

THE ART AND CRAFT OF UNIVERSITY COORDINATION

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand the apparent acquiescence of senior officials at Alberta's universities to legislation that might pose a threat to their institutions' autonomy. In 1975 the Alberta government under the leadership of Premier Peter Lougheed attempted to introduce a mechanism for coordinating university programs in the *Adult Education Act* by placing Alberta's four universities against their will within a system of provincial public post-secondary institutions. The 1975 *Act* failed to receive third reading due to successful lobbying efforts, yet in 2003 Lougheed's vision was finally realized with the passage of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), which enlisted Alberta's four universities without resistance as members of a provincial system that coordinates post-secondary programming.

A historical analysis, this study was framed within the dimensions of Wenger's Communities of Practice model to analyze the interaction and trust between and among senior university and government officials in their attempts to find agreement on matters concerning the coordination of university programming. The study found that, only where there was evidence of all three dimensions of the Communities of Practice model, was there mutual trust as well as agreement by the university officials on government initiatives regarding the coordination of university programming. The main conclusion of the study is that university officials responded well to the program coordination concerns of the provincial government when the university officials, treated as equals to their government counterparts rather than as agents of government policy, were given the opportunity to participate in the development of the program coordination legislation and policies in conjunction with government officials.

Preface

The identification and design of the research came about through the researcher's background as a former member of Alberta Advanced Education, and later of Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, from 1986 to 1994. First as an intern in the Deputy Minister's office, later as Special Assistant to the Deputy Minister, and finally serving as a communications specialist and speechwriter seconded to the Minister's office.

As the researcher, my personal awareness of the enduring yet sometimes dormant intent of the Alberta government, under Premiers Lougheed, Getty and Klein, to coordinate university programming was a key factor in the development of this study. Personal knowledge of department activities made easier the gathering of relevant government and university data, but great care was taken to ensure all data used would originate from sources other than the researcher's personal knowledge. I may have contributed to the development of some of the government materials used in this research, for example by editing *Alberta Advanced Education 1971 – 1985* or by drafting the policy document *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta*. However, these and other materials were produced under the watchful and guiding eyes of senior government officials, were approved by these same senior government officials, and can be verified as such.

The interviews conducted prior to August 31, 2011 were in accordance with the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary, which provided Certification of Institutional Ethics Review as stated in file number 6471. All interviews conducted after September 1, 2011, when I transferred to the College of Graduate Studies at the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia, were in accordance with the Behavioural

Research Ethics Board as stated in Ethics Certificate number H12-03395. This dissertation is original, previously unpublished, and independent work of the author.

The relationships between senior officials of the universities and of the department may have appeared to at times be tested, but for the most part were solidly respectful, professional and sincere. At one point I expressed my dismay to Peter Meekison at the end of my interview with him that, aside from any advantages the University of Alberta may have enjoyed over the other universities due to its proximity to the Alberta Legislature, I had uncovered no outrage, intrigue or systemic injustice among this exclusive group of senior officials. Controversies and conflicts between universities and governments seem apparent in other provinces, but there have been few clashes in Alberta. “Then that’s your story,” Dr. Meekison replied, and my objective became to understand why.

James Barmby

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My interest in post-secondary education policy began when I had the very good fortune to serve as an intern in the Deputy Minister's office at Alberta Advanced Education, and for this I shall always be grateful to Dr. Henry Kolesar, the Deputy Minister at the time, and Dr. Larry Orton, his Executive Assistant. I am also greatly indebted to Henry's successor and my all-time favourite boss, Lynne Duncan, who has yet to receive the thanks and recognition she deserves from a province she served so well.

I owe a great deal of thanks to many people for their encouragement and support. These people include Janice Dickin, John Ballheim, David Bershad, Phil Hoffmann, Greg Lucier, David Marshall, Ian Winchester, Diane Dutton, Joe Lund, and Marcia Clark. At Okanagan College, I received generous support from Andrew Hay and Charlotte Kushner.

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My most lasting memory of this study is interviewing Reno Bosetti, the man who provided the passion that helped set the Worth Report apart from all other policy documents, who designed the organization of the first department of Alberta Advanced Education and who

was a giant among education deputy ministers across Canada for a great many years. Respected by all who knew him, he is a hero to many.

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Dedication

To Moragh MacAulay and Lynne Duncan

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The concept of institutional autonomy

In the western world, the autonomy of a university is generally accepted as essential to the protection of academic freedom. In 2005, Columbia University hosted the first annual Global Colloquium of University Presidents in response to a United Nations request of major research universities to become more involved in addressing international public policy concerns. Several principles were established during the course of the colloquium by the 20 university presidents accepting the invitation, including the rights of universities:

Academic freedom requires the institutional autonomy of universities, which enables them to preserve the human record of knowledge and ideas, to advance the discovery and interpretation of new knowledge, to educate students, and to serve the larger society. This autonomy includes the right of the university to determine for itself, on academic grounds, who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study. Likewise, this institutional autonomy should determine the framework for statutory provisions that govern or impact universities (Doyle, Fine & Moneyhon, 2005, p. 14-15).

Protecting this right on academic grounds may be a just cause, but universities have other considerations as well. The jurisdiction in which they reside may have laws and regulations that affect the ability of the university to perform its self-determined academic functions, and the university may also rely on one or more levels of government for financial support to carry out those academic functions. Institutional autonomy may be an ideal to proclaim and protect, but at

the same time universities invariably must negotiate with governments to secure financial resources and must comply with the legislation and regulation that accompanies those government resources.

The ability of a university and a government to work together is critical to their mutual success. The university's principle of institutional autonomy must be respected while, at the same time, the government's agenda for higher education must be advanced. The risk to a university is in the conditions that accompany government funding, as such conditions might compromise its institutional autonomy. The risk to the government is in how the court of public opinion assesses the value achieved by public funds being awarded to a university, and the political ramifications that may result (Newman, Couturier & Scurry, 2004, pp.68-72).

In a recent review of relationships between Canada's universities and their provincial governments, it was observed that Alberta government officials enjoyed a close relationship with their counterparts in the province's universities, which is uncommon in Canada (Clark, Trick & Van Loon, 2011, p. 198). As this study will illustrate, this observation could not have been made in the years immediately following the defeat of the Social Credit party and the election of the Progressive Conservatives in Alberta's 1971 general election.

The call for government controls

The years immediately preceding the 1971 election of the Progressive Conservative government in the Province of Alberta were a time of significant growth for the province's universities. Full-time university enrollment in the province tripled during the years 1957 to 1966, from 5,000 to more than 15,000. Enrolment on the Calgary branch campus of the University of Alberta, established in 1945, increased more than tenfold, from 400 to more than 4,000 during that same period, which led to the creation of the University of Calgary as a

separate board-governed institution in 1966. The University of Lethbridge was created in 1967, with 638 students enrolled in its first year of operation and over 1,400 students by 1970.

Projections in the late 1960s that the University of Alberta student population would soon reach 25,000 prompted speculation about the need for a fourth university in the province, this time in northern Alberta. In response to these projections, Athabasca University was created in 1970, with administrative offices later established in the northern Alberta town of the same name (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, pp. 26-36).

This significant growth in the number of universities in the province, from one university to four in less than five years, also meant growth in programs, campus facilities, faculty, administrative staff and the costs borne by the Alberta taxpayer in support of the growth. In developing his policy platform, Peter Lougheed anticipated the concerns of the electorate by recognizing that the growth of university programming needed to be controlled. This anticipation became evident on the evening of October 21, 1969, when Lougheed, as leader of the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party and Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, gave his nomination speech to seek another term as the Progressive Conservative candidate for the riding of Calgary West.

Lougheed made a commitment that night to his riding association that "A Progressive Conservative Government in Alberta would give urgent priority to the development of a contemporary and comprehensive plan for post-secondary education." He listed in his speech 19 guidelines that would be used to establish outcomes of, in more general terms, greater accessibility, decentralization of institutions across the province, and diversity of programs. Definitely contentious in the view of the universities, Lougheed also included provincial coordination of programs by means of "one comprehensive post-secondary education authority"

that would also enhance the reputation of the universities thanks to a “proper balance of graduate and undergraduate programs” (Alberta Advanced Education, 1987). Application of Lougheed’s proposed policy meant there would be an increased level of government coordination of the universities’ activities, which would later be seen as an affront to the notion of university autonomy (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 47).

The Progressive Conservatives would go on to win their first provincial election in 1971, and among the many initiatives launched was a proposal for a system for coordinating university programs across the province, but it would not be the only proposal. Other proposals would be developed by subsequent Progressive Conservative governments in the years that followed the Lougheed regime, all with the stated intention of creating a coordinated system of post-secondary education programming, with the universities assumed to be, without question, part of that system. Only with the proclamation of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), which made into law the concept of universities as members of Campus Alberta, was there finally to be a recognized formal system of post-secondary institutions that included the universities. The purpose of this system was to enable through coordination an increase in student accessibility to programs, and to improve the transferability of students between institutions, all while improving cost-effectiveness in terms of government expenditures on university-level education and assessing program quality (Alberta Learning, 2002a).

Although Alberta’s universities had previously required ministerial approval for new programs under the 1966 *Universities Act*, such approval was the result of recommendations put forward by the four universities as members of the Universities Coordinating Council. Under the PSLA, that recommendation would come from the newly-formed Campus Alberta Quality Council, an agency at arm’s length from government and comprised of post-secondary

representation made much broader than the four universities, by including the province's colleges and technical institutes as well.

The coordination of university programs as outlined in Lougheed's 1969 nomination speech became a reality in 2004 when the universities through the PSLA legislation willingly became members of Alberta's system of post-secondary education, which came to be known as Campus Alberta. University membership in such a system, which had been bitterly rejected in the early years of the Lougheed regime, was now accepted by the universities with little or no concern expressed for their autonomy. This acceptance meant that no longer could the universities determine independently, or agree among themselves, the programs they would add to their academic calendars. There was now a larger body operating as one comprehensive authority overseeing their programs as well as programs offered by other post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

Statement of the problem

The institutional autonomy of Alberta's universities ensures the integrity of their provision of educational programs, their research activities, and their service to the community. Alberta's universities offered little resistance in 2003 to the passage of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), legislation that requires the universities to have their new program proposals reviewed, first by the department for need within the province and for fit within the system of post-secondary education, and secondly by the Campus Alberta Quality Council for quality. The universities' institutional autonomy, in terms of their ability to determine for themselves the educational programs they wish to offer, may appear to be compromised by the PSLA's coordination process. The agreement of the senior officials at Alberta's universities to

legislation that may one day appear to undermine their institutional autonomy warrants further study.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to research and analyze the relationships between senior appointed officials of the Alberta government and the university sector, which was comprised at the time of Athabasca University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge. More specifically, the research will examine the relationships among the leadership of these two groups in terms of interaction, and how their interaction affected the intersection of institutional autonomy and the coordination of university programs between 1971 and 2004.

Significance of study

There may be significant benefits for post-secondary institutions and governments interested in learning how government and university relationships developed in Alberta, as well as how actions and events enhanced their relationship or tested their relationship. Understanding the process by which university autonomy from the province was negotiated over time would also be beneficial, as it may help resolve similar challenges in other jurisdictions. The ways in which the leaders of the universities and government engaged in conversation, developed trust in one another and achieved mutual understanding, if not agreement, may provide other organizations with a model for consultation and collaboration, especially as an alternative to confrontation and conflict. Ideally, the study will illustrate an example of how to build effective relationships between universities and governments while negotiating difficult issues, not only through examples where opportunities were realized, but also examples where opportunities were lost.

Definitions

Throughout this research “government,” unless otherwise indicated, refers to the Government of Alberta, as comprised of its elected officials holding a cabinet position.

A great deal of change occurred during the period 1971 to 2004 involving Alberta’s universities and so it is important to recognize those changes, but it is also important to recognize factors that persisted during this period, specifically the senior officials of the universities and the government department responsible for the universities. Beginning with the establishment of the province in 1905 until Ralph Klein became Premier in 1992 (Rennie, 2004, pp. x-xi) the term “department” was used to identify the organizational sectors of the government’s public administration. The most senior appointed official of the department, typically known as the deputy minister, provided leadership and served at the pleasure of a member of Cabinet, typically known as a minister. During the Klein years, the term department was replaced by the term ministry. In this research, the term department is used most often, but the terms department and ministry are synonymous.

The department responsible for universities has had many nomenclatures. From the inception of the University of Alberta in 1908 until Lougheed came to power in 1971, the Department of Education was responsible for Alberta’s universities. From 1971 to 1975, the Department of Advanced Education had oversight of the universities, as did the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower from 1975 until 1985, when Lougheed retired from politics. When Getty formed his cabinet in 1985, the department responsible for universities and other post-secondary institutions again became known as Alberta Advanced Education until 1992, when it assumed additional responsibilities and became Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development. When Klein became Premier, he reorganized the government bureaucracy by

combining elementary and secondary education with post-secondary education under the name Alberta Learning. Regardless of nomenclature, the term used in this research in reference to the government administration responsible for universities is “department.”

Employees of the government including the deputy ministers and all those who report to them, are referred to as senior officials or government officials depending on their relative status within the department. Elected officials may include premiers, ministers or members of the legislative assembly (MLAs).

In the universities’ institutional structures, the chair refers to the chair of the board of governors, a body independent of the provincial government that holds general responsibility for the administration of the university. At the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge during the period of research, each institution had a General Faculties Council, which was responsible for academic matters, and a senate, which had general responsibility for liaison with the communities served by the university. At Athabasca University, all administrative, academic and community functions were combined during the period researched and assigned to one body independent of government, called the Governing Council, which had a chair equivalent in status to a board of governors’ chair. Senior officials of the four universities in this research are those employees of a university led by the President and all those who report directly to the President, such as the Vice-Presidents and, in some cases, a Registrar.

The university community refers to all members of Alberta’s four universities during the research period, including students, faculty, staff, and members of the boards, senates, governing councils, and other official bodies operating under the auspices of the *Universities Act*.

The term “program coordination” is used in this study as it has been used historically among members of the department since its inception. In the early 1970s there was a softening

of the language in government circles, from terms like supervisor or manager to terms like coordinator. The softening came from the realization that, rather than a more senior person telling a less senior person what to do, there was the possibility that the two persons might be in agreement on what to do, which could be determined through collaboration. Program coordination was therefore a matter of the department and a university finding agreement on the provision of a program, but with the proviso that the Minister must still approve the program proposal and provide the necessary funding (R. Westwood, personal communications, July 15, 2010).

Softening the use of the word “coordination” does not diminish its importance, and so arriving at a definition of the term is vital, but challenging. In discussing the many possible definitions, West (1982, p. 23) concluded “coordination could be regarded as control of institutions through whatever means a government sees fit to employ.” As West uses this definition in researching events related to the establishment of Alberta Advanced Education, it is appropriate to continue with this definition, but in a narrower context. Rather than exploring the possibility of the department attempting to control a university, this research study will only consider attempts by the department to control or influence the nature or number of educational programs offered by the universities.

Summary

By 2004, Lougheed’s 1969 vision was realized. Through legislation, Alberta’s universities had been placed within a formal system of post-secondary institutions, and their programs were coordinated by a central authority, which we now know as the Campus Alberta Quality Council. However, what is not commonly known is how that vision was achieved despite the universities’ expressed need for independence from the government that created them,

funded them, and held expectations of them. This study will show the nature and evolution of the relationships between the senior officials of the universities and the government, which eventually enabled that vision to be realized.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

The origins of the university and its autonomy

An exploration of the relationship between Alberta's universities and provincial government begins with the origins of universities and their interaction with the states and churches that founded and supported them.

Universities began in the High Middle Ages at the time of the Crusades. Scholars have speculated on the connection between madrasahs and universities, but there is no dispute those returning from the Crusades had the opportunity to be influenced by the Arab world's practice of madrasahs collecting, preserving and sharing knowledge. While the madrasahs and the early universities of Western Europe are not considered facsimiles of each other, the madrasah's concept of a doctorate, and the practice of developing religious doctrine through disputation, both predate the emergence of these same features of medieval Western European universities. As well, both madrasahs and universities at the time were direct extensions of religious organizations. While there is no discernibly direct causal relationship between the Crusades and the creation of the first universities in Europe, the coincidences are remarkable (Makdisi, 1989).

William Clark (2006) describes the development of the medieval university and its gradual transformation manifested in the 19th century German research university, which then became a significant influence on the development of other research universities, especially those in North America (Kerr, 2001). During this time the idea of a university expanded, from a repository and critical examiner of knowledge, to also being an institution dedicated to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. At the same time, the relationship of the universities

to their church and state benefactors was transformed, and included in that transformation was the rationale for academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

Universities were a means of bringing greater intellectual life to Europe through the introduction of the lecture (Clark. W, 2006, p. 73). Gradually, a second activity was introduced, the disputation, which was a debate among academics as to which proposed item of knowledge or philosophy held true. As growth in new knowledge was extremely limited at the time, and as there were few expectations for creating new knowledge, the disputation was an oral event aimed at testing conventional knowledge in theology, law and medicine through debate. As W. Clark describes, a notorious canon secular in France named Peter Abelard (1079 – 1142) engaged in the practice of disputation in an aggressive manner, and he made it an important feature of university life in the process. Abelard's notoriety not only stemmed from the fact he was loud, confrontational and skilled in argument, but among other things he chose to subject the most authoritative texts of the day – church doctrine – to disputation, and he was happy to take either side of the debate. While Abelard was testing the logic of church doctrine, he was also testing the functional autonomy of his university in relation to the church.

Universities as an entity distinct but not separate from the church or state began emerging around the time of Abelard – including Bologna in 1080, Paris in 1160, Oxford in 1167 and Cambridge in 1209. The church and state accepted both the lecture and the disputation as essential to the functions of these universities, and these activities set them very much apart from the monasteries and cathedral schools. As well, just as the lecture was an early form of teaching at a university, the disputation was a precursor to research (Clark, W., 2006, p. 68).

The disputation, however, required an adversary, and adversaries required the shield of academic freedom in order to develop convincing counter-arguments. This context helps explain,

in part, the events surrounding October 15, 1517 when Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the door of the Wittenberg church. He had posted them within the relative security provided by the conventions of a disputation (Clark, W., 2006, p. 80). In doing so, the functional autonomy enjoyed by the University of Wittenberg was tested by Luther's act of academic freedom.

Oversight by the church and state

Previous to Luther's successful test of academic freedom, universities were typically not instruments of free inquiry. Not only did the disputation keep unorthodox thinking in check while championing church doctrine, the universities were subject to the episcopal right of visitation, wherein the local bishop would visit or could send a delegate to investigate any person or entity under his jurisdiction.

The bishop or *ordinarius* could inquire about the orthodoxy of the preaching, the frequenting of taverns, the consorting with frivolous persons, the presence of blasphemers or heretics, and the quality and content of teaching at the school (Clark, W., 2006, p. 341).

In England, visitations did not often occur, whether before the Reformation or after it began, and so threats against institutional autonomy that might result from a discordant visitation, were essentially nonexistent. The chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge were, after all, prelates or nobility or both, and little has changed in this regard since those days. One can only conclude, as one scholar states, that "The British universities have been protected, not because state interference is illegal, but because it has been thought unthinkable" (Hare, 1968, p. 9). In medieval and renaissance England only the Jesuits, it appears, were visited (Clark, W., 2006, p. 342).

In the German lands, where a distinct and often emulated university model would later emerge, the church indeed conducted visitations at universities. After the Reformation, the state began assuming or sharing with the Protestant churches the rights of visitation. “Until about 1800, just about every German university seems to have endured visitations, from once every two to three years, to once or twice per decade, to once every generation, depending on the university and the century” (Clark, W., 2006, p. 343). These visits often included a survey distributed to the faculty in advance of the visit, an interview with each faculty member based on their responses to the survey, and a table outlining the nature of the lectures given by each member, the quality of their lessons, and even their popularity with their students and colleagues.

Visitations at German universities employed a variety of recordkeeping methods as a means of establishing institutional accountability. In one fashion or another, these records were designed as instruments to apply external pressure on the university by assessing its performance and requiring corrections as prescribed. In William Clark’s elaborate analysis of the survey questionnaire and resulting interrogations, he concludes these exercises were “useless” (Clark, W. 2006, p. 350). The records he studied ultimately demonstrate that the university membership was acting in an acceptable manner. Such attempts at accountability aside, European universities generally enjoyed a rather placid relationship with church and state for 700 years, despite a milieu of wars, inquisitions and revolutions, until the 18th century drew to a close.

The dawn of the research university

Following the crushing defeat of Prussia by Napoleon at Jena and Auerstadt in 1806, Prussia became a vassal state of France, and a government was installed with Karl Freiherr von Stein as its head. Defeat at the hands of Napoleon had led the Prussians to believe that the only means of ensuring the future survival and prosperity of the Prussian identity was through the

development of the inner life of Prussians, thereby protecting and nurturing Prussian cultural life through increased personal freedom and, most importantly, education (Thomas, 1973).

Wilhelm von Humboldt, a Prussian philosopher and bureaucrat, was charged with making Stein's vision a reality. Prussia's recent loss of the University of Halle to France was an opportunity for Humboldt to establish a much needed new university, the University of Berlin, in 1809. The very word university, in Humboldt's view, meant no field of study should be excluded, that the learning process had to be dynamic, and that institutions should

... treat knowledge as not yet complete, and to stress on-going investigation in contrast with many lower schools which deal with a closed book. At the higher levels, there must also be a different relationship between teacher and student, since the former is not there simply for the benefit of the latter; both are there for the sake of knowledge....

...Thus the university instructor is no longer the teacher, the student no longer the learner. The latter is himself a researcher, and the professor guides his research and supports him in it (Thomas, 1973, p. 227).

Although England had its Royal Societies and France had its many academies, including the Collège de France, there had been no strategic importance placed on research at the medieval university; the professors were expected only to "defend God, the native country and the emperor using hair-splitting syllogisms" (Bertilsson, 1992, p. 334). One must also keep in mind that in 1809 Prussia was a Protestant state, but now was subject to the rule of Catholic France. It is, therefore, understandable why Humboldt wanted his new brand of university to be clearly

independent of church and state. Research would come to provide the rationale for a university's autonomy, as the disputation had in earlier times.

Institutional autonomy, as we tend to understand this concept today, is foreshadowed in Humboldt's vision for the University of Berlin:

The university should be a 'republic' within the state – with its own 'senate,' own 'citizens,' and guardians. The university was an 'ideal society,' a modern equivalent to the Greek *polis*. The true and correct life should be able to develop without interference (Bertilsson, 1992, p. 335).

Academic freedom was clearly a preoccupation for Humboldt, but it would be protected, not by arms-length organizational autonomy, but by engaging faculty as civil servants and establishing the university as a branch of the state. As Kerr notes of Humboldt's vision, "The emphasis was on philosophy and science, on research, on graduate instruction, on the freedom of professors and students (*Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit*)" (Kerr, 2001, p. 9). These terms are not easily translated, but Hare suggests *Lehrfreiheit* as the professor's right to teach as he wants, and *Lernfreiheit* as the right of the student to choose their studies free of administrative constraints. These rights of the faculty and students would be ensured because the state had the power to do so (Hare, 1968, p.12).

The university and the state generally worked well together in the 19th century Humboldt model. Contrasted to Oxford and Cambridge, the Humboldtian university's relationship to the state was based on merit in terms of economic and social contributions to society, rather than collegiality and patronage as practiced among the English elite (Clark, W., 2006, p. 453). In France, until reforms were introduced in 1892, the state was highly intrusive in the affairs of its teaching universities and research academies.

Regarding the research function at the Humboldtian university, William Clark takes care to discuss the influence of Johann Justi, an 18th century Prussian theorist considered to be the Adam Smith of what was known at the time as police science, with the term policing roughly meaning at the time the operation of a well-organized republic. Policing education, in Justi's context, meant ensuring that learning was taking place, ensuring there was no waste of time or materials, and ensuring there was a constant level of satisfactory activity. In terms of research, Justi considered the university to be no less than a mining company, mining for knowledge with the freedom to seek knowledge wherever it might be. In 19th century Germany, academics were miners and servants of the state. Institutional autonomy from the state simply was not an issue, as the research university was an instrument of the state (Clark, W., 2006, p. 12-13).

The American university

The Humboldt model of the research university was not lost on Americans. Between 1815 and 1915, more than 10,000 American students enrolled in German universities, there being very few opportunities for advanced studies in their own country. The Americans came to be impressed by German academic practices in teaching and research, but the philosophic idealism – the *kultur* - that held the German university and state relationship intact was not readily appreciated by the Americans (Brubacher, 1997, p.197). Universities in the United States were intended to be agents for a stronger society, but when American research universities emerged in full force, having been influenced by the German research model, they became agents for a stronger economy (Kerr, 2001, pp. 67-70). Beginning with the founding in 1876 of Johns Hopkins University, the idea of the American research university took hold, but it developed within a dynamic quite distinct from the German university (Clark, W., 2006, p. 463). The German state permitted their universities functional autonomy and it respected that

autonomy, at least that is, until the National Socialist Party took power in 1933. In the United States, private universities prided themselves in their self-declared, as opposed to awarded, autonomy (Kerr, 2001, p. 37). In contrast, when the Merrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 initiated the creation of more than 100 state colleges and universities across the United States, a wide variety of levels of control, independence and accountability emerged across the country (Newman, Couturier, and Scurry, 2004, p. 33). As Hurtubise and Rowat observed, some institutions insisted upon absolute autonomy from the state, citing John Stuart Mill, who proclaimed “A general state education is a mere contrivance for moulding people exactly like one another....” (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p 61).

The Canadian university

Canadian universities were initially shaped by the traditions of Oxford and Cambridge, although like the University of Edinburgh, the faculty and student body were more egalitarian, and the universities were more demanding of their students in terms of self-discipline. Dalhousie, McGill and Queen’s typify the Scottish model of university in Canada, all established prior to Confederation and tending to enjoy the support and influence of churches either Protestant or Catholic. In Western Canada, the American land grant university was an influence upon post-confederation universities once each western province was created (Pocklington & Tupper, 2002, pp. 20-23).

In 1906, the Flavelle Commission report signalled the end of the prevalence of denominational higher education in Canada. Public funding had become the only recourse for the survival of several universities in Ontario, but the use of public funds to teach and assert religious doctrine, such as the literal interpretation of the Bible, was unacceptable politically. In response, two recommendations by the Flavelle Commission became a reality: a board for each

university comprised of governors mostly appointed by government, and a second body responsible for academic matters. This bicameral governance structure, if accepted by a denominational university, resulted in a shift to the university becoming non-denominational. This Ontario model was adopted by provinces in eastern Canada, and served as a model for new universities being established in western Canada (Jones, 1997, p. 139; Skolnik, 1997, pp. 326-329).

By 1970 there were approximately 54 institutions granting university-level degrees in Canada (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 232). Each operated under provincial legislation, as education falls under the exclusive authority of each province. While there is no national oversight for university education, as such a body might need to include by definition the federal government, there are at minimum three pan-Canadian organizations: The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. While federal government representatives may be invited to events held by these organizations, they are not eligible for membership. However, these organizations have common interests in terms of policy, and operate on a national scale (Pocklington & Tupper, 2002, p. 31).

In surveying university autonomy across Europe and the United States as it relates to Canada, in their 1970 report Hurtubise and Rowat make a number of observations. First, determining that autonomy is a relative term, they noticed that the universities do not want any further erosion of that autonomy. As a defensive tactic, Canadian universities reviewed by the commission had positioned themselves as requiring collective autonomy, as if they were members of a system of universities. By creating a means of coordination among themselves, they appeared to be reducing the need for government oversight or intervention. This

positioning mirrors the six regional accreditation agencies in the United States, each of which performs a collective function (Newman et al., 2004, p. 152). Criteria for membership in these organizations vary, but all require that each member institution has control over admissions, academic staff and programs of instruction (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p.62).

In addition to asserting autonomy in the face of government intervention, a second observation is that autonomy is also used as an argument against the inefficiencies inherent in a publicly owned and state-run enterprise. If state bureaucrats were permitted to exert administrative control over a university, the unique nature of each university might be supplanted by a series of homogeneous educational institutions within that jurisdiction, all centrally designed and controlled (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 74). Such was the criticism of Clark Kerr's development of the University of California system when it was first established (Kerr, 2001, p.viii).

Recognizing that the use of the word autonomy was most often understood in absolute terms, in referring to universities Hurtubise and Rowat expressed a preference for the term independence, rather than autonomy, but then "it would have been impossible to discuss the uses and abuses of the word 'autonomy.'" Autonomy, they concluded, when used in reference to a university, can only be accepted as a relative term (1970, p.65).

The relative nature of university autonomy, they observed, should not be problematic in carrying out the responsibility of ensuring academic freedom. German universities, they note, have their finances tightly controlled by a senior official of government with an office on campus. Yet despite this control and the fact that West German university professors were all civil servants, the German professors were, at least circa 1970, more likely to enjoy a greater degree of academic freedom and individual autonomy than elsewhere (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 68).

Hurtubise and Rowat also argued that a board of governors guaranteed no protection from government interference into the affairs of a university for, if a government chooses to interfere into the affairs of a university, it certainly has the means to do so. As well, they concluded the linkage between institutional autonomy and academic freedom is not direct. They affirmed that the principle of academic freedom is asserted, hardly as protection against outside intervention, but more in defence from those appointed as members of the university's board or administration (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 67).

Despite concluding the lack of a direct link between institutional autonomy and academic freedom, Hurtubise and Rowat provided a Canadian argument for institutional autonomy. Asserting that academic freedom is a necessity, and considering the history of universities and the political culture within Canada, they determined that substantial institutional autonomy is needed in order to preserve academic freedom (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 73). They proceeded to identify and discuss two kinds of autonomy: autonomy essential to academic freedom, and autonomy that, while not essential to efficient and effective operations, would be prudently respected by government and prudently exercised by the university. This prudent autonomy, as they described it, is necessary to ensure that Canadian universities, even if they were regarded as instruments of government, should not be controlled or directed by government (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 76). While recognizing the need for both essential autonomy (to protect academic freedom) and prudent autonomy (to protect university administration), the capability of a provincial government to significantly interfere in the management of a university is recognized, but the authors also recognized with some amazement the historical deference of governments in allowing universities to manage their own affairs as they see fit.

There were problems specific to the relationship between Canada's universities and its provincial governments in the 1960s. While all concerned appeared to agree that "a university ought to search for 'truth, beauty and goodness,'" on more specific issues there was no agreement. This lack of clear aims of a university were attributed to both the universities for failing to voluntarily develop this needed clarity among themselves, and to the lack of mechanisms within governments to effectively deal with post-secondary issues (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 81-82). Universities at this time did not generally work together, as their predisposition to maintain a sense of autonomy prevented any real cooperation among them. This cooperation, while seen as needed among the universities, came with an element of distrust among each other as there was no means of enforcement. This distrust was fueled by the occasional break of an agreement, such as when one university may have been led by another university to assume it would not be developing a competing graduate program, which would eventually turn out not to be the case (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 86-87). Despite the fact the universities found it difficult to work together, they realized they had to coordinate their efforts or at some point government would do it for them (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 87-88).

Hurtubise and Rowat noted that due to the universities' general lack of clarity of purpose, and their inability to effectively coordinate their programming activities among themselves, most provinces had formed university commissions – Saskatchewan and Newfoundland excepted, as each had only one university at that time. These commissions were created as a buffer to help governments make policy and funding decisions through recommendations, while giving the universities a voice on matters directly affecting them. The commissions tended to work as long as the budgets for higher education did not threaten the budgets of other government-funded agencies. With rapid growth in student population in the 1960s, demands for more funding from

each university grew, as did the strain on government budgets and the need to more effectively coordinate university program activity. The commissions initially provided advice to government on how to equitably distribute funds that were sufficient to the needs of the universities. Due to increasing student enrollment demands, governments realized that, at some point in order to contain costs, there had to be firm control of growth through restricted or targeted funding, which was beyond the advising capability of the commissions (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p. 94).

Firm control of the coordination of university program growth demanded leadership, Hurtubise and Rowat concluded, and university leadership is something that a universities commission cannot provide, as it is only an advisory body. Further, formula funding is not seen as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership. Such formulae require at least two variables: recognition of the actual cost of the programming, and agreement that the academic opportunity provided has value equated to that cost (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, pp. 97-98). As each educational program has a distinct cost associated with its provision to the students, when the funding formula is applied each budget year to inexpensive programs, there was concern that the public was not getting sufficient value for the support provided. When the funding was provided to programs more expensive than the costs recognized in the formula, there was a concern that the program may not have sufficient resources to ensure a quality education. Hurtubise and Rowat did not see formula funding, as it existed in the 1960s, as a suitable means of financing universities or coordinating university programming; they saw it instead as an absence of leadership – “a guardian of the status quo” (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970, p.97). In their summary of the relationships between governments and universities, Hurtubise and Rowat provided three criticisms: a lack of consultation between the two entities, a cloak of secrecy over discussions

that do manage to take place, and awkward timing of government budget announcements, which greatly undermines a university's ability to plan for the coming academic year.

The Alberta university

In Alberta, there was only one university, from shortly after the inception of the province in 1905, until the creation of the University of Calgary in 1966 (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980). As described by Macleod (2008), the University of Alberta was founded in 1908 as the realization of a dream of the province's first premier, Alexander Cameron Rutherford. In May 1905, three months before the province was established, and six months before becoming Premier and appointing himself Provincial Treasurer and Minister of Education, Rutherford had initiated discussions with Henry Marshall Tory, who would become the first president of the University of Alberta, on the importance of establishing a provincial university without delay. The two men continued these discussions by correspondence, with Rutherford in Edmonton and Tory in Montreal where he was a professor of Mathematics and Physics at McGill University. In the first session of the Alberta Legislature, held in the Spring of 1906, Rutherford introduced an act to establish the university. Following the appearance of a search for a president for the new university, in 1907 Rutherford travelled to Montreal to formally offer Tory the position, a hiring decision Rutherford had made alone. Tory formally accepted the position and moved to Edmonton early in 1908. It was only later discovered that Rutherford had already offered the job to Tory in 1906.

The relationship between the Premier of the province and the President of the university could not have been stronger. They agreed there should only be one strong and centralized university in the province, considering the limited financial resources and relatively small population, as they feared a multi-campus system would compromise the quality of teaching and

research. They agreed the site of the university should be in Strathcona, a town on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River and located directly across from Edmonton, which had been chosen as the capital of Alberta. In fact, the Alberta Legislature and the first university buildings would be in sight of each other, with only the river between them. There would be much controversy over the university's location, and one of Tory's first public appearances as president was in Calgary, where Rutherford's decision to locate the university in Edmonton was not welcomed. The Premier and the President also decided that the university should avoid religious affiliations, which they saw as threateningly divisive in a thinly populated province, as well as potentially restrictive for researchers subjected to constraints of religious orthodoxy. They were also quite determined that, unlike Manitoba and British Columbia where the provincial universities began only as examining bodies for other organizations, Alberta's university would begin by holding classes as soon as possible. As well, they agreed there should be strong representation of women among the students.

If anything, the relationship between the leaders of the provincial government and the university strengthened in the years to follow. When Rutherford stepped down as Premier and leader of the Liberal party in 1910, Tory reluctantly accepted an invitation to meet with members of the Liberal party to discuss potential candidates for succession (Macleod, 2008, p. 16), which led to Arthur Sifton becoming the next leader and Premier of Alberta.

Tory also worked with Sidney Woods, the province's deputy attorney general, to create a *University Act* in 1910, which changed the governance structure from the original fifteen-member governing body, five of whom were elected by Alberta residents holding degrees and ten of whom were appointed by government. The new structure included a senate limited to academic issues, and a board of governors consisting of the president, a chancellor and nine

members appointed by government. As Macleod points out, one might assume this new board structure would allow government greater control over the university, since it controlled all spending, held any powers not specifically mentioned in the act, and had the last word in any disputes with the senate. However, Tory and Woods had actually fashioned the act to give the president greater powers, as all appointments and promotions needed the approval of the board, but only on the recommendation of the president. The only group the president had to persuade was the board, rather than an elected or appointed government official. As well, while the university president was a member of the board under the Tory and Woods governance structure, the president did not report to the board. Until passage of the 1966 *Universities Act*, the President of the University of Alberta would be appointed by Cabinet but, in reality, the Premier of Alberta (Macleod, 2008).

An arm's-length relationship between the university and the government would indeed exist for many years to come under this structure, with the length of that arm determined sometimes by the Premier of the day, and sometimes by the President. To combat pressures from Calgarians and farmers in southern Alberta to decentralize university programs across the province, Tory addressed the 1910 annual meeting of an opposition party, the United Farmers of Alberta, and convinced them a separate campus for agriculture located in Calgary would not serve the farmers well. In doing so, he diffused a major opposition policy initiative and helped keep the Liberals in power (Macleod, 2008, p. 30). Tory also gave the government a plan to create three "practically-oriented" agricultural schools in an effort to help the university retain the Faculty of Agriculture in Edmonton. These three schools were eventually established in Vermilion, Premier Sifton's home riding, Olds, the hometown of the Minister of Agriculture, and Claresholm in southern Alberta where Liberal popularity was weak.

Tory's relationship with the Liberals ended in 1921 when the United Farmers of Alberta became the governing party. While Tory was able to work with Herbert Greenfield, Premier from 1921 to 1925, and avoid significant cuts during a period of restraint, he was not as successful with Greenfield's successor John Brownlee, who was Premier from 1925 to 1934. Brownlee expressed little interest in the affairs of the university, and did not provide special financial considerations when austerity measures were applied. So concerned was Tory that the university would lose the support of the government, which drew its political strength from farmers and people in southern Alberta, that he manipulated the university's enrolment reports (Macleod, 2008, p. 83). Although in reality the majority of the university's students were from Edmonton and northern Alberta, Tory's reports suggested that there were a significantly large number of agriculture students by counting students in short-term courses of three to four weeks in length as full-time students. He also listed all the communities in Alberta from where the students originated, but he did not disclose the number of students in each of these communities. Had there been more transparency in disclosure, Albertans would have learned that students from Edmonton and northern Alberta, where the Liberal Party dominated, significantly outnumbered students from Calgary and southern Alberta, a region providing strong electoral support to the United Farmers of Alberta by a margin of two to one. Through these less than forthcoming reports, Tory was purporting to serve the needs of the ruling party's constituents when in fact he was doing what he felt he must to serve the needs of the university. A proud academic, Tory's understanding of where scholarship ends and intellectual dishonesty begins may suggest a relationship too close to the ruling government, or a willingness to undertake extreme measures for the sake of the university's financial sustainability, or both.

Tory's successor, Robert Charles Wallace, made no attempt to continue the ruse of the university as a friend of the farmer. Perhaps not a visionary or a charismatic leader, Wallace was nonetheless a very good manager and impressed Premier Brownlee by asking the provincial auditor to conduct a pre-audit of the university's finances. The relationship between the university under Wallace and Premier Brownlee and later Premier Richard Reid was largely uneventful due to significant financial restraint imposed by the Depression of the 1930s. The provincial government had little money, so there was no lobbying. With the resources available, Wallace carried out what plans he could that had been put in place by Tory. There were no great expectations of the government or the university for the other, so there was relative calm and little interaction between them.

William Aberhart became Premier in 1935 and William Alexander Robb Kerr became President of the University of Alberta in 1936. A high school principal from Calgary and unhappy with other protestant churches, Aberhart had founded his own, the Prairie Bible Institute, and had also embraced the political philosophy of Social Credit, which had among many concepts the proposal that economic problems could be solved simply by printing money (Macleod, 2008, p.111). When the Social Credit party first came to power, there was great apprehension at the university because of fears the institution of higher education would have to succumb to a political philosophy that made no sense financially and that had brought embarrassment upon Alberta from around the world. However the fears were soon dispelled. Aberhart, having proudly earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Queen's University by correspondence, was a champion of university education. He appointed himself Minister of Education and his first budget in 1936 actually provided the university a modest increase despite the province defaulting on bond interest payments.

Aberhart's support for the university soon became obvious. Attacked on all sides by businesses, banks and other governments for its financial policies, the Social Credit government needed credible allies. Although Aberhart and his party enjoyed support from the farmers and workers of Alberta, there tended to be distaste for him among professionals, especially lawyers and others with a higher level of education (Macleod, 2008, p. 126). As long as the university received sufficient funds to survive the Great Depression, the university would do its best to appear uncritical of Social Credit policy (Macleod, 2008, p. 116).

Despite the muted but positive relationship between Aberhart and the university, the relationship was indeed tested, and in a manner that caused significant embarrassment for the Premier and which prompted the university's president to resign. Although the governance structure designed by Tory and Wood in 1910 had only eleven members, the senate responsible for academic matters had in 1941 no fewer than 55 members, including the president, the chancellor, the chair of the board of governors, the heads of the affiliated colleges, the principal of the province's Normal School, the deputy minister of education, the deans of each faculty, one elected representative of each faculty, a member of each professional society affiliated with the university, and ten members elected by Albertans holding degrees ideally awarded by the university (Macleod, 2008, pp. 20, 124). An unwieldy number of members certainly, but just as certain, included in this cohort was a sufficient number of senators intent on embarrassing Aberhart at the expense of testing his support for the university.

The university had established a tradition of awarding honorary degrees to the premier of the province after being elected to a second term in office. Aberhart won his second election in 1940 and the senate nominating committee duly put his name forward for the honour. Months before convocation, Aberhart was advised a routine vote of the senate on his nomination would

be taken at their next meeting, which was to be only one week before convocation. Aberhart began preparing his speaking notes, and friends gave him a gift of an academic gown for the ceremony. However, the nomination was rejected by ballot during the senate's morning meeting, and again in the afternoon when a second ballot was held. On both occasions, the margin was one vote. Both the chair of the board of governors and the president of the university, in their embarrassment as members of the senate that treated Aberhart so discourteously, offered to resign. While the chair was persuaded to withdraw his resignation, Kerr as president would not withdraw his.

The relationship of the government and university leadership was tested in this episode, but as Macleod observes in reference to a concurring *Edmonton Bulletin* editorial, "The rejection of an honorary degree for the premier had little to do with the relations with the university. The elite of the province, who had been unable to defeat Aberhart at the polls, found a way to take their revenge. The only positive outcome of this sorry episode was that it led to a thorough examination of the governing structure of the university and changes that modernized it just in time for the postwar expansion" (Macleod, 2008, p. 127).

In 1942 Aberhart amended the *University Act*, giving greater powers to the board of governors, creating a General Faculties Council with control over academic matters, and limiting the role of the senate to serving as a mechanism for involvement by the community. Included among recommendations for changes to the act was the appointment of the president by the board of governors rather than by cabinet, which had been the practice since the university was first established. Not surprisingly this recommendation was rejected by Aberhart. Accounting lecturer Francis Winspear, who had made the recommendation, included with it the comment that the appointment of the president by Cabinet would ensure that future presidents, "unless

they were unusually strong characters, would reflect the attitudes and priorities of the government.” Macleod goes on to say that the two presidents who followed Kerr, Robert Newton (1941-1951) and Andrew Stewart (1951-1959), were not strong characters (Macleod, 2008, p. 156-7; Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 77).

Aberhart died in 1943 and was succeeded by Ernest Manning, a fellow cabinet minister who was also a preacher at the Prairie Bible Institute. Unlike Aberhart, Manning was not a university graduate, and he tended to view universities as sanctuaries for left-wing secularists, and, therefore, something that needed to be guarded against. Manning would remain Premier for 25 years, until 1968. Macleod speculates that Newton resigned in 1951 due to Manning’s unwillingness to fund the university to the levels Newton thought essential, although Newton never explained his resignation. Manning personally interviewed and then hired Stewart, who went on to delegate most of his responsibilities to others over the next eight years, while he served on a variety of royal commissions. Funding during Stewart’s first years began to increase, no thanks to the largely absent Stewart or to Manning’s government, but instead federal funding initiatives for colleges and universities (Macleod, 2008, p. 162). Stewart’s absences caused the need for the creation of the position of vice-president in 1955, and the new federal dollars made this possible. Classics professor Walter Johns was awarded the position, and went on to become a strong university administrator and eventually president of the institution.

Three overriding factors brought post-secondary education issues to the attention of the Social Credit government as Johns took office as Vice-President. The post-war baby boomers were starting to enter their teenage years; there was a perceived threat of Soviet advancements in science and technology evidenced by Sputnik; and there was a surprising drop in Manning’s popularity in the 1955 provincial election as Alberta’s urban voters began to supplant his base of

traditional rural support. Johns began developing plans for the future expansion of the university, and Manning responded over time with money for new buildings, new programs, and more staff and faculty (Macleod, 2008, p. 169-70). By the end of 1958, several new departments in the arts and sciences had been formed, a faculty of graduate studies had been established, and 300 acres for a southern Alberta campus had been given to the university by the City of Calgary. Stewart was realizing such significant expansion meant the presidency could no longer be a position of nominal leadership, and he resigned effective January 31, 1959 without consulting Manning or Johns, having already accepted an appointment as chair of the Board of Broadcast Governors in Ottawa.

Unlike Newton and Stewart, Johns was very much a strong character in terms of leadership. He had overseen significant expansion of facilities and programs, while Stewart was president, and Stewart's role primarily as figurehead was well known. Johns was cool to Manning's offer to become president of the university, taking more than a month including a trip to Ontario to respond. His negotiations with Manning on terms of the appointment are not documented, but a few months later the annual provincial grant to the university increased from \$3.1 million to \$4 million, his salary was raised from \$15,000 to \$17,000, and he was promised a new residence for the president to replace the old one, which was in serious disrepair. Further, the capital grant tripled the following year from \$3.5 million to \$10.5 million. Johns also made it clear as president he would be following the university's agenda, which may or may not be in agreement with the government. The economic and demographic tide had changed in Alberta, thanks to increasing oil revenues, and an increasingly younger and more urban population. To keep the Social Credit government in power, Manning was now listening rather than simply giving lip service to the university leadership (Macleod, 2008, p. 181-82). Clear evidence of

Johns' influence is found in the fact that it was Johns as President of the University of Alberta, not Manning or his government, who initiated a lengthy and thorough review of governance and legislation, which ultimately resulted in a new *Universities Act* in 1966 (Macleod, 2008, p. 190).

The early years of the University of Alberta in most respects can be characterized as being independent yet supportive of objectives of the provincial government that created it. For the most part, there was an expectation that the university would, to the best of its ability, act in the best interest of the government and, in turn, the government would reciprocate in the same manner. Trust among officials of the university and government developed over time as a result, but was tested on occasion, most notably when Premier Aberhart failed to receive his honorary doctorate as he had anticipated. Nonetheless, that trust persisted throughout the years Manning served as Premier, which is evident in the university's role in the drafting of the 1966 *Universities Act*.

An era of change

The period from 1966 to 1968 was a very busy time for post-secondary education in Alberta. The new act facilitated the expansion of university programming in Alberta, and took the pressure off the U of A to provide all programs to all university students. The Calgary campus of the University of Alberta became an autonomous board-governed institution in 1966, and the University of Lethbridge was established in 1968. Since there were more universities on the horizon in 1966, the universities would seek out their funds from a newly established Universities Commission instead of directly meeting with the Premier. The commission was intended to be a buffer between the universities and the government, assessing the universities' needs and plans, and making recommendations to the government. Also established was the Universities Coordinating Council, which was comprised of the presidents and academic vice-

presidents of the universities (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 28). The coordinating council attended mainly to academic matters, mostly by its members working together to make recommendations to the Minister on approvals of new programs.

Section 64 of the 1966 *Universities Act* introduced for the first time in Alberta the formal requirement for the approval of the Minister when a new program was proposed. The Minister was not expected to grant approvals independently, as the Universities Commission and the Universities Coordinating Council were created in this same legislation to provide the minister with advice. Nonetheless, this legislation could restrain a university in Alberta from offering a program of study of its choosing. While it may be curious that many officials from the University of Alberta were involved in the drafting of this legislation and would support this section of the act, the Universities Commission's role in making recommendations for ministerial approval may not have been intended to restrict the University of Alberta's plans for new programs, but instead to limit the program plans of the newer universities that would be competing for programs and students. As West points out,

In the eyes of the other universities, there was no question of the Commission's being dominated by the senior university; this complaint was made repeatedly by members of the University of Lethbridge (for instance, at the meeting of the Commission in November, 1968) and ... the perception was shared by Mr. Robert Clark when Minister of Education. The fact that staff members were seconded from the University of Alberta to the Commission did nothing to mitigate such criticisms: one such staff member said on one occasion "that the University of Alberta objected to the

Commission and the Government setting its priorities” The conflict of loyalties here is obvious (1985, p. 62).

In 1968, Ernest Manning was succeeded by Harry Strom, who would serve as Premier for less than three years. Many believed the ability of the Social Credit government to effectively lead the province disappeared with Manning’s departure (Wagner, 1998, p. 66). Manning clearly had been in charge, especially when it came to working with the universities. In Johns’ memoirs of his years as vice-president and president of the University of Alberta, the only discussions with cabinet ministers he mentions are with Manning; there are no mentions of any of the Ministers of Education. There is also no mention of any discussions with Premier Harry Strom, but this may be understandable as Johns was only in office for the first six months of Strom’s tenure. Further, Strom is the only premier not mentioned in Macleod’s history of the University of Alberta’s first hundred years. However, there are at least two legacies Strom left in terms of post-secondary education: a commission on education and a fourth Alberta university. In June 1969 Strom created the Commission on Educational Planning, which resulted in *A Choice of Futures*, more commonly called the “Worth Report” after its commissioner, Walter Worth (1972). Despite the defeat of the Social Credit government in September 1971, Worth was allowed by the Progressive Conservative government to complete the work of the commission, and the report was released in 1972 (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 44).

The second Strom legacy was the promise of a fourth university in Alberta, which was established as Athabasca University in 1970 in response to anticipated overwhelming enrollment of 25,000 students at the University of Alberta, but instead there was an unexpected reduction in enrollment in 1971 (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p.36). Originally intended to offer only undergraduate programs in the arts, science and education in St. Albert, the university was

established with a unicameral governing council, rather than the governance structure at the province's other three universities. The work of the governing council did not develop beyond the planning stages until after Lougheed became Premier in 1971. Under the Progressive Conservatives, the university was located in the Town of Athabasca, and it had a new mandate to use new educational methods and technologies. The Lougheed government's decision to locate the institution in Athabasca, and to change its mandate from undergraduate liberal arts and education programming to open and distance education, was seen as an infringement of institutional autonomy by the few members of the Athabasca University community, and many strongly opposed this decision (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 46).

There was a subtle but important shift in perspectives on education when the Progressive Conservatives under Peter Lougheed took office in 1971. In his dissertation, Wagner (1998) looks at the transition closely, and notes several contributing factors. Where Manning and Aberhart before him were quite willing to acquiesce to educators across the province and the educational experts within their civil service, Lougheed made it clear that it would be the elected officials who would be making policy (Wagner, 1998, p. 83). In early 1975, following his fight with Trudeau over natural resource issues, Lougheed turned his attention to the long-standing Social Credit policy of supporting progressive education, as espoused by John Dewey, and which gave priority to the purpose of education as the means to enable the full potential of an individual. This was no longer accepted by the Lougheed government. Touting "back to the basics" the Progressive Conservatives recognized the priority to address the needs of the economy, with the pre-supposition that if the economy were sound, all other needs would be met (Wagner, 1998, p. 88). Also strikingly different was the composition of Cabinet. Wagner notes that at times during the Social Credit regime as many as a third of Cabinet had been teachers (Wagner, 1998, p. 84),

while in Lougheed's first cabinet there were only two teachers, which was less than a tenth of Cabinet membership, with the remaining ministers being primarily businessmen and lawyers.

The need for research on program coordination at Alberta's universities

There is little further literature that explores the relationship between Alberta's four universities and senior officials within the Alberta government. Macleod (2008) has provided a thorough examination of the relationship between the University of Alberta and the Government of Alberta at senior levels from 1908 to 2008, but there is no exploration focused on the relationship between the Alberta government and the other three universities, or the four universities as a group.

A former Canadian deputy minister writing about the inner workings of government policy development, Gordon Osbaldeston provides the context in which senior appointed government officials must operate (1989). Governments have agendas that are typically a limited number of objectives that can be accomplished within the time available to them. These objectives stem from the values and beliefs of the governing party or from specific priorities developed in response to pressing issues of the day. While the agendas may be set by elected officials, it is the public servants who often develop strategies to achieve those objectives. Once those strategies are adopted by the elected officials in government, it is the public servants who implement them.

On occasion these objectives are related to universities, often in recent years on a provincial level in terms of accessibility to university education, or on a federal level in terms of research and student financial assistance. Much has been written about the primacy of academic freedom, and the need for university autonomy to protect that freedom. However, research on Alberta government policies specific to university programs is slim. West (1982) writes about

the establishment of the Department of Advanced Education; Winchester (1983) writes about a failed 1975 attempt by the Lougheed government to introduce legislation affecting institutional autonomy; and Hughes (1993) writes about the error of regarding access to university education solely as an economic problem but not also as a sociological problem. While all three studies are concerned to some extent with the implementation of policy regarding the coordination of university programs, they do not address the problem, which is the need for analysis of the apparent acquiescence of senior officials at Alberta's universities to legislation that might undermine their institutional autonomy. There remains an opportunity to better understand the interpersonal dynamics that led to that acquiescence.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methods

Theoretical Frameworks for this study

Communities of Practice – Wenger.

Wenger's theory of communities of practice describes certain communities as informal groups of people who come together to discuss matters that are of common importance to them, and to develop a shared knowledge in the process. The theory, simple but overlooked until identified by Wenger, is that when people form a group of peers out of a common interest, their knowledge and ability regarding that interest improves. In other words, they learn and, the more they interact, the more they learn (Wenger, 1998, pp. 45-47).

These self-organizing groups are not teams because they are not assembled to accomplish a specific task. Instead, their mutual interest in a topic or issue brings them together and their desire to learn from each other keeps them in the group (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, pp. 41-45). As well, communities of practice are not networks, because they are formed out of a common interest, rather than to promote one's self interest. There are no reporting relationships or hierarchies in communities of practice; membership is determined only by participation in the act of sharing information about something of mutual interest and by learning from one another. The members act independently of each other, and join in the discussion voluntarily because they care about the topic. Any leadership of the group exists not to direct discussion, as in a team, but to enable the opportunity for discussion. These communities can be organized, meet on a regular basis or limit their membership, or they can be very small groups, meet by chance or engage in discussion as little as once.

Wenger was the first to identify the Communities of Practice model and present it as a theory in terms of how people might learn from one another in a social setting. The importance of Wenger's theory is recognized by those who see knowledge as essential to meeting their objectives. In an arena where leaders of Alberta's universities and government work with each other as peers to try to solve problems of mutual concern, such as balancing the need for a government to coordinate university programs with the universities' need to function independently from government, a community of practice theory provides a framework in which to analyze the relationship between and among these leaders.

Wenger provides three dimensions of a community of practice (Wenger et al, 2002, pp. 27-40). First is the domain, the joint enterprise that can be measured by the scope of the topic or issue about which all members care enough to participate. The second dimension is the community, which can be described by the nature of the engagement of the members as peers. The third dimension is the practice itself, the knowledge the community members share among themselves or develop with one another, and which they can go on to apply or share elsewhere.

With evidence of communities of practice in these three dimensions, practitioners can give greater significance and understanding to existing information, and they share and retain knowledge primarily within an oral tradition, which brings more sharply focused engagement, personal relevance and greater immediacy to the learning. Maintaining an oral tradition of sharing knowledge helps ensure a sense of community, as written or electronic communication may marginalize some members of the community, whether inadvertently or intentionally, unless a protocol is established and followed to promote inclusivity. The knowledge is more current, as it is not restrained by the need to be reviewed or published, yet it is likely to be reasonably accurate, as other members may also have an opportunity to consider the information and

comment on it. A third important benefit is the identity that the community provides to its members in terms of their knowledge, skills and character, which are distinctive qualities that cannot be discerned by a member's position within an organization.

Critics of Wenger's theory tend to focus on a lack of a uniform operating context. Initially, in 1991, Wenger discussed the theory in terms of bridging the divide between novices and experts. In his second publication on the topic in 1998, discussion was mostly in terms of learning and development through group participation. In a third exploration in 2002, the concept was conveyed in terms of a management tool. Where Wenger stands on the tension between an individual becoming empowered and an organization's need to be competitive in the market place is, at best evolving (Li, Grimshaw, Nielsen, Judd, Coyte & Graham, 2009). For the purposes of framing the research in this study, Wenger's work is presented in the 1998 context, that is, as a means by which a group of individuals learn from each other as peers.

A second important criticism is simply whether or not Wenger has indeed presented a theory. While Wenger's work is recognized as valuable, there is some concern as to whether it is an actual theory. In his work, Wenger uses the term theory interchangeably with the word perspective. Storberg-Walker (2008) finds in her analysis that the Community of Practice model is at best a mid-range theory, recognizing Wenger's helpful insights while at the same time reminding the reader that Wenger's theory doesn't indicate what ought to be done or how to proceed, but simply what ought warrant attention.

Accepting that the Community of Practice model is a midrange theory that helps one develop of model for learning, it provides the basic framework for the study. It frames circumstances in which peers learn from one another in order to solve problems, and it helps draw attention to important factors that facilitate that learning.

Trust - Shoorman, Mayer & Davis.

Wenger places great importance on trust. In learning much from one another, there may be occasions to reveal past mistakes, answer tough questions, or address vulnerabilities that might undermine the integrity of a member or others (Wenger et al, 2002, pp. 37, 82, 85). Developing trust takes time, and becomes apparent only when one person begins to appreciate the other's benevolence. Trust is an aspect of the relationship between two people and not necessarily a trait of one of the individuals. It is the willingness to make oneself vulnerable to another person. While some research has been conducted on the possible motivations for being willing to make oneself vulnerable to another person, the research appears inconclusive. The motivation may be emotional, cognitive or irrational (Shoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007).

Three variables contribute to a relationship of trust. First, the individual to be trusted must have the ability to earn that trust; the greater the ability, the greater the potential for trust. Secondly, the integrity of the person to be trusted is also a factor; the more evident the integrity, the more likely there will be trust. The third factor is benevolence, which is defined as the extent to which the trusting party believes the trusted party wants to be of genuine help or assistance. While evidence of ability and integrity might be assessed rather quickly when making a decision to trust, determining benevolence requires time. The need for benevolence draws a strong link between Wenger's view that trust needs time to grow, and the finding of Shoorman et al., that over extended periods of time, benevolence and integrity became factors discernible from one another, as they are virtually impossible to separate at the outset of a relationship. Integrity does not compensate for a lack of benevolence, nor do they overlap in definition (Shoorman et al., 2007, p. 346). Both factors, as well as ability, are necessary in demonstrating – and testing – trust over time.

The Communities of Practice theory provides the framework to analyze the relationships between and among the government and university leaders. Communities of practice emerging from the research will be analyzed in terms of their domain, community and practice. This framework will also allow for analyses of incidents when trust between the leaders was tested, and whether that trust proved to be resilient or unworthy.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to research and analyze the relationships between two groups, senior appointed officials of the Alberta government and their counterparts in the university sector, in terms of actions and reactions during ongoing attempts by government officials to coordinate the provision of university programs between 1971 and 2004. The intended result of this qualitative analysis is to determine the nature of the relationship between the two groups, how that relationship may have evolved, and how that relationship may have promoted the acceptance of legislation passed in 2003 although legislation with similar objectives had been successfully opposed in 1975. In most basic terms, the intent is to use a narrative approach to discovering and analyzing how the department achieved cooperation with the universities in order to bring into force legislation that may appear to threaten university autonomy.

A long-held tenet of organizational theory is that, in a cooperative process, there must be willingness among the people involved to contribute to that process or the process will not be successful (Bernard, 1938, p. 83). Recognizing there was a series of deputy ministers under Premiers Lougheed, Getty and Klein charged with developing a policy that had the potential of compromising the autonomy of a university community, there is an opportunity to better understand the strategies used by these government officials to eventually create a willingness to

accept, and contribute to the successful implementation of, government legislation that could have otherwise been seen as an affront to university autonomy.

Essential to this study, therefore, are the actions taken by department officials and the responses by university officials to those actions. Also important is the social context within which these interactions take place. Wenger (1998) provides a theory, for comparison purposes, that helps to establish that social context.

Research Questions

Since the proclamation of the *Universities Act* in 1966 through to the proclamation of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* in 2004, the Government of Alberta was rarely the target of criticism for limiting the autonomy of its public universities. Alberta's universities must submit annual reports to the Alberta legislature, and their annual financial statements are subject to approval by the province's Auditor General. These reports are recognition of the need for accountability of the universities to the provincial government and, at the same time, they demonstrate that Alberta's universities do not enjoy absolute autonomy. These annual reports suggest there is a balance, or at least an implicit reciprocity, between the autonomy of a university and accountability for funds provided to that university. Even in the most informal setting a university is dependent on government funds and will, to some lesser or greater extent, need to plead its case. Each budget, therefore, creates an additional exercise in accountability or at least negotiation (D. Owram, personal communication, September 26, 2013).

With the universities assuming the role of autonomous provider of educational programs, it falls upon the government, with funding and accountability measures as potential leverage, to initiate some form of program coordination. Left to the universities is the role of anticipating or

responding to government attempts to encroach upon their sense of autonomy. Therein lie the research questions:

- How has the Government of Alberta attempted to achieve its program coordination objectives in relation to its public universities, while respecting their autonomy?
- How did the universities respond to these attempts by the government to coordinate their programs?
- How best should governments and universities act in future, perhaps not only in terms of program coordination, but on other issues of mutual concern?

In answering these questions, the research will identify which types of government strategies have worked, and which types of strategies have not worked. The research will also show how Alberta's universities responded to these attempts, which in turn may help identify a means by which a government and a university in its jurisdiction may work toward mutual benefit, with both parties achieving sufficient accountability and autonomy.

Guiding themes in the analysis of data

The aim of the research is to provide an assessment of what happened in the development and maintenance of the relationship between Alberta's universities and government between 1971 and 2004, with particular attention to the universities' desire for autonomy and the government's desire to coordinate university programs. The assessment would be the result of exploring the recollections and views of major actors in the Guiding themes in the data collection process, which include the following:

- The patterns, trends, and forms of engagement when the universities and government entered into dialogue;

- The nature of university autonomy as absolute or relative, as practiced by the universities and as accepted by government;
- The negotiation required of a university to be independent from, and an agent of, the province;
- The universities' process of coming to accept their assigned role as members of a system of post-secondary education;
- Tests of the relationship between universities and government officials involving the provision of university programs and associated academic policies;
- The element of trust in the relationship, and how the parties approached issues of trust;
- The amount of university participation in the development of government policy.

Analysis of policy initiatives and events related to these themes led to an improved understanding of the nature of the relationships between university and department officials as those relationships evolved.

Methodology

This qualitative study is the result of employing a non-emergent research design, a process by which data is gathered and then analyzed (Maykut & Morehouse, 2005, p. 40). With reference to documents collected, former university and government subjects who participated in related events were asked to comment on those events and documents in a semi-structured interview format. As a non-emergent study, information new to the researcher came to light during the interview process, and the eventual findings were not anticipated when the study commenced. True to the non-emergent model, despite the researcher's personal knowledge of events, the resultant findings emerged only after all data had been gathered.

Certainly having served in the Deputy Minister's office for a total of more than five years, the researcher had the opportunity of personally knowing most of the department officials who were interviewed, and so approaching them to request interviews was not difficult. Also, approaching and securing interviews with senior university officials was not difficult, as these individuals certainly knew the researcher's former supervisors, had been actors in the narrative being developed, and had welcomed the opportunity to share their perspective.

Richards (2005, p. 200) states "elite interviewing should not be conducted with a view to establishing 'the truth', in a crude, positivist manner. Its function is to provide the political scientist with an insight into the mind-set of the actor/s who have played a role in the shaping the society in which we live and an interviewee's subjective analysis of a particular episode or situation." As the researcher was familiar with the milieu in which senior department and university officials operated, this function, as Richards describes it, was an overriding interview strategy. While the facts were not in dispute among the interviewees, seldom was "the truth" in dispute either, for virtually all interviewees tended to approach the facts in the same manner. This may be an indication that some semblance of a community of practice model had indeed been in place over the years. Having so few discrepancies among the perspectives of the interviewees was helpful in arriving at the historical analysis.

As the interview process unfolded, it became clear there was a great deal of data that had not been previously been known to the researcher, despite a heightened awareness of the circumstances. It was only after all data was gathered could analysis of any merit have been possible, and the findings were indeed unanticipated until after the final interview had been completed.

To ensure construct reliability and validity, three principles proposed by Yin (2009, pp. 114-126) were followed in the data collection process:

- Employ multiple sources of evidence – comparing documents and recollections of the interviewees allowed the opportunity for corroboration. The greater the number of sources of evidence, the greater the validity of the analysis.
- Maintain a database - printed documents, recorded narratives, electronic records as well as the researchers notes created during the document analysis and interview process have been maintained to support the analysis of events during the period being researched.
- Ensure a chain of evidence – the reader should be able to follow the links from research questions posed to findings or, conversely, from findings to research questions posed.

The data collection occurred in two steps, document gathering and interviews.

Documents.

Issues related to university program coordination and autonomy in Alberta are evident in several secondary sources, most notably two histories of the University of Alberta (Johns, 1981; Macleod, 2008) and two histories of the Education Society of Edmonton (McDougall, 1967; Chalmers, 1988). As well, several publications specific to politics in Alberta and education in Alberta were very helpful, as were two dissertations focussed on the educational policies of the Progressive Conservative governments of Alberta: West (1982) on the creation of the Department of Alberta Advanced Education, and Wagner (1998) on Alberta's policy initiatives regarding elementary and secondary education as contributors to economic development.

Government policies, strategies and actions are identified through legislation, draft legislation, policy documents, publications and other materials or statements generated by government officials. Primary sources also include newspaper articles, correspondence and materials retrievable through application of the Alberta government's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (2000). Archives of the proceedings of the Education Society of Edmonton and the Educational Progress Club of Calgary, dating back to the 1920s, were instrumental in determining the evolving nature of the relationships, and the many interrelationships, among the officials of the universities and of the government.

Much of the documentation dates back to the period beginning in the late 1960s, with a sharp focus on the mid-1970s when there was a failed attempt to include the universities as components of a provincial system of post-secondary education. Another period providing greater volumes of data begins in the 1990s, when public consultations on the future of post-secondary education preceded major cutbacks in funding, until 2003 when the universities acquiesced to being members of a system of post-secondary education, and also being subject to educational program oversight by an agency of that system, the Campus Alberta Quality Council.

There is significant scarcity of government materials in the later years of the Lougheed regime and the early Getty years, from 1976 to 1987, but it became apparent this is primarily due to a lack of government attention to the objective of coordinating university programming during that period. The reasons for this lack of attention and scarcity of government material are provided by other sources, especially through interviews.

An unexpected data source was a short video of Peter Lougheed explaining his technique for gathering perspectives of influential Albertans for the purposes of developing policy

(Lougheed, 2010, September 22). This electronic document was helpful in the development of the research findings.

Interviews.

The semi-structured interviews received prior approval (Appendix A) from the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB) at the University of Calgary, as the researcher was a graduate student at that institution during the initial data gathering process. After the researcher transferred to the College of Graduate Studies at the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia, further semi-structured interviews were conducted as approved by the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) (Appendix B). Questions and topics of inquiry related to the guiding themes were provided to the interviewees in advance, illustrating the nature of the interview to be expected (Appendix C and D). A majority of the interviews were digitally recorded, and the researcher made notes on all occasions. When requested to do so, the digital recorder was turned off and information was left out of the researcher's notebook, and these omitted data are not included in the study.

The interviews in general focused on a series of topics that helped help identify the nature of the relationship between senior officials of the department and of the universities, especially in regard to the coordination of university programs. These topics included but were not limited to university autonomy, the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, the appointment of members to governing boards, policies or legislation requiring ministerial approval, the Universities Coordinating Council, the draft *Adult Education Act*, the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, informal or unofficial communication between university and department officials, the Education Society of Edmonton, the Educational Progress Club of Calgary, the Access Fund, and a series of policy initiatives that were introduced between 1971 and 2004.

Interviews were conducted with the intent of achieving equitable representation of all four universities and the department. Six retired university presidents were interviewed, with at least one from each of the four universities, as well as four former vice-presidents and a retired dean (Appendix E). Interviews were also held with senior government officials with responsibilities for post-secondary education: three retired deputy ministers, three former assistant deputy ministers, and one branch director with responsibility for program coordination. The combined careers of the 18 interviewees span the entire research period from 1971 to 2004.

The interviewees were selected based on their proximity to events related to university program coordination during the research period, their level of responsibility, and the fact they no longer held that office or a similar office within the Alberta post-secondary system. The objective was to seek out interviewees who participated in addressing university program coordination issues, who acted in a senior decision-making capacity and, as former employees, could now speak freely if they wished to do so.

While there were a great many events and issues involving the Alberta government and the province's four public universities during the period 1971 to 2004, and despite a great many colourful and exciting stories being shared (some in confidence), the prevailing objective during the interviews was to unearth information on the relationship between senior university and senior government officials, and also between the bodies they represented. As such, despite great temptation to delve into matters such as government funding, tuition, tenure, student unrest and politics, attention was given to these tangential factors only if they appeared to be of some bearing upon issues of program coordination.

During some of the interviews, the subject's memory may have been a factor in the clarity of description of events or issues that appeared out of alignment with other events and

circumstances. In these few cases, the data was considered invalid and not included in the research.

Trustworthiness of the data.

Data from primary print sources can be obtained from government holdings or in newspaper archives, thus establishing a level of trustworthiness. Some data provided by the interviewees were incomplete, could not be placed within an acceptable time frame, or could not otherwise be corroborated, and was, therefore, considered invalid. Three documents, Berghofer & Vladicka (1980), Andrews, Holdaway & Mowat (1997), and Macleod (2008), provided a significant amount of detail that subsequently verified primary sources regarding the accuracy of times, places and actors involved in the events analyzed, as well as the context in which those events took place.

In the interview process, pivotal statements made by one interviewee were frequently offered for comment and validation to another interviewee, and key information was confirmed in this manner. Each interviewee, except one who declined the opportunity, was offered drafts of chapters of this study in which their information was attributed, or the opportunity to request revisions to their attributions. All revisions suggested by interviewees were made.

Data analysis.

Content analysis of the data was grouped according to seven major policy initiatives attempted by the department to influence the coordination of university programming between 1971 and 2004:

- *Universities Amendment Act* (1973)
- *Program Coordination: Policies, Guidelines, Procedures* (1974)
- *Adult Education Act* (1975)

- *Responding to Existing and Emerging Demands for University Education: A Policy Framework* (1990)
- *Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act* (1990)
- *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta* (1994)
- *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (2004)

Each group of data was then placed in the framework of Wenger's Communities of Practice theory for analysis:

- For each policy initiative, was there evidence of all three dimensions of a community of practice, which included both department and university members?
- For each community of practice identified, did it lead to the success of the policy initiative? Was trust a factor? How was trust demonstrated?
- For each policy initiative that failed, was there a community of practice in place? If so, did it play a role in the initiative? Was lack of trust a factor?
- Is there a correlation between communities of practice and the acceptance by universities of department policy initiatives?

Each potential community of practice was assessed in terms of Wenger's dimensions of domain, community and practice as well as the level of trust demonstrated, and the success of the community in helping its members learn from one another as peers. The interview process disclosed many instances describing the presence of some or all of the dimensions of a community of practice. The analysis of the data focused the possible correlation of the presence of a community of practice with the success of the policy initiative.

As erstwhile members of the community of practice, the interviewees' recollections helped in developing an understanding of how various department policies were regarded by the universities, whether ignored, contested or accepted.

Delimitation.

During the period 1908 to 1966, there was only one university in Alberta, and the relationship between the university and the provincial government is well documented by Macleod (2008) and Johns (1981) in their separate and compatible histories of the university. As well, these events and interactions are consistent with Berghofer & Vladicka (1980) in their review of the development of post-secondary education from 1905 to 1980.

Attempting to research the period from 1966, when the *Universities Act* was proclaimed and the University of Calgary was established, until Lougheed took power in 1971 would be a difficult task as the period was rife with change. Within those five short years, three new universities were established, four new university presidents were hired, the first ministry in Canada dedicated to post-secondary education was created, a universities commission and a universities coordinating council were established, and two new premiers took office, Harry Strom in 1968 upon Ernest Manning's retirement, and then Peter Lougheed in 1971 by winning a subsequent election (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, pp. 36 – 37, Rennie, 2004). As a further complication, student activism was also on the rise during this period (Macleod, p. 212). Relationships between the universities and the government during this time would have been difficult to become effective under these circumstances, let alone become reasonably well established. The time frame for this research, therefore, begins when new political leadership came to Alberta in the form of Peter Lougheed and the Progressive Conservative party when

they formed the government in 1971 until the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* came into force in 2004.

Ministers of the Crown tend not to serve lengthy terms in a portfolio. Lougheed regularly changed his cabinet, and the tradition generally continued under his successors. (Wood, 1985, p. 189) As such, the ability of a minister responsible for the universities to develop strong relationships with their corresponding chairs of the universities' boards of governors was compromised by infrequent contact within a limited time period. Distance might also be a factor in face-to-face contact, whether due to the location of the minister's home riding or the distance from the legislature to the university. Therefore, the study was limited to the relationships among senior appointed officials of the universities and of the government department responsible for the universities are the focus of this research, rather than any relationship between elected officials of government and representatives of the universities' boards.

There are a great many avenues of negotiation between a university and the government department assigned to oversee it, and they include a range of issues related directly or indirectly to finances, such as operating and capital funding, tuition fee policy, fundraising, tenure and other human resource practices, salaries and performance incentives. While these issues are of great importance, they are included in the research only if they are directly related to the coordination of university programs, and the relationships between senior university and government officials and ongoing attempts to resolve program coordination issues. Consequently, a great many other issues of significant mutual importance to the universities and government are not included in this research in order to allow a more narrow focus on the relationship between the two groups, as defined by their interactions.

Limitations.

While the interviewees spoke candidly, some provided certain information on the condition it not be recorded or documented in the research.

Another limitation was the clarity of memory of some of the interviewees. All retired or semi-retired, there were sometimes gaps in their recollection or uncertainty in details. A reluctance to go on record was occasionally the result, and in this regard one former department official well versed in program coordination declined to be interviewed. Advancing age and the frailties that accompany it also contributed to a limited pool of potential interviewees.

While a participant to some of the events in the study, the researcher was not the source of any data. However, personal knowledge of some events did enable the formulation of some questions of interviewees, enabling the confirmation of data triangulation to occur. All data originated from interviewees and print or electronic sources. Great care was taken to base the analysis on verifiable data, rather than on the researcher's personal knowledge of events.

CHAPTER 4

The Lougheed Years

The exploration of how the Lougheed government attempted to achieve its objectives for university program coordination is largely a narrative of how the government dismissed, not only what was dysfunctional in the previous government's relationship with the universities, but what was effective as well. The Social Credit government had treated the University of Alberta as being independent of government, and was deferential to it in terms of accepting that the university was capable of making important but often loosely defined contributions to Alberta, thanks to government support. The other three universities, in various stages of infancy between 1966 and 1971, were considered to hold great promise for the future of Alberta and Albertans, but had yet to enjoy the same level of deference from the government as the University of Alberta. The Progressive Conservative government, in contrast, treated the four universities as its agents, and attempted to enlist them more as means to helping achieve economic diversification priorities and anticipated labour market needs, and less in recognition of the students' individual interests and potential, or in the academic interests of the faculty.

Subjugating the scholars

Peter Lougheed's 1969 nomination speech began to emerge as policy when his government took power in 1971, and he announced his intention to create the Department of Advanced Education (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 44). One year later he introduced the *Department of Advanced Education Act*. The establishment of a department responsible for post-secondary education, and then shortly thereafter the elimination of the granting council known as the Universities Commission, was seen by some university faculty as an attempt to increase government oversight of the universities. This perception of government control over the

universities became more pronounced in 1975, when the name of the department was changed to Advanced Education and Manpower. “Some faculty saw the change in name as a significant shift in the policy framework ... that Advanced Education really was a subset of Manpower. It sets a certain tone, that [the university] is just a training ground.” (J. P Meekison, personal communication, August 9, 2010).

This perception that Alberta’s universities would become instruments of economic development had some merit. Having briefly worked on a Gulf Oil summer project in Oklahoma while studying for his Harvard MBA degree, Lougheed had been struck by the lack of prosperity in Tulsa and Oklahoma City after the oil boom in that state went bust. Years later as premier, Lougheed was determined that there would be no bust in Alberta after its oil boom was inevitably over, and so he set out to put policies in place to diversify Alberta’s economy (Hustak, 1979, p. 46).

One of Lougheed’s economic development policies was to adopt a strategy for providing education and training that leads to the employment needs of the economy (Wagner, 1998, p. 86). This is in direct contrast to the historical role of most universities, based on the Humboldt model focusing on *bildung*, which was to create within each student a fullness of character. Lougheed was not known as an academic, but he was well known as an effective organizer (Hustak, 1998, 42). During his first term in office, Lougheed’s government developed a strategy to organize post-secondary education in Alberta as a means of building and diversifying Alberta’s economy (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 66). The challenge would be to organize the Alberta universities into a system coordinated by the government, which was an anathema to a university community priding itself on upholding a legacy of academic independence that had lasted for a millennium (Winchester, 1983).

Institutions versus organizations

In *The New Institutionalism*, March and Olsen (2006) describe the characteristics of an institution:

An institution is a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances (March & Olsen, 2006, p.3).

Often cited in Clark Kerr's *The Uses of a University* is the observation that

About eighty-five institutions in the Western world established by 1520 still exist in recognizable forms, with similar functions and with unbroken histories, including the Catholic church, the Parliaments of the Isle of Man, of Iceland, and of Great Britain, several Swiss cantons, and seventy universities (Kerr, 2001, p. 115).

Institutions as described by March & Olsen and by Kerr share the characteristic of being venues for structured discourse, where individuals come together to develop a common understanding. This understanding may be in the form of doctrine, as with the Catholic church, or law, as with the parliaments noted, or knowledge, as with research universities that Kerr distinguished from teaching universities or universities focused on education leading to employment.

Kerr's research universities, which fall within March & Olsen's definition of institutions, also do not share characteristics with organizations. They do not have a membership subscribing to a common purpose that helps define the organization, or have a mission of serving a certain

group of people, or providing a certain kind of product or service (Lane, 2000, p.172). While parliaments and universities are typified as institutions, it is important to note that governments, non-profit associations and business are organizations. Organizations are instruments of policy, mission statements, goals and objectives, while institutions are arenas where these values are explored, developed and codified in groups bound by their membership to do so.

Kerr's institutions have a strong and common will, such as that provided by faculty in a research university, or representatives in a parliament, or the faithful in a church. They fit well into their environment; they are generally resilient to external forces, and they are not easily subject to fundamental change. In fact, Kerr states that the attributes of these institutions are eternal (Kerr, 2001, p.116). With attributes so impervious to change and of such longevity, there emerges the question of how Lougheed's government might affect the delivery of educational programs at research universities in Alberta, which aspire to uphold such resilient characteristics.

The public sector principle-agent relationship, such as that found between a government and its agencies, differs from the private sector principle-agent relationship. In the private sector, the principle provides processes and tools for coordinating activities in order to achieve objectives of a quantitative nature, and these objectives tend to be readily measured. In the public sector, the principle is the government that makes and implements policy, and it is the goals of these policies that tend to be qualitative and not readily measured (Lane, 2000, p. 13, 175).

Lougheed came from the private sector with an MBA from Harvard and served very successfully for five years as legal counsel for a group of companies owned by the Mannix family, one of the largest, most well managed and successful companies in Alberta (Hustak, 1979, p. 49). In addition to a strong business background, Lougheed also had an excellent record

as an organizer during his years as a student leader and student politician. When Lougheed as Premier turned his attention to the role of universities in developing the Alberta economy, it would eventually become clear, as the analysis to follow illustrates, that the type of principle-agent relationship with which he was familiar was not the same as the relationship between the provincial government and the research universities in Alberta. Not only would there be a challenge in understanding how the relationship was different from Lougheed's previous organizing experiences, there would be the challenge of realigning that relationship to more explicitly support economic diversification in Alberta.

Out with the old

With few university graduates in its ranks, the Social Credit government was regarded as respectful and supportive of universities (Winchester, 1983, p. 42). Under Lougheed, no longer would government comply with few questions to the universities' requests for money, without greater accountability for expenditure, or without demonstrating that they would support Lougheed's economic development plans. Since many of Lougheed's ministers were university graduates, there was an assumption they knew all they needed to know about how a university operated, and this familiarity was understood by members of the University of Alberta to be a form of contempt (Macleod, 2008, p. 219). The universities, as Lougheed the non-academic (Hustak, 1998, p. 42) made clear, had a role to play in the economic diversification of the province, and Lougheed was going to organize the universities into a coordinated system, a goal the previous Social Credit government had tried to accomplish with the 1966 *Universities Act*. (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 26)

A product of the 1966 *Universities Act*, and in anticipation of new universities being created in the province in addition to the University of Alberta, the Universities Commission was

to serve as an intermediary between the government and the universities. However, seldom did it enjoy success in its three primary functions: to make recommendations to government on financial needs of the universities, to assist the universities in development planning, and to limit duplication of services among universities by regulating the expansion of university programs. Created in the same act, the Universities Coordinating Council (UCC) also was designed to limit duplication of programs, not through financial constraints, but by requiring the universities to be in agreement with one another that a new program was indeed warranted. While the UCC invariably found agreement among its members to support recommendations for new programs put forward by its member universities (T. White, personal communication, July 28, 2011), the Universities Commission, a buffer organization intended to provide financial acumen to the process of university coordination, struggled to be effective and efficient throughout its existence (Macleod, 2008,p.222).

From the proclamation of the *Universities Act* in 1966 until the elimination of the Universities Commission in 1973, Alberta's university operating grants were developed through a formula based on the estimates of full-time enrolment and program costs (Andrews, Holdaway & Mowat, 1997, pp. 78-80). In the 1960s, there was significant enrolment growth among the universities in the province, and so the estimates were always low and sometimes off by considerable numbers. In the spring of each year, the Universities Commission would develop enrolment estimates for the coming fall intake of students, eight months in advance. The low enrolment estimates invariably led to budget deficits, and the additional money needed to offset the deficit was not awarded until months later. Another factor was salary inflation associated with existing and additional faculty and staff hired to serve the surging enrolment, making even more inevitable funding shortfalls each year. A recurring practice emerged of awarding "above-

formula” and “non-formula” grants each year to compensate for underestimated needs (Macleod, 2008, p. 218).

Although the Universities Commission used enrolment and program cost projections from the universities in order to establish the grants to be awarded, the universities were not consulted on the final grant amount allocated to each institution. When one university submitted a proposal for a new program, the Universities Commission did not consult with the other universities, leaving that role to the UCC. The General Faculties Council (GFC) of each university did not have representation on either the Universities Commission or the UCC, and at least the University of Alberta GFC became wary that its own role and authority for academic functions would be undermined by these external bodies (Johns, 1981, p. 473-476).

The composition of the Universities Commission was also a point of contention, as were the membership of its secretariat, and the location of its meetings. The first two chairs appointed, Swift in 1966 and Stewart in 1968, were Edmontonians. The Social Credit government then decided to appoint Calgarians, which was “a deliberate attempt to change the perceived dominance of that commission by the University of Alberta” (West, 1982, p. 137). Concern about the dominance of the University of Alberta (U of A) came from the perception that the Universities Commission was an agent of the U of A. Most of the commission’s staff were seconded from the U of A, and of the 62 meetings held by the commission during its existence from 1966 to 1973, 50 or nearly 81% of the meetings were held in Edmonton, although in office buildings off campus. The location of the majority of the meetings was also a source of irritation, especially at the University of Lethbridge, which hosted only three meetings during that period (West, 1982, pp. 57-63).

The Universities Commission, as inherited by the Lougheed government, exemplified all that was wrong with the coordination of university programs. The projections for funding needs were inaccurate due to rapidly increasing enrolments and because of significant inflation that was characteristic of the early 1970s; the process of developing and approving grants was slow and largely devoid of consultation with the universities; annual funding shortfalls were routine; and special awards to correct the universities' inevitable deficits came to be expected on a regular basis. As well, there was internal conflict prompted by the General Faculties Councils (GFCs), which were fearful of disempowerment, and the coordination of programs among the universities from an academic perspective excluded the GFCs while the financial support required for coordinating programs was determined unilaterally by the Universities Commission (Macleod, 2008, p. 217-219).

The dysfunctional nature of the Universities Commission was not lost on department officials of the new Department of Advanced Education, announced in 1971 and formally established in 1972, as evident in the department's first Minister, James Foster, when he stated the new department would, among other things, "coordinate the activities of the Universities Commission and the universities" (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 44).

Despite any dysfunction of the Universities Commission, the other creation of the *Universities Act*, the Universities Coordinating Council, initially served its membership very well. As former President of the University of Alberta Myer Horowitz related, some would say the UCC in the 1970s was really a club of the four university presidents, vice-presidents academic and one other senior official of each university, twelve in all.

We would meet roughly once a month and no one worried very much whether we were truly an entity of the University's Coordinating Council

or strictly a voluntary group coming together for our own selfish purposes. But a lot of things were discussed at that level anything that touched the universities” (M. Horowitz, personal communication, August 9, 2010).

Until dismantled with the passage of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* in 2004, the UCC was a venue for exchanging information among the four universities, although the nature of information evolved from formal and substantive, to often unproductive discussions (D. Abrioux, personal communication, August 10, 2010).

Transferability: The first engagement of the universities with Advanced Education

The Lougheed government’s first attempt to include the universities as members of an Alberta system of post-secondary education met with intractable resistance. Yet despite the inability of Advanced Education officials to garner acceptance of their policy proposal, the government would later take sole credit for the innovative compromise that eventually emerged.

The issue arose as a number of colleges in the province were offering courses designed to be accepted by the province’s universities for transfer, but the process to which the students were subjected was generally inefficient, unpredictable, and limiting. A student would rarely have clear assurances that a university-level course delivered by a college would be accepted for transfer credit by a university, as each college transcript tended to be assessed individually, without common institutional guidelines, and often by different individuals within a university holding varying views on the requirements for awarding transfer credit.

There were two competing proposals to resolve the problem. As recommended by the Mowat Committee in 1971 and supported by the Universities Coordinating Council and the Worth report (Andrews et al, 1997, p. 77; McIntosh, 2008, p. 27), a council with representation

of all post-secondary institutions concerned would be formed to negotiate and disseminate agreements between institutions to accept each other's courses for transfer credit. However, the department was wary of this suggestion. Fearing the universities would have the upper hand and unfairly restrict transferability, a second proposal by the chair and former members of the Colleges Commission, now officials with Advanced Education (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 78), proposed that the colleges unilaterally determine the transferability of courses and that the universities would be required to accept those determinations. This unilateral method would compromise the universities' institutional autonomy; as well as conscript the universities as members of a provincial system of post-secondary education they had no intention of joining. After two years of discussions and debate, the Mowat recommendation held, the universities retained their autonomy to determine for themselves the courses they would accept for transfer. The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT), as recommended by the Mowat Committee and initially rejected by the department, was formed to serve as a venue for negotiation and information sharing. The universities had won the first round in their dealings with the Department of Advanced Education, but the department later claimed ACAT as one of its most significant innovations (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 45).

The wariness of certain department officials towards the universities, evident in their reluctance to accept the participation of universities in determining transferability of college courses, may be explained by the background of the department officials. As Horowitz suggests, few department officials came from the university sector, as few applied for department positions:

Generally speaking no one is to blame for this and, if anybody is to blame for this, it is university people, because university people weren't very responsive when word got out that [the department officials] were

looking to replace X, or position X and position Y. There was very little interest on the part of university people to move into the civil service.

My point is simply this: many of the people in the civil service ... had a real loyalty, and there was no need for them to apologize for this, a real loyalty to the college sector [for they were previously employed in the college sector].” (M. Horowitz, personal communication, August 9, 2010)

The affinity of department officials for the college sector was the result of appointments made by Walter Worth as Deputy Minister upon the dissolution of the Universities Commission and the Colleges Commission. Although offers had been extended to former Universities Commission staff, only one person had accepted; all other appointments of senior staff at Advanced Education were formerly of the Colleges Commission (West, 1982, pp. 164-165).

Round two: A coordination policy

The second engagement between Alberta’s universities and the Department of Advanced Education was an unabashed attempt to coordinate university programming. *Program Coordination; Policies, Guidelines and Procedures* was released by Advanced Education as a policy document in 1974, but other policy changes had already laid the foundation for its introduction.

The Lougheed government’s initial intent was to allow the Universities Commission to continue to exist although in a more efficient manner and with a more adept application of a funding formula, but this idea was later abandoned in the second year of Advanced Education’s existence. The Lougheed government eliminated the commission with the passing of the *Universities Amendment Act, 1973* in May of that year and assigned the commission’s duties to the Minister of Advanced Education. However, most important in the 1973 amendment act was

a new power given to the Minister: through regulation or prohibition, section 64 provided the Minister with the authority to reduce or avoid unnecessary university services, facilities or programs.

The new power given to the Minister to limit university programming did not cause controversy, as significant and rapid expansion of university programming had just taken place in recent years. Instead, most attention in the media regarding the amendment act was given to the elimination of the Universities Commission, and the concern for Advanced Education replacing the cumbersome funding formula with a series of annual grants based on three-year projections (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 80). In part, this new system was the response of the government to a fifty-page proposal put forward by the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge, which together requested adjustments for inflation, and a tolerance for inaccurate projections of enrolment. In light of the University of Lethbridge's difficulties in securing a stable enrolment pattern during its initial years, the proposal also requested that the University of Lethbridge be temporarily exempt from any formula tied to enrolment. To a great extent, the universities' proposal was ignored (Macleod, 2008, p. 223).

By 1976 the department had developed its own solution to the annual funding allocation problems by establishing a block grant funding system. In essence, grants to each institution were based on the provincial award of the previous year. Adjustments would then be made for inflation, additional program costs, greater space requirements and similar recognized costs (Andrews et al., 1997, p.80). Not until the Getty years, when provincial government deficits became a concern, would there be controversy on a similar scale regarding funding for university programs (Dupre, 1987, pp. 29-30).

While issues of underwriting many of the costs of the universities were addressed in relatively short order, with a revised funding model in 1973 and a block funding model introduced in 1976, the Alberta university community was still quite apprehensive about its relationship with the Department of Advanced Education. Issues of institutional autonomy, the role of universities and university education, accountability, and value for taxpayers' dollars expended became major issues in Alberta in 1974 and 1975 (Grant, 1974a; Winchester, 1983).

Nine months after the *Universities Amendment Act, 1973* was passed, the Department of Advanced Education document *Program Coordination: Policy, Guidelines, Procedures* was released. The policy was encapsulated in one sentence:

Instructional programs in the Alberta system of advanced education will be coordinated to ensure the availability of effective educational experiences and to avoid unwarranted duplication of effort in institutions.

(1974, p. 1)

Although some senior members of Alberta's university community were in agreement with the idea of the provincial government coordinating programs to prevent unnecessary duplication, they did not agree with the use of financial constraints to control the universities or their programming. Instead, the universities believed they should continue to coordinate programming independently of Advanced Education through the Universities Coordinating Council, just as intended and which, by all accounts up to that time, had been successful.

The universities were also suspicious of the department's consultation process, and they wanted to know how unnecessary duplication in programming would be determined. There was a wide range of variation in content in similarly named university-level courses and programs across the province, so while some university programs appeared to be the same, an evaluation

would be needed to determine their similarities and differences. As well, different regions could have similar programming needs, so there would need to be an equitable means of assessing programs to determine whether duplication was in fact unnecessary or necessary. The Department of Advanced Education had issued a draft of the policy in December of 1973, asking for comments, but none of the University of Calgary's concerns were included in a subsequent draft issued by the department in January 1974, thus escalating the issue by prompting the doubts about the department's sincerity in seeking to consult (Grant, 1974b).

One comment in particular, as expressed in 1974 by the University of Calgary Vice-President Academic Finley Campbell, was that the department was putting too much emphasis on program development. Evaluating university programs in the same way as career and training programs designed to meet manpower needs, it was argued, would eventually undermine the university's role to help their students realize their individual potential, especially in terms of their ability to think critically. While details are important in manpower training curricula at colleges and technical institutes, "university program details," said Finley, "don't matter" (Grant, 1974b). By rebuking the department's assertion that it should be involved in the content of university programs, Finley was simply asserting university autonomy.

The program coordination policy stated the universities were responsible for preparing and revising their role statements, and the department would be responsible for ensuring that collectively, role statements "reflect mission and role and the entire system of advanced education" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1974, p.2). A further criticism by the universities was that, in submitting a program proposal, a university also had to provide a statement of philosophy and purpose that was consistent with the "current philosophy of the system as a whole" but the

department had yet to provide that current philosophy for universities, other than to declare the universities were part of the system of post-secondary education in Alberta (Grant, 1974b).

The inability of the former Universities Commission to efficiently and effectively provide financial support to the institutions was lost on many of the faculty now attempting to understand the relationship of this new department to the universities. In a debate carried out in the press in April of 1974, Minister James Foster responded to concerns about the absence of a buffer organization between the universities and Advanced Education by saying each university has a board of governors serving that role. In fact, however, the *Universities Act* made clear that the boards of governors are indeed part of the governance structure of each university, with the authority to appoint the president of the university (1966). While the boards may act as buffers between university administrations and the department, the boards are not independent third party organizations that effectively replace the Universities Commission, as Foster may have attempted to imply. Any confusion prompted by Foster's comment is not reflected in the response provided by University of Calgary President A.W.R. Carrothers, who, nonetheless, questioned the "quality of opinion" a buffer group, such as a board of governors, could offer the Department of Advanced Education (Grant, 1974a). Considering that Dr. Carrothers' comments may have been a reflection on the board to which he reported, his candidness may be explained by the fact his term as president would be ending within months (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 77).

Carrothers' candidness is also evident in other statements made to the *Lethbridge Herald* at the time, in that he suggested there were political motivations for certain government officials labeling universities as elite and unaccountable. Contending that one role of a university was to be "a centre of informed criticism" in society, Carrothers affirmed a buffer is needed to protect

the universities from members of society being criticized, suggesting that he believed there was – or soon would be – an insufficient lack of autonomy at the University of Calgary from the Department of Advanced Education. There were many comments emanating from the department at the time offering views on the need to control university spending, in particular by limiting university research and avoiding duplication of similar programs at different universities, and also by directing the universities to provide programs that more quickly and directly led to employment of graduates (Grant, 1974c). Carrothers' comments were not, therefore, unprovoked, and most of the provocation, when not uttered by the Minister of Advanced Education, came from his Deputy Minister, Dr. Walter Worth (Grant, 1974a).

Prior to his appointment as Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Worth had been commissioned by the previous Social Credit government to conduct a study of the future of education. Initiated under the Social Credit government, the work of the commission continued under the Progressive Conservatives, and was released in 1972. According to Worth, the purpose of the study was to attract voter support for the Social Credit party in urban areas, where it was losing support to the Progressive Conservatives. The Social Credit government had wanted to establish itself as a visionary government by conducting a well-publicized study that focused on the future of education in the province (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 22).

The Worth report, as it came to be known, had the official title *A Choice of Futures*, with the two choices being, in Worth's terminology, either the second-phase industrial society or the person-centred society (Worth, 1972, p. 28). The report envisioned a second-phase industrial society as a natural extension of the industrial society that was still evident in the 1960s. In this milieu, Worth predicted there would be a choice between dominant business and government institutions providing a leadership role in developing the society, or a society shaped by the

personal interests and aspirations of individuals. With either choice, the Worth report predicted that the traditional school will largely disappear, only to be replaced by a system of human assistants aided by technology to communicate at a distance with students from regional centres. Aside from the lack of similarity of Worth's vision of the future of automated education in 1972 to online education as we know it today, the Worth report was remarkably accurate in predicting Alberta's growth in population, urbanization, and per capita income (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 23).

Worth's prescience did not occur in isolation. Several individuals working for the Worth commission were also senior employees of Advanced Education (Worth, 1972, p. i), which at the same time was developing a plan for the role that the highly anticipated fourth university, Athabasca University, would play in Alberta. That role would be to serve exclusively as a distance education university (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 48).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s there were three groups with significant influence on education in Alberta: the elite, the Social Credit party, and the Progressive Conservatives (Wagner, 1998, pp. 86-88). The elite were a group of educational administrators with origins in the Education Society of Edmonton founded in 1927. They supported a progressive education model, which had also enjoyed benign acceptance by the second group, the Social Credit party under William Aberhart, the former high school principal who had served as Minister of Education while Premier, and by his successor as Premier, Ernest Manning, who had acquiesced to a progressive education model despite perception of the Social Credit party as right wing.

The progressive education philosophy held that the more education a person received, the more developed they would become and the more society would benefit regardless of the direction in which their academic pursuits took them. Worth and several of his staff, including

Henry Kolesar, future Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, were members of the Education Society of Edmonton (Chalmers, 1988, p. 51). Social Credit party members comprised the second group supporting progressive education, as they were populists who also held that the welfare of the individual took precedence over the needs of the economy. Members of the third group were Progressive Conservatives, who supported a manpower model that sought to align educational programs with the needs of the economy, a strategy at odds with the progressive education model.

Worth's second choice of futures, the person-centred society, had much in common with the concepts of progressive education. In his report, Worth describes a person-centred society as taking precedence over an industrial society, because addressing the needs and rights of the individual results in a higher level of growth than an industrial society can provide (Worth, 1972, p. 28). Although Worth goes to great lengths to give a balanced view of both types of future society, his report does come out in support of the person-centred society. However, after the release of the report, Worth as the newly appointed Deputy Minister of Advanced Education found himself promoting a manpower planning view of education, which was the policy of the Lougheed government. In fact, Lougheed later became quite critical of the Worth report and its support of progressive education (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 25).

There is some irony in Lougheed, with his manpower planning agenda for education, appointing Worth, an apostle of progressive education, as Deputy Minister of Advanced Education. Although Worth's progressive views on education were not in agreement with the Progressive Conservative manpower training model, Worth's suitability for the job was apparent due to his strong vision, as demonstrated in his report, of a coordinated system of post-secondary education. He had proposed that, where no formal means of coordination exist, informal

coordination will occur out of necessity; therefore, in the interests of all parties concerned, it is prudent to formally establish the means of coordination among all Alberta's post-secondary institutions rather than leave it to chance (Worth, 1972, p. 131).

Worth introduced to academia in an aggressive manner the concept of Alberta's universities being subject to a system of program coordination. In February 1974, one month prior to the release of the *Program Coordination* policy document, Worth participated in a seminar on politics in higher education at the University of Lethbridge. His statements were not those of bureaucrats typically known for their non-committal, vague comments in deference to their minister. Instead, he suggested that the importance of universities was declining in relation to other members of the post-secondary system, and that the universities should become accepting of their role in a centralized system, which would be at its core an organization with staff in Edmonton reporting to the Minister of Advanced Education. Recognizing his views were not in agreement with the majority of those in the university community, he concluded his remarks by provoking his largely academic audience. "Avoidance of what de Tocqueville called the 'despotism of the majority' is the name of the political game in higher education. Personally I have come to play and win. Have you?" (Worth, 1974, p. 65)

Seeking consensus was not one of Worth's strategies in his efforts to include Alberta's universities in a system. Indeed, according to Reno Bosetti, one of Worth's assistant deputy ministers, seeking full consensus was viewed as a waste of time by Worth and his staff (personal communication, July 18, 2010). Worth had instead attempted to promote the concept of university programs within a coordinated system by "establishing capital and operating grant schemes with similar elements for most institutions, which from time to time, could be modified

to reflect the economic and social priorities of the government” (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 30).

The Lougheed government’s initial funding strategy following the dissolution of the Universities Commission was an interim measure and not effective, and was almost Faustian in the eyes of the universities. In exchange for implementing government-approved program revisions, the government attempted to offer financial incentives, which could be seen by the universities as compromising institutional autonomy. Later, when the Lougheed government introduced the block funding model, universities were allowed to reallocate funds internally, making it possible to fund new programs without seeking new program dollars from the government. While tuition had always been included in the universities’ annual budget, and, therefore, subject to approval, the universities could also on occasion increase revenue from students through new or increased ancillary fees, such as technology or lab supply fees, thus avoiding ministerial approval. These additional funds could then be allocated to support programs. The existence of “unfunded programs,” as programs offered by Alberta universities without approval from Advanced Education came to be known (Dupre, 1987, pp.84-87), exemplified university independence from the government. As well, during the 1970s and 1980s, many three-year bachelor degree programs were unilaterally transformed into four-year programs, without consultation or consent from the department. In one instance, there was a reprimand by Assistant Deputy Minister Desmond Berghofer, who had telephoned U of A Vice-President Academic Peter Meekison to inform him that his university did not have the authority to extend the academic program by one additional year. “Well, I don’t agree with you,” responded Meekison over the telephone. “We have had the authority to offer the B.A. and the B.Sc., and that’s what we’re doing. We feel this is academically sound.” The phone call ended

soon after and there was no further discussion on the matter by either party. There would be no further attempt by government officials to assert the need for approvals lengthening programs from three years to four (J.P. Meekison, personal communication, August 9, 2010).

While the universities sought approval for some of their programs, they did not always seek that approval, as illustrated above, and were quite willing to test the department's tolerance for the university's internal reallocation of funds to support new programs. The universities' increases in tuition to cover the costs of courses unfunded, extended or otherwise bereft of ministerial approval, was not an issue during this period, although it was generally accepted that tuition and fee increases were a legitimate alternative to seeking ministerial program approval (Dupre, 1987, p. 85). However, tuition fee increases would eventually emerge as a major controversy and continue for some time, both in the media and in policy.

In terms of university programs, the success of the government's policy document *Program Coordination: Policy, Guidelines, Procedures* (1974) at best might be considered a draw. The universities would follow the policy when they needed government financial support for a new program, thus showing their support for government priorities, and they would ignore the policy when they did not need government financial support, thus demonstrating their autonomy. The program coordination policy functioned only when the universities decided it was in their interest to recognize it. Limited in its ability to coordinate all university programs within its sphere, Advanced Education during this period was more often an enabler of programming, rather than a coordinator. The government policy, as developed by Worth's officials in Advanced Education and introduced by Minister James Foster was in practice not a coordinating policy, but a funding policy because the requirement of full cooperation by the universities to introduce or revise a program did not exist. The full cooperation sought by

Lougheed's government would soon emerge much like a contractual obligation in the next attempt by the government to coordinate university programming.

The Kolesar Paper

In 1971 while Chair of the Alberta Colleges Commission, and soon to be Assistant Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Dr. Henry Kolesar delivered a paper to the Northwest Association of Secondary & Higher Schools in Reno, Nevada (Kolesar). Kolesar was not without influence in Alberta's post-secondary community, and it would only grow over time. When Walter Worth left the Deputy Minister's office, Kolesar would succeed him in the role.

With a focus on the need for accountability, the thrust of Kolesar's argument presented at the Reno conference was that clear and precise contracts were needed between post-secondary institutions and the government authorities funding them. Without such contracts, responsibility for obligations of each party could not properly be assigned. Kolesar asserted that provincial and state governments are responsible for post-secondary education, regardless of involvement by federal or local governments, and that contracts delegating this responsibility to post-secondary institutions by government are necessary to ensure authority and responsibility are recognized. Part of that responsibility is to provide educational services that meet certain standards of quality, and these standards need to be made clear in contracts, as well as in how the performance of these services would be monitored and assessed. Further, if these educational services did not meet a satisfactory level of performance, an understanding of the responsibility of the provincial or state government to correct the situation needed to be clear in a contractual manner as well.

Without naming any provincial or state governments, Kolesar's paper goes on to describe the situation circa 1971 in certain unnamed jurisdictions. These provincial or state governments had not made clear their obligations for post-secondary institutions to their constituents, to the

agencies to which they had assigned responsibilities, nor had these agencies defined the obligations they expected of their government. As a result, the current situation was based on trust amid ambiguity. Without contracts to remove the ambiguity, Kolesar feared that polarization was inevitable, between those that provided funds and those that provided education, as well polarization between those that provided education and those that receive education.

Kolesar concluded his paper by commenting that such contracts will provide gains, but losses as well, and they must be weighed against each other. If contractual procedures are imposed on the post-secondary institutions with no corresponding obligations expected of the province or state to help identify and solve problems, the relationship between the two parties would be seen as inequitable, and the goals of neither party would be achieved. This parting comment may have been lost on those in the department who would later draft the *Adult Education Act* (1975).

The “Failed Act”

On February 14, 1975 Peter Lougheed called an unexpected provincial election to provide a show of support by Albertans for his oil pricing and energy policies, which were being rebuffed by the federal government in its determination to assert some control over energy-related issues. It was an emotional campaign, pitting Alberta’s rights over its own resources versus inevitable inflationary energy costs for all of Canada. The election resulted in Lougheed’s party winning 63% of the popular vote, the highest in the history of the province, and over 90% of the seats: 69 Progressive Conservative, four Social Credit, one NDP and one independent. This mandate to negotiate from a position of strength with Ottawa gave Lougheed the political capital he needed to successfully fend off pressures from Ottawa and Ontario to keep oil prices below market value, but it also gave some members of his cabinet a swaggering

sense of being impervious to criticism, thanks also to a sycophantic media in the province (Hustak, pp. 181-197).

This boldness was evident in the legislation drafted under a new minister responsible for post-secondary education following the election, Bert Hohol, who was appointed by Lougheed to a department now named Advanced Education and Manpower. Walter Worth remained Deputy Minister and Hohol, the former Minister of Labour, brought with him a portion of his previous portfolio dealing with manpower planning (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 79). As stated previously, the implied intent of this new department was not lost on members of the university community, many of whom saw the change in name of the portfolio as a signal that Lougheed envisioned the universities as part of an educational system designed to support a manpower planning strategy (J. P Meekison, personal communication, August 9, 2010).

In July 1975, Hohol's department of Advanced Education and Manpower issued for discussion a draft of *The Adult Education Act*. Contractual language previously championed by Kolesar, as one of Worth's assistant deputy ministers, was clearly evident in the draft, and it demanded the universities' cooperation in realizing Lougheed's manpower planning goals. In the draft legislation, section 24 begins by stating the many duties of each of the boards of governors of Alberta's universities and public colleges, but the level of cooperation sought previously in the 1974 program coordination policy document is now explicit in contractual language of the first three duties:

24. (1) A board shall
 - (a) assist the Minister and other members of the system of advanced education in efforts to contribute to the educational and cultural advancement of the people of Alberta at large by

providing for necessary courses, programs of study, services and facilities,

(b) assist the Minister in effecting program coordination and monitoring development of programs of study so as to avoid duplication,

(c) subject to subsections (1) and (5) of section 51, cooperate with other members of the system of advanced education in implementing policies regarding admission standards and transferability of credit, and in the case of a dispute resolved by the Council on Admissions and Transfer, implement the decisions of the Council (1975, p.16).

In section 51 of the draft legislation, an institution's academic council replaces the General Faculties Council but retains much the same characteristics. Should an academic council vote by simple majority to make a recommendation on an academic matter to the board and the recommendation is vetoed by the board, the academic council may hold a second vote. If the second vote passes with at least a two-thirds majority, the board must approve the recommendation (1975, p. 31-32).

Annotations in the draft legislation explain that this is an innovative method of recognizing both the boards' ultimate responsibility for the business and finances of the institution while maintaining the characteristics of bi-cameral governance where an academic authority has distinct powers regarding academic affairs. Regardless of being overruled on an academic matter, the board would retain ultimate authority for all expenditures, leaving the possibility that even if the academic council won that battle for program development, it could

lose the war of program coordination. The draft legislation, in other words, meant that while the academic council within the university would have had the authority to offer a program it created or revised, as well as compel the board to approve that program, securing the financial resources necessary to offer that program would be at the mercy of a board duty-bound to accept direction from the minister.

With reference to the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT), the concept reemerges from earlier in the decade of forcing one member institution of the system of post-secondary institutions, likely a university, to accept for transfer credits awarded by another member of the system, likely a college. In the draft legislation, ACAT is empowered to develop and apply a process for resolving disputes, allowing institutions denied transfer credit through negotiation the opportunity for a binding resolution (1975, pp. 12-13).

The clarity of responsibility and authority Kolesar described in his 1971 paper on accountability was evident in the 1975 draft legislation. With the passing of this act, there would be no ambiguity regarding the expectations of universities and colleges to contribute to the province, to support the Minister's objectives, and to cooperate with one another. However, the polarization that Kolesar feared had already started to emerge more than a year earlier with the release of the *Program Coordination: Policy, Guidelines, Procedures* (1974). By the time the draft *Adult Education Act* was released, resistance to the concept of universities being part of a system of coordination was considerable. Both the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta submitted formal responses objecting to the legislation, as did professional groups including the Alberta Association of Architects. With the minister holding such sweeping powers to control virtually every aspect of university operations, they argued, whether directly or by controlling membership on the boards and other agencies, there was little in terms of authority

and responsibility left to the boards or other agencies in the system. Ultimately, the boards would be redundant (Winchester, 1983, p. 54).

For the universities, the government's ability to coordinate programming was not an objective to which they took exception. Indeed, they had agreed all along that care must be taken to ensure there would be a minimum of duplication in programming, as these programs were being supported with public funds. It was not the objective of program coordination that was of concern; it was the strategies proposed by the government officials to achieve the objective that had caused the polarization between the universities and the government. As the University of Calgary argued, the draft legislation gave the Minister complete control, more power than one individual could handle, and so the role of exercising these powers would be delegated to officials in Advanced Education and Manpower. On New Year's Eve 1975, Minister Bert Hohol came to agree with the universities. He withdrew the legislation, deciding that universities – as their purposes and traditions defined them – should not be assimilated with colleges into a system. Instead, he decided they should continue to be treated separately (Winchester, 1983, p. 54). According to one observer, Hohol's decision, not surprisingly, seemed to catch officials within the department by surprise (W. Workman, personal communication, July 23, 2010).

As Worth concedes, there were two errors made in the attempt to include the universities as part of a coordinated system (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 31). The first error was that the draft legislation was perceived by many in the university community as a serious threat to their autonomy and, as such, a threat to academic freedom as well. Worth's attempt to separate institutional autonomy from academic freedom, in his discussions with the university community, was not appreciated. He had failed to successfully argue that institutional autonomy was not an

essential means of assuring academic freedom, and that there were indeed other arrangements to ensure academic freedom as evident in other jurisdictions (West, 1985, p. 75). One can only speculate that the unusual opportunity in section 51 of the draft act, where an academic council can overrule a board of governors by securing a two-thirds majority vote on an academic recommendation, was offered as a means of demonstrating the government's respect for the primacy of academic freedom, provided it has the support of at least two-thirds of the potential collective academic voice. A lone academic voice, on the other hand, might not find sufficient support to pursue or profess a line of academic inquiry.

The second error admitted by Worth goes to the heart of the concept of communities of practice, how a community of practice that had existed in the form of the Education Society of Edmonton for generations had been ignored by the Lougheed government as a means of policy development, and how, in the defeat of the draft legislation in the court of public opinion, Lougheed and his successors would deal with universities in the coordination of programs. In Worth's own words

Another factor contributing to the early demise of this venture was a flawed process. We simply did not involve the institutions in a way that took cognizance of their beliefs and aspirations and gave them a sense of participation, if not ownership. (McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 31)

The road not taken

The Adult Education Act was not the product of consultation with the universities; but rather an attempt to assign the universities membership in a system they saw as a threat to their autonomy. Worth's attempts to coordinate university programming, by means other than the draft *Adult Education Act*, might have been successful had he tried to employ a less

confrontational approach. A collaborative model similar to Wenger's theory of communities of practice may have emerged, if only he had given the universities sufficient opportunity to participate in developing a policy rather than debating the merits of policies proposed in the failed act.

The Education Society of Edmonton (ESE) is the first documented organization in Alberta with the dimensions of a community of practice involving senior government and university officials (Chalmers, 1988). When Peter Lougheed came to power as the Premier of Alberta in 1971, the ESE had been in existence for 45 years. At that time, no fewer than six of its members held the rank of Dean, Vice-President or President at the University of Alberta, including future U of A President Myer Horowitz, and no fewer than five members of the ESE were officials employed by the Alberta government, including one cabinet minister and four former or current deputy ministers. Deputy Minister of Education E.K. Hawkesworth would join the ESE in 1972, and Deputy Minister of Advanced Education Henry Kolesar would join his predecessor Walter Worth as a member in 1975. In later years, while Lougheed was still Premier, at least three Assistant Deputy Ministers in the portfolio responsible for advanced education would join ESE, along with many professors, administrators and graduates of the University of Alberta.

The ESE continues to meet on a regular basis to this day. Membership is limited and by invitation only, and concedes to be elitist by its limited membership, by the advanced degrees of its members, and by the positions of leadership they hold, whether at the University of Alberta, within the Alberta government, other post-secondary institutions in the Edmonton area, or in surrounding school districts. The sense of elitism is further enhanced by the secretive nature of

the society, for the debates of the society are privileged. Further, members are expressly forbidden to reveal the debates of the society to the media (Chalmers, 1988, p. 4-5).

Founded by nine Edmonton high school teachers in 1927, the ESE began as a professional organization, not immediately concerned with financial issues related to the salaries of teachers, but to help educators become more knowledgeable and better leaders. Dr. H.C. Newland was the driving force behind the creation of the ESE. A graduate of the University of Chicago where the progressive education philosophies of John Dewey and William Kilpatrick were very popular, he later became supervisor of schools for the Province of Alberta in 1935. In the ESE's early years, progressive education was the topic of many ESE meetings; issues of the *Progressive Education* magazine were shared at meetings, and in 1939 speakers from the Progressive Education Association were invited to speak at a teachers' conference in Edmonton, thanks to the efforts of ESE members. In 1941, American progressive education advocate Harold Rugg spoke in Edmonton and, while in the city, developed a "private, mutual admiration society" with Alberta Premier, Minister of Education and former high school principal, William Aberhart (McDougall, 1967, pp. 11-15).

The aims and objectives of the ESE were

To frame such policies, and to concert such measures, as may serve to place teaching on a par with major professions of the Province ... To assume educational leadership of this City, and, if need be, of the Province ... To enable the professional educators of Edmonton to debate and discuss any or all aspects of the educational problems of Alberta ... To serve as a medium whereby the professional opinions of Edmonton

educators ... [and] To carry on educational research in so far as means and opportunity may permit ...” (McDougall, 1967, p. 5).

Calgary had a similar organization, the Educational Progress Club of Calgary (EPC), founded in 1928. Described as a study group, the aim was to “review, research and discuss current issues in education.” Similar to the ESE, membership was by nomination and election, and limited to 30 members until 1968, when the membership limit was increased to 45. In 1971, the membership limit was raised to 60. Meetings were held over dinner and only men were allowed to join the society until 1989, when women were accepted. The EPC was officially disbanded in 2001 (Coats, 2001).

On occasion, the ESE and EPC would hold joint meetings in Red Deer, no more than one per year. Few records of these meetings remain, but among them are the April 1971 records of a joint meeting in which Deputy Minister of Education Tim Byrne spoke about Alberta’s fourth university, which was to be called the University of Athabasca. However, although several guests from Calgary’s university campus were speakers at EPC meetings over the years, there is no evidence of any government representative other than Byrne attending or speaking about post-secondary education in Calgary during the entire existence of the club (Educational Progress Club of Calgary, 2001).

The strong presence of progressive education in Alberta is an indication of the success of the ESE as a community of practice. Progressive education did not take hold in Alberta in response to widespread public demand, or demand by Alberta’s teachers, but instead to an elite group of educational leaders, many of whom were members of the ESE. (Wagner, 1998, pp. 40-42).

The influence of the ESE on education in Alberta was not lost on its membership, including Worth, as suggested by the lyrics written and sung to the tune of *Clementine* at a meeting on the occasion of ESE's 60th anniversary on February 9, 1987 (Chalmers, 1988, p. 45). The following lyrics were co-authored by Worth and his wife, Joan, and Worth led the ESE in song that night:

Founding members, few in numbers, they were visionaries all;

Felt conversion, and reformation, was their duty and their call.

Chorus:

Sixty years old, growing less bold, education society,

Been influential, still has potential, education society,

Chorus

Whoever's who, everyone knew, society members did become.

As the in-group, with the latest scoop, they all knew that would be done.

Chorus

Quit at eight, did the great, fearful of their spouses' ire;

But during the meetings, none were weaklings,

When for change they did conspire.

As Worth well knew, progressive education enjoyed a strong influence in Alberta's educational policies until Lougheed came to office, and the shift in philosophy was significant. While progressive education promoted an emphasis on the individual learning experiences of the child and holistic development of the child's character and personality, as espoused by Dewey, in the later years of the Lougheed government, it would employ an educational model focused on skills that were needed for employment. As a result, the needs of the economy would now take

precedence over the needs of the individual (Wagner, pp. 39-42, 79, 88). Despite the waning influence of progressive education after 1971, the ESE membership remained well connected to government, not only because representatives of both the University of Alberta and the Alberta government were members of ESE, but because of presentations at meetings. "...Tory ministers have been punctilious in keeping the Society informed as to the ministry's policies, a perhaps unintended acknowledgment of its and its members influence" (Chalmers, p. 35).

As a community of practice, the ESE has all the dimensions: the domain is education, the community is Edmonton area educators, and their practice, which began with an interest in promoting progressive education, has, over the decades, branched out to a wide variety of issues within educational policy. Government officials and university officials gathered on a monthly basis to discuss educational issues at ESE meetings, and not the least of these issues were related to universities and their programs. The University of Alberta was the only university represented at these meetings.

However, the ESE community of practice depended on strong links between a particular part of the university, the Faculty of Education, with senior university leadership and the department responsible for universities. Those connections were evident in the era of Kolesar and Worth but became less significant as the profile within the department and university leadership began to change (D. Owrap, personal communication, September 26, 2013).

An analysis of the Lougheed years

For a community of practice to exist during Worth's term as deputy minister, three elements were required:

- There needed to be a commitment to a domain of knowledge, that is, a common desire to learn from one another in order to achieve Lougheed's goal of avoiding unnecessary

duplication of programs. All four Alberta universities would have needed to appreciate the benefits of program coordination for their respective institution.

- There needed to be a community with a membership that wanted a shared understanding of the issues involved, such as coordination, institutional autonomy, academic freedom, unnecessary duplication and governance. As these shared understandings developed, trust and mutual respect would emerge among the membership and create the community.
- There needed to be developed by this community a practice, that is, collective knowledge, of how to identify and avoid unnecessary duplication in university programming.

Regarding the first requirement of a domain of knowledge in which members would learn from each other, while the universities agreed with Lougheed's goal of program coordination, they first sought clarification of what unnecessary duplication might be, as the *Lethbridge Herald* articles illustrate (Grant, 1974a). James Foster, the first Minister of Advanced Education in Lougheed's government, was unable to explain why a proposed management program at the University of Lethbridge may be unnecessary, considering similar degree programs offered in Calgary and Edmonton were accepted as indeed necessary. Due to the minister's inability to be definitive, or failure to invite the universities to participate in the development of a definition of unnecessary duplication, the universities could only conclude that the government had no interest in learning through exploratory discussions with the universities how coordination could be achieved (Grant, 1974c). Worth, in addition to Foster, failed to demonstrate a desire to learn from the universities. A former academic at the University of Alberta and knowledgeable about all aspects of education in Alberta thanks to his recent role as commissioner of educational planning, Worth may have found it difficult to assume there was anything further to learn. While there is little evidence to suggest he may have acknowledged there was more for him to learn

from the universities during discussions surrounding the draft *Adult Education Act*, it is apparent in his 1974 address to the university community in Lethbridge that he believed they had much to learn from him, for he presented the issue to them in the form of a challenge to a debate, rather than as an invitation to participate in policy development. There is no indication during this period following the release of the Worth report and the establishment of a department of advanced education that government officials acted as if they had anything more to learn, despite their inability to answer some of the questions posed by the university community.

To the second requirement, a membership wanting to learn from one another, while there may have been the members available to form a community of shared knowledge, these potential members – both university and department officials - were not exchanging their views in the relatively risk-free spirit of collegiality. Rather, the interactions between representatives of the university and the department during the Lougheed years were in the form of organized events, statements to the press, committee deliberations and, ultimately, draft legislation. As a result, there were two camps of differing opinion, often in explicit conflict with one another, instead of one community united by the intent of its membership to work together. Information between the two groups was exchanged on occasion, and consultation may have occurred in a generous sense of the term, but the two groups did not jointly participate in any decision making or policy development. As a result, the perspectives of the two groups were shared, but there is no evidence of the creation of a shared understanding other than the existence of irreconcilability.

The third requirement, a new collective knowledge on how to coordinate university programming, simply was not achieved. There is a pattern during the Lougheed years of attempting to organize the colleges and universities with the objective of creating a system of coordination when, in fact, the objective may have been more easily attained if membership

within a formal system was not a requirement. When Lougheed in 1969 first brought to the public's attention his understanding of the need to coordinate university programming, he stated it as the result of the Social Credit government's "piece-meal, hit and miss" development of post-secondary education in Alberta (Alberta Advanced Education, 1987, p.4). Not wanting to continue with such an undesirable method, Lougheed's government sought the polar opposite, a legislated arrangement with clearly defined contractual obligations. The simple concept of coordination, to which the universities agreed, was made a feature of a system in which the universities resisted membership for fear of losing autonomy, and the government's attempt to overcome this resistance became a series of strategies, all of which were in some respect unsuccessful:

- 1971-72 – The announcement and later the formal creation of the Department of Advanced Education; which supplanted the Universities Commission, causing distrust, apprehension and a reluctance to cooperate in the absence of a recognizable buffer agency.
- 1971-74 – Following more than two years of controversy, the creation of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, which provided a venue for colleges and universities to negotiate transfer of courses, but which did not compel, as the department had long insisted, the universities to accept from Alberta's colleges the transfer of courses that the colleges had unilaterally deemed acceptable for transfer credit.
- 1974 - Introduction of *Program Coordination: Policy, Guidelines, Procedures*, which rewarded universities with financial support for programming approved by the Minister but did not prevent universities from avoiding new program approval by reallocating funds internally. The definitions and desired objectives in the policy lacked clarity.

- 1975 - *The Adult Education Act* proposal, which sought to establish contractual obligations, sweeping ministerial powers, conscripted institutional membership, and intrusive levels of oversight in the pursuit of system coordination. Public and university community pressure eventually convinced the Minister that the proposed legislation was not appropriate for universities.

The pattern emerges that the Lougheed government, with each successive setback in its attempts to establish satisfactory program coordination, raises the stakes or, using a more contemporary term, doubles down. First by removing a buffer organization and taking direct responsibility for government oversight of the universities, then by attempting to force the universities to accept transfer courses from colleges, third by unilaterally attempting to conscript the universities into a system, and finally by creating redundancy in virtually all vital university administrative functions, the government demonstrated its determination, not only to establish program coordination, but to force it, then control it, and then ultimately demand it in law.

As well, there were several complicating factors. Not only was the Lougheed government attempting to eliminate or reduce unnecessary university programming, it wanted to ensure the manpower needs of the economy, as they existed and as they would be diversified, would be met. While universities do serve the needs of the economy in many respects, such as by offering professional programs, economic development objectives are not necessarily components of their teaching, research and community service functions. As opined by Worth, while academic freedom was seemingly assured in his vision of a post-secondary system that served these economic needs, institutional autonomy would remain, as it had been for some time, a relative matter. Consequently, while there could have been light emanating from the friction

between the universities and government in a community of practice, the concept of autonomy, whether relative or assured, produced mostly heat.

A second factor was trust or, more specifically, the absence of trust. As mentioned previously in the discussion of the theoretical framework, one of the three essential elements of trust is benevolence, the other two elements being ability and integrity. Although integrity may be mistaken for benevolence, benevolence by one party toward another can only be developed over time. While the ability of the Lougheed government to manifest its policies was apparent by the size of its mandate, and while there was no reason to question the Lougheed government's integrity, the Lougheed government in 1972 was still relatively new and unfamiliar to the university community. There had been little opportunity in the early years of Advanced Education by its first minister, James Foster, to demonstrate benevolence, and his aggressive stance taken with the 1974 introduction of the *Program Coordination* policy did little to enhance any sense of respect or care for the concerns of the universities. Neither was benevolence apparent with each successive attempt to coerce the universities into a system that would ensure program coordination. Only when the second minister, Bert Hohol, backed away from presenting *The Adult Education Act* for third reading in the legislature could there have been any demonstrable sense of benevolence by the government toward the universities.

A third complicating factor was that the government considered the universities to be organizations, rather than institutions, terms which are outlined earlier in the discussion of the theoretical framework. In this context, universities are seen as institutions; arenas of discourse with no common values necessarily held among its members beyond mutual recognition and agreement on rules of order. The alternative to the institution is the organization, typified by colleges, businesses or non-profit associations that are instruments of the common values of their

owners, membership or employees. These values may include missions, visions or other uniting precepts. Considering the university as an institution rather than as an organization may explain the often-made observation that providing leadership in a university is much like herding cats; academics are not banded together to achieve a common vision, instead they have discrete visions as determined by independent study in their disciplines. The officials at Advanced Education in its early years were mostly from the Colleges Commission, and very few if any had been associated with the Universities Commission, which may explain any tendency to treat universities as if they were simply colleges on a grander scale. As well Lougheed approached the universities as if they were organizations, that is, as if they were instruments of a common set of economic goals that could be modified, revised or otherwise negotiated to better serve his objectives. In this regard he was unsuccessful, with the notable exception of the creation of the Alberta Heritage Fund for Medical Research (AHFMR).

The establishment of the AHFMR was the result of a completely different strategy from the Lougheed government's previously noted attempts to coerce Alberta's universities into a system. In many ways, it illustrates the effectiveness of Wenger's communities of practice. The strategy was revealed by Lougheed at a meeting of the Public Policy Forum in 2010:

It was the watering down of [information from various sources] that concerned me, so what I did – and I don't think this is public, so I just thought this is a good time to try to describe it – what I did was to come up with an idea – not in the first year of government, but I think in year three or year four.

In Government House in Edmonton - what we would do – and it's something you may want to think about or even talk about at the

dinner – we would get together a group which would be in a given situation, let's say it was energy, we'd get together five or six leaders in the energy community, who would come and meet at Government House in Alberta in Edmonton. Now here's the thing probably that these days, anyway, might be hard to grasp. Jim Dinning knows what I am about to say. This went on, with due respect to the media that are here tonight, this went on without any of them knowing it went on. I'm sort of proud of that – [Laughter] - that we were able to pull that off over all those years.

Maybe in today's world it would be harder to do but we had one rule. The individuals, the Jim Grays or the others that were involved, the Doc Seamans, they were not there to speak for their company. They were there to speak for their own views and their own aspirations and their own focus on the future. And that was extremely important. But it remained - and we did it for many years - it remained completely quiet. We had some of the deputy ministers and some of the ministers with us. It was that kind of a table. I just thought it would be time to be public about that, after all these years. [Laughter] I think it worked, from my point of view (Lougheed, 2010).

Eric Geddes, a personal friend of Lougheed's, confirmed this was the manner in which the AHFMR was created. On March 20, 1978 Lougheed invited several prominent members of the medical research community as well as several current and former members of boards of governors of Alberta's universities to a dinner meeting at Government House (Geddes, 1999, p.

230). The AHFMR has since proven to be very successful over the years, benefitting medical research at Alberta's universities immensely, but as Lougheed and Geddes confirm, part of its inception was an exercise resembling the communities of practice model, a significant departure from previous attempts to coordinate university programs.

Lougheed and his government may have abandoned coercive means of coordinating the activities of universities in the final days of 1975, but they did not abandon interest in Alberta's universities completely. John Schlosser, an Edmonton businessman, was a friend of Lougheed's, and their families had spent time together on holidays (Hodysh & McIntosh, 1999, p. 82). In Calgary, Ross Mackimmie was a distinguished senior partner in Mackimmie Matthews, whose law firm is alluded to several times in the Peter C. Newman series *The Canadian Establishment* (Newman, 1975, p. 226; Newman, 1981, pp. 346, 361, 401). Schlosser was appointed Chair of the University of Alberta Board of Governors by Lougheed in 1978, and Mackimmie was appointed Chair of the University of Calgary in 1975 (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 77). Like virtually all public appointments to university boards, these individuals served in the interests of the students, although there may have been political connections. The great advantage of the caliber of appointments such as Schlosser and Mackimmie is not to assert a government agenda at board of governors meetings, because the government knows the new appointees inevitably take up the cause of the students shortly after their terms begin. Instead, the appointment of such distinguished individuals provides assurance that the concerns of the university will reach the ear of the Premier when necessary (J. P Meekison, personal communication, August 9, 2010). The argument that Lougheed sincerely wanted accurate and unfiltered information, just as he stated in his address to the Public Policy Forum, is reinforced by appointments to the board of people he held in high regard. Just as Geddes (1999, p. 230) and Wood (1985, p. 193) confirm, Lougheed

relied on information from individuals he trusted; he did not rely primarily on information from representatives of groups, such as a university or the Education Society of Edmonton, seeking to influence government policy. This suggests that while Lougheed may have appeared to disregard the universities after the Adult Learning Act failed in 1975, he continued to keep abreast of the issues through personal contact with the chairs and other very senior members of the university community.

Lougheed did not stop exercising his influence in matters concerning universities after he stepped down as Premier in 1985. While Getty was Premier, Lougheed played a direct role in the recruitment of Howard Tennant as President of the University of Lethbridge (U of L) in 1987 and, as promised to Tennant during the recruitment discussions, Lougheed was influential in securing funds for new facilities and new programs at U of L in the late 1980s (H. Tennant, personal communication, March 4, 2013).

Tennant and Lougheed met several more times during and after Tennant's presidency. Still intent on enlisting Alberta's universities as a means to further develop the province's economy, Lougheed made it clear to Tennant that a "Jeffersonian" university, populated by academics charged with the pursuit of truth wherever it may lead, had no place in Alberta. Lougheed fully expected Tennant to provide the leadership necessary to help develop Alberta's economy with more practical curricula. That expectation was realized with Tennant as U of L president, as he brought a focus to developing university program growth in the areas of management, health sciences and teacher education.

Lougheed was renowned as an organizer, and biographers have extolled his ability to create a vision and then assemble the right people and determine the right course of action to realize that vision. Lougheed could organize and lead individuals, but as the failed *Adult*

Education Act illustrates, he – or the department under his direction – could not organize universities. This inability in part may be due, as stated previously, to treating the universities as reasonably unified organizations in terms of common goals and objectives, which they are not. Lougheed’s inability to organize universities may also be due to the universities’ lack of participation in the development of his government’s program coordination policies.

While there was no community of practice membership consisting of university and department officials in the development of the failed *Adult Education Act* in the early 1970s, it can be argued that in later years Lougheed had indeed learned from the experience, as he appeared to employ a community of practice model to help create the AHFMR and other policy initiatives. Well after his tenure as Premier had ended, in the boardroom of Bennett Jones LLP where he was a senior partner, Lougheed and Howard Tennant met as members of a community of practice, and they were successful in the rededication and revitalization of the University of Lethbridge with new programs, new facilities and more accessibility for students (H. Tennant, personal communication, March 4, 2013).

Washing of the hands

The 1971 election of the first Progressive Conservative government coincided with the demise of the “golden age” of education in Alberta, when educators and government officials were able to find agreement on policies and strategies (Hodysh & McIntosh, 1999, p. 122). The Education Society of Edmonton also experienced a loss in the 1970s of influence in the development of educational policy:

Beneath the surface as revealed mainly by correspondence and minutes of the executive meetings, there often seemed an air of discontent or of satisfaction that the Society, once a dynamic force in the province’s

educational activities, had entered a period of lassitude – not quite of angst but headed in that direction (Chalmers, 1988, p. 46).

Failure of *The Adult Education Act* signaled a distinct change in the relationship between the government and the universities. In the years following the 1975 failure, the ability of the university community to resist the pressures of conformity to the government's agenda was apparent, and the institutional autonomy – relative or not – that made this resistance possible was now recognized by the Minister. Although a willingness in the Lougheed government to develop a relationship with universities resembling communities of practice would begin to emerge in the years following this defeat of policy, there was yet another signal sent to the universities, this time in legislation, which left little doubt about the government's perspective following its inability to gain the universities' cooperation.

The 1966 *Universities Act* included in section 4 the statement "The Lieutenant Governor is the Visitor of each university, with the authority to do all those acts which pertain to Visitors" (Alberta, 1966). As discussed in the literature review, since its origins in medieval times a Visitor has the right of oversight of the university. In the *Universities Amendment Act, 1976*, there could be no confusion about the intent of the legislation, for it consumed less than half a page of print. The *Act* simply stated that the office of Visitor of an Alberta university was abolished (1976). It was a simple, short and clear statement of policy, which could be interpreted as a statement worthy of Pontius Pilot: if you want autonomy, you shall have it.

Changing of the guard

Walter Worth left his position as Deputy Minister to assume the role of Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta in 1976 (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 77; McIntosh & Hodysh, 1992, p. 33). Henry Kolesar, former Chair of the Colleges Commission,

author of the paper on the need for contractual language to ensure institutional accountability, and Assistant Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, was appointed Deputy Minister on October 1, 1976 by Minister Bert Hohol (From the Minister's Office, 1976). As signaled by the *Universities Amendment Act, 1976*, the relationship between the universities and the department would remain cordial but cool for quite some time to come.

This coolness may have stemmed from the absence of department personnel with university administration experience who were recruited into more senior positions after Worth left, or was due to the backgrounds of those who were placed in senior positions during the Worth years. Several had professional experience in the public education system, and others had served with the Colleges Commission, including Kolesar. However, as noted elsewhere, there was a paucity of interest among university staff to seek a public service career. It is not clear during this period if the universities wanted representation among the department's senior officials, but it was clear the universities wanted to represent themselves regarding the issues of the day. Differences in salary and benefits packages, the ability to do research, and potential career opportunities may also have contributed to an apparent reluctance among university staff to join the department.

In contrast to Worth, Kolesar did not often step into to the spotlight of a public forum, as policy discussions during his time as deputy were seen to be the prerogative of the Minister, not the civil servants. Kolesar had a great deal of experience in education as a teacher, principal and superintendent, in addition to serving as a member of the Colleges Commission, which may appear to explain a coolness toward the universities; it must also be remembered that a deputy's role is dictated by the Minister (W. Workman, personal communication, July 23, 2010). From 1976 to 1987, there would be many issues of concern common to the universities and the

department during Kolesar's term as Deputy Minister, including facilities, tuition fees, and capital and operating funds. In keeping with the direction chosen by each of the Ministers that Kolesar served and advised, there would be no policy initiatives regarding the coordination of university programs until a new premier, a new deputy, and a new minister had taken office.

CHAPTER 5

The Getty Years

The Getty government, and the Klein government that followed, came to develop an approach toward the coordination of university programming that was quite different from the Lougheed regime. The goals of their respective governments for program coordination remained the same as that of the Lougheed government, but dire financial circumstances both Getty and Klein inherited required their governments to find more cooperative ways of coordinating programs with all four universities. The need was recognized for more collegiality and dialogue with the universities in order to achieve effective program coordination and, with that coordination, program cost containment.

Getty's financial challenges

Don Getty became Premier on November 1, 1985, and in financial terms the seven years to follow were tumultuous. Government revenues from energy started to collapse less than a month after he took office. The loss of billions in oil and gas royalties was compounded by weak agricultural commodities due to poor weather, and trade disputes that devastated farm incomes. Interest rates on mortgages were in the double digits, bringing housing starts to a virtual standstill, two Alberta-based banks collapsed along with a privately-held trust company, and the province's credit unions came close to collapsing. On the national front, and also requiring a great deal of Getty's attention, were two attempts to rewrite the Canadian constitution – the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Accord, both of which failed (Lisac, 2004, pp. 230 -236). Lougheed's manpower planning approach to education was not about to change under his successor (Wagner, 1998, p. 77), but the new premier had little time to spend on post-secondary education. Post-secondary education in Alberta would continue with a

“predominantly cost-benefit/human resources planning focus” well into the next century (Andrews et al., 1997, p.88).

First, stop the bleeding

With the overriding challenge of getting expenditures under control, the coordination of university programs was no longer simply a means of increasing efficiencies by limiting unnecessary duplication of programs or meeting the employment needs of the economy. Marginal cost savings, simply by eliminating unnecessary duplication of university programs, would do little to curtail the growing debt and deficit. Significant cuts in grants to the universities would be needed. At the same time during the Getty years, the strategy of coordinating university programs would be, not only to improve efficiency and effectiveness within a system, but to ensure capacity for the surging enrolment numbers expected to come (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Henry Kolesar retired as Deputy Minister on March 31, 1987 (Alberta Advanced Education, 1988, p. 12), 16 months after Getty became Premier. During that 16-month period, it became clear because of the emerging need for financial constraint that increases in government program funding would no longer be obtained by the universities with relative ease, whether for programs, buildings or personnel. As well, significant concerns had long been expressed by the University of Calgary, alleging inequity in program funding. In response, Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education Dave Russell commissioned Dr. Stephan Dupre to conduct a study of equity in funding among Alberta’s public post-secondary institutions (Dupre, 1987, p. iii).

Let's start talking

From 1976, when the Lougheed government effectively lost interest in university program coordination, until 1986 when declining oil revenues prompted concerns about looming government deficits, the universities had largely been ignored by Lougheed (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010), while considerably more attention was paid to the colleges and technical institutes (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010). The Dupre commission would shed light on the nuanced funding of university, college and technical institute programs during Henry Kolesar's tenure as Deputy Minister, but it did not address the coordination of programs. Dupre for the most part found consistency and equity in the funding of the universities, and the inequity in funding argument put forth by the University of Calgary was not wholly accepted. Dupre did not find an implicit correlation between funding awarded and cost per student, which was asserted by the University of Calgary, but instead he found, as the department had contended for many years, a causal relationship between funding and costs per program. As the University of Calgary's program costs were, according to funding "rules" discerned by Dupre, less than the University of Alberta's program costs (Dupre, 1987, pp. 31-39), Dupre concluded that the University of Calgary had, for the most part, been funded equitably. However, Dupre did find reason to recommend an upward adjustment of \$1 million to the University of Calgary's base operating grant in recognition of its status as a "full-service, research-oriented university" (Dupre, 1987, p. 104), which was not considered a substantial sum in relative terms (J.P. Meekison, personal communication, August 9, 2010).

Beyond the issues of program funding, the Dupre Commission was a clear signal that the government's need to control costs would eventually lead to further development of the objective of more closely coordinated programs, and this objective began to emerge soon after the Dupre

commission completed its work. In the closing remarks of his report, Dupre provided a recommendation for “a fixed reference point for the purpose of consultative or information-sharing activities” among the executives of all board-governed post-secondary institutions in Alberta and the Minister, which would be held at least once a year. Dupre did not claim to be the originator of this idea, but instead he termed it an endorsement of “a proposal that the institutions repeatedly advocated in the course of the hearings” (Dupre, 1987, p.153). This recognition of the need for more and better communication was recognized by the incoming Deputy Minister.

A new deputy

Appointed by Deputy Premier and Minister David Russell, Lynne Duncan became Deputy Minister of Advanced Education on July 1, 1987. Holding a Master’s degree in Economics, Duncan had been Assistant Deputy Provincial Treasurer for five years at the time of her appointment, after having served a previous nine years in various capacities with the Alberta treasury department including Executive Director of Fiscal Policy and Economic Analysis (D.J. Russell, personal communication, May 7, 1987). With a background in Economics rather than Educational Administration, almost immediately there was a change in approach towards the universities, which was in keeping with a change in management style notably different in comparison to her predecessor.

Shortly after her appointment, Duncan made presentations to many of the colleges and universities on emerging student enrolment demands and the government’s pressing fiscal situation. A more open and meaningful dialogue emerged, a form of supportive and non-confrontational interaction. As Duncan said, “We had a number of people who worked in the department who were by nature collegial kind of people, and I think we moved away from the

assumption that we could command and control, because we really couldn't" (personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Recognition that the department could not command or control the universities may have been key to developing a new level of mutual respect. As Duncan describes, the actual role of the Universities Coordinating Council, and Advanced Education's actual ability to coordinate university programming, had been distorted. "At one time, the final place for approval of programs was University Coordinating Council, and they were given the opportunity to say yea or nay as to whether a university program should go ahead. Norm Wagner [President of the University of Calgary] said it was just a joke. They had never turned down a program because it was 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. If you're putting forward a program, I'll approve it, then you're going to approve what I want to do.' We moved to a much more collegial kind of approach; we recognized reality" (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

As Duncan commented further, "I think that the department changed, because people said at the time, after I got appointed, the view of Advanced Education was that it was a black box. Information went in but it didn't come out. They didn't know how decisions were made, they didn't know the big issues, and so on. After '87 we got a lot of credit for opening it up - for taking a much more collegial approach - for sharing information."

Duncan's approach was appreciated. Myer Horowitz, President of the University of Alberta, stated "There was a lot of excitement when she was first appointed. We got to know her in no time at all. We were able to interact with her the way we interacted, going all the way back, with Wally Worth" (M. Horowitz, personal communication, August 9, 2010). This was acknowledgement that the "black box" days were over.

The work of Advanced Education staff with the universities during the Kolesar years was earnest, honest, and with good purpose, Duncan had learned, but for the most part it wasn't effective. The universities, in their relative isolation in comparison to the department's more effective interaction with the colleges and technical institutes, had undermined Advanced Education's processes for coordination. As Duncan describes, "the kind of work we were asking of institutions to do was putting [Advanced Education officials in the role of] judge and jury over the programs these institutions wanted to create, and we would go back and we would ask them, how many students did they expect to attract, and so on." What Duncan realized was that Advanced Education officials were repeating program review and approval processes that the universities had already conducted internally, before they had been submitted to the Universities Coordinating Council. Under Duncan, there was recognition that, while approval and support of the UCC may have been unquestioning, the review process within each university was not. Academic leaders, through a credible and rigorous internal process, had already convinced their faculty colleagues of the merits of each program proposal long before they had been submitted to the department. "And so," Duncan explains, "we moved away from that kind of approach and just looked at the coordination aspects - like 'who else is offering this program and how do they relate to each other?' rather than trying to get down into the nuts and bolts of 'how did you create this program, or why?'" (personal communication, July 16, 2010).

There was little disagreement when the UCC stopped meeting to approve one another's university programs, although the council would continue to exist in legislation until the Universities Act was abolished in 2004. As the last UCC Chair before its dissolution, former University of Lethbridge President Bill Cade describes the final few years of the council this way: "It had no real function. It had, for a time, taken on giving professional exams to immigrants, so

it had taken on the task of giving a professional qualifying exam in Dentistry, for example, of all things. And that was pretty much its only remaining official duty” (B. Cade, personal communication, August 3, 2010).

There was another reason for Advanced Education moving away from reviewing university programs, and focusing primarily on their coordination with other university and college programs. There had been a large standing committee within Advanced Education that made decisions on university programs a bureaucracy, as Duncan explains, “that served no useful purpose because in the end the department didn’t have much power over whether the university offered a program or not. We were admitting that universities had huge political clout. But we also gained credibility with them in recognizing, after they’d done all this homework, that [Advanced Education’s role in approving university programs] doesn’t work” (personal communication, July 16, 2010). The department committee overseeing the approval of programs was disbanded as part of a significant revision to the organizational structure, which Duncan began to implement in the fall of 1987 (Duncan, 1987).

A new approach

Following extensive consultations with senior officials within the department during her first few months as deputy, Duncan described in a September 15, 1987 discussion paper a new framework for how the department would establish and pursue its goals and objectives. Citing and acting upon an earlier 1985 report by an internal department committee, and with the support of her Minister Dave Russell, Duncan wrote that the department’s mission will no longer focus on the development of a system of advanced education, as that system was now in place and mature. Instead, recognizing and incorporating recommendations made in the 1985 report, the

mission will focus on the value of advanced education. Duncan outlined four goals for the reorganized department:

- To promote life-long learning opportunities for adults in Alberta
- To promote excellence in post-secondary program delivery, scholarship, research and public service
- To ensure accountability to the people of Alberta for the public resources allocated to post-secondary education in Alberta
- To provide leadership to ensure that post-secondary education is responsive to the changing needs of individuals and society. (Duncan, 1987, pp. 5-7)

To achieve these goals the department was organized to assume a clear and easily understood and approachable leadership role. Previously, funding responsibilities were a shared responsibility under several branches of the department, but were now consolidated under one assistant deputy minister. Similarly, all program planning and policy functions were combined under a second assistant deputy minister. Other functions were internal to the department and were assigned to an executive director for department administrative functions, an executive director responsible for the Student Finance Board, and a director responsible for advising the deputy on the four remaining vocational colleges still part of the department, but which would receive board-governed status in the years to come. It was now clearer to the universities, and to other post-secondary institutions in the province, which branches of the department were now responsible for the many varied issues and concerns facing the institutions. As well, rather than channelling most communication through the deputy's office, staff in the universities and in the department were encouraged to talk directly to each other.

In addition to streamlining processes, enhancing credibility with the universities, and recognizing the universities' ability to produce well-considered decisions on programming, the department's change in approach to dealing with the universities also allowed department staff to better respond to political concerns. Rapid growth of university programming since the 1960s had led to overriding concerns of possibly needless overlap and duplication, as previously discussed, during the Lougheed years. But since the early 1990s, as Duncan noticed, the concern shifted to transferability of courses, and in particular from university transfer programs offered in regional colleges to the two largest universities located in Edmonton and Calgary (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010). The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) would come to play a more prominent role, as increasing accessibility to university programming through coordination came to eclipse the failed strategy of limiting programs through an approval process conducted by UCC.

As former Assistant Deputy Minister Neil Henry noted, "The notion of career ladderling, of progressing through a hierarchy of college to university programs, could not have been part of any program coordination policy without ACAT. Somewhere, I think, somebody needs to recognize that [ACAT] really was some years ahead of just about every other province." (N. Henry, personal communication, July 15, 2010)

As well, one argument made by Mount Royal College, in making a case for acquiring university status, was that their students could not get satisfactory assurances of transferability for many of their courses to a university, despite all accounts that the courses were indeed at university level. Providing greater support for ACAT would help assuage Mount Royal College's argument for university status (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Too much information?

There would be greater engagement between the universities and the government in the years to follow Duncan's appointment as Deputy Minister, a practice that was continued by her successor, Maria David-Evans (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010). However, engagement was not only about providing information, it also meant receiving it, and the government's request for information from the universities would become a test of the mutual desire for a better working relationship.

In January 1990, Minister John Gogo's department released for discussion *Responding to Existing and Emerging Demands for University Education: A Policy Framework* (Alberta Advanced Education, 1990). The paper was intended to begin a discussion with the universities in response to a number of "imperatives, including the need for: fiscal responsibility in a period of restraint, increased cooperation for program delivery, and longer-term coordinated planning" (p. 3). Although there had been dialogue and negotiation between the universities and the provincial government on a range of financial issues, including tuition and grants both operating and capital since the failed *Adult Education Act* of 1975, it would be the first formal attempt in 14 years by government officials to address with the universities issues related to the coordination of programming. A strategy was needed to resolve the stated imperatives for university programming, and the Minister and Deputy Minister wanted to engage in discussions with the universities.

The *Responding* document listed seven factors that would influence the development of the strategy:

1. Accessibility – the need to ensure qualified and motivated students can receive a university education.

2. Credibility – the need for programs to maintain and enhance characteristics of quality such as the success of the graduates and recognition by the minister, other institutions and agencies, and professional associations.
3. Community pressures – the ability to respond to demands from all regions of the province, rural and urban, for greater access to degree programs.
4. Mandate clarification – answering questions regarding how to determine which university programs should be available in several regions of the province, and which programs should be available only in certain locales.
5. Roles of other institutions – if greater access to university programs involved public or private colleges, technical institutes or out-of-province degree granting institutions, there would be a need to clarify the roles they would play and their relationship to the provincial government.
6. Fiscal considerations – with restraint expected for the foreseeable future, cost-effective innovation is necessary; success will depend on the universities' commitment to the strategy.
7. Trends – the strategy must recognize new and emerging challenges. such as
 - Increases in enrolment due to the echo baby boom and to increasing participation from non-traditional groups such as aboriginals, women, older students, and part-time and disabled students,
 - Increased expectations of graduates for skills in technology, the ability to adapt to a changing work environment and international competition, and transferable skills like problem solving and communication,
 - Increased demand for more university-level programs in non-urban regions, and

- Increasing costs of program delivery in terms of facilities and equipment. (pp. 4-7).

The *Responding* document then proposed five scenarios to begin the discussion with Alberta's university community:

1. Increase the capability of the system by building on existing institutional mandates and programming, with the universities retaining their dedicated research function, while making available bridging and shared facility arrangements on college campuses in the regions.
2. Establish a new post-secondary institution with a mandate to offer degree programs.
3. Encourage degree-granting institutions from out of province to offer programs in Alberta.
4. Award degree-granting status to selected public colleges in Alberta.
5. Develop and introduce two-year associate degrees at Alberta's public colleges and technical institutes (pp. 10-15).

With each of the five scenarios, advantages, disadvantages and policy implications were listed, signaling to members within the university community that the government officials were aware of some of their concerns, but it also was a way of asking the reader to recognize some of the concerns held by government. For example, the advantages of Scenario 1, which was most favoured by respondents in the university community, were that the necessary administration was already in place and capable of expanding, and that the credibility of the degrees awarded in this scenario could be maintained. Disadvantages included potential dissatisfaction coming from communities and colleges still denied the opportunity to earn degrees while remaining in their region, the possibility of the universities being unable or unwilling to expand in response to demand, and the potential perception that degrees awarded at a distance from the main campus

may not be considered comparable in quality to the traditional credentials. Policy implications for Scenario 1 included the need for further discussions regarding tuition, the effect on Athabasca University's distance education mandate, the determination of subject areas of programs to be delivered in other regions of the province, and assurances of transferability.

As Duncan explained, the *Responding* document anticipated continued significant growth in university enrolment forecasted as a result of the echo baby boom, and it prompted concerns about existing capacity within Alberta's four universities and the university transfer programs at many of the colleges. The document emboldened Mount Royal College and at least two private colleges – Concordia University College in Edmonton and Canadian Union College near Lacombe –to give stronger voice to their aspirations to acquire university status. In the end, the *Responding* document achieved its desired effect, which was to encourage the universities to work with the department to address the enrolment growth challenge, and to begin the task of setting a new direction, which the universities and the department could agree upon, and work toward together (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Adding to the challenge of developing more openness and interaction between the department and the universities was a lack of cooperation between the four universities, especially between the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary. For example there had been, prior to Duncan's appointment, concern that the two faculties of medicine were competing with each other, rather than working collaboratively, and that this competition was costly to the taxpayer. The regard by each faculty of medicine for the other had not been complimentary. With the establishment of the University of Calgary had come the aspiration of becoming a major research university, no less in stature than the University of Alberta but, as the politicians of the day realized, the province could not afford such an arrangement. Duncan's role

during this period of rivalry was to frequently remind the universities that, if the government were forced to choose between the two universities, they indeed would do so, and that neither university could risk being on the losing end of such a decision. In other words, the two universities needed to exercise their collective autonomy, or risk having the government undermining it. Eventually both universities began to realize the advantages of working together for mutual benefit, and often did so (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

The approaches of the department toward university program coordination issues under the three successive deputy ministers could not have been more different, and the *Responding* document was unlike any policy paper on university program coordination that had preceded it. Walter Worth from 1972 to 1976 had attempted to win a debate with the universities on the merits of coordinating university programming within a system to which the universities would be conscripted. Henry Kolesar, former chair of the Colleges Commission until 1973, and deputy minister from 1976 to 1987, largely ignored for 11 years the universities and their reluctance to participate in a system of program coordination. Aside from related operating and capital funding support, Kolesar instead devoted most of his energy to working with the colleges, technical institutes and other educational organizations within his responsibility. Until Lynn Duncan became the deputy minister, not been since the days of Premier Ernest Manning and U of A President Walter Johns had there been any indication of collegial participation in the development of university programming.

Athabasca University – autonomy as a double-edged sword

As an open and distance education institution, Athabasca University's relationship with the other three universities and with the department was different in many respects. As former president Dominique Abrioux related, with a non-traditional university comes a set of non-

traditional challenges, and among them three are most striking (D. Abrioux, personal communication, August 10, 2010).

First, Athabasca's relationship with the other three universities was much stronger than its relationship with the department. It had been created in the breach, conceptualized by the Social Credit government as a full-fledged campus in Northern Alberta that would divert from the University of Alberta an influx of additional students that never materialized, and established by the Progressive Conservatives in fulfillment of an expectation for a new university, although in a very different format than what the electorate had expected. Once created, the government did not know how to make the best use of it.

Second, Athabasca University found strength and support primarily from the other three universities, but for the wrong reasons. When innovative or non-traditional programming was called for, and which the three campus-based universities did not want to do, Athabasca became the mechanism for responding. In other words, it let the other universities "off the hook" when pressed to meet an educational need that was, for whatever reason, unappealing.

Third, Athabasca University has been, and may continue to be, an institution without a constituency capable of providing the community and student support it needs. Although it has classrooms in larger urban centres, it is not an institution of those centres. It is based in a town in a rural area with one member of the legislative assembly responsible for a large geographic area. More than a third of its students are also registered at other universities and are taking courses for transfer credit, and consequently their loyalties lie elsewhere. There is no one to turn to when political support is required.

As well, Abrioux pointed out, there was no clear policy direction coming from government, despite efforts to develop one. Piloting "unconventional delivery methods"

(Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980, p. 72) simply wasn't helpful enough. The first two presidents of Athabasca University, Tim Byrne and then Sam Smith, had strong relationships previously established with department officials. After Smith's departure, the institution became adrift. As well, Abrioux pointed out, no one with potential influence with the department was "just dying" to get on the governing council, and it was relatively weak in comparison to the boards of the other universities.

Institutional autonomy at Athabasca University appears to have never been in danger of being threatened, and program coordination was seldom an issue, at least until graduate programs were beginning to be developed and offered. As a distance institution based in a sparsely populated rural setting, with little government direction, no political support, benefitting from funded initiatives the other universities didn't want, Athabasca University may never have feared the loss of its autonomy, but it is doubtful the university ever truly benefitted from it. In terms of program coordination, it is not clear how the university's efforts to offer a multitude of courses at a distance were aided by their autonomy. If institutional autonomy has not been a solution to many of Athabasca's problems, then perhaps it is one of their challenges. Had Alberta's four universities been enlisted as members of Alberta's post-secondary system, especially during the Getty years when program funding was restrained, Athabasca University may have been the only university to not offer any resistance.

The situation according to Wenger's model

Wenger's definition of community requires that its membership be engaged with one another in a common effort (Wenger, 1998, p. 73-74) and, as Dupre had recognized, there was in 1987 no such community that included the senior officials of both the universities and the department. It was not until Duncan began to engage university officials in dialogue that was

recognition of a community of Alberta universities, much less a sense of the universities being part of Alberta's post-secondary system. As well, Wenger defined community not as a group identified by a common characteristic, but a group that builds its identity as its members establish relationships with one another through common activities. As discussed in the previous chapter, Worth attempted to declare the universities part of a system when in fact they had limited relationships with one another, and only one activity had brought them together, which was membership in the Universities Coordinating Council, an organization that had become dysfunctional. Further, the Alberta university community was focused on institutional autonomy, long afforded them by a compliant Social Credit government, and it was autonomy that they saw being threatened under Worth and the Progressive Conservatives. The universities' desire to maintain their autonomy did not bring them together as a community or into a system that also included Advanced Education. Instead, the more Worth tried to include the universities, the more they resisted to the point that the *Universities Amendment Act* was passed in 1976, which eliminated the possibility of the government's direct involvement in the universities. Years later, Duncan initiated dialogue with the university community by recognizing some of the concerns held by both parties in the *Responding* document, and by asking for further comment. She identified financial pressures that would affect the ability of all Alberta degree granting institutions to continue as before, and she tried to engage the universities in seeking solutions together, using *Responding* as a starting point.

The universities' views were not contested under Duncan's leadership, as they had been under Worth, nor were the universities to any extent disengaged from the department, which was characteristic of the Kolesar years. Instead, the universities were invited to engage in activities and dialogue that would ideally be in the best interests of all concerned, and that would

eventually form the basis of a community. The challenge would be to develop that community of university and government officials despite many competing priorities in terms of funding constraints, respect for autonomy, responsiveness to the economy, surging enrollment growth, and demands for greater accountability. For the government to be satisfied that these priorities were being met, a much greater scope of information would be required of the universities, and the introduction of Bill 27 was designed to provide that level of detail.

At least they were still talking

Bill 27, the *Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act*, was assented to July 5, 1990, but not before revisions were made in response to highly charged exchanges between representatives of the universities and government officials. Both the universities and the government accepted the objective of controlling costs, but they did not agree on the strategy proposed by the government to meet that objective. Passage of Bill 27 meant that the level of service to Albertans, in terms of the delivery of university programs, would not be reduced without the review and approval of the Minister. This review, as Bill 27 was originally presented, suggested to the universities that the government could require the universities to submit a great deal of data for the most minor change in a university program. In reaction to the proposed legislation, the boards of governors of the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge condemned the Bill (Gerson, 1990, July 4). Members of the University of Calgary Board of Governors even considered resigning (Musselwhite, June 6, 1990).

From a government perspective, in a time of financial constraint and growing university enrolments, and with universities capable of reallocating funds internally, Bill 27 was intended to ensure that, unless the Minister approved, programs of study initially funded by the province would not be cancelled, reduced or transferred to another post-secondary institution, and that the

funds used to support those programs would not be reallocated elsewhere in the institution.

Murray Fraser, President of the University of Calgary, suggested that the government might have been feeling pressure “from the voters whose children had been denied university admission because of budget-related program cuts and enrollment quotas.” Fraser also observed that the Minister “already controls our operating budget, our capital budget, our tuition level, all proposals for new programs, and the appointment of the majority of our board.” Paul Davenport, President of the University of Alberta, added to the discussion by suggesting such intense oversight was “a recipe for paralysis and mediocrity” in that the Minister would have to approve adjustments to courses, course sections and enrollments on a daily basis (Gerson, 1990, July 4).

To make his position on Bill 27 clear, Minister John Gogo stated in a letter to the editor of the *Calgary Herald* that the boards of governors are responsible for the “judicious use of public funds allocated to them” and that he as well is responsible for the “judicious use of public funds.” Gogo’s message was that he was accepting that responsibility rather than delegating this duty, in its entirety, to the universities. “These are not isolated or mutually exclusive responsibilities. They are, and they will remain [under Bill 27] a joint effort.” Gogo went on to state his government is trying to achieve “a degree of assurance, on behalf of the citizens of Alberta, that institutions are acting in the best interests of all Albertans. We should expect nothing more or nothing less” (Gogo, 1990, June 19).

During this period there was dialogue between the government and the universities, interaction on a level that may not have existed since 1975, and while it may have been confrontational, it was dialogue nonetheless. In the end, there was compromise. Bill 27 passed with the requirement of Ministerial approval for cancelation, reduction or transfer of courses still in place, but the wording was amended to read that the Minister’s actions would be “without

derogating from the general powers of the board” of governors of the universities (Alberta Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act, 1990, p. 576). Murray Fraser of the University of Calgary acknowledged that the amendment addressed some of his concerns but “there has been no reason given for this legislation, at least one not acceptable to me” (Musslewhite, 1990, June 27). Between the time the Bill was proclaimed law in 1990 and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* was enacted in 2004, there have been no documented statements or newspaper articles of any Alberta university objecting to any intrusiveness that may have been facilitated by Bill 27. The powers available to the government under Bill 27 during that time were not exercised.

Tuition fees and program coordination

The *Universities Act*, since it was enacted in 1966, could be used as an instrument by government to control the amount of tuition fees assessed students through the budget approval process (Johns, 1981, p. 450). In 1991, provincial control of tuition fees was made more explicit with the introduction of a tuition fee policy (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 83). That year, Minister John Gogo announced a tuition policy that allowed no more than 20% of a public post-secondary institution’s revenue could come from tuition fees. In 1995, Minister Jack Ady established a policy with a similar intent, although with a greater financial burden on students, in which tuition revenue could equal up to 30% of an institution’s expenditures (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 83, 85). Limiting university revenues through the control of tuition fees could result in the reduction or elimination of programs, as evident in the University of Alberta’s 1990-91 budget deliberations (Macleod, 2008, p. 277), but it was the university, not an external authority, that made the decisions about which programs to eliminate or reduce, and ministerial approvals were not withheld. This process is evident when the University of Alberta made several program

reduction decisions during Paul Davenport's term as president, although some program cuts were not entirely successful due to lobbying efforts by alumni and professional groups in the province (Macleod, 2008, pp. 289-292).

Board appointments and program coordination

Appointments to the boards of governors at Alberta's public post-secondary institutions, and Athabasca University's Governing Council were made by Cabinet, and without the involvement of officials within the department or the universities. While there may be the assumption from time to time that an appointee to a board was selected with the intention of representing the interests of the government, that assumption has not been generally accepted, with the exception of the appointment of Stan Milner as Chair of the Board of Governors of the University of Alberta. Milner's involvement in the university's attempt to determine program reductions in anticipation of significant funding cuts was seen as an attempt by the Progressive Conservative government to directly interfere in the affairs of the university (Macleod, 2008, p. 287).

An appointee of the Getty government, Milner's three-year term beginning in September 1990 was eventful, to say the least. Previous chair appointees had always been sitting members of the board, which was seen as a customary means of providing a smoother leadership transition by assuring greater awareness of the issues, the roles and responsibilities of the board, and the working relationships within the university. As chief executive officer and chair of an oil company, Milner had virtually no relationship with his alma mater since graduating in 1951. Milner brought the same corporate strategies and leadership style he employed in his business to his role as chair of a public university.

When President Paul Davenport and his vice-presidents addressed the challenge of impending government funding cuts, Milner inserted himself into the process of reviewing potential program reductions, at times without including Davenport and his vice-presidents, rather than assuming the conventional role of overseeing the application of board policies and the senior university officials who administered them. Although some decisions by the Davenport administration were unpopular, even more unwelcome was Milner's interference in a great range of issues, not only including program reductions, but also attempts to restructure the institution even to the point of proposing the relocation of board offices off campus. Milner's performance as chair resulted in Paul Davenport's shorter than expected tenure as president, and a letter of resignation from the Vice-President, Academic that was ultimately not accepted. As well, there was the considered opinion of many within the university community that Milner's appointment was a direct attempt by the government to make the university more responsive to the priorities of the Cabinet that had appointed him (Macleod, 2008, pp. 279-287).

The context in which Milner was appointed appears less conspiratorial to some officials who were in the department at the time. While the Lougheed cabinet had taken considerable care in appointing its chairs and members to board-governed post-secondary institutions, it was the conclusion of some senior officials within the department that the Getty cabinet had simply exercised less rigor in selecting appointees to the universities and colleges during this period. This view goes so far as to make the conjecture that a certain clerical employee in the Cabinet office, who in the Lougheed years had simply gathered and sorted potential board appointees according to rankings provided by members of government, had by default under the Getty regime become the person who in effect determined the recommendations for board appointments to Cabinet. The process was remedied by the Klein government when Minister

Jack Ady began the practice of advertising the opportunity to serve as a public post-secondary board member or chair in Alberta's major daily newspapers (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

An analysis of the Getty years

During the months Getty was Premier and Kolesar was Deputy Minister of the department, from November 1985 to June 1987, there was little if any sense of community of practice in terms of a possible membership of department and university officials. However, when Duncan became Deputy Minister, there soon emerged an explicit desire by the department to develop an appreciation of the manner in which the universities operated. Although there was strong disagreement between the universities and the department regarding Bill 27, through that debate came an improved understanding by both parties of the other party's program coordination concerns. As for a desire by the universities and the department to develop strategies or policies to address these concerns, there was consultation and a renewed sense of collegiality, but policies satisfactory to all had yet to be developed.

A community of practice between the university and department officials was emerging but not fully developed as Getty left office. There was an identifiable domain of knowledge that they wanted to learn from each other, in this case how to coordinate university programs in the best interests of all concerned. There was a community, which consisted of senior university and department officials who were encouraged to interact with each other. However, the practice of coordinating university programs in a manner satisfactory to all had yet to be developed, and there were significant differences of opinion, as the Bill 27 discussions illustrated. As the next Progressive Conservative government under Premier Klein began its concerted and ultimately successful effort to eliminate the province's considerable deficit and debt, the community of

practice model would develop further under Duncan as Deputy Minister, and then become fully developed under her successor, Maria David-Evans.

CHAPTER 6

The Klein Years

The province's financial situation Getty inherited from Lougheed had not changed for the better when Ralph Klein became Premier in 1992. Average deficits during the Getty years were \$2.3 billion, and in Klein's first year as Premier, the deficit climbed to \$3.4 billion and the debt was approaching \$15 billion. In the June 1993 provincial election, Klein had won a stunning upset over the opposition, in part by promising to adhere to his *Deficit Elimination Act*, which required program spending cuts of 20%. Through determined measures, the deficit was eliminated by 1995 (Barrie, 2004, pp. 261-266). Included in these program cuts was a 1994 reduction in program funding by 21% to Alberta's universities, colleges and technical institutes (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 84). The later Getty years and early Klein years were a significant challenge for Alberta's universities; facing no hope of increases in government funding, the universities' enrolment would continue to surge despite the significant program cutbacks. In 1994-95 there were 47,952 full-load equivalent (FLE) students in Alberta's four universities, and by 1999-2000 there were 56,098 FLE students, an increase of 17% (Alberta Learning, 2002b, p. 8). There was no better time than the Klein years for government officials and university officials to improve upon their ability to communicate and work constructively with one another.

Sharing the pain

The universities would not escape Klein's clear mandate to eliminate the provincial deficit and reduce the debt. When Minister Jack Ady announced that funding for the post-secondary institutions would be reduced by cuts totalling 21% over three years, beginning in the 1994-95 fiscal year (Andrews et al., 1997, p. 84), this was an incentive for the university community, post-secondary instructors, administrators and students, as well as the general public,

to participate in the Klein government's first public consultation process, *An Agenda for Change* (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994a). More than 7,000 Albertans participated in the process, through written submissions, attending public meetings and by accepting invitations to roundtable discussions.

The result of the consultation was the policy document *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta* (1994b). To the incredulity of some, it called for improvements in accessibility, responsiveness, affordability and accountability, all while dealing with a reduction of more than one-fifth of provincial government grants to post-secondary institutions (Andrews et al., 1997, p.88). These goals may have appeared impossible to attain, in light of seemingly crippling cuts in provincial grants, and so financial incentives were proposed to ensure continued and greater accessibility by students to programs. The impact of the funding cuts upon the universities was not trivial, and financial incentives were intended to promote achievement of the four goals and also help make the cuts manageable.

A \$47 million Access Fund was established shortly after the *New Directions* document was released, and made available to finance innovative and cost-effective programs. However, much of the Access Fund, approximately one-third, was never awarded. As former Assistant Deputy Minister Neil Henry explained, "We were aiming for 10,000 new [student] places right across the university and college system, and we had \$47 million to spend, and we only managed to spend \$30 million or so, because we and the colleges and universities ran out of credible ideas" (N. Henry, personal communication, July 15, 2010).

As part of the *New Directions* policy framework, Minister Ady announced a new tuition fee policy had allowed a significant increase in revenues from students. In future, tuition fees equivalent to as much as 30% of an institution's operating expenses were allowed (Andrews et

al., 1997, p. 84). Combined with the opportunity for additional financial support from the Access Fund, changes the university officials wanted to make at their respective universities had renewed impetus. As Henry recalls, “I think they were happy because they were able to save a lot of positions that they would otherwise have had to get rid of. People had to learn new jobs, faculty members were moved around a bit.”

Bill Cade, former President of the University of Lethbridge, supports Henry’s observation. Cade recalled being asked on occasion, “‘did the budget go down, did it actually go down?’ And the answer was no, because tuition went up and the number of students went up” (personal communication, August 3, 2010). The University of Lethbridge took advantage of the Access Fund, allowing it to dramatically expand its Management program and introduce an Environmental Science program, according to Cade. In addition to cuts in government grants being compensated by increases in tuition, there were compulsory salary and wage cuts in all provincially-funded employee salaries in the 1994-95 fiscal year, which were a significant factor in balancing revenues and expenses.

New directions, new attitude

The *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta* (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994b) policy document established four goals: accessibility, responsiveness, affordability and accountability. To achieve these goals, *New Directions* set out 22 strategies that included the opportunity for qualifying private colleges to grant degrees and be called university colleges. Other strategies to relieve enrolment pressures included a strengthened Alberta Council for Admissions and Transfer, and greater collaboration between colleges and universities to offer degree programs regionally. In terms of new programs or coordinating programs, *New Directions* focused primarily on transferability issues. There was

no language suggesting a concern with unnecessary overlap or duplication of programming. If anything, the policy document held the promise of enhancing the ability of the institutions to develop and deliver programs, as recognized in Strategy 2.7 of the document: “Remove barriers to responsiveness in programming to more effectively meet the needs of the learners” (p. 13).

Mount Royal College’s campaign to become a university was not addressed in *New Directions*. Rather than establishing a fifth university in the province, the increasing unmet demand for university programs would be accommodated in three ways: through increased efficiencies in transfer arrangements, by promoting the delivery of programs by universities on college campuses, and by allowing the new university colleges the ability to grant degrees. In response to the aspirations of Mount Royal College and other institutions to achieve degree granting status, the applied degree was created, which consisted of three academic years of classroom instruction and one academic year of workplace experience. The applied degree was not to be confused with the four-year baccalaureate degree, although for years to follow the institutions did not discourage use of the term “bachelor’s degree” in describing these new and unique to Alberta credentials. As Duncan recalls, “[the Minister] created applied degrees, not because the department bought the story that Mount Royal was handing out although the politicians certainly did. We created applied degrees to differentiate them from university degrees. Even though up front we said these are not university degrees, Mount Royal immediately began pushing them that way” (personal communication, July 16, 2010). Further, the Klein government’s mandate was to balance the budget and eliminate an overwhelming budget deficit. There would be no new money to fund any of the strategies in the *New Directions* policy document, let alone fund the conversion of Mount Royal College into Mount Royal University.

Although *New Directions* was introduced amid tumultuous financial challenges resulting in significant program cuts, reductions in workforce, and increased competition among the institutions for students, most of these effects were felt primarily in the college and technical institute sector. Affecting this sector, as well as the universities, were accountability requirements to report key performance indicators, and to meet standards for program quality, both of which prompted the need for greater dialogue among the universities and with the department.

For the next decade, these efforts to prompt and maintain dialogue would become characteristic of the Alberta post-secondary community. The idea of universities being part of a system had lost the connotation of being a threat to institutional autonomy. As a new generation of senior administrators took on their leadership roles at the four universities during the late 1990s and into the new century, they accepted the roles of their universities as they found them, which included the characterization of the universities, in practical terms, as members of a system – a concept that had been met with resistance by the universities in the 1970s and early 1980s. There was no resistance to being members of a system in the late 1990s because the universities had found that working in such an informal arrangement was indeed to their benefit.

New terms of reference

As Hurtubise and Rowat had commented years before in their report, a reliance on formula funding could be viewed as an abdication of the responsibilities of leadership. “It may be that a formula can be used as a tool for [socially critical functions], but, if so, it must become an instrument of conscious change rather than of unthinking preservation” (1970, p. 98). A dependency on government grant formulas, by calculating dollars per full-time equivalent student or dollars per square feet of a building, diminishes the opportunity for universities to help

government officials develop an appreciation for the value that universities provided, the challenges universities faced, and the legitimacy of the costs required. In the absence of any predominant reliance on formula funding in Alberta, leadership is required, and on many levels. The most prominent distinguishing feature of Alberta's post-secondary system, as described in a recent study of provincial arrangements, is the importance of personal contacts and relationships, and which is attributed to a funding system that is not reliant on formulas but instead on adjustments in funding in relation to the previous year (Clark et al., 2011, p. 198). Clark et al. then speculate that, to influence these non-formulaic adjustments, a good university president will maintain effective communication with officials within the department.

As Duncan pointed out, it was often a challenge to ensure that communication was effective, in that the information presented had to have the desired effect on decision makers. Of her earlier years as deputy, she said, "I would go to Treasury Board, asking for money for the universities. I would say, 'they're doing well' and be asked, 'how do you know they're doing well?' I had no way of talking to them about it" (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

New Directions included a strategy that provided a means by which Duncan could more effectively communicate with Treasury Board: "Establish a new funding mechanism to reward performance and productivity in publicly supported post-secondary education" (p.15). This new mechanism, which would complement the block funding model, would require the cooperation of the public post-secondary institutions in order to determine expected outcomes, develop indicators of performance, and then collect and assess the data. The strategy eventually became regarded as a series of funding envelopes, with funds in each envelope determined by the institution's key performance indicators, which became known as KPIs. To recognize

institutional responsiveness to the needs of the students, KPIs were developed to recognize graduate employment rates and graduate satisfaction with their educational experience. To assess the goal of accessibility, a KPI was proposed that was based on an institution's ability to maintain or increase enrollment. In terms of affordability, there was not a measure created to ascertain value or expenditure from the student's perspective, but the institution would be measured by cost containment and the generation of additional revenue by means other than government grants or fees assessed to students. The fourth goal of *New Directions*, accountability, was the introduction of KPIs. An additional goal specific to the universities was developed, research excellence. In this realm, there were KPIs proposed in four areas: national ranking by peers, citations of research, research funding from non-government sources and sponsored research (Barnetson, 1997, pp. 7-8).

Enthusiasm for the use of these or similar KPIs faded after Duncan left the department, but what remained was a common set of terms that both government and university officials could use to better understand each other's perspectives. KPIs helped illustrate to the universities what accountability could entail, while also providing examples in managerial terms of the value and performance of universities to government decision makers. Duncan had resurrected the practice of continuous dialogue and consultation with the universities regarding program coordination, long abandoned during the Kolesar years. However, it would be her successor as Deputy Minister, Maria David-Evans, unencumbered by the significant budget cuts Duncan had to manage, who would advance policy development beyond the level of consultation with the universities, and induct them as full participants into the process of recommending policy to the Minister.

A consolidated ministry; a consolidated system

On May 26, 1999, Lyle Oberg M.D. was appointed Minister of Learning. The Ministry of Learning was a new department formed by the Klein government with responsibilities for elementary and secondary education, as well as post-secondary education (Svidal, 1999, p. 8-9). Oberg brought with him Maria David-Evans as the Deputy Minister of the department, who had also been his Deputy Minister in his previous role as Minister of Family and Social Services.

David-Evans came to the department with experience and success in community development from her days in senior management with the City of Edmonton in the Planning department, then Community and Family Services, and finally Parks and Recreation, where she became head of the department. David-Evans was the first deputy minister in Alberta responsible for elementary and secondary education who had no experience as a classroom teacher in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system. However, like her predecessor Duncan, she did have experience as a post-secondary instructor. As both Duncan and David-Evans were graduate students at the University of Alberta, there were opportunities for them to develop an appreciation for both academic freedom and university autonomy. Experienced in strategy, David-Evans made a point to her staff that the educational policy experts in her new department would play a key role in developing an agenda for developing educational policy, but it would be her role to make sure that agenda moved forward (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013). Her experience using community development strategies would prove to be very helpful.

As Deputy Minister to Premier Klein, Jack Davis had recommended combining the Education and Advanced Education departments with the guiding vision of making lifelong learning a reality (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013). Creating for

students a more efficient transition from secondary to post-secondary education, a “seamless system” as Oberg called it, was the oft-stated rationale for the new Ministry of Learning. Few economies of scale were mentioned as a result of the amalgamation, but Oberg saw a renewed opportunity for all the educational providers in Alberta to collaborate, resulting in greater benefits to Alberta’s students (Svidal, 1999, p. 8-9). Collaboration would soon be proven an understatement, as David-Evans set out not only to bring the universities and other educational providers into the process of developing policy and legislation, but to establish a coordinated system in which all educational providers as members would accept responsibility for their role in making the system a success. More than consulting and collaborating, in the process of making recommendations to the Minister the educational providers would be participants in deciding what those recommendations would be.

A great deal of trust between Oberg as minister and David-Evans as Deputy Minister would be essential to this process, and David-Evans had an advantage over many other deputies with a Minister new to a portfolio in that this necessary trust had already been established by working together in their previous department. This allowed them to move quickly in establishing relationships and trust with the educational community, rather than experience any delay caused by the need to first establish a good working relationship and trust with each other.

David-Evans considered relationships and trust as essential to achieving her objectives. From experience, she believed that community development had to happen at the grassroots level or the objectives, once they were achieved, would not be sustained if and when the leadership changed. For David-Evans to be successful, she wanted the developments she and Oberg would introduce to continue long after they had established them and left the department. The long-term sustainability of an initiative depended on the people affected by it to support it indefinitely

and as it evolved, and this required that the participants accept responsibility for their role in the initiative. The most effective way David-Evans found to ensure that community members would accept their role in the initiative would be that they fully participate in the development of the initiative. Not only would they be consulted, they would help decide the process by which recommendations would be made to the Minister. Further, these recommendations would be developed jointly by the participants and department staff in order to meet objectives set by David-Evans, and Oberg would play an active role in developing the objectives through many discussions at many levels as well.

The objectives were well understood by all. Increases in population coupled with unpredictable revenues due to fluctuating oil prices meant greater cost-effectiveness was required in Alberta's education system. At the same time, there needed to be clear assurances of greater access to programs. In the post-secondary education sector, Alberta needed better access to degree programs but without the expense of creating new universities. Better access not only meant more programs, but also a more efficient and effective transition for students between secondary and post-secondary institutions. A new set of policies was needed to make that objective a reality, and one key factor would be to finally include and formally recognize the universities as members of Alberta's post-secondary system.

Mount Royal College (MRC) had long held aspirations for university status, and would be a participant in the process. While the idea of including the universities as members of an Alberta system of post-secondary institutions did not suggest that MRC would or could become a university, by participating in the process MRC would not only help shape that system and their role in it; they might also improve their chances of becoming a university simply by being in the same system as the universities. There were other issues as well. The *New Directions* policy

framework had precipitated increased competition for students among the institutions, leaving the colleges and universities less likely to cooperate with each other. The severe budget cuts imposed in the mid 1990's had left a lasting effect on their organizational structures and programs, and had affected their ability to meet the needs of students with the limited resources available to them. Often protectionist and sometimes confrontational in their behaviour toward one another, communication was not effective, relations were often not cordial, and the students suffered (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013).

The system that Lougheed envisioned had yet to be realized, thirty years after he had first proposed it. The objective that Oberg and David-Evans set for themselves in 1999 was to make that system a reality by including all the publicly-funded universities, colleges and technical institutes in a formal system. It would be essential for the universities to participate in that system in order to make credible the degrees that would be awarded by the colleges and technical institutes. The four universities did not want another university created, nor did they want any of the colleges to evolve into universities, but they also recognized there would be further pressure for greater access to degree programs, which had to be addressed. It would be to their advantage to participate in the development of this new system for, by participating, they would help define the role they would play and the influence they could exercise in the number, type and quality of future degree programs in the province (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010). New legislation would be necessary to bring the universities together with the other institutions under one unified policy framework. To develop that policy framework within the collective vision, mission and goals of Alberta Learning, David-Evans embarked on a community development process specifically for the post-secondary providers of education.

The call for a common agenda

Working quickly upon taking office, David-Evans assembled representative leaders of all the various groups having working relationships with the new Alberta Learning department, 34 groups in all including representatives of each of the post-secondary education sectors as well as representatives of various organizations associated with elementary and secondary education. Within four months, building new relationships and trust in the process, the 34 members in consultation with the groups they represented went on to create vision, mission and goal statements for the new department. Oberg did not change one word of the statements, thus underscoring the trust and confidence he was placing in the contributors' abilities to frame this new and expanded community of educational providers:

Vision: Optimizing human potential.

Mission: Alberta Learning's leadership and work with partners build a globally recognized lifelong learning community that enables Albertans to be responsible, caring, creative, self-reliant and contributing members of a knowledge-based and prosperous society.

Goals: Alberta Learning is committed to

- providing high quality learning opportunities;
- excellence in learner achievement;
- well-prepared learners for lifelong learning, the world of work and citizenship;
- effective working relationships with partners; and
- highly responsive and responsible ministry (Alberta Learning, 2000, p.7).

The group of 34 also participated in the development of the first business plans of the department, and the budgets that followed (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013).

David-Evans was guided by a process for large-scale social change called Collective Impact, which forgoes attempts by government agencies to intervene in individual organizations and instead asks these organizations to abandon their individual agendas and develop a common agenda from which all will enjoy greater success (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013). Rather than attempting to find solutions to problems by working with individual organizations, the Collective Impact model might offer a greater likelihood of finding effective long-term solutions by developing agendas in which multiple organizations contribute, each in a manner that recognizes their strengths and resources:

An effective collective impact initiative requires five conditions for success:

- (1) a common agenda, both in an appreciation of the problem and how it can be solved;
- (2) a shared measurement system of indicators that reflect the progress and alignment of various contributing activities, that provide accountability, and that signal success;
- (3) mutually reinforcing activities that capitalize on the unique strengths and contributions of various groups;
- (4) continuous communication in order to further the development of relationships between the participants and the trust that grows from those relationships; and

- (5) a backbone support organization, with sufficient staff and resources, that will ensure coordination of activities through structured processes (Kania & Kramer, 2011, pp. 36-41).

Using the collective impact model, David-Evans worked with the post-secondary providers in Alberta to develop a backbone support organization that eventually came to be known as the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC). With an agenda of making recommendations to the Minister regarding degree programs, the CAQC would monitor enrolments in degree programs as one of several measures reflecting its agenda. Leaders in various sectors of the post-secondary community, along with members at large, would work together, building stronger ties between the various sectors, and come to rely on one another to reinforce the effectiveness of the council. The CAQC would come to be the Alberta post-secondary community's manifestation of the collective impact model. With these elements in place, all five conditions of the Collective Impact model would be met.

However, an organization resembling the collective impact model could not exist without legislation. New legislation had to be developed, not only to establish and support the backbone support organization, but also to include the universities, colleges, technical institutes and qualifying private educational providers into one system of post-secondary education. In order for that legislation to be developed, department staff began a series of meetings with senior representatives of Alberta's post-secondary education providers. From those meetings came the concept of a quality council although the initial proposal from the department was an accreditation and coordination council. David-Evans, however, didn't care what the council was called. "All we wanted was coordination. I could not have cared less what it was called. What

we wanted was the understanding of what [the quality council] could be, and what it could really do for students.” (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013).

Responding to the call

Dr. Doug Owram, Vice President and Provost of the University of Alberta from 1995 to 2003, was one of the first university officials to become involved in developing the common agenda, and he eventually took on a substantive role in working with David-Evans to develop the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) legislation, and then becoming the first chair of the CAQC (D. Owram, personal communication, March 25, 2013).

As Owram described the situation prior to Oberg becoming Minister of Learning, the universities had been “hammered” in the mid-1990s because of the cuts in programming. The department had worked with the universities to compensate for cuts, giving them the ability to raise tuition and offering them various sums of money for achieving performance measures. The Klein government had also imposed wage rollbacks across the entire government sector, including the universities. As Owram stated, “This was gross interference with university autonomy, but it saved us financially.” No one was happy about the cuts, but they were accepted as necessary and inevitable. However, by the time Oberg became Minister, the government’s financial crisis had eased and any sense of operating in a reactive mode was gone. Revenues from oil and gas royalties were once again sufficient to support funding programs, and there was a renewed sense of optimism.

It took a while for the university community to get used to the new Minister. His style and that of his deputy minister were in contrast to their predecessors. Whereas Clint Dunford, who coined the phrase “Campus Alberta” (L. Duncan, personal communication, July 16, 2010) was considered mild mannered and contemplative, the first impression of Lyle Oberg was that he

shot from the hip. As Deputy Minister, Duncan had the profile of a friendly yet reserved technocrat, whereas David-Evans was a colourful, outgoing pragmatist. Within six months, the universities were generally impressed with Oberg and David-Evans. Their statements soon began to reflect an appreciation of the situation in which the universities had found themselves, and they were supportive of the universities' efforts.

Dunford's notion of a Campus Alberta did not disappear when Oberg took office. The colleges supported the concept as a means of responding to demands for degree programs being offered in their local regions. The universities, as Owrap noted, also saw a need to bring structure to the concept, for they saw a danger in government funds for new programs being dispersed too widely. There was a concern that degree programs in some regions would suffer from low enrollment while students at the universities would be turned away from similar programs due to lack of funds for additional class sections. Also, while Owrap would have welcomed the increased revenues from additional tuition, he saw no net benefit in the accompanying increase in operating costs, and so he welcomed the role that the colleges could play in meeting this demand, as long as the demand justified the costs involved. A Campus Alberta system might also help the universities attract students who, although they had started their academic studies at a college, were now interested in taking advantage of all a university had to offer by transferring to one.

Owrap and his colleagues at the University of Alberta saw a benefit to bringing clarity to the roles of the universities, colleges and technical institutes, not only to enhance opportunities for research, but because the colleges and technical institutes were also beginning to express similar aspirations. Even if there was not to be a Campus Alberta, the universities saw the need for rules to be established, making clear the roles and mandates of each educational provider in

the province. Potential funding for future new programs was at stake, and the universities wanted to participate in determining how that funding would be awarded. Although the stated goal was to increase accessibility to post-secondary programs throughout the province, as Owram observed there were actually three issues associated with the concept of Campus Alberta: (1) program approvals, (2) the mandates of the post-secondary institutions, and (3) funding. To ensure continued growth, to remain distinct as universities, and to qualify for additional government support, it was in the best interests of the universities to participate in the development of Campus Alberta.

Owram soon had a central role in the development of the Campus Alberta concept. He had the credibility of being Provost of the province's largest university, and he understood the government's agenda, not only to create greater accessibility to post-secondary programs and degree programs in particular, but to go beyond that in terms of strengthening Alberta's economy by diversifying it through research and other activities that a university could offer. Where the Getty government had experienced a series of poor returns on investment in attempts to diversify the economy, Owram understood that the Klein government would not be picking "winners and losers" but instead would be building an "infrastructure of success," an infrastructure that would include the universities. Klein also voiced this role for the universities when he occasionally came on campus and, after years of budget cuts, the comments were welcome by Owram and his colleagues despite initial skepticism. Gradually Klein overcame his image as hostile to universities, at least among those who came into regular contact with him or members of his government.

Participation

The universities did not call for the development of new legislation, but they accepted the opportunity to participate, as did the other post-secondary providers. There would be a great many meetings, formal and informal, during the process of developing the concept of Campus Alberta, the legislation that would bring it into existence, and the CAQC that would make it operational. There were concerns about many ideas for change that surfaced for discussion or appeared in draft legislation. The student unions did not like the idea of the tuition fee cap being removed and in response Oberg continued to allow for increases, but they would now be limited to adjustments for inflation. The student unions did not like the power of the Minister to seize control of a student council, but Oberg cautioned he would only exercise that power “if financial irregularities can be proven” (S. Myers, *Calgary Herald* & L. Johnsrude, 2003). The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) also expressed their concern, with one of their officials stating, “Perhaps the most depressing aspect of Bill 43 is its assumption that post-secondary education is solely vocational” (“Alberta asserts,” 2003, p.1).

One feature perhaps overlooked by most Alberta university deans was the removal of their status as chief academic officers of their respective faculties, a distinctive feature of their positions in the 1966 *Universities Act*. In the PSLA, there was now recognition that the universities needed their academic operations to become more coordinated internally, as reflected by the recently introduced practice of awarding the title Provost as an addition to their titles of vice-president of academics. The provost at each university would be accountable for that priority, not the deans. Although the Provost of the University of Lethbridge did not see the PSLA having much of an effect on his university, this was one difference that he welcomed (S. O’Shea, personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Also in agreement with O'Shea's assertion that the PSLA provided little actual difference from the previous legislation was Harvey Weingarten, former President of the University of Calgary. From his perspective, the only difference to the new legislation was that it made possible the 2007 *Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly Funded Advanced Education System*, which placed each of Alberta's institutes of higher education into one of six sectors, with each sector assigned clearly defined roles and mandates (personal communication, February 22, 2013). This framework helped contain Mount Royal College's ambitions to become a university by limiting its ability to offer only certificates, diplomas and undergraduate degrees, but not graduate degrees. The framework also limited the Calgary college's ability to become a comprehensive research institution (Alberta, 2007, p.17).

Turning practice into policy

The *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), which was assented to in December 2003 and came into force in 2004 after corresponding regulations had been developed, was the means by which the concept of Campus Alberta would become a reality. Campus Alberta in many respects was arguably the vision Walter Worth had put forward in the early days of the Lougheed government, but notably different by the means of how it was achieved. Unlike Worth's strategy of confrontation, Campus Alberta relied on a strong sense of effective participation in the decision making process, with the department's respect for the institutional autonomy that was critically important to the universities. The system emerged successfully from the discussions because there was a willingness among the department officials to develop the concept together with the universities and colleges. A member of the department since 1978, Assistant Deputy Minister Phil Gougeon provided the experience and continuity considered by many to be the department's reasonable and stabilizing force in the discussions, keeping the development

process moving forward, anticipating problems and helping the participants, not only to work together, but to help them appreciate that the outcome of the process would belong to them.

Gougeon recalled one of his first meetings in 2003 with Dr. Carl Amrhein, who then was new to Alberta and new to his position as Provost of the University of Alberta. At that time, members of Alberta's university community were fully aware that new legislation would soon be introduced, as they had been involved in its development. Indeed, Amrhein had just succeeded Dr. Doug Owram as Provost, and Owram had led many of the discussions on the new legislation as a representative of the universities. As well, Owram would go on to be the founding Chair of CAQC. Amrhein had heard some of the rumoured fears about the new legislation, one of which was that the universities would be amalgamated and that their identity and autonomy would be lost. Although a series of government officials had stated that the Campus Alberta concept meant the 22 separate institutions would remain separate, and that they would not be combined under one board of governors, concerns continued to persist. It was, therefore, not surprising that one of Amrhein's first questions to Gougeon was "What is this Campus Alberta?" (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Gougeon's response was simply "That's for you guys to decide," Amrhein was impressed by the fact the department was prepared to let the system, comprised of the universities, colleges, technical institutes, the Banff Centre and private institutions, determine its own destiny. Gougeon's response was also recognition of institutional autonomy, for it illustrated the department's confidence in the institutions to act wisely, and it confirmed that senior officials in the department trusted their institutional colleagues in what was to become an actual system of post-secondary institutions. However, Gougeon added a caution. "You better determine your destiny, or the department will do it for you."

Later that year, as Oberg began the process of introducing the PSLA Act in the Legislative Assembly, he found it necessary to reassure the many institutional boards of governors that there was no hidden agenda. Still concerned about being amalgamated under one board and about losing their identity, the board chairs pressed Oberg in a meeting to reveal the government's motive for creating the PSLA. They were not satisfied with his answers indicating that there was no significant difference to the previous legislation, and they persisted. "Finally," as Gougeon recalls, "Oberg said, 'It's symbolism ... we are a system that works together, and that is all this legislation is.'" His answer was accepted.

David-Evans' community development strategy and the Collective Impact model she brought to Alberta's post-secondary education community resulted in a policy framework that others have described in different terms. The passage of the PSLA was a shift away from an emphasis on transactional contracts in a principal-agent framework, where a university (the agent) offers educational opportunities to students in exchange for funding from government (the principal), and a shift toward collaboration among trusted peers, known as relational contracts. Relational contracts are characterized by their long duration, by delegating more complete rather than partial responsibility for the delivery of services, and by all parties acting in good faith (Lane, 2000, p. 307). One of the challenges of principle-agent relationships, as pointed out by Lane, is that, while the agent may be complying with the contract according to strict interpretation, there is no assurance that the agent will always act in the best interests of the principal and, as a result, additional resources may be required to monitor the contracts (p.236). Foreshadowing of this shift to a relational contract model can be found in Duncan's previously mentioned 1987 discussion paper on the reorganization of her department, where the focus of the department would change from development of a system to the value of post-secondary

education. David-Evans would take these relationships that Duncan had managed to revive, and arrange interdependence among the institutions so that positive and effective relationships would be essential not only to the success of the post-secondary system, but to each institutional member of the system that would come to be known as Campus Alberta.

As a key feature of the PSLA, the CAQC as an arms-length body makes recommendations to the Minister on requests for Ministerial approval of post-secondary education program proposals, and from time to time makes recommendations on other matters as well. Current and former members of the post-secondary community comprise the membership of the CAQC, and the university community is represented. Although the department provides staff in the form of a secretariat to support the work of the council, there is no government representation, as former CAQC chair Ron Bond stated:

Well, we still talk a lot in the Campus Alberta Quality Council world about the nature of the arms-length character of the Quality Council, as we are composed of people, all of whom are free to make independent decisions. No one from government sits with us. We invite people periodically, perhaps the Minister, the Deputy Minister, the Assistant Deputy Minister, to come to our meetings and talk with us, but we pride ourselves at being at arms-length (R. Bond, personal communication, August 16, 2011).

Although members from the public at large are present on the council, they are in the minority. “One thing we did right,” stated CAQC’s founding Chair, Doug Oworm, is that in the selection of the council membership, it became “dominated by academics.” Similar boards in other jurisdictions, Oworm noted, tend to be dominated by members with political or business

connections. The CAQC has such members as well, but the integrity of the program approval process relies on academic expertise, and so academics should comprise the majority of members.

Owram concedes there may have been a misstep as the CAQC developed its approval process, which was to require an institutional review of Alberta's well established institutions prior to conducting a review of the proposed programs. In later years, this review was augmented with the opportunity for a much faster and less intrusive expedited review for qualifying institutions (D. Owram, personal communication, March 25, 2013).

The creation in 2004 of CAQC provided a formal structure to the system of post-secondary education envisioned by Lougheed 33 years previously, and it routinely provides the coordination of university programming that Lougheed had sought. While the objective of university program coordination has been met, the strategy that helped achieve that objective had not been employed during the Lougheed years. Instead, the development and awareness of shared values, which made the notion of universities within a system possible, emerged over many years of discussion, collaboration, sharing of ideas, resources and, most importantly, trusting one another.

The universities had participated willingly in making the choices necessary for the system to develop and to act on its shared values. They were aware that if they did not make the choices available to them, others might make those choices for them. This was the incentive needed to help the universities and other institutions develop the trust in one another that was needed to develop shared values and act upon them as a system.

The community of practice continues

In recent years, the community of practice model, especially in regard to program coordination and related academic issues, has become more strongly evident in Alberta's

university community. The four research universities' vice-presidents responsible for academics have formed a community of practice called the Alberta University Association (AUA) (R. Bond, August 16, 2011). Prior to his retirement, Phil Gougeon was a welcomed and active participant in their meetings and conference calls. Gougeon's participation was at his own initiative. When Oberg learned of his involvement he had a number of reservations but eventually agreed that he should continue (P. Gougeon, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Ron Bond, former Vice-President and Provost of the University of Calgary, explained how the AUA functioned:

[Phil Gougeon] would often give us advance notice of announcements that the government was about to come out with, or changes in policy. He would use us as a sounding board for changes that were brewing within the ministry in various policy meetings and corridor conversations, vote problems and so on. We developed a strong and very candid relationship with Phil, with the very explicit understanding that those conversations were confidential. He could trust us and we could trust him. It worked quite well (R. Bond, personal communication, August 16, 2011).

With Gougeon's open and active membership in AUA, it became, in all respects, a community of practice.

Trust and testing the community of practice

On May 10, 2004 Premier Ralph Klein rose in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta in answer to criticisms of previous comments he had earlier made regarding automobile insurance under the Pinochet regime in Chile. In an effort to demonstrate his knowledge and sympathy for

the plight of Chileans during that period in their history, he tabled a paper in the Assembly he had recently written as a student of Athabasca University, and for which he had received a grade of 77% (Klein). Four days later, the *Calgary Herald* published an analysis of Klein's paper, which concluded that at least one quarter of the document had been plagiarized. In the following days there was a flurry of controversy, some pundits coming to Klein's defense as a well-intended but naïve high school dropout (Olsen, 2004, May 14), others considering the controversy as a political smear (Martin, 2004, May 18), while yet others questioned the charge of plagiarism (Cooper, 2004, May 19) or suggested Klein's plagiarism was another symptom of the Premier demonstrating little regard for acceptable standards of behaviour (Thomson, 2004, May 19).

The issue continued to generate headlines for more than a week in Alberta newspapers, including letters to the editors in local newspapers by the presidents of Alberta's universities based in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge.

On May 20, 2004 it was reported in Alberta's major daily newspapers that the letters to the editors were in response to a request of the university presidents, by telephone from Oberg, for their support "in quelling questions" regarding charges of plagiarism against Premier Klein. Oberg admitted to phoning the four university presidents to "discuss academic freedom, student-teacher confidentiality and university autonomy" (Baxter & Howell, 2004, May 20). Oberg also stated that he had asked the presidents to write letters to make public their views on these issues, although the timing and nature of his request were remarkably circumstantial in relation to the charges of plagiarism against Klein.

Baxter and Howell's report concluded with confirmation by University of Alberta Provost Carl Amrhein that officials of the four universities had held a conference call to discuss

Oberg's request, and in the end Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge universities decided to write letters "celebrating the importance of lifelong learning," which they did. As Klein was a student of Athabasca University, there was at that time no letter to the editor submitted from that institution, but an internal review of the incident was in the process of being conducted by the university.

Oberg's attempt to compel the universities to respond to the plagiarism charges in a supportive manner was obvious, and such an attempt to direct the universities to act in the best interests of the government could be seen as a government official's violation of respect for university autonomy, regardless of how relative that autonomy might be. By most accounts plagiarism had indeed been committed as Klein, regardless of intent, had clearly represented the work of others as his own. While the issue of Klein's plagiarism garnered most of the controversy, more remarkable and reassuring is the response of the universities in the form of the letters to the editors of the newspapers. Not suggesting there had been any pressure to absolve Klein of plagiarism, the universities responded just as a community of practice could be expected to respond. After years of wary interaction with one another prior to 1999, the universities banded together on their own and worked together to respond to Oberg's request. The universities were now part of a system, and although the government supported that system, government did not rule that system.

The university officials had managed to respond to Oberg's request without adding to any embarrassment the Minister might have suffered. The incident has been a reflection on Klein's character quite understandably, but Oberg's public profile was compromised as well. Oberg's telephone calls to the university presidents may have suggested to the general public that he did not appreciate the impropriety of his actions, but it is significant that the university officials did

not respond as if the Minister had violated any principles associated with university autonomy. It is clear that Oberg came close to imposing unwelcome interference into the affairs of the universities, but it is possible he had faith that the university presidents understood his predicament and, therefore, would respond accordingly, each party representing their constituencies in a gently assertive manner and trusting the other parties would not escalate the matter further.

It is also important to remember that during his tenure as Minister of Learning, through the development of the department's vision, mission and goals, in the discussions leading to the creation of the CAQC, and in the passage of the PSLA, Oberg along with David-Evans had developed strong relationships and trust with these same university officials. It now is apparent that Oberg was asked by certain Cabinet officials to make the calls, putting him in a situation where he had to weigh his solidarity with his Cabinet colleagues against his clear and strong appreciation for university autonomy, which would damage his reputation in the process. Knowing the repercussions that would likely follow, Oberg "took one for the team" and made the calls (M. David-Evans, personal communication, February 10, 2013). The university officials responded as if they knew this and were sympathetic to Oberg's plight. Despite political forces external to the community of practice, relationships remained positive, trust was maintained, and the coordination of university programs remained an important focus in the relationships.

CHAPTER 7

Findings and Recommendations

The argument

In circumstances regarding the coordination of university programs in Alberta, when government policy is developed with the participation of the universities' senior officials, the policy is successfully implemented. The policy is successful in that it enjoys the support of all representative parties who helped develop it, it is an instrument of the values shared by all concerned, and the parties have accepted responsibility for applying the policy to the best their ability.

While consultation with universities may have an effect on policy development, consultation does not compel government to modify policy to the extent the universities will work to ensure successful application. Therefore, short of full participation in policy development with the universities, when policy is developed by government, regardless of the extent of efforts by government to communicate or consult with the universities, successful application of the policy is less certain. Three factors may contribute to this uncertain outcome: (1) the universities did not participate in making the policy decision, (2) there is no shared responsibility for the success of the policy, and (3) the policy does not represent shared values.

Successfully implemented policies can be defined as those policies recognized, accepted and acted upon by the senior officials representing each of the universities. Presumably, acceptance of these policies included consultation with representative groups within each university, or problems would have occurred. In the development of a successfully implemented policy, the three necessary elements of the Community of Practice model (domain, community and practice) are present. While the successful policies are enacted with the authority of

government, they are not necessarily regarded as a “government policy” because the policy enjoys shared ownership with the universities and other post-secondary education providers that were involved in the policy’s development.

The four Alberta universities maintained their institutional autonomy in the years under study, as defined by the Global Colloquium of University Presidents, in that they continued to determine for themselves, “on academic grounds, who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study” (Doyle, Fine & Moneyhon, 2005, p. 14-15). Further, just as the Colloquium prescribed, the Alberta government’s respect for this institutional autonomy determined the framework for the statutory provisions (in this case, the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*) that would affect the universities.

A scale for evaluation

Applying Rowe and Frewer’s three types of public engagement typology (2005, pp. 255-257), the interaction between government and university officials can be classified into one of three levels. The lowest level of interaction is *communication*, wherein a government body is the initiator of policy development, having conveyed that information to the parties to which the policy is to be applied. The communication flow from the government body is largely one-way and a response to this information is not requested, and may not be heeded.

The intermediate level of interaction is *consultation*, wherein the government body asks for comment on aspects of a policy being developed or considered, but action may not necessarily be taken to reflect the responses received from the parties that will be subjected to the proposed policy.

The third level in Rowe and Frewer’s typology is *participation*, where dialogue takes place between the government body and those that would be affected by the policy, and results in

a policy developed largely in agreement with all participants. The dialogue serves as an opportunity for the government body and invited participants to revise their shared and distinct perspectives on the issues at hand, and together develop or revise the policy accordingly.

The Rowe and Frewer typology, in its simplest of forms, provides a means to assess the potential success of the Community of Practice model in terms of attempting to coordinate university programs by the Lougheed, Getty and Klein governments. By using the three levels in this typology to evaluate the general level of engagement of the department with the universities, distinct characterizations emerge of the department's approaches to the universities under each of the four deputy ministers in this study.

Walter Worth - 1972-1976

Ministers: James Foster 1971 – 1975, Bert Hohol 1975 – 1979

Premier: Peter Lougheed 1971 – 1985

While Worth was Deputy Minister, engagement was predominantly one-way *communication* in terms of program coordination, as illustrated in his documented interaction with university faculty in Lethbridge (Winchester), and in Worth's own recounting of his tenure (McIntosh & Hodysh).

Attempts at university program coordination by the department at the time reflect the general tendency to limit engagement to a one-way flow of interaction. As a first example, the *Universities Amendment Act* (1973) eliminated the Universities Commission and its assigned responsibility for financial support, which included the funding of new programs. It also gave power to the Minister to coordinate university programs in terms of regulating or eliminating programs deemed unnecessary. This amendment to legislation gave the department a role in financial matters that increased administrative efficiencies within government and the

universities considerably, but the Minister's role in coordinating programs came to be circumvented by the universities in later years. As previously noted by Dupre (1987, p. 84), the universities made a practice of reallocating funds internally, thus avoiding the need to seek program approval from the Minister, which the department appears to have mistakenly assumed to be necessary for programs to be financially supported. The potential backlash by the university community to claims of government undermining university autonomy, later demonstrated as very effective in stopping passage of the 1975 *Adult Learning Act*, prevented the department from attempting to end the delivery of these unfunded new or expanded programs. As Meekison related in Chapter 4, a university might simply contest the department's authority to limit growth of its programming, in effect by daring the department to take action, which it did not.

While the financial support aspects of this legislation were created partially in response to both the government and the universities' frustrations with the Universities Commission, the program coordination features were not developed with the participation of the universities. In terms of program coordination, this legislation was largely ignored by the universities, and was, therefore, unsuccessful in this respect.

A second example, a prelude to the failed 1975 *Adult Education Act*, was the 1974 *Program Coordination: Policies, Guidelines, Procedures* document, which received strong resistance from the universities, as discussed in Chapter 4. Worth's introduction of the policy to university faculty was at the basic communication level although some might argue his challenge to debate the faculty might be an attempt to consult. Others might argue his statement "I have come to play and win. Have you?" was an attempt to recognize an imminent confrontation, rather than as an attempt to be consultative. There is no debate about the success of this policy

with regard to the universities. It was loudly and aggressively rejected by the universities and ultimately by the Minister.

A third example is the *Adult Education Act* (1975), which failed to reach third reading in the Legislative Assembly due to the effective resistance of the universities and their supporters. It had been developed following the communication to the university community of an annotated draft explaining the reasons and merits of various sections. Consultation was also evident in that responses to the proposed legislation were welcomed. However, as the universities argued, revisions they considered necessary were not made to subsequent drafts. The draft legislation put forward to the Minister for presentation in the Legislative Assembly was the result of *consultation* but not *participation*, and the largely unchanged version of the legislation was tabled in the legislature, only to be permanently withdrawn later by the Minister.

The Mowat Committee recommendation is perhaps the best illustration of the department's resistance to collaboration and participation under Worth. Formed of university and college delegates by the Social Credit government in 1970, and chaired by Dr. Gordon L. Mowat of the University of Alberta (E. Keen, 1999), the Mowat Committee was an attempt, through engagement at the participation level, to develop a solution to transfer problems arising from students taking university courses at Alberta's two-year colleges. Mowat's recommendation was to create an independent body to facilitate transfer agreements, a body which today we know as the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT). As the government changed hands from Strom to Lougheed, and as transfer problems grew in complexity and magnitude, the Mowat recommendation remained in the eyes of many outside the department as a suitable solution. Resistance by Worth's department to the Mowat recommendation was strong, and the department preferred to legislate a solution that would

enable the colleges to unilaterally certify advanced course credit standing that the universities would be required to accept. Finally after three years of bickering, the department was forced to relent as the Minister acted on the request of the college and university presidents, and created ACAT (Andrews et al., 1997, pp.77-78). In this instance, the department under Worth tried to advance an agenda that refuted the outcome of engagement at the participation level.

Henry Kolesar - 1976-1987

Ministers: Bert Hohol 1975 – 1979, Jim Horsman 1979 – 1982, Dick Johnston 1982 – 1986, David Russell 1986 - 1989

Premiers: Peter Lougheed 1971 – 1985, Don Getty 1985 - 1992

As this study has indicated, there was little if any documentation of organized communication, consultation or participation between the department and the universities officials regarding university program coordination during the Kolesar years. However, despite the apparent lack of any official engagement on the topic of program coordination, unofficially at least two arenas of engagement were in place: the Education Society of Edmonton (ESE), where university and department officials regularly met in a social environment, and Lougheed's ad hoc meetings at Government House where he would bring top government officials together with leaders of various sectors of Alberta's economy. In both instances, the necessary elements of the Community of Practice model are evident. However, while Lougheed maintained engagement at the participation level in his ad hoc meetings, the level of engagement among university and department members of ESE waned under Lougheed. Co-written by Walter Worth, the ESE 60th anniversary song expressed pride in its members' influence into government policy prior to the Lougheed years, and suggested regret in the ESE's marginalized influence that followed Lougheed's installation as Premier.

The establishment of the Alberta Heritage Fund for Medical Research is a clear indication that participation as a level of engagement in Lougheed's *ad hoc* meetings could result in successful university program coordination. However, one can only speculate if the ESE was a venue for engagement in terms of university program coordination during the Lougheed years, considering two of its members were Henry Kolesar and the President of the University of Alberta, Myer Horowitz. Certainly, as Horowitz has confirmed (M. Horowitz, personal communication, August 9, 2010), the two men knew each other well and respected each other's challenging positions, but any agreements at which they may have arrived need not have been the result of their membership in the ESE.

The Worth years were characterized by a heightening of tension between the department and the universities, and there was much interaction between the department and the universities. The Kolesar years allowed for an easing of those tensions, but as Horowitz stated, there was little interaction with the universities regarding program coordination. Programming in the college and technical institute sectors grew dramatically during the Kolesar years, largely due to these sectors' willingness to comply with the economic diversification agenda of expanding education and training opportunities in a manner coordinated by the department, but there was little progress in terms of advancing the government's agenda to coordinate university programs. University programs did expand in scope and grow in enrollment during this period, but there is no evidence of engagement at the participation level, or even the consultation level, which may have otherwise helped facilitate this growth.

Lynne Duncan - 1987-1999

Ministers: David Russell 1986 – 1989, John Gogo 1989 – 1992, Jack Ady 1992 – 1997,
Clint Dunford 1997 - 1999

Premiers: Don Getty 1985 – 1992, Ralph Klein 1992 - 2006

If the Kolesar era were to be considered the years of détente between the department and the universities, the Duncan years would be considered an era of glasnost. Duncan took office in midway through Getty's second year as Premier, and by then the financial challenges facing the government were becoming painfully clear. Assistant Deputy Treasurer prior to being promoted to Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Duncan was well aware of the government's financial challenges and, as discussed in Chapter 5, she began to open up the "black box" that had been her department, and engage with members of the post-secondary community in Alberta, whether administrators, faculty or students. Engagement rose to the consultation level under her leadership, which was greatly appreciated. However, financial pressures precluded any engagement at the participation level, simply because the government's deficit reduction measures would need to take precedent over the needs of the post-secondary institutions. The universities were quite capable of determining how much financial support they needed, but they could not be given the opportunity to help determine how much they would be awarded.

Consultation did not always result in agreement with the universities. The first example of an attempt at consultation while Duncan was Deputy Minister began with the release of *Responding to Existing and Emerging Demands for University Education: A Policy Framework*, which was closely followed by Bill 27, the *Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act (1990)*. As these two episodes discussed in Chapter 5 illustrate, where there was no agreement a stalemate might result. However, the disagreements arose through consultation – not confrontation or frustration out of being disregarded, and the universities' concerns were accepted as valid even if they could not be accommodated. The department attempted to accommodate these concerns to a limited extent, but was constrained by financial pressures to

seek greater cost-effectiveness in the post-secondary institutions that it supported financially. Bill 27 passed in an amended form to recognize the universities concerns although it did not eliminate the concerns.

The 1994 policy framework *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta* was the result of successful engagement at the consultation level. Ralph Klein was now Premier and, with Jack Ady as Minister, the department set out to prepare for cuts of 21% to the institutions' annual operating grants while also increasing accessibility to educational opportunities, including degree programs typically offered by the universities. The *New Directions* framework had a lasting effect in many respects: a new applied degree was introduced as a compromise to continued requests from Mount Royal College to offer baccalaureate degrees, tuition fees were allowed to rise to 30% of an institute's operating expenditures, and key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed although their utilization in later years would diminish, thanks to the post-secondary institutions *participating* in the development of measures that would indicate their performance. If the post-secondary institutions had been limited to engagement at the consultation level, perhaps the KPIs would have been developed differently; more in satisfying the department's agenda to evaluate performance, and less in satisfying the institutions' agenda of minimizing potential negative effects of any evaluation of their performance.

Despite severe financial constraints, the Duncan years are characterized by greater accountability, openness, and consultation. Although the long-held goal of bringing the universities into a system of coordinated programming remained, it continued to be elusive. It would not be until the Province recovered from its financial crisis that universities would be given the opportunity to participate in the creation of that system.

Maria David-Evans - 1999-2004*

Minister: Lyle Oberg 1999-2004

Premier: Ralph Klein 1992 – 2006

*Donald M. Ford served briefly as Deputy Minister during 2001 (Alberta, O.C. 522/2001)

Finally realized during this period is Lougheed's vision of a system that coordinates university programs. The system was created by engaging the universities and other post-secondary institutions in the province as *participants* in its development. There are risks when a minister or government department permits the engagement of external parties as full participants in developing policy. These risks are significant but, as Minister Oberg and Deputy Minister David-Evans demonstrated, they are manageable. Beyond the obvious risks of unrealistic expectations being set, of losing control of the engagement process, and encountering insurmountable disagreements, perhaps the greatest risk was the credibility of the resulting system. However, just as the participation of the universities may add to the risks involved, the participation of the universities also added to the credibility and acceptance of the resulting system.

Engagement between the universities and the department officials at the participation level was essential to the success of the policy development, and also essential was Minister Oberg's trust in the process David-Evans had established, as well as in the people involved in the process. The Vice-Presidents Academic of the four universities, Ronald Bond, Alan Davis, Seamus O'Shea and Doug Oworm, met regularly and worked co-operatively to overcome obstacles that might have caused departmental plans to be sidetracked by intra-university bickering. All of these senior officials also worked well with and respected Phil Gougeon. Doug Oworm, Provost of the University of Alberta and the first Chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council assumed

an ongoing role in the realization of campus Alberta when he became the first chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council. These contributions to the policy development resulted in the realization of the Campus Alberta concept, the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* legislation that created it, and the Campus Alberta Quality Council that made it functional. The three essential elements of trust, as Schoorman et al. prescribed, are found in the relationships between the Vice-Presidents Academic, and especially Owram with Gougeon: they each had the ability to provide the leadership necessary to achieve success, they both had long before earned reputations for integrity by the groups they represented, and their respective careers both illustrated a sincere and profound benevolence for post-secondary education in Alberta.

The community of practice could not have been possible were it not for the experience of David-Evans and her confidence in the process she called community development. Most importantly, without Minister Oberg's confidence in David-Evans' abilities, and his trust in Owram and Gougeon among others, there would not have been a system of post-secondary education that included the universities, and Lougheed's vision of a system of university program coordination might still be unrealized. Oberg clearly took a risk in allowing the universities to participate in the development of government policy, and he was successful.

Other contributing factors

Two factors specific to Alberta should not be overlooked in assessing the development of the Campus Alberta concept, and especially in enlisting the universities as members of a system to coordinate programs:

- The Alberta government was relatively stable over the period of this study, from the day in 1971 when Lougheed established the Department of Advanced Education until the day the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* was enacted in 2004. The goal of creating a system of

coordination that included the universities did not change during that time, and the professionalism of the senior public servants in the department helped keep them intent, despite all distractions and challenges, on achieving that goal.

- The lack of a formula funding model for operating grants since the early 1970s required the leadership of the universities and the department to establish relationships and maintain a level of dialogue, if not to discuss and resolve program coordination issues, then at least financial support issues. There was always dialogue occurring, but perhaps not always friendly and informal; all parties knew that ongoing dialogue was essential in the absence of formula funding. The relationships established through dialogue also helped the parties alert each other to problems on the horizon, and to help each other resolve issues before they became escalated.
- As recognized and promoted by David-Evans, it was essential that all the post-secondary institutions be legislated by one act common to all publicly funded post-secondary institutions. One act helped ensure there would only be one system of program coordination, one set of rules and procedures, one governing body (the CAQC) free of representatives of government, allowing for one united front with Alberta's universities, colleges and technical institutes standing behind any recommendations made to the Minister.

In summary, the Worth years were typified by engagement at the communication level, as well as resistance to engagement at the higher levels of consultation and participation. The Kolesar years are characterized by a great deal of expansion of college and technical institute programming, but in terms of program coordination, any engagement greater than at the communication level with the universities appears undocumented and perhaps was non-existent.

The years Duncan was Deputy Minister provide clear examples of initiatives to communicate and consult with the universities, with some resulting in progress toward further university coordination, and despite the universities suffering significant financial challenges in the years of her leadership of the department. It was not until David-Evans became Deputy Minister that participation as an optimum level of engagement was reached, and resulting from the department's participation with the universities, the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* was developed and enacted.

The research questions revisited

Financial issues aside, in terms of program coordination the interaction between the Alberta government and its four public universities from 1971 to 2004 changed significantly over time, from confrontation to neglect, and then to engagement in consultation, and finally participation in policy development. An ill-conceived strategy in 1973 to debate and refute the universities' arguments for respecting the universities' own sense of autonomy during the early days of the department resulted in no effective discourse or change in the relationship, and a resulting stalemate lasted from approximately 1976 to 1987. From 1987 to 1999, a renaissance of mutual respect emerged through open dialogue and collegiality. Beginning in 1999 a process developed to establish in legislation processes and practices that would prove to be effective in the coordination of university programming.

Answers to the research questions illustrate these general statements:

1. *How has the Government of Alberta attempted to achieve its program coordination objectives in relation to its public universities, while respecting their autonomy?*

Collegial, trusting, interactive relationships existed between the provincial government and the University of Alberta officials since the early days of the province, but were eclipsed by

the Lougheed government's attempt to marshal the universities into a system of post-secondary institutions that would support the government's economic development agenda. The Lougheed government's 1975 *Adult Education Act* was a failed attempt at contractual government legislation, employing command and control strategies to direct or limit university programming that appeared to threaten the universities' sense of autonomy. In the later years of the Getty government, the development and maintenance of meaningful interactive relationships emerged between the presidents of the universities and the Deputy Minister of the department, and were the guiding force in the coordination of programming at Alberta's universities. During the years of the Klein government, despite pressures to eliminate significant budget deficits, the Community of Practice model was evident in the ability of the universities and the department to agree on goals and strategies that would affect future program coordination. Collegial, trusting, interactive relationships became a hallmark of the relationship between university and department officials, and were key to formally establishing in legislation a method of coordinating university programming, which came into force in 2004.

2. *How did the universities respond to these attempts by the government to coordinate their programs?*

The aggressive attempt by the department to introduce the failed 1975 *Adult Education Act* resulted in a period, lasting more than ten years, of détente and inaction in terms of university program coordination. Mutually beneficial relationships between the senior officials of the universities and the department began to develop during the Getty years when it became clear that greater interaction and collaboration would be necessary in weathering the province's escalating budget crisis. These relationships matured and continued under the Klein government to the extent that trust in the department among the universities' senior officials was sufficient to

nullify any sense of threat to university autonomy posed by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, which established the universities as members of a system. This is in contrast to the negative reaction from the university community when legislation was proposed in 1975 to enlist their institutions as members of a provincial post-secondary system.

3. *How best should governments and universities act in future, perhaps not only in terms of program coordination, but on other issues of mutual concern?*

In determining how governments and universities might best act together in the future on issues of mutual concern, adoption of the Communities of Practice model is a major consideration, but other factors ought to be considered as well. Few people, whether in government, the university community or the general public, appreciate the distinction between the terms institution and organization as used in this study. As institutions, that is, as arenas of discourse, universities might be described as venues for an endless series of consultations, where through interaction academics come together to discover, share and apply knowledge. Like a sporting event or a parliament, an institution has rules and conventions by which all must abide, although its members may never be in agreement about the desired outcome, but nor do they all need to be in agreement.

An organization, unlike an institution, is an instrument of its members' common purpose (Cameron, 1990). This common purpose might be a mission statement or a vision statement, often accompanied by certain organizational values to which a member must comply. The failed 1975 *Adult Education Act* is an example of this error in confusing institutions and organizations, as if the universities had a set of purposes not of their own making. Members of an institution, on the other hand, may have individual purposes, or may be in groups, each with a common purpose, but they do not all share the same common purpose. They are members of the

institution to negotiate different ends, with other members or independently. While the *Adult Education Act* recognized the need to respect the rules of academic freedom held by the universities as institutions, it also tried to provide government with the authority to direct the outcome of the program activities as if they were organizations, and went too far in doing so, as the Minister ultimately concluded.

By the time the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* was introduced, there was no need for the government to direct the universities' programming. The universities had learned to operate within the system to their advantage, and as autonomous entities they were committed to the success of the system that transferred students to them, that helped them influence academic decisions at other institutions within the system, and that allowed them to affect the establishment and development of new university programs across the province. By 2004, the department was not responsible for coordinating university programming, the system was, and the universities were effective as members of the system. Again, trust in the system, to act in the best interests of the province, proved to be essential.

In closing

The Communities of Practice model existed in various forms throughout the history of universities in Alberta. The domain of university program coordination remained relatively constant since the creation of the Education Society of Edmonton in 1927, but the community changed several times, as did the practice. Despite his lack of attention to the universities in his later years in power, Lougheed also engaged in *ad hoc* Communities of Practice, as he admitted later in life. One example of Lougheed's use of the model resulted in the creation of the highly successful Alberta Heritage Fund for Medical Research, which benefited university research in Alberta immensely. The need for a greater dialogue between the senior officials of the

universities and the department resulted in a key recommendation by the Dupre Commission, and slowly dialogue between the parties grew to the point the Community of Practice model was routinely employed. With the enactment of the PSLA in 2004, the Community of Practice model was formalized in the creation of the Campus Alberta Quality Council.

University autonomy in Alberta is a relative term. Rather than stating that a particular action was a threat to a university's autonomy, it would be more accurate to state that the action was simply a threat to the university. In Alberta, university autonomy does not mean immunity from the realities of the economy, social values or cultural sensitivities; instead it means a university has the ability, indeed the obligation, to make its own decisions within its considerable authority to make decisions, whether at the board level or in the General Faculties Council. In the case of ministerial pressure to compromise their values, Alberta universities have proven to be sufficiently independent to the extent they can easily rebuff that pressure. The coordination of programming within Alberta's system of post-secondary education does not compromise the autonomy of the universities, as they are free to make choices. However, to ensure continued trust among the members of the system, the universities strive to perform to the best of their abilities, to maintain their integrity, and to demonstrate benevolence toward their fellow institutions in a community of practice known as Alberta's post-secondary system.

The relationships and interaction within Alberta's system of post-secondary education in 2004 has strong similarities to the Communities of Practice model, and to a great extent exemplifies it. The consultative strategy revealed by Lougheed years after he left office is included in the research to illustrate that Lougheed had the same means at his disposal to improve relations with the universities. The irony is that, while Lougheed set the objective of coordinating university programming, it was one of his few failures. Only after urgent financial

concerns necessitated the need to move to a Community of Practice model in the late 1980s did Loughheed's objective become attainable.

Recommendations for further research

William Clark makes it clear in his exploration of early German research universities that institutional autonomy and institutional independence are not synonymous. This is echoed in the Hurtubise and Rowat report, in their determination that university autonomy is better described as independence, and relative independence at that. There is also some confusion as to the similarities between the German research university and the North American research university. These are comparisons that would greatly benefit from further study and clarification.

The presence of the Education Society of Edmonton in the development of educational policy in Alberta over an 85-year span may be on a scale of influence that matches or exceeds that of an elected government. The ESE is still a thriving association, and has a history and a membership that compels one to learn as much as possible the dynamics and impact of this remarkable group.

Loughheed's attempt to treat the universities as agents rather than as autonomous entities may have been an error, but his decision to dismiss the concept of progressive education and instead embark on attempting to develop a model serving labour market needs for the purpose of economic diversification may have been an error as well. A recent report from Ontario's Higher Education Quality Council (Lennon, 2010) suggests that university programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math may not be as beneficial to an economy as when students are encouraged to develop and pursue plans of study that are of personal interest.

Epilogue

Former University of Calgary Dean Don Detomasi recalled that the 1966 *Universities Act* was largely developed by senior officials of the University of Alberta under the leadership of its president Walter H. Johns, rather than by government officials as one might more likely assume (personal communication, March 12, 2013). This conclusion is supported by the great amount of detail Johns provides in his memoirs regarding the U of A's role development of the 1966 *Universities Act* (1981, pp. 357-369), which was of such influence as to overrule the recommendations of the government's own consultants (Macleod, 2008, p. 193). From Dr. Detomasi's recollection emerged the theme that "top-down" policy development is not likely to be effective (like Lougheed's 1975 *Adult Education Act*, or the 1990 *Responding to Existing and Emerging Demands for University Education: A Policy Framework*), but "bottom-up" policy development (like the 1966 *Universities Act* and the 2003 *Post-Secondary Learning Act*) is more likely to be of lasting value to the parties concerned.

An example from another province supports the idea that "bottom-up" policy development is of much greater effectiveness than policy development that is "top-down" in nature. The 1962 MacDonald Report was written entirely on the initiative of its primary author, the President of the University of British Columbia at the time, John MacDonald. The report was not requested, supported or initially acknowledged by the British Columbia government, but the outcome of the report proved to be a set of recommendations the government could not afford to ignore, should it hope to remain in power. The MacDonald Report is widely credited with the B.C. government agreeing to implement a wide range of initiatives including the establishment of the University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, a system of community

colleges offering vocational, trades and university transfer programs, and a set of policies and procedures for financially supporting these initiatives (Dennison, 1997, pp. 36-37).

In contrast, the Government of British Columbia under Premier Gordon Campbell commissioned former BC Attorney General Geoff Plant to review the province's post-secondary system. In the 2007 report that came to be known as *Campus 2020*, Plant made 52 recommendations, with the majority of them specific to undergraduate education. In *Academic Reform*, the authors remark on only one major recommendation being implemented, which was to create teaching universities from some of the former university colleges (Clark et al., 2011, pp. 41, 200).

By enlisting his university colleagues and speaking on behalf of the post-secondary needs of all British Columbians across his province, MacDonald was able to position his report as the voice of British Columbians. Plant's *Campus 2020* report had no such voice as it was commissioned by the government of the day. While the great majority of MacDonald's "bottom-up" policy proposals were initiated, the great majority of Plant's "top-down" initiatives were not.

As Howard Tennant observed from close quarters, Peter Lougheed took great pains to discern the voice of the grassroots and he echoed that voice well, which gave Lougheed enormous power and influence (H. Tennant, personal communication, March 4, 2013). However, Lougheed's failed 1975 *Adult Education Act* was not the product of the grassroots in Alberta; it was a top-down policy attempting to support a conflicting grassroots policy: economic diversification. The universities prevented Lougheed from implementing the former policy, and some might argue they limited his ability to achieve the latter policy in the process.

In order to develop and implement effective policy in higher education, government officials regardless of jurisdiction or political leanings may do well to adopt a Community of

Practice model, just as Lougheed learned through experience. Such an endeavour would include inviting post-secondary institutions, not only to be informed and consulted as the policy development process unfolds, but to allow the institutions to take some ownership of the resulting policy by encouraging their participation through dialogue and accepting their contributions as valid.

One last thought

In the year leading up to the submission of this study, relations between the universities and the Government of Alberta have become strained. Expected government revenues have failed to materialize, grants to universities have been significantly reduced as a result, and the Minister responsible for the universities has made many statements in the press that have tested the relationships that have been so carefully developed over decades. The department appears to have misplaced its role and obligations as a member of the community of practice, but the universities continue to work together, perhaps stronger than they ever have before. Trust in the minister responsible for the department is gone because any sense of benevolence has disappeared in the panic to address fiscal matters. The prospect of benevolence and mutual respect returning in the near future appears dim, and we are left to wonder if history is repeating itself. Perhaps Alberta's universities will have to relive the 1970s.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – University of Calgary CFREB Document



CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW


This is to certify that the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary has examined the following research proposal and found the proposed research involving human subjects to be in accordance with University of Calgary Guidelines and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on *"Ethical Conduct in Research Using Human Subjects"*. This form and accompanying letter constitute the Certification of Institutional Ethics Review.

File no: **6471**
 Applicant(s): **James Barmby**
 Department: **Graduate Division of Educational Research**
 Project Title: **The Art and Craft of University Coordination**
 Sponsor (if applicable):

Restrictions:

This Certification is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the project and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modifications to the authorized protocol must be submitted to the Chair, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board for approval.
3. A progress report must be submitted 12 months from the date of this Certification, and should provide the expected completion date for the project.
4. Written notification must be sent to the Board when the project is complete or terminated.


Kathleen Oberle, PhD
Chair
Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board

MAY 27 2010

Date:

Distribution: (1) Applicant, (2) Supervisor (if applicable), (3) Chair, Department/Faculty Research Ethics Committee, (4) Sponsor, (5) Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (6) Research Services.

APPENDIX B – University of British Columbia BREB Document



The University of British Columbia Okanagan
 Research Services
 Behavioural Research Ethics Board
 3333 University Way
 Kelowna, BC V1V 1V7 Phone: 250-807-8832
 Fax: 250-807-8438

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Lynn Bosetti		INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT: UBC/UBCO VP Academic (Academic Units)		UBC BREB NUMBER: H12-03395	
INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:					
Institution			Site		
CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): James T Barnaby					
SPONSORING AGENCIES: N/A					
PROJECT TITLE: The Art and Craft of University Coordination					
CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: February 14, 2014					
DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:				DATE APPROVED: February 14, 2013	
Document Name				Version	Date
Protocol: The Art and Craft of University Coordination Proposal				N/A	May 5, 2009
Consent Forms: Art and Craft Consent Form				2	February 13, 2013
Letter of Initial Contact: Art and Craft Initial Contact letter				N/A	February 3, 2013
The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.					
Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board Okanagan and signed electronically by:					
Dr. Carolyn Szostak, Chair					

APPENDIX C – U of C Letter of Inquiry and Informed Consent Form

University of Calgary Letter of Inquiry and Informed Consent Form

(Name)

(Street Address)

(City, province, Postal Code)

(Date)

Dear (Name):

I am a doctoral candidate in the Graduate Division of Educational Research at the University of Calgary. I am also Dean of the Shuswap-Revelstoke region of Okanagan College, although most of my career has been in Alberta, beginning with Alberta Advanced Education in 1986.

My doctoral research project is a study of various approaches by the province of Alberta to coordinate university programming over a 35-year period. The study begins with Peter Lougheed's October 21, 1969 nomination speech for the Calgary West constituency, in which he made a policy statement that university programs need to be coordinated by means of "one comprehensive post-secondary education authority." The study ends with the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* in 2004, which established the Campus Alberta Quality Council as an arms-length agency that makes recommendations to the Minister on applications for all degree programs in offered in Alberta, with the exclusion of divinity degrees.

Based on interviews and an analysis of documents, this study is an historical account of the various policy initiatives, demographic and financial pressures, and shifts in values and perspectives that may have occurred during this period.

I am especially interested in the issue of the coordination of university program by government in relation to the universities' sense of inherent academic freedom and institutional autonomy. I believe there is much to learn about how Alberta's universities and successive governments between 1971 and 2004 have worked together to achieve objectives both common and disparate. The aim of the research therefore is to better understand the policy initiatives that were considered or implemented by each successive government since 1971, and how the universities responded to those initiatives. As well, it is important to learn how each government developed strategies for coordinating university programs while also recognizing the universities' strong sense of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

You played a key role in the development and application of policy for Alberta's university policies during this period. I am particularly interested in learning about your perception of the various government strategies considered or employed to coordinate university programming in Alberta, and how the universities responded to those strategies.

I would like to arrange an interview with you in person, at a place and time convenient to you.

Your participation in this research would be purely voluntary. As well, please be assured any direct quotes attributed to you will require your permission prior to publication. Audio recordings and notes of our interview will be kept locked and secured for five years and then, according to University of Calgary faculty guidelines, the recordings would be destroyed. If you wish to receive a summary of my findings, I would be happy to provide them to you as soon as they are available.

Attached is a consent form for you to review at your convenience. Prior to my formal interview with you, I will review this letter and the attached consent form with you and answer any questions you may have.

I plan to contact your office by telephone in the next two weeks. Should you prefer to contact me in the meantime, I encourage you to call me on my cell phone at 250-XXX-XXXX or send me an email at jbarmby@okanagan.bc.ca

I am very much looking forward to the opportunity of meeting with you and learning more about your insights into this important aspect of Alberta's history.

Sincerely,

Jim Barnby
Education Doctoral Candidate

Informed Consent Form

Name of Researcher: James T. Barmby Ed.D. (Candidate)
Supervisor: Dr. Lynne Bosetti
Title of Project: The Art and Craft of University Coordination

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study. The use of the data from this study will inform an Ed.D. project. The study may be submitted to scholarly journals and other periodicals for publication.

The purpose of the project is to develop a historical account of how a policy statement announced in 1969, to coordinate university programs in Alberta, was pursued in various forms until 2004, when the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* came into force. The objectives are to (1) determine the strategies of each government and (2) assess the effectiveness of these strategies as they relate to the coordination of university programs.

If you decide to participate in this study and at some later date wish to withdraw, you are able to do so at any time. Any data that you would have contributed to the point of withdrawal will continue to be used in the writing of the research. The only exception is that if you decide to withdraw from the study and have previously agreed to an audio recording, you may request that the audio recording be destroyed. Your request will be honoured.”

What Will I Be Asked to Do? I wish to interview you because of your professional knowledge of this issue as a cabinet minister, senior government official, or senior university official. Your participation would involve answering some questions, which would require about 30 minutes. Your participation is purely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

I would prefer to interview you in person. However, if that cannot be arranged I would welcome the opportunity to interview you over the telephone. If a telephone interview takes place, I will follow the process approved by the University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected? By signing this consent form, you are providing permission to be identified by name as a participant in this study. Direct quotes will not be used without your permission. With your permission (please see below), I will record the interview to improve the accuracy of my work.

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate? I do not expect any risk to you in participating in this study.

What Happens to the Information I Provide? I will keep the interview notes, drafts and audio tapes in a locked drawer in my home office. After the study is finished, I will keep the data in a secure and locked container for five years as required by our Faculty ethics guidelines. After that, the notes of the interview will be destroyed and the audio tapes will be erased.

Permission of Participant (please initial):

I grant permission to be audio taped: Yes: ____ No: ____

Signatures (written consent)

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Researcher's Name (please print)

Researcher's Signature

Date _____

Participant's Name (please print)

Participant's Signature

Date _____

Questions or Concerns

If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Jim Barmby (Researcher) Dean, Shuswap-Revelstoke Region Okanagan College Salmon Arm, BC Phone 250-832-2126 ext 8239 jbarmby@okanagan.bc.ca	Dr. Lynn Bosetti (Supervisor) Professor Faculty of Education University of Calgary Phone 403-220-3648 blbosett@ucalgary.ca
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If you have any concerns about the way you have been treated as a participant, please contact the Senior Ethics Resource officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-3782; email rburrows@ucalgary.ca

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.

APPENDIX D – UBC Letter to interviewees



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Consent Form

Study Team

Title of Project: The Art and Craft of University Coordination

Principle Investigator: Lynn Bosetti, PhD
Dean of Education, UBC Okanagan
Telephone (250)807-9808

Co-Investigator: James T. Barmby, PhD Candidate
College of Graduate Studies
UBC Okanagan
Telephone (250)832-2126

The research being conducted related to this consent form is in partial fulfillment of the co-investigator's PhD thesis, which shall be a published and available to the public. Information provided by the participants may be used as part of a historical analysis of the development and evolution of the relationship between senior officials of Alberta's four comprehensive academic research universities and senior officials in the Alberta government responsible for universities between 1971 and 2004.

Invitation and Study Purpose

In 1969 in his nomination speech for the Progressive Conservative nomination for the Calgary West riding, Peter Lougheed as Leader of the Opposition in Alberta called for the coordination

by government of university programming. Two new universities had just been created, the University of Calgary in 1966 and the University of Lethbridge in 1968, and the Social Credit government had recently made a commitment to establish a fourth to be called Athabasca University, which was assumed to be a traditional campus university in or near Edmonton. In his speech, Lougheed expressed concern that, while the demographics and enrollment trends might justify more university educational programs, the government of the day did not have sufficient control over the apparent rapid growth of university programs. Lougheed's government attempted to introduce university program coordination in the 1975 Adult Education Act, but it failed to receive third reading due to successful lobbying by university alumni and other groups seeking to assert university autonomy. Not until the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) was passed in 2003, 34 years after his policy statement to his riding association, was Lougheed's vision realized.

One significant feature of the PSLA was agreement by the universities to be part of a system - not a system as Lougheed had proposed where university autonomy was clearly subjugated to government economic development policies - but instead a system of coordination that was independent of the government, which we now know as Campus Alberta under the guidance of the Campus Alberta Quality Council.

The research follows the events and activities related to attempts to coordinate university programs in Alberta from 1971 to 2004. It is a study of the nature of the relationship between senior university officials and senior department officials, and primarily in terms of program coordination. Other issues such as funding, capital projects, tuition, board appointments, and ACAT are sometimes explored, but the main thrust of the research is the nature of the interaction regarding program coordination.

You played a key role in the development and application of policy for Alberta's university policies during this period. I am particularly interested in learning about your perception of the various government strategies considered or employed to coordinate university programming in Alberta, and how the universities responded to those strategies.

The purpose of the research is to develop a historical account of how a policy statement announced in 1969, to coordinate university programs in Alberta, was pursued in various forms until 2004, when the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* came into force. The objectives are to (1) determine the strategies of each government and (2) assess the effectiveness of these strategies as they relate to the coordination of university programs.

Study Procedures

I wish to interview you because of your professional knowledge of this issue as a cabinet minister, senior government official, or senior university official. Your participation would involve answering some questions, which would require about 30 to 60 minutes. Your participation is purely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

If you agree to participate, there are no prepared questions. Instead, the interview would begin by asking your impressions of the possible factors that affected the relations between the universities and the ministry, and how those factors may have facilitated or impeded the development of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*. Any comments, insights or observations you provide may lead to other questions, and you are free to decline answering any questions.

I would prefer to interview you in person. However, if that cannot be arranged I would welcome the opportunity to interview you over the telephone.

Study Results

The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles and books.

The co-investigator can provide you with the results of the study by email, or printed version will be provided by mail upon request.

Potential Risks

I do not expect any risk to you in participating in this study.

Your participation in this research would be purely voluntary. Any direct quotes attributed to you will require your permission prior to publication. Audio recordings and notes of our interview will be kept locked and secured for a minimum of five years. If you wish to receive a summary of my findings, I would be happy to provide them to you as soon as they are available.

If you decide to participate in this study and at some later date wish to withdraw, you are able to do so at any time. Any data that you would have contributed to the point of withdrawal will continue to be used in the writing of the research. The only exception is that if you decide to withdraw from the study and have previously agreed to an audio recording, you may request that the audio recording be destroyed. Your request will be honoured.

Potential Benefits of the Study

There may be significant benefits for post-secondary institutions and governments interested in learning how government and university relationships developed in Alberta, as well as how actions and events enhanced their relationship or tested their relationship. Understanding the process by which university autonomy from the province was negotiated over time would also be beneficial, as it may help resolve similar challenges in other jurisdictions. The ways in which the leaders of the universities and government engaged in conversation, developed trust in one another and achieved mutual understanding, if not agreement, may provide other organizations with a model for consultation and collaboration, especially as an alternative to confrontation and conflict.

Confidentiality

All quotes and paraphrases must be subject to attribution. Information provided in confidence will be respected, and will not be recorded, included in the research or attributed to you.

Contact for Information About the Study

If you have any questions, please contact me at 250-832-2126. You may also contact Dr. Lynn Bosetti at 250-807-9808.

Contact for Complaints

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at [1-877-822-8598](tel:1-877-822-8598) or the UBC Okanagan Research Services Office at [250-807-8832](tel:250-807-8832). You may also contact the Research Subject Information Line by email: RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.”

Participant Consent and Signature Page

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

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Participant Name: (Name)

APPENDIX E - List of Interviewees

Dominique Abrioux, PhD	Former President, Athabasca University
Ron Bond, PhD	Former Vice President, Academic and Provost, University of Calgary
Reno Bosetti, PhD	Former Deputy Minister, Education Former Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Advanced Education
Bill Cade, PhD	Former President, University of Lethbridge
Maria David-Evans	Former Deputy Minister, Alberta Learning
Don Detomasi, PhD	Former Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary
Lynne Duncan	Former Deputy Minister, Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development
Phil Gougeon	Former Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
Neil Henry	Former Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development
Myer Horowitz, PhD	Former President, University of Alberta
J. Peter Meekison, PhD	Former Vice President, Academic, University of Alberta
Doug Owram, PhD	Former Vice President, Academic and Provost, University of Alberta
Seamus O'Shea, PhD	Former Vice President, Academic and Provost, University of Lethbridge
Howard Tennant, PhD	Former President, University of Lethbridge
Harvey Weingarten, PhD	Former President, University of Calgary
Ralph Westwood	Former Director of Program Coordination, Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development
Terry White, PhD	Former President, University of Calgary
William Workman, PhD	Former Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Advanced Education