned research agenda” (3.2; p. 110)</p> <p>“If faculty . . . are expected to be scholar-teachers . . . and exercise responsible position in academic governance, they are entitled to teach and research. . . . [resulting] in a need for . . . policy respecting academic freedom and tenure” (3.2; p.118)</p> <p>“The <i>University Act</i> acknowledges responsibilities of faculty in the area of research [while] The <i>College and Institute Act</i> is silent on this task for faculty” (3.2; p. 121)</p> <p>“universities which emphasize undergraduate teaching also maintain a research orientation and a culture in which teaching faculty are rewarded for scholarly activity, teaching, and service” (3.3; p. 122)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . . ; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
1, 2	Legislation	<p>“the <i>College and Institute Act</i> provides for direct intervention, by the minister . . . into policies respecting programs offered by institutions Conversely, the <i>University Act</i> states that ‘the minister may not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on a university” (3.2; p. 121)</p> <p>“The <i>University Act</i> acknowledges responsibilities of faculty in the area of research [while] The <i>College and Institute Act</i> is silent on this task for faculty” (3.2; p. 121)</p> <p>“if the task of conversion . . . is to be completed satisfactorily, the [university colleges] will have to be incorporated either under new legislation . . . or under the <i>University Act</i>” (3.2. p. 121)</p>
1, 2, 3	Academic Freedom	<p>“a university in Canada would embrace academic freedom, institutional autonomy with respect to its relationship with government, and . . . tenure to faculty . . . to ensure freedom of enquiry” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“If faculty . . . are expected to be scholar-teachers . . . and exercise responsible position in academic governance, they are entitled to teach and research [resulting] in a need for . . . policy respecting academic freedom and tenure” (3.2; p. 118)</p>
1, 2, 3, 4	University Recognition	“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education emphasis on high standards . . . high

		<p>percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the equivalent of accreditation is . . . membership in [the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada] . . . [which] provides instant recognition to baccalaureate degrees awarded by the institution” (3.2; p. 112)</p> <p>“[Thompson Rivers University, formerly University College of the Cariboo] might be seen as an unconventional university with the inclusion of academic as well as applied programs along with adult basic education” (3.2; p. 114)</p> <p>“Conventional universities in Canada are essentially academic in their program orientation” (3.2; p. 114)</p> <p>“credibility as a legitimate degree granting institution with a claim to the title of ‘university’ . . . [requires confronting] issues [that] may include accreditation, academic freedom and tenure, governance, and administrative and faculty credentials” (3.2; p. 115)</p> <p>“universities which emphasize undergraduate teaching also maintain a research orientation and a culture in which teaching faculty are rewarded for scholarly activity, teaching, and service” (3.3; p. 122)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . . ; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
1, 3	Resources	<p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p>
2, 3, 4	Quality Assurance	<p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the equivalent of accreditation is . . . membership in [the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada] . . . [which] provides instant recognition to baccalaureate degrees awarded by the institution” (3.2; p. 112)</p> <p>“program quality largely depends upon leaders who maintain contact with their respective academic</p>

		discipline, profession or trade” (3.2; p. 120)
1, 2, 3, 4	Faculty Roles	<p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“a university in Canada would embrace academic freedom, institutional autonomy with respect to its relationship with government, and . . . tenure to faculty . . . to ensure freedom of enquiry” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the university perspective was that [faculty in the university colleges] would be ‘scholar teachers’ with a present or planned research agenda” (3.2; p. 110)</p> <p>“[The Thompson Rivers University Act indicates] a requirement to ‘maintain research and scholarly activities’” (3.2; p. 114)</p> <p>“credibility as a legitimate degree granting institution with a claim to the title of ‘university’ . . . [requires confronting] issues [that] may include accreditation, academic freedom and tenure, governance, and administrative and faculty credentials” (3.2; p. 115)</p> <p>“If faculty . . . are expected to be scholar-teachers . . . and exercise responsible position in academic governance, they are entitled to teach and research. . . . [resulting] in a need for . . . policy respecting academic freedom and tenure” (3.2; p. 118)</p> <p>“program quality largely depends upon leaders who maintain contact with their respective academic discipline, profession or trade” (3.2; p. 120)</p> <p>“universities which emphasize undergraduate teaching also maintain a research orientation and a culture in which teaching faculty are rewarded for scholarly activity, teaching, and service” (3.3; p. 122)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . . ; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
3, 4	Administrator Roles Joined with Faculty Roles in Integrated Document Table.	“ credibility as a legitimate degree granting institution with a claim to the title of ‘university’ . . . [requires confronting] issues [that] may include accreditation, academic freedom and tenure, governance, and administrative and faculty credentials” (3.2; p. 115)

		<p>“administrators in universities . . . are hired with the assurance that they have an academic ‘home’ and are always appointed to the appropriate department . . . to recognize [they] are essentially academics and will return to that role after serving a period of time in an administrative position” (3.2; p. 119)</p> <p>“program quality largely depends upon leaders who maintain contact with their respective academic discipline, profession or trade” (3.2; p. 120)</p>
1	<p>Funding</p> <p>Joined with Resources in Integrated Document Table.</p>	<p>“University funding is based partly on the assumption that all faculty members will engage in research [so] It seems reasonable that if university colleges are to become universities they should be funded as universities” (3.2; p. 121)</p>

Initial Premise	Considerations Relating to Initial Premise
<p>1. Institutional Mission and Mandate</p> <p><i>University mission and mandate should include a commitment to liberal arts and professional degree level programming as well as research activity.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legislation and resources supporting institutional mission and mandate * Critical mass of degree-level programming * Research practices supportive of faculty interest, program currency, and community needs
<p>2. Institutional Governance</p> <p><i>University governance should be bicameral, vesting educational responsibility in a Senate led by academic staff and fiduciary responsibility in a Board.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legislation and infrastructure supporting bicameral governance * Collegial appointment and governance processes for Faculties, Senate and the Board * Tenets of academic freedom
<p>3. Faculty Roles</p> <p><i>University faculty roles should be tripartite in nature, encompassing teaching, scholarship, and service to the institution and its communities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Appropriate physical, financial, and academic policy infrastructures * Faculty work provisions necessary to sustain tripartite roles * Faculty peer review assessment and/or tenure provisions
<p>4. Educational Programming and Quality Assurance</p> <p><i>University degree programming should be broad in scope and be supported by systematic professional peer review to ensure quality.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Range of degree programs in liberal arts and professional fields * Breadth and depth of study in degree programs * Peer review program evaluation and/or institutional accreditation to support student mobility

Appendix B

Integrated Documents Value / Criteria Assertion Quotations for **Research** Detailed Sub-category

Research Documents: All Document Groups (1-14)		
<p><u>Information Collection and Organization Process</u>: Integrated Value / Criteria Assertions are arranged by the Research detailed thematic sub-category and document group and then cross-referenced with initial premise(s). Relevant textual information is highlighted within each quotation. For convenience, initial reference premises are listed in a separate table below.</p>		
Reference Premise (1-4)	Detailed Sub-Category (Documents)	Value / Criteria Assertions
1, 3, 4	Research (1.1)	<p>“Thompson Rivers University is a comprehensive university . . . given the authority to awards [sic] master’s degrees generally and to engage in research” (1.1; p. 148)</p> <p>“there should be a link between autonomy and the mandate of a university to engage in research and not just teach . . . as research seems to be a core attribute . . . of a university” (1.1; p. 151)</p> <p>“Thompson Rivers University was given the full autonomy of a university in a context where it remained a comprehensive institution . . . [with a mandate for] . . . baccalaureate and master’s degree programs . . . adult basic education and training, and . . . undertaking research and scholarship in support of the previous two purposes” (1.1; p. 152)</p> <p>“correlation in legislation in BC between an institution being given a legislated research function and its being given autonomy from government” (1.1; p. 155)</p> <p>“Campus 2020 Report makes research a focus . . . when recommending that the existing university colleges be transformed into universities involved in conducting research” (1.1; p. 155)</p>

1, 3	Research (2.1)	<p>“Petch . . . discusses expanding the university college mandate to include research, graduate studies, and scholarly activities and identifies deficiencies in the governance system under the <i>College and Institute Act</i>” (2.1; p. 2)</p> <p>“the University College Consortium [calls] for university colleges to become regional universities with a mandate including research, graduate programs and new legislation” (2.1; p. 3)</p>
1, 3, 4	Research (3.1 – 3.3)	<p>“the term ‘university’ connotes a specific form of higher education . . . emphasis on high standards . . . high percentage of faculty with advanced credentials, usually to the doctoral level . . . great value upon the acquisition of knowledge, as well as its dissemination . . . high percentage of students in academic programs, and . . . well-equipped facilities such as libraries and computing services” (3.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“the university perspective was that [faculty in the university colleges] would be ‘scholar teachers’ with a present or planned research agenda” (3.2; p. 110)</p> <p>“If faculty . . . are expected to be scholar-teachers . . . and exercise responsible position in academic governance, they are entitled to teach and research. . . [resulting] in a need for . . . policy respecting academic freedom and tenure” (3.2; p. 118)</p> <p>“The University Act acknowledges responsibilities of faculty in the area of research . . . [while] The College and Institute Act is silent on this task for faculty” (3.2; p. 121)</p> <p>“universities which emphasize undergraduate teaching also maintain a research orientation and a culture in which teaching faculty are rewarded for scholarly activity, teaching, and service” (3.3; p. 122)</p> <p>“university tradition emphasized research and scholarly activity; practiced bicameral governance . . . ; placed a strong emphasis on theory; and emphasized orientation toward one’s discipline” (3.3; p. 135)</p>
1, 3, 4	Research (4.1 - 4.2)	<p>“conventions that pertain to university status, such as scholarly activity” (4.1; p. 449)</p> <p>“[In the university colleges] research and scholarship became accepted and expected professional behaviours of faculty with formal workloads comprised of both” (4.1; p. 457)</p>
1, 3, 4	Research (5.1)	<p>“increased investment in the research agenda . . . has motivated even the smallest Canadian universities to turn to the traditional university research and scholarly mission” (5.1; p. 6)</p> <p>“there seems to be a notion shared across several [provincial governments] that ‘research’ can either be limited or entirely removed from the undergraduate delivery model” (5.1; p. 7)</p>

		“What role does research and scholarship play in the degree environment . . .?” (5.1; p. 10)
1, 3, 4	Research (6.1)	<p>“Many faculty research programs are directed at solving regional problems” (6.1; Executive Summary, p. 1)</p> <p>“continuing efforts need to be made to integrate research and other scholarly activities into the institutional culture” (6.1; Executive Summary, p. 2)</p> <p>“the university colleges have a responsibility to promote scholarly activities among their faculty” (6.1; Overview, p. 4)</p> <p>“Although the <i>College and Institute Act</i> . . . does not specify research . . . as one of the objects of the university colleges . . . such activities are essential to maintaining over the long term good teaching at the post-secondary level” (6.1; Issues, pp. 6-7)</p> <p>“has been discovered in universities that having faculty members do research is one of the most effective ways of helping them keep current” (6.1; Issues, p. 7)</p>
1	Research (7.1)	“given the amount of [federal] money involved, almost all institutions of higher education have been planning strategically to strengthen their research infrastructure” (7.1; p. 41)
1, 3	Research (8.1 – 8.2)	<p>“an approved . . . mission statement and academic goals that are appropriate to a university and that demonstrate commitment to: (i) teaching . . . (ii) research . . . and (iii) service to the community” (8.1; section 3.1(c))</p> <p>“proven record of scholarship . . . and research, expects its academic staff to be engaged in externally peer reviewed research . . . and provides appropriate time and institutional support for them to do so” (8.1; section 3.1(g))</p>
1, 3, 4	Research (9.1)	<p>“research activity and funding should not be limited to so-called research-intensive universities, as regional universities, colleges, and institutes are already sites of relevant research that warrant provincial support” (9.1; p. 3)</p> <p>“The report makes clear that . . . regional universities can . . . undertake and maintain research . . . ‘for the purposes of supporting teaching’ (p. 67)” (9.1; p. 9)</p> <p>“It may be argued that the spatially-based distinctions between teaching and research universities construct a</p>

		false and misleading dichotomy” (9.1; p. 14)
1, 3, 4	Research (10.1)	<p>“sufficient and appropriately qualified resources, academic and otherwise, to deliver degree-level education, and satisfactory policies pertaining to faculty that address issues such as the protection of academic freedom; academic/professional credentials; the regular review of faculty performance; the means of ensuring that faculty knowledge of the field is current . . . staff resources . . . to ensure the coverage required within the discipline for the proposed program” (10.1; p. 9)</p> <p>“institution has approved a mission statement and academic goals that identify the academic character . . . of the organization, including the extent to which [it] is committed to the dissemination of knowledge through teaching . . . the creation of knowledge . . . and service to the community” (10.1; p. 11)</p> <p>“has policies with respect to . . . qualifications of the academic faculty . . . including . . . policies with respect to appointment, evaluation . . . employment conditions, which include workload, promotion, termination, and professional development; and policies/practices with respect to research and/or scholarship” (10.1; p. 11)</p>
1, 3, 4	Research (11.1 – 11.3)	<p>“The institution has satisfactory policies pertaining to faculty that address issues such as the protection of academic freedom; academic/professional credentials; the regular review of faculty performance; the means of ensuring that faculty knowledge of the field is current” (11.1; p. 31)</p> <p>“Faculty have an appropriate level of scholarly output and/or research or creative activity for the . . . program involved.” (11.1; p. 31)</p> <p>“The institution can demonstrate that it has appropriate accountability mechanisms functioning for both the academic programs and research activities.” (11.2; p. 6)</p>
1, 3	Research (12.1)	<p>“Higher education cannot be maintained unless graduate faculties in Canadian universities rapidly extend their facilities for advanced work.” (12.1; p. 32)</p> <p>“I suggest, for example, that the staff will be somewhat different in kind from those at the University, where we normally expect a member of faculty to devote a significant part of his time to research and the advancement of his professional field. The staff for the academic programmes in the two-year colleges should have at least the equivalent of an honours degree or a graduate degree” (12.1; p. 51)</p> <p>“The character of universities everywhere has changed during this century. They have come to place increasing emphasis upon the quality and level of research and scholarly production . . . In other words, they have recognized that their duty to provide new knowledge and to explore the unknown is as important as their duty</p>

		to propagate existing knowledge.” (12.2; p. 54)
1, 3, 4	Research (13.1)	<p>“ensure that our research institutions are adequately supported and that our province ranks in the top three jurisdictions in the country” (13.1, p. 15)</p> <p>“existing legislative mandate for institutes, colleges and university colleges, found in the College and Institute Act, makes no reference to research. I acknowledge that regionally based, community-supported research has a role to play in supporting learning at all levels. But it is supportive, not fundamental. . . . I suggest adopting a statutory mandate for regional universities along the following lines:</p> <p>(1) The purposes of a regional university are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to offer baccalaureate and masters degree programs, and (b) to offer post-secondary and adult basic education and training. <p>(2) A regional university must promote teaching excellence.</p> <p>(3) A regional university may undertake and maintain research and scholarly activities for the purposes of supporting teaching.</p> <p>(4) In carrying out its purposes, a regional university must serve the educational and training needs in the region specified by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.</p> <p>I would also continue the education council model of governance for the regional universities to reflect the fact that they have a key role to play in the delivery of regional learning opportunities within a coordinated system of post-secondary institutions . . . regional universities would not have the power to establish new degree programs without approval from the Minister” (13.1; p. 67)</p>
1, 2, 3, 4	Research (14.1 – 14.4)	<p>“2 The purposes of the university are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to offer certificate, diploma and degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in solely the applied and professional fields, (b) to provide continuing education in response to the needs of the local community, and <p>(c) to maintain teaching excellence and research activities that support the university's programs in response to the labour market needs of British Columbia.” (14.2; p. 2)</p> <p>“14 (1) The program and research council consists of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the president, who is its chair, (b) the chair of the academic council, and (c) other members appointed to the council by the board. <p>(2) At least 2/3 of the members of the program and research council must not be employees of the university.</p> <p>(3) The program and research council advises the board on instructional program and research priorities, program objectives and desirable learning outcomes.” (14.2; p. 6)</p>

		<p>“3 (1) The purposes of the university are (a) to offer baccalaureate and masters degree programs, (b) to offer post-secondary and adult basic education and training, (c) to undertake and maintain research and scholarly activities for the purposes of paragraphs (a) and (b)” (14.3; p. 3)</p> <p>“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 . . . (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.” (14.4; p. 30)</p>
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Initial Premise	Considerations Relating to Initial Premise
<p>1. Institutional Mission and Mandate</p> <p><i>University mission and mandate should include a commitment to liberal arts and professional degree level programming as well as research activity.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legislation and resources supporting institutional mission and mandate * Critical mass of degree-level programming * Research practices supportive of faculty interest, program currency, and community needs
<p>2. Institutional Governance</p> <p><i>University governance should be bicameral, vesting educational responsibility in a Senate led by academic staff and fiduciary responsibility in a Board.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legislation and infrastructure supporting bicameral governance * Collegial appointment and governance processes for Faculties, Senate and the Board * Tenets of academic freedom
<p>3. Faculty Roles</p> <p><i>University faculty roles should be tripartite in nature, encompassing teaching, scholarship, and service to the institution and its communities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Appropriate physical, financial, and academic policy infrastructures * Faculty work provisions necessary to sustain tripartite roles * Faculty peer review assessment and/or tenure provisions
<p>4. Educational Programming and Quality Assurance</p> <p><i>University degree programming should be broad in scope and be supported by systematic professional peer review to ensure quality.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Range of degree programs in liberal arts and professional fields * Breadth and depth of study in degree programs * Peer review program evaluation and/or institutional accreditation to support student mobility

Appendix C

Summary Analysis of Integrated Value / Criteria Assertions, Detailed Sub-Categories and Reference Premises

Detailed Sub-category	Number of References ¹	Document Coverage ²	Reference Premise Categorization ³	Themes / Notes
Institutional Autonomy	60	13 of 14	#1 = 7 #2 = 11 #3 = 0 #4 = 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong interrelationship between institutional autonomy and legislated university mandate and between institutional autonomy and bicameral governance Large number of practice references suggests institutional autonomy functions as a major criterion category
Bicameral Governance	46	12 of 14	#1 = 0 #2 = 12 #3 = 0 #4 = 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicameral governance relates to institutional autonomy and quality assurance Large number of practice references suggests bicameral governance functions as a major criterion category
Degree Programming	57	13 of 14	#1 = 13 #2 = 0 #3 = 3 #4 = 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong interrelationship between legislated university mandate and degree programming focus, and some with faculty research and quality assurance Large number of practice references suggests degree programming functions as a major criterion category
Research	42	14 of 14	#1 = 14 #2 = 1 #3 = 13 #4 = 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong interrelationship between research and legislated university mandate, faculty role, and quality assurance Large number of practice references suggests research functions as a major criterion category
Legislation	48	13 of 14	#1 = 12 #2 = 8 #3 = 2 #4 = 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong interrelationship between bicameral governance, institutional autonomy and legislated university mandate, and some interrelationship between degree programming, quality assurance and legislated university mandate Large number of references and cross-referencing with bicameral governance and institutional autonomy suggest legislation as a boundary demarcation tool
Academic Freedom	16	10 of 14	#1 = 6 #2 = 10 #3 = 5 #4 = 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong interrelationship between bicameral governance and academic freedom Additional interrelationship with faculty roles and institutional autonomy Low number of references but cross-referencing with faculty roles and institutional autonomy suggest academic freedom does not function as a major criterion category, but is a foundational principle within the structures and practices of the university

Detailed Sub-category	Number of References ¹	Document Coverage ²	Reference Premise Categorization ³	Themes / Notes
University Recognition	43	11 of 14	#1 = 8 #2 = 6 #3 = 3 #4 = 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interrelationship between degree programming, quality assurance, research, institutional autonomy, bicameral governance, faculty roles and legislated mandate • Strong interrelationship between degree programming, quality assurance, research, institutional autonomy, bicameral governance, faculty roles and “unofficial” accreditation (AUCC, DQAB) • Large number of references and cross-referencing with degree programming, quality assurance, research, institutional autonomy, bicameral governance, faculty roles and legislated university mandate suggest university recognition is a result contingent upon demonstrable practices related to the foregoing
Resources	27	11 of 14	#1 = 10 #2 = 2 #3 = 8 #4 = 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interrelationship between resources and legislated university mandate for degree programming, quality assurance, research, and faculty roles • Moderate number of references and cross-referencing with degree programming, quality assurance, research, faculty roles suggest university resources does not function as a major criterion category, but is relational to capacity requirements in keeping with legislated university mandate
Faculty Roles	47	12 of 14	#1 = 9 #2 = 8 #3 = 12 #4 = 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interrelationship and cross-referencing between faculty roles and degree programming, research, institutional autonomy, bicameral governance, academic freedom, quality assurance and legislated university mandate • Large number of practice references suggest faculty roles function as a major criterion category
Quality Assurance	58	12 of 14	#1 = 8 #2 = 7 #3 = 7 #4 = 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interrelationship between quality assurance and degree programming, faculty roles institutional autonomy, bicameral governance and legislated university mandate • Large number of practice references suggest quality assurance functions as a major criterion category

¹ Number of References indicates the total number of relevant Value / Criteria assertions identified in the scholarly opinions and legislative, policy and professional association documents. As multiple Value / Criteria assertions may be within a single quotation, the same quotation may recur in different detailed subcategories.

² Document Coverage indicates the occurrence of relevant Value / Criteria assertions within the 14 document groups in relation to a detailed sub-category.

³ Reference Premise Categorization indicates the frequency with which Value / Criteria assertions comprising a detailed sub-category relate to an initial premise category. As multiple Value / Criteria assertions may be within a single quotation, the same quotation may recur in different sub-categories and categories.