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ABSTRACT

As Canadian higher education expanded from the 1950s, new institutions sought institutional legitimacy, meaning credibility and prestige in relation to educational peers and the state. Three dimensions to institutional legitimacy were identified: hierarchies of institutions, curricula and pedagogies; horizontal status within institutional sectors and fields of knowledge; and external legitimacy in relation to the state. New distance education institutions have found institutional legitimacy unusually problematic because of widespread scepticism about an educational form in which teacher and learner are separated in time and/or space. Distance educators typically balance industrial organizational forms using modern communications technologies, with attention to individual learners and accessibility. The study examined how a new, publicly-funded, distance education institution acquires legitimacy.

The British Columbia government established the Open Learning Institute in 1978, over extensive opposition, with an unusual mandate to teach programs from degree level to adult basic education at a distance. OLI never fitted easily into either university or college sector. Ambiguity persisted over its roles as credential-provider and service agency, but OLI quickly proved its popularity with students. Its leaders adopted existing norms and standards, especially those of the universities, while insisting on college characteristics of openness and accessibility. Government Restraint policies in the 1980s materially affected OLI's curriculum and pedagogies, and contributed to continuing debates over OLI's role as provincial coordinator of distance education.
By 1988, OLI's credentials were accepted in BC; inter-institutional collaborative agreements confirmed OLI was an acceptable partner; and OLI was a significant leader in the international distance education field. The Institute challenged traditional indicators of hierarchical institutional legitimacy through its sophisticated distance education techniques and new organizational patterns. Horizontal legitimacy, especially in relation to OLI's accessibility and its distance education expertise, was more important to its overall institutional legitimacy than position in traditional hierarchies of prestige. Its relationship with the state was also crucial to fiscal prosperity and perceptions of distance education's capacity to serve state functions. Conclusions are drawn about distance education's effects on the three dimensions of institutional legitimacy.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Higher education has expanded enormously in most quarters of the world since 1950. Massive growth has occurred in the number and variety of institutions, students, subjects and credentials. Pressures for increased popular access have vied with efforts to retain traditional elite characteristics of higher education. Canada has been no exception to these trends. Before 1950, Canadian higher education was largely conducted by a small number of autonomous universities with denominational affiliations, accessible to the privileged few. Each province now has a large, hierarchical system of universities, institutes and colleges, funded and increasingly influenced by government. Access has increased, but equality of educational opportunity remains problematic.

Among the changes has been an increased prominence of distance education aimed at adults who study at home or in the workplace rather than attending the campus. This change has taken two forms in Canada. One has been the metamorphosis of small 'correspondence study' programs in conventional institutions into more substantial distance education programs using sophisticated technologies and managed by specialist distance educators. Secondly, three new special purpose distance education institutions have been created: Athabasca University in Alberta, the Télé-Université de Quebec, and the Open Learning Institute of British Columbia.¹ The last is the subject of this study.

To survive and prosper, a new higher education institution must necessarily establish its identity, credibility and status with its peers and sponsors, and its popularity in the market place - in short, its legitimacy. A legal mandate, alone, cannot guarantee this legitimacy. Some institutions have chosen to follow traditional intellectual, pedagogical and organizational models
to achieve their desired stature and character. Others have eschewed convention and made alternative, often innovative choices of pedagogy, organizational structure, resource use, and admissions requirements. Both paths are problematic. It is a struggle to earn respect for the intellectual quality and standards of teaching and research, to fend off competition, and to reach levels of funding and enrolment popularity guaranteeing not only survival but also prestige and stature.

A new, publicly-funded distance education institution cannot escape these fundamental imperatives to find ways to survive and prosper. How it goes about it poses intriguing questions. Distance education’s unconventional pedagogies and unusual organizational structures and systems challenge educational orthodoxies, and suggest new reference points for those claiming institutional legitimacy. This was less important while correspondence study remained an insignificant and poorly-regarded educational form on the institutional margins. New techniques and accelerating social pressures for educational access improved that marginal position from the late 1960s. Rapid and massive expansion of distance education worldwide since then indicates it has become an important tool of national educational policies and is likely to play a significant and continuing role in both developed and developing countries into the next century. This lends cogency to the primary question addressed in this study:

How does a new, publicly funded distance education institution acquire legitimacy?

A social history of the origins and early years of a distance education institution offers one way of addressing the question. This study of the Open Learning Institute (OLI) of British Columbia (BC) covers the period leading to its creation in June 1978 through to its reformation as the Open Learning Agency in April 1988. As an important starting point, I elaborate below definitions of ‘institutional legitimacy’ and ‘distance education’ which have shaped and been reshaped by the research.
INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY - A DEFINITION

By 'institutional legitimacy' I mean the stature, credibility and prestige of the institution within its higher education system and in relationship to the state. There are three broad and interconnected dimensions to institutional legitimacy: vertical hierarchies of institutions, curricula and pedagogies; horizontal status within institutional sectors and fields of knowledge; and external legitimacy in relation to the state. This definition emerged as the research progressed. OLI's various relationships suggested that more familiar views of hierarchical stratification did not adequately explain how OLI claimed and substantiated its legitimacy.

The three dimensions of legitimacy are closely linked to the purposes of higher education. Today, these are argued to include discovering new knowledge; preserving, reproducing and inculcating culture in coming generations; maintaining elite social and cultural dominance; managing and legitimating knowledge as a commodity in industrial society; and transmitting knowledge and skills required in the increasingly specialized workplace (after Schultz 1961; Halsey 1961a; 1969; Halsey & Trow 1971; Stone 1983; Perkin 1984; Trow 1984; 1987). Modern conflicts about these purposes have been especially affected by increasing state demands for relevance of higher education to state economic and social purposes. Tensions exist between social and political demands for mass access to higher education, and efforts to retain higher education as a preserve of social and intellectual elites.

Trow (1984) argues institutional legitimacy has objective and subjective aspects. He suggests objective legitimacy is typically a fairly straightforward matter of legal status, and formal rights, privileges, obligations and limitations. All these are, nowadays, strongly influenced or determined by the state. These criteria define boundaries between sectors of higher education and determine institutional mandates and resources. Subjective aspects of legitimacy invite comparison of institutional reputations and prestige based on normative criteria set by the
university tradition. Trow sees universities as a "kind of reservoir or bank of accumulated successes" in the market for "high-quality students, for distinguished teachers and researchers, for research support, and for scholarly and research publications and honours" (1984,135).

Institutional distinction relies on judgements by scholars presumed able, by virtue of their own expertise and reputation, to assess quality. Their judgements intersect with those of the state, other sponsors and students.

The recognition accorded an institution is inevitably qualitative and contested because of the many subjective perceptions involved. Who, then, confers institutional legitimacy? There are three broad groups involved. One is the institution's clientele, comprising students, employers and sponsors of research. Students' choices of institution reflect their perceptions of its relative prestige in the higher education system, and its relevance and convenience to their particular needs. Employers and sponsoring agencies have a stake in the institution's outcomes in the form of graduates and research. The second group comprises other institutions and individuals in the higher education system. Included here are universities and colleges or institutes in the immediate region, and possibly others further-flung, within or beyond the country. Higher education institutions share an interest in preserving normative standards of teaching and research and other criteria confirming their own legitimacy. In an increasingly crowded environment, they also have an interest in asserting and maintaining their own territories.

Many are concerned, too, to expand that territory and acquire higher status. The third group are state functionaries, defined here to include elected and appointed officials (after Panitch 1980), primarily those in education ministries. The state has multiple interests as an employer and sponsor of research, resource provider, and guardian of social and economic ideologies.

All higher education systems exhibit some form of hierarchy, however much they vary in degree and form. As Trow notes (1984,132; see also Clark 1978; Bok 1986,15), hierarchies tend to be remarkably stable over time and around the world even though, as Perkin (1984) reminds
us, universities have undergone many transformations in the last 800 years. The stability and transformations are both predictable. Through their influence on how knowledge is defined and allocated, higher education institutions have tended to reproduce hegemonic social values, and reinforce existing social stratifications (see, inter alia, Connell 1977; Bourdieu 1977; Tapper & Salter 1978; Apple 1982; Aronowitz & Giroux 1985). In so doing, they have been arenas for conflict and change in their societies. Reproduction and reinforcement are not simple matters, especially in societies where pressures for higher levels of professionalization increasingly vie with demands for equality of educational opportunity. Today, the idea of elite education conflicts with the idea of mass education. Institutional attitudes towards both ideas affect the institution's prestige as viewed by different interest groups.

Status and prestige are elusive attributes, relying on implicit assumptions about quality, standards and social desirability, and overt indicators of wealth and power. 'Quality' is a highly subjective and contested attribute. In everyday parlance we can readily recognise the intent of statements like 'X is a top university' or 'Y has a first rate department of Z studies.' It is manifestly difficult to establish performance indicators and pin down absolute or comparable standards. No one criterion is paramount or immutable or enough by itself to confer legitimacy. Collectively, however, they define normative standards of modern higher education. Interest groups will judge a new institution by how well, and to what extent, it meets the normative standards. Hierarchical status indicators have come, for the most part, from the university tradition; some are centuries old.

Common indicators of comparative institutional status in today's hierarchies include academics' research productivity; honours awarded to faculty and students; size and comprehensiveness of library, laboratories and other facilities; size of budget and access to non-government sources of funds; institutional autonomy in allocation of financial resources; standards and restrictions in admissions policies; and graduate success in subsequent careers (Trow 1984, 135-37; Bok
1986,178). Some quantification is possible of these indicators but each also has a qualitative, subjective aspect. Institutional age is another important subjective indicator of legitimacy. Age allows institutional traditions to develop and merge with alumni loyalties, which are themselves handed on through generations of family and social networks. Age can confer a self-confidence and complacency born of long monopoly (Annan 1961,352).

Hierarchical legitimacy also derives from relative prestige of types and levels of knowledge: for example, the late 20th century pre-occupation with science and technology, and the relative decline in the humanities; the traditionally higher status of 'liberal' over 'vocational' education, and the comparative value of graduate programs over sub-degree studies (see inter alia, Bok 1986; Silver & Brennan 1988; Stephens 1989). Another criterion of hierarchical status is 'cosmopolitanism', meaning national and international outlooks rather than a provincial focus or reputation (Halsey & Trow 1971). Universities have traditionally been distinguished from community colleges in this regard, because their emphasis on research transcends classroom and geographical boundaries.

Access to higher education has become an important aspect of hierarchical legitimacy, especially since World War Two. Restricted entry has tended to symbolize high quality. In simple terms, the tougher the barriers to admission, the more desirable the credential and membership of the institution. This criterion remains at the heart of contemporary conflicts over alleged dilution of academic standards by allowing 'open entry' to people who have not first proven their intellectual capability. Entry standards have been a formidable weapon in many institutions' efforts simultaneously to expand and remain exclusive. These standards have also helped define the relative prestige of higher education sectors. Broadly speaking, conventional universities have retained restrictions on entry, especially to higher status professional programs, leaving it to colleges and other institutions to accept people with no or insufficient qualifications. Clark (1961) calls this a 'cooling out' function of colleges. Large
numbers are encouraged to aspire to higher education, but access to the more prestigious levels of knowledge and institutions is protected.

Until the 1950s, higher education in most countries was a tight triangle where a small number of homogeneous institutions catered to a small number of students. Growth occurred in all directions in the face of political and social pressure for access to higher education, and accelerating trends towards a credential-ridden society (Collins 1979) dominated by an upwardly mobile, professionalized middle class (Perkin 1989). The triangular shape of the hierarchy has, if anything, been accentuated as it has enlarged, though location of particular institutions is still a subjective matter. A tiny number of the most prestigious universities hold the top position, followed by other institutions (mostly universities) with both teaching and research functions and emphasis on graduate and professional education. A major barrier, or binary divide, then appears. Below it are institutions (typically colleges) with no research functions and, in some jurisdictions, without degree-granting powers. A similar triangular shape is evident in the location of students, with small numbers in postgraduate programs and the largest in non-degree and junior levels of degree programs. The evidence strongly suggests proportional access to upper levels of the hierarchy continues to be skewed towards more socially or economically privileged males who also continue to exert proportionally greater influence on public affairs (see Chapter 2). Yet it would be simplistic and inaccurate to suggest the peak institutions are untouched by the consequences of far larger numbers demanding access to esoteric or sacred knowledge (Silver 1980,135), and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1971; 1990).

The horizontal dimension of legitimacy refers to an institution’s credibility and stature in the eyes of peer institutions and disciplinary practitioners. There are analogies here to Weber’s concept of status groups internally bound by a shared sense of status based on participation in a common culture (Weber 1968,201-08; also Collins 1979,125-27). Credibility and stature are
earned by performance within that culture. In higher education the culture may be that of a particular type or sector of institutions, or of a field of knowledge or educational practice. The culture is rich in normative and symbolic bonds justifying and legitimating the ideologies of that type of institution or knowledge field (Clark 1978,14).

Horizontal legitimacy is especially noticeable within sectors or types of institution, according to their recognized functions. In Canada, for example, a community college is not expected to conduct research. Its location in a provincial hierarchy reflects that lack of a research mandate, but its own legitimacy comes from other sources. One, the objective element, is the colleges' teaching mandate, and the rights and obligations conferred on a college by the state. More subjectively, a college is judged by its institutional peers, clients and the state for the perceived quality of its teaching, openness of its admissions policies, and relevance of its programs to local economic and social demands. Fierce advocacy of the 'vocational ideal' in non-university sectors is a positive acclamation of the virtues and values of teaching-only organisations devoted to employment-oriented education (see, for example, Beinder 1986; Dennison & Gallagher 1986; Silver & Brennan 1988). A problem of status arises when the institution does not conform in important ways to the normal indicators of horizontal legitimacy. The problem will be exacerbated if the institution is also competing with peers for resources or territory.

Peer perceptions of how another institution treats a field of knowledge or educational practice provide another significant element of horizontal legitimacy. Faculty typically look to disciplinary peers outside the institution for affirmation of their personal status and that of their unit. Similarly, members of fields like distance education tend to look to their peers for legitimation of their practice. The result may well be a hierarchy of individuals or units within a discipline or field. In an environment of increasing specialization, "the operating units of universities and colleges tend to give their parent bodies the shape of federations, coalitions, and conglomerates rather than of unitary and single-purpose organisations" (Clark 1978,3).
Formal institutional attitudes towards each other, determined largely by senior policy makers and administrators, may not reflect the attitudes of people in the institution's operating units. Consequently, there may be marked differences in perceptions of hierarchical prestige and horizontal status of an institution, according to the observer's location and affiliations.

The external dimension of institutional legitimacy - its relationship to the state - is integral to the other two dimensions because of the contemporary state's pervasive presence in, and influence on higher education. I distinguish it here for two reasons. One is to emphasize the modern state's power over objective aspects of institutional survival and prosperity. State officials' perceptions of the comparative worth or 'relevance' of fields of knowledge and ways of conducting teaching and research affect state decisions on institutional mandates, financial provision, and institutional freedom to operate.

The other reason for singling out the relationship with the state is to emphasize the importance of higher education's role in assisting the state to fulfill its own functions of supporting capital accumulation and legitimation of the social status quo (Tapper & Salter 1978; Carnoy & Levin 1985). In the first case, higher education educates and trains an appropriately skilled workforce. In the second case, higher education is a key cementing agent in maintaining social and cultural norms of dominant elites (Halsey 1969). These often ambiguous and conflicting functions are typically expressed as ideologies supporting investment in human capital and redressing social inequalities. Both ideologies have gained enormous popularity in the post-Second War period though their meaning to different social groups is very different and, as Tapper and Salter argue (1978,147ff), they are in some respects mutually contradictory. The university's traditional role of conserving civilized, esoteric culture conflicts with the concept of higher education as a fundamentally economic resource to be employed to the maximum national benefit (see Stephens 1989). The former implies limited access to a privileged few; the
latter a commodification and devaluation of knowledge as higher education expands to meet mass markets.

The complicated interdependencies of state and higher education arising from this contradiction affect the value and credibility accorded certain types of institution and fields of knowledge over others. Institutional legitimacy is bound up in the degree of autonomy an institution is legally and politically able to exert. In general terms, Canadian universities, as the repositories and transmitters of the most highly valued knowledge, have maintained a distance from the state by calling on their specialist expertise, traditions of academic freedom and impartiality, and supposedly supra-vocational goals. Colleges have tended to be more open to state incursions because of their avowedly vocational and popular purposes.

There are no simple criteria for institutional legitimacy. Indicators of hierarchical status may conflict with horizontal criteria, and both may be shaped by the institution's relationships with the state. The irresistible rise of distance education in the last 25 years provides a new source of, or reference point for, institutional legitimacy on both vertical and horizontal dimensions. In general terms, the standard indicators of legitimacy have in common certain assumptions about how education is normally conducted. Above all, the norm that education is best conducted face-to-face is rarely questioned. Consequently, education requires certain facilities, timetables, staffing ratios, academic and student behaviours, and organization. These shape the institution's character and influence its legitimacy and prestige. When, as in distance education, temporal and spatial contiguity are largely removed, education is not primarily a face-to-face activity. Yet, although distance education institutions have encountered much suspicion and have typically been located at the lower end of status hierarchies, it does not necessarily follow that low status is the proper, inevitable or permanent consequence of teaching at a distance.
Most single-purpose distance education institutions in industrialized countries are, at most, 25 years old, and therefore likely still to be in early phases of the struggle to survive which every higher education institution experiences. Moreover, as Chapter 2 will show, distance education has attracted the attention of governments seeking ways of improving workforce skills and acceding to popular demand for educational access, while reducing unit costs. Distance education has been justified by its supporters as an important solution to this conundrum. Distance education may not easily exhibit the usual characteristics of institutional status, but increasing state support seems likely to improve the location of distance education institutions in the slowly changing hierarchies of higher education.

DISTANCE EDUCATION - A DEFINITION

I define distance education in this study as a form of normally part-time education in which teacher and learner are separated in time and/or space, and communicate with each other through various media (adapted from Keegan 1980; Perraton 1982a; Rumble 1986a; 1989; Shale 1988). Distance education goes to people where they live and work. Teachers and students are linked by networks using multiple information and telecommunications technologies and pedagogical practices including print, audio, television, telephone, and computers. Two other common elements are an industrialization of the educational process (Peters 1969; 1971; 1989; Keegan 1983; 1986; Jevons 1986); and efforts to balance learner independence with interaction with the institution (Moore 1977; 1983; Daniel & Marquis 1979; Keegan 1986). This definition is consistent with that used by most OLI staff and fits my own experience in the field.

A second term, 'open learning', gained popularity by the late 1980s. It connotes a social purpose of removing barriers to educational access, and/or an andragogical approach to teaching and learning emphasizing learner independence (Farrell & Haughey 1986; Paine 1988). They are often used interchangeably, but the terms 'open learning' and 'distance education' are not
necessarily synonymous. The former may be conducted either face-to-face or at a distance. The latter may be inflexible and controlling in structure, conditions of entry, and teaching strategies (Keegan 1986,24). The international popularity of the term 'open' in nomenclature of institutions teaching at a distance shows its symbolic power, not least in British Columbia's Open Learning Institute. Debates about the meaning of both terms, their relationship, and the greater appropriateness of one or the other reveal an inherent conflict between educational strategies devoted primarily to the singular needs of the individual learner, and those concerned primarily with enabling very large numbers of people to meet their educational goals.

Legitimation within conventional status hierarchies is difficult because, by removing teacher and learner from each other's presence, distance education challenges the deep and rarely questioned normative concept of education as a face-to-face activity. This challenge and the search for legitimacy have been driving forces behind a lengthy, unresolved debate over whether distance education is a new and distinct field of education, or different from other forms of education only in its morphological features (Shale 1988,25). If distance education is a distinct field, its practitioners can claim it has discrete standards and norms and horizontal legitimacy assumes top priority. If distance education is not distinct, then it must compete more directly with conventional forms of education, and is vulnerable to all the indicators on both vertical and horizontal axes of legitimacy.

Shifts in the popularity of each side of this debate have coincided with changing policies and practices designed to legitimate the field of distance education. The first step - distinguishing the modern form of distance education from its less reputable predecessor, 'correspondence study' - coincided with the creation of single-purpose open universities and expansion of small operations within conventional institutions. In the 1970s and early 1980s, an argument for distance education as a distinct field accompanied the burgeoning of distance education institutions and their struggle for legitimacy in the eyes of educational peers, governments and
funding agencies. Boundaries between distance and mainstream forms of education began to blur in the late 1980s as conventional institutions themselves started to use some of the technologies and techniques initially appropriated by distance educators. Age, experience, and performance have had their own effects on institutional credibility.

Until the late 1960s, practitioners viewed correspondence study as a form of education unique only in its delivery techniques. The term 'correspondence' implied use of the postal system for transmission of printed learning materials and correspondence between teacher and learner. Erdos argued the principles of correspondence teaching were similar to those of any other form of human learning based on reading and writing (rather than practical skills development). Correspondence study could be just as effective given appropriate forms of student support and better quality learning materials to counter high drop out rates (Erdos 1962; 1967; see also Wedemeyer 1971b; Sims 1972; Sheath 1969; Mackenzie & Christensen 1971). Erdos may have been right, but correspondence study enjoyed an indifferent reputation at best in the wider educational arena. In the early 1970s, as new techniques and technologies emerged, theorists pursued two broad paths: the significance of interaction and independence, and a concept of distance education as an industrial form of education.

Concepts of andragogy and self-actualization (Rogers 1969; Faure 1972; Knowles 1973; Kidd 1973) were important elements in a widespread resurgence of adult education from the late 1960s. American distance educators such as Wedemeyer (1971a; 1971b; 1979) and Moore (1977; 1983) drew on these concepts to argue, not for a new form of education, but one using different methods and media to maximize the independence and self-actualization of the adult learner at a distance. To Moore, this meant giving equal weight to learner and teacher in determining learning goals, resources and evaluation decisions, thereby replacing the traditional power relationship between teacher and learner with a facilitative, responsive approach to
teaching (1977,33). Both believed students should control when, how and at what pace they learned, and systems should encourage adaptation to individual differences among learners.

Daniel and Marquis (1979), on the other hand, argued for a judicious synthesis of student independence and interaction with the teacher, in order to balance student needs for socialization and integration with reinforcement of intellectual independence, and to balance these with administrative and financial imperatives of efficiency and economies of scale.

Sewart (1978; 1979; 1981) stressed continuity of concern for students through various support services in addition to learning packages. He deplored an over-emphasis (especially at the British Open University) on sophisticated, costly course packages at the expense of individual student needs and interests.

Holmberg (1969; 1982b; 1989) emphasised a different aspect of learner independence, using a model of guided didactic conversation to describe the simulated and real conversations represented by pre-produced materials and subsequent communications. Others also have used the analogy of conversations (for example, Pask 1976; Northcott 1977), or Rowntree’s idea of a ‘tutorial in print’ (1974). However Holmberg has more recently (1989) proposed three universal characteristics of distance education which he believes combine to make it a unique discipline.

Communication between teacher and learner is non-contiguous; study is guided by pre-produced instructional materials using various technical media; and the education involves organized non-contiguous two-way communication, so the student is not alone. He accepts Sparkes’ assertion (1983,181) that to achieve acceptance in the academic world as a discipline, distance education must grow in relevance to real and important problems, and in theoretical and conceptual depth, and must develop its own conceptual structure. Holmberg somewhat wistfully concludes distance education is doing all three but there is little evidence its concepts and data have yet been adopted by other fields of education (1989,208).
Perraton summarises neatly the attitudes of the many practitioners who do not regard distance education as a unique discipline. He justifies it rather through existing educational philosophies and communications theories, and stresses the importance of expansion and dialogue (1982a). Perraton defines education's purpose as the "liberation of man (sic) from the restraints and limitation of ignorance and dependency", arguing education should be about empowerment. The case for expansion is thus an egalitarian one (1982a, 374). He argues distance education can be used to empower learners through its use of a wide range of media to teach almost anything; removal of the fixed faculty:student ratios typical of conventional education; and its potential for economies of scale and for reaching new and hitherto unreachable audiences. Dialogue between teacher and learner is important not only because it encourages learning, but because, without it, education becomes indoctrination. It is "a necessary condition of an education respecting the humanity of student and teacher" (Perraton 1982a, 375). Distance teaching can be organized to encourage dialogue by changing the tutor's role from communicator of information to facilitator of learning. This can be done by using group discussions and community resources to support distant learners, adopting a multi-media approach to materials and teaching, organizing systematically, providing feedback, building in a variety of learning activities, and incorporating face-to-face learning where necessary. More recently, proponents of open learning (especially in North America) lay greater stress on the value of technological delivery systems to achieve the desired expansion of educational access (e.g. Farrell & Haughey 1986; Garrison & Shale 1987; Barker et al 1989).

One of the most influential theorists of modern distance education has been the German educator, Otto Peters (1969; 1971; 1989). Unfortunately, because his major theoretical elaborations have not been translated, non-German speaking scholars have had to rely on Peters' brief excursions into English, and on Keegan's (1980; 1983) and Jevon's (1986) summaries and interpretations of Peters' theory. This limited access has not, however, prevented a basic form of Peters' industrial thesis attaining near hegemonic proportions within
the field. Peters defines distance education as a unique form of education because the
categorical content of educational theories were designed for oral not written teaching, and
because its industrialized nature separates it radically from conventional forms of teaching and
learning. He argues distance education is a child of the industrial revolution. Its maturation in
the late 20th century is due to the need of capital and the state for large numbers of educated
people, and is but a small part of an enormous pattern of social change involving
industrialization of most facets of life.

Peters likens oral teaching to a craft, a pre-industrial form of relatively small-scale instruction,
which is resistant to the new technical media. He draws loosely on Weber's strictures about
ideal bureaucracy (Weber 1968,66-77) to develop analogies of distance education and industrial
production and to establish criteria for analysing distance education. The first is
rationalization; a teacher's knowledge and skills are "transmitted to a theoretically unlimited
number of students by the detached objectivity of a distance education course of constant
quality" (Keegan 1986,76). The labour of course development, teaching, support and
administration is divided far beyond that characteristic of the conventional classroom.
Secondly, distance education is highly mechanized and automated, and is geared for mass
production. Thirdly, bureaucratic principles of organization, planning, centralization and
standardization characterise organizational behaviour and control, and accentuate trends towards

To Peters, distance education's greatest advantages are the opportunity it provides for those who
have so far been denied education, and the "unparalleled self-confidence and self-reliance" of
successful students (1989,7). In addition, he argues "industrialized society of today has
developed so many needs for education that it is absurd to imagine that conventional systems
can satisfy them" (Keegan 1986,79). The disadvantage is its potential for alienation of both
teacher and student. Like Weber's pessimistic view of ideal--bureaucracy, Peters sees this as
part of an irresistible rationalization of society. For the teacher this can occur through the objectification of knowledge and the splitting of the teacher's role into knowledge provider, evaluator of progress and counsellor, thereby potentially reducing the importance of the teacher-as-person:

(T)he teaching which is traditionally performed subjectively in the classroom...becomes objectified in the sense that it becomes an object which can be manipulated. It can be improved, adapted, changed, and duplicated and lends itself to mass production (Peters 1989,6).

Student alienation may result from the predominantly de-personalized forms of instruction they receive, the loss of "the contagion of shared experience" (Peters 1989,7) or, as Stone puts it, "access to a luxuriant and exciting...subculture" (1983,5).

Notwithstanding its depressing implications, the industrial model strengthened the argument that distance education is important and legitimate because it encourages empowerment and overcomes the limitations of traditional higher education. Distance education escapes the bondage of teacher:student ratios and spatial and psychological boundaries of the classroom. In certain circumstances, it can achieve economies of scale and provide mass higher education at relatively low cost. Peters' theory was adopted with enthusiasm by the new generation of distance educators. It quickly became part of common lore in the field, underlying the language of funding and project submissions, research, and practice. The industrial model is an attractive, commonsense way to portray the peculiar structures and processes of modern distance education. It is less convincing (at least that much which is available in English) in arguing distance education is therefore a distinct field.

The concept of distance education as different from conventional forms of education only in its techniques enjoyed a resurgence in the late 1980s. Shale (1988) suggested an over-emphasis on 'distance' has narrowed the field's characteristics at the expense of the educational process
itself. Echoing Sewart's earlier concerns (1978; 1979; 1981), Shale called for a retreat from the one-sided interaction he saw involved in mass production and teaching at a distance, and recollection of education as an exchange of information and negotiation of meaning between teacher and learner. Rumble (1989) shared Shale's concern that distance education not be defined too rigidly, not least because the boundaries between distance education and conventional higher education are breaking down as new technologies percolate into the latter and change pedagogies.

To many distance educators, myself included, the persistent debates over definitions of distance education, and whether it is or should be a distinct discipline, have often seemed an unnecessary and tiresome diversion from more immediate issues of survival and prosperity in an often antagonistic environment. Ironically, some of the most important conceptual contributions to clarifying the definition of distance education have come from arguments concerned primarily with how distance education should be practised. Nevertheless, concepts of distance education's nature and uniqueness (or otherwise) have been useful in giving practitioners a common, international language. They have nurtured an international sense of community, partly because national communities are numerically small, and partly to confound distance education's typically low status within higher education hierarchies. The expansion of distance education institutions, programs and practices, coupled with conceptual debates, have created an international group of institutions with something of a common ideology. This in turn has provided a reference point and set of normative criteria for those striving for legitimacy within the distance education field (see Chapter 2). These criteria include a commitment to improving educational access; the quality of instructional design and physical presentation of learning materials; variety of communications media used; emphasis on student support services; cost effectiveness and managerial efficiency through industrial forms of organization; and willingness to collaborate with others.
No higher education institution is free of its environment and, whether or not distance education is a distinct form of education, its legitimacy is largely determined within the broader dimensions of institutional legitimacy outlined above. This study follows in detail the experience of one distance education institution seeking legitimacy within an established provincial hierarchy, in various areas of horizontal legitimacy, and in its relationships with the state. The Open Learning Institute's unconventional nature and purpose called into question many of the normative criteria for such legitimacy. This suggests its history may shed light on institutional legitimation in general, and on the impact of a rapidly growing and novel form of education on established criteria for legitimacy.

THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Open Learning Institute (OLI) was established on 1 June 1978 under the British Columbia Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977). OLI's mission from the state was to open access to education to people hitherto inhibited from study by geographic, social or economic isolation, or by traditional admission requirements. The Minister of Education, Patrick McGeer, defined OLI's mandate as provision of programs of study leading to a first degree in arts and science, and programs of study in career, technical and vocational areas, and in adult basic education. To this end OLI was to "manage needed support services; develop and acquire courses, programmes of study and learning material and distribute them by distance education methods", and was to enter into relationships with other organizations in British Columbia (BC) and elsewhere to do so. A codicil was added to the Universities Act (1979) to give OLI the power to grant baccalaureate degrees in arts or science in its own name.

OLI was a hybrid from the outset. Unlike BC's colleges and other institutes, it had the power to award degrees and thus enjoyed quasi-university status. Yet its legal rights and obligations were determined by the Colleges Act, and its teaching-only mandate and 'openness' were more
similar to that of other colleges and institutes than to that of the BC universities. At the same time, OLI's mandate implied a service role unlike that of any other BC higher education institution, and a commitment to inter-institutional collaboration became a fundamental part of its institutional character. The strategies OLI's leaders adopted made it unusual in other ways too. Its structure resembled no other higher education institution in BC or indeed in Canada.\(^7\) OLI employed no full-time academic staff; its personnel were professional educators, technical specialists and support staff who were educational brokers, arbiters of curriculum and pedagogy, and educational policy makers. OLI's structure and operations came to rely on forms of organization more analogous to industry than to traditional education, and on extensive use of computer-based technologies.

In other ways, OLI's experience resembled any other new higher education institution in its early years. Senior administrators were preoccupied with creating structures and systems, setting standards and operating styles, and developing relationships with external groups and individuals. In short, they were concerned with survival and prosperity, and with justification of OLI's claims to pre-eminence in BC as the provider of distance education opportunities. It is the combination of OLI's uniqueness and commonality which makes it a useful example for a study of institutional legitimacy. OLI's uniqueness illuminates the peculiar issues facing a distance education institution seeking legitimacy, while its commonality grounds OLI's experience in the familiar.

The primary question addressed in this study is how a new publicly-funded distance education institution acquires legitimacy. The above discussions of institutional legitimacy and the nature of distance education suggests subsidiary questions in relation to OLI, including:
* How did OLI's leaders go about securing the Institute's survival and prosperity?
* How did OLI's definition and practice of distance education relate to traditional indicators of institutional legitimacy in the BC context?
* How did OLI's definition and practice of distance education relate to emerging indicators of legitimacy in the distance education field?

NATURE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Historical studies of Canadian higher education have typically examined four aspects of institutional life and policy: intellectual, administrative and community themes, and external relationships. Like its school education counterpart (see Wilson 1980; 1987), the historiography has moved from whiggish, antiquarian, celebrationist history to contextual, interpretive analysis drawing on contemporary social theories (Axelrod 1982b; Reid 1984b; Sheehan 1985). Till the early 1970s, Canadian university histories tended to be hagiographic and broadly descriptive studies with little substantial thematic presentation or analysis. Since then, the more compelling institutional histories have developed particular themes such as denominational influences on curriculum and institutional development (for example, Johnston 1976; Reid 1984a), the relationship between the institution and the state (for example, Axelrod 1982a; Hayden 1983), the development of professional and graduate programs and research (for example, Johnston 1976; Gibson 1983), and the social backgrounds of students (for example, Reid 1984a; Axelrod & Reid 1989).

Most of the major themes typical of the Canadian historiography are included in this study because of their impact on institutional legitimacy. The study explores OLI's intellectual history, meaning changes in, and influences on its curriculum and ways of understanding the forms of education OLI espoused. It follows the emergence of governing and administrative structures influencing and reflecting OLI's intellectual life and changing personnel. More
limited attention is paid to OLI's internal community life and the nature of the student body. All three strands are tied together by an over-arching concern with OLI's external relationships through which the Institute sought credibility and prestige. Emphasis is laid on OLI's dealings with government and bureaucracy, and with the BC colleges and universities. OLI's relationships with others in the distance education field were also of significance, especially for its legitimacy within that field.

However, the OLI study is unlike most Canadian institutional history in four respects. First, none has been primarily concerned with institutional legitimation as such, although several have dealt effectively with the early years (for example, Johnson 1976; Neatby 1978; Hayden 1983; Reid 1984a). Second, although two excellent studies have examined institutional relationships with the state (Axelrod 1982a; Hayden 1983), and several have considered, with more or less success, 'their' institution's relationships with one or more other universities (for example, Morton 1957; Bedford 1976; Hayden 1983; Reid 1984a), none has yet considered in detail the relationship of a particular institution to the rest of its provincial higher education system. Third, comprehensive Canadian institutional histories rarely examine an institution so recently established; indeed, few have ventured beyond the 1970s in their analysis (cf Hayden 1983). This may be due to historians' reluctance hitherto to enter contemporary policy debates. Silver (1990) argues, however, that policy studies are much the poorer for lack of scholarly historical analysis. Finally, OLI's unconventional nature and purpose mean that many of the usual historical features of university topography do not appear, or do so in different form.

I recognise the significance of OLI's clientele in its historical development and in its legitimation. However, a comprehensive analysis of students' relations with OLI was impractical here. OLI maintained data on student profiles, admissions and academic progress throughout its history. Periodic summaries, on which this study draws, were produced for Board and government statistical purposes. The raw data are rich but would require extensive
processing and manipulation to extract the gold. Occasional surveys of OLI students elicited their views on specific issues, but no in-depth ethnographic analysis has been published of OLI student characteristics, views and culture as distance education students. A quantitative and qualitative study of this kind would make a valuable companion study to the present one. A longitudinal, prosopographical study requires more time to elapse. In the meantime, this study draws on the available statistics and reports in the OLA Archives, which OLI policy makers used in their planning and decision making.

I reluctantly examined only superficially another aspect of OLI's history. Institutional status depends, in some measure, on perceptions of what it is like to work or study in the organization - that is, on the culture, character and ineffable sense of community which engenders loyalty and a sense of belonging (and their opposites). Histories of older Canadian institutions use documentary evidence of social, cultural and sporting activities to illuminate organizational culture. In OLI's case, the conventional trappings of a campus, social and sporting facilities and, above all, gatherings of students and faculty, were absent. The obvious alternative, an extensive ethnographic study, was beyond the scope of this study. Such research would also be a valuable companion to this study, helping illuminate how OLI's meaning and purpose were defined and interpreted inside the Institute.

The methodology used here combines traditional literary historical techniques with interviews with key figures in OLI and BC higher education during the period. Most of the documentary evidence used was drawn from OLI's archives, now held by the Open Learning Agency. The data were rich, comprising papers of OLI's Board and various standing, advisory and ad hoc committees; correspondence with members of government, higher education and other organizations; and the working papers of OLI personnel - the three Principals, Dean of Academic Affairs, and sundry senior staff. Although cited as the 'OLA Archives' throughout this study, the files had not been sorted, labelled or professionally archived when data were
gathered. This made the task of citation somewhat lengthy and often complicated. I created, perforce, archival-type series, and catalogued the files held in the OLA Archives. This catalogue is now in the OLA Library, for future reference purposes; citation details are elucidated in Appendix 4.

I found other documentary evidence in archives of Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia and Athabasca University, in various newspapers and the BC Government Hansard, as well as in journal articles and other publications of OLI staff, educators and academics in other British Columbian institutions, and other secondary material. I examined collections of distance education literature at four major centres: OLA and Athabasca University in Canada, Deakin University in Australia, and the International Centre for Distance Learning at the British Open University.

The literary evidence was supplemented by extensive interviews with the three Principals of OLI, the Chair of its Board for the first seven years, OLI's two Deans and two other senior staff, senior university and college officers with extensive knowledge of OLI and its external relationships, Ministry officials concerned with system planning and coordination, and the two key political figures in OLI's history. Several other interviews were also conducted with adult educators at UBC and with a senior instructional designer at Athabasca University. Appendix 3 lists respondents and their affiliations. The interviews were taped, transcribed and checked by respondents for inaccuracies or sensitive material. An open-ended, relatively unstructured approach was taken to the the interviews to allow respondents maximum flexibility to comment on issues and draw inferences without undue influence by the author as interviewer. The content of each interview varied, so few questions were standardized.

Oral testimony, like written documents, can present problems of reliability and validity due to faulty memory, personal bias and ego, and intrusion of motives and agendas outside the brief
of the interview (see Dunaway & Baum 1984; Hay 1986; Thompson 1988). In this study, minor inaccuracies could usually be compensated for by reference to documentary material. There was, inevitably, some *post facto* rationalization or modification of responses, requiring cautious interpretation. However, I found the interviews a very useful source of information and opinion not otherwise available, and a valuable means of triangulating written evidence. The Australian historian, Ailsa Zainu'ddin, writes in another context of "the positive commitment which is part of the celebration of the past but needs to be distinguished from the writing of celebratory history; (and) the double vision of the historian who is in any sense a participant observer" (1990, 743). I have been conscious of this commitment and vision while researching OLI's history. I chose to study OLI not least because I already had some knowledge of the Institute and its personnel. In the course of professional dealings with the Institute during the 1980s, I was struck by OLI's interesting organizational structure and distance education systems, and willingness to collaborate with others. As I researched OLI's history, of course, I realised how little I had actually known from the outside, but that did not diminish my sense that its past was worth celebrating. At the same time, I recognised the dangers of a hagiographic administrative history. The contextual, interpretive, critical approach of social history offers a satisfying alternative.

I have also been a participant observer of OLI's history in the sense that I was intimately involved in the creation of an Australian university which teaches predominantly at a distance (Deakin University), and detected many parallels between OLI's experience and my own. Far from distorting my sense of OLI's history, I found the comparisons invaluable in sharpening my understanding of circumstance and motive in a different environment. It is the historian's responsibility to assess evidence as objectively as possible but truth is not absolute. Life, and history, would be dull if it were so.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Growth rates in distance education worldwide show no signs of slackening; indeed, formal and informal distance education programs will likely become increasingly important elements of national educational strategies in many countries (Briggs et al 1987; Daniel 1988; Timmers 1988). If, as this study contends, distance education introduces new normative criteria into institutional legitimacy, an understanding of these criteria and their impact will be beneficial to policy makers and researchers alike. Many in higher education still regard distance education with suspicion and even distaste, and distance educators will have to find ways to overcome those perceptions if distance education is to achieve lasting and superior status in higher education hierarchies. One part of that search is understanding the nature of institutional legitimacy and distance education’s impact on it.

The history and politics of distance education have so far drawn very little interest from English-language scholars. Several studies have been published on Athabasca University’s origins (Hughes 1980; Runte 1981; Byrne 1989) but none is a comprehensive or compelling institutional history. Perry’s memoir (1977) of the British Open University’s early years stands out among the many more specific studies of BOU policy and practice. Numerous ‘in-my-country’ case studies have emerged, but they are typically a-historical and descriptive rather than analytical. Distance education policy makers have devoted more time to creating their institutions than to analysing how and why they developed policy as they did, and what were the outcomes. The stage has now been reached where such reflection is possible and, indeed, urgent. Historical policy studies of major distance education institutions are likely to help distance educators and other policy makers comprehend the significance of these organizations in their higher education systems. This is especially important in western nations like Canada where the trend is towards greater government interference in institutional affairs, and distance education’s vulnerabilities are becoming increasingly apparent.
Thirdly, I hope this study will add something new to the small, but growing genre of social history of Canadian higher education. Canadian higher education historians have not so far examined in any extensive way the phenomenon of distance education. Nor have they dealt substantively with very recent Canadian higher education history. Finally, this study responds to Silver's call (1990) for greater interest by historians in policy analysis in the expectation that historians' concern with the complexities of stability and change can contribute to the analysis of intentions, process and outcomes.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter Two examines aspects of two major contexts in which OLI functioned: the postwar history of Canadian higher education, and changes in the field of distance education over the last 25 years. In the former case, I argue postwar expansion was broadly driven by the ideology of education as a valuable investment in human capital, and by pressures to reduce social inequalities by improving educational access. Changes in the structures, systems and technologies of distance education have made it attractive to funding agencies and strengthened its claims to legitimacy. Chapter Three pursues these themes in the context of British Columbia, where the higher education system changed in significant ways from the 1960s. These chapters set the scene for analysis in Chapter Four of the events leading to OLI's creation in 1978. I argue the Minister of Education and his Deputy sought to complete the higher education system in BC by catering more effectively for the needs of non-metropolitan adults. Of the various options open to them, they chose to create a new Institute, a hybrid organization fitting easily into neither sector of higher education, and roused considerable ire from the system.

Chapters Five and Six examine OLI's first two years of operation, from 1978-1980, as the Institute's leaders enunciated their basic principles, established structures, policies and systems,
and developed a range of programs, under the guiding eye of the first Principal. Chapter Five focusses on the establishment of the institution itself; Chapter Six follows the creation of four curriculum areas, and initial relationships with the state, and other universities and colleges.

The economic and political climate in BC changed significantly in the 1980s, as the government introduced a Restraint policy profoundly affecting the autonomy, shape and policies of higher education institutions. Chapter Seven outlines briefly some of the salient features and consequences of that policy as they related to OLI's legitimacy and growth. Chapters Eight and Nine examine OLI's history from 1980-88, first from an internal perspective, and then in relation to other institutions and the state. Thus Chapter Eight considers the impact of the Restraint policy on OLI's growth, and traces curriculum development and experience with OLI's distance education systems. Inside OLI, the 1980s was a period of consolidation, systematization and affirmation of what the Institute meant by 'distance education'. Chapter Nine examines briefly the nature of OLI's student body and their reactions to the Institute, before considering OLI's burgeoning relationships with others in the distance education field, and patterns of inter-institutional collaboration developed in the 1980s. This leads into an outline of the establishment and development of the Knowledge Network, and analysis of moves to extend OLI's provincial role in distance education, culminating in amalgamation of the two organizations in 1988.

Chapter Ten draws conclusions about how OLI's leaders pursued the Institute's survival and prosperity, and its location within BC's higher education hierarchy. Conclusions are also drawn about the relationship of OLI's definition and practice of distance education to traditional indicators of institutional legitimacy in BC, and the impact of the state on OLI's legitimacy. Finally, I discuss the impact of the modern form of distance education on the three dimensions of institutional legitimacy, and suggest areas for further research.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 On Athabasca University, first created in a somewhat different form in 1970, see Hughes (1980), Runte (1981); Byrne (1989); on the Tele-Universite de Quebec, established in 1972, see Daniel & Smith (1979), Guillemet et al (1986); for brief accounts of the Open Learning Institute of British Columbia, see Ellis & Mugridge (1983), Mugridge (1986).

2 Hilary Perraton, pers. comm. with author, 25 July 1991. Also see context in which other theorists write - e.g. Sewart (1978; 1979; 1981); Keegan (1980a; 1986); Daniel & Marquis (1979); Rumble (1986; 1989).

3 The study uses OLI's own nomenclature. Alan Dawe persuaded his OLI colleagues to adopt two descriptors: 'OLI', with no preposition or full stops, and 'the Institute'. This copied UBC custom. The organisation was familiarly called 'Oley'.

4 Hereafter cited as the Colleges Act.

5 Amplification and interpretation of "a Statement of Mission" for the Open Learning Institute as provided by Dr. Patrick L. McGeer, Minister for Education [Bd: 12 Jan 1979].


7 There are still relatively few multi-level distance education institutions, though many open universities in developing countries offer what industrialized nations would consider technical or vocational education. One example is the CNED, Centre National d'Enseignement a Distance, in Paris which enrolls some 250,000 students in courses from elementary school to postgraduate qualifications.

8 One example close to this study is Logan's 1958 history of UBC. Another, more recent work is Byrne's 1989 study of Athabasca University.

9 Most respondents have agreed to placement of their interview transcripts in the OLA Library, and have determined the conditions under which it may be used by other scholars.
CHAPTER 2: THE CONTEXT - CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION, AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Open Learning Institute was one of many distance education organizations created during the 1970s, as a result of pressures to increase access for adults to post-secondary education. The Institute's roots are to be found in the postwar history of Canadian higher education and in changes in the field of distance education over the last 25 years. The following discussion refers primarily to higher education in Canada's English-speaking institutions.

LEGITIMACY AND CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

One way to understand the vertical and horizontal dimensions of legitimacy in Canadian higher education is to examine how knowledge has been stratified, where people and institutions are allocated in the knowledge structures, and how these processes of stratification and allocation are legitimated by relevant interest groups (Young 1971a,b; Bernstein 1971). The panorama of intellectual preoccupations and priorities has been complicated by a massive growth in higher education since 1950, and increasing involvement of governments in higher education affairs since the late 1960s. Two complementary but sometimes conflicting ideologies have driven much of the expansion, and encouraged stratification. One views higher education as an investment in human capital, the other sees it as a route to greater social equality.

Growth in Higher Education

The most obvious topological change in Canadian higher education since 1950 has been the massive and comprehensive growth in institutions, curriculum, enrolments and funding. In 1945 there were 27 universities; in 1969 there were 47, and by the mid 1980s there were 65 (Sheffield 1970; Anisef et al 1985). A large, new public sector of community colleges and institutes was created in every province and, by 1986, it included 177 publicly funded
institutions (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986, 284-88). Fragmentation of traditional disciplines into new specializations, which had begun in the late 19th century, accelerated after the Second World War (Harris 1976). A bewildering variety of credentials transformed the curriculum into a multi-layered conglomerate. Graduate programs remained firmly in university hands (not all of which were allowed to offer doctorates). Degrees were primarily a university responsibility but in most provinces, colleges were allowed to offer academic transfer programs at lower baccalaureate levels. College diplomas and certificates covered an enormous array of semi-professional, technical, trades, and pre-vocational education, in answer to corporate and public pressure for credentialled skills (Dennison & Gallagher 1986).

In 1944-45, Canadian universities enrolled 40,000 full-time undergraduates. By 1962-63 the figure was 197,000; in 1984-85 it was 462,000. Part-time university enrolments also increased dramatically from 39,000 to 171,000 between 1962-63 and 1977-78, and to 283,000 by 1984-85. Full-time graduate numbers quadrupled in the 1960s, to 30,200 by 1969-70 (StatsCan 1979,35); part-time graduate numbers rose from 5,400 in 1962-63 to 28,200 by 1977-78 (StatsCan 1979,41). College enrolments are less easy to enumerate but growth has apparently been no less substantial. Dennison and Gallagher (1986,293) complain about the "relatively primitive national data base on non-university post-secondary institutions" until 1985. They report some full-time enrolment data but note statistics of part-time students and non-credential students were not compiled nationally until very recently. Sheffield (1970,424) indicates there were about 3,000 students enrolled full-time in 1952-53 in a small number of technical institutes. By 1959-60, that enrolment had increased only to 8,300 in 27 institutes, but jumped under the impetus of the federal Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act (1960) to about 20,000 in 1964-65. College and institute enrolments burgeoned from that point.

Dennison and Gallagher (1986,294-95) indicate an increase in full-time career and university transfer enrolments from 226,000 in 1976 to 295,600 in 1982, and a further 182,600 enrolled in full-time trades, vocational and pre-vocational programs in 1982-83. The Macdonald Royal
Commission (1985,743) estimated the proportion of part-time enrolments in universities and colleges combined rose from 23.7% in 1962-63 to 37.6% in 1985.

Growth has been sustained and extensive, but diverse. Some of the diversity is due to the different historical and cultural character of each Canadian province. In addition, provincial college systems, the length of undergraduate university programs, and availability of particular programs all affect provincial participation rates. School retention rates, which vary markedly among the provinces, have also affected access. Part-time participation has also varied considerably. For example, in the mid-1980s, 51.5% of undergraduate students in Quebec were part-time, compared with 25.9% in Alberta (Anisef et al 1985,29). In addition, growth rates have risen and fallen in company with provincial economic circumstances. Nationally, the annual rate of increase in higher education was 4.5% in the early 1970s. It slowed later in the decade, picked up again as the 1980s began, and then declined in the severe recession (Anisef et al 1985,26).

Some of the reasons for this massive growth have their roots in the inter-war period and earlier: for example, emergence of the welfare state (Finkel 1977); professionalization of many types of occupation as industrialization and international competition took hold (Axelrod 1982a); and the beginnings of state support for research (Gingras 1989). Canada's demographic character changed dramatically after the war through immigration, a sharp increase in the birthrate, and rapid urbanisation. Sheffield (1970) notes the population increased from 12 to 20 million between 1945-69. In addition, the expansion into mass secondary education produced a vastly enlarged pool of potential entrants to higher education among the 'baby boomers'. Postwar prosperity brought a greater demand for a larger, more skilled workforce, and the entry of many more women into the workforce. Increasing American investment in Canada, coupled with a growing acceptance by Canadian business people of the ideology of corporate internationalism, added to the pressure for more higher education (Johnson 1980). The Soviets'
Sputnik successes in the 1950s spurred greater government commitment to science and technology for political as well as economic reasons. The magnitude of Sheffield's estimates of coming demand for university places shocked the university community and governments in 1955 but, as he later noted, they were significant under-estimates (Sheffield 1970,420).

In Canada, constitutional power over education rests with the provinces, though higher education is now largely funded by the federal government. The federal government began cautiously to allocate funds from 1912 (see Stager 1972a; Gingras 1989), but funding remained a denominational or provincial concern till the Second War, when university research and teaching contributed importantly to the war effort (see Johnston 1976; Axelrod 1982a; Gibson 1983). In 1951 the federal government began making direct per capita grants to the universities (Massey 1951). The total amounts involved rose rapidly thereafter. Bladen reports that total (federal and provincial) expenditure on universities and colleges was $88 million in 1954-55, rising to $352 million in 1962-63 (Bladen 1965,23). He projected an increase to $1,844 million by 1975-76, but in fact $3,165 million were allocated to higher education in 1974-75 (StatsCan 1979,table 6). Higher education had become a major enterprise, and took a significant proportion of provincial budgets.

In 1967, following provincial pressure, federal funds were channelled to universities via the provincial treasuries. The Established Programs Financing Act (1977, amended 1984) provides federal monies for higher education and public health. By 1985 the federal government was transferring $4.2 billion annually to the provinces for higher education, representing approximately 80% of the total operating grants received by universities and colleges (Johnson 1985; Decore & Pannu 1986). The EPF terms have never bound provincial governments to spend the money on post-secondary education and all provinces have taken advantage of the loophole to vire money elsewhere at various times (Johnson 1985,vi). Despite this huge overall growth, education spending relative to GDP, and relative to net government expenditures, has
decreased throughout Canada since 1970-71, in the wake of economic downturns and more conservative policies on accessibility (Decore & Pannu 1986).

Stratification of Knowledge and Allocation of Status

Postwar Canadian higher education has carried the dual legacy of the 'enlightenment' and utilitarian models of higher education. The enlightenment model (Runte 1981) is encapsulated in Newman's and John Stuart Mill's views that learning is intrinsically valuable and the university's purpose is to develop capable and cultivated human beings (Newman 1852; Mill 1867). The utilitarian model views education as having a purpose beyond learning for its own sake. The university is expected to develop the professional character of its students and thereby produce the cultural, intellectual and ruling elites (Runte 1981, 15). The persistent liberal/vocational debate gives contemporary voice to this legacy, though discussion is more likely nowadays to turn on acceptable degrees of relevance of education to occupational purpose and corporate interests. Vocationalism has become a central concept in institutional and state policy-making, affecting the structure of higher education and status accorded to areas of the curriculum (Silver & Brennan 1988, 16).

Nineteenth century Anglo-Canadian universities catered for the small number of young men who had obtained secondary education and could afford to attend university. They received a classic liberal education in a small number of broad disciplines including, from the turn of the century, literature, languages, physics and chemistry (Harris 1976). Reid reports that Scottish university values of the 'democratic intellect' imported in the 19th century by the fledgling Maritime universities had been virtually replaced by the 1920s in the face of socio-economic changes and doubts of the ability of a general education to "meet the perceived need of society as a whole for expansion and renewal of the professional elite" (1989, 292). In the inter-war years, public and institutional priority went increasingly to applied and social science subjects, and to new, professional faculties. World War Two encouraged a highly instrumentalist attitude
towards higher education and further diminution in the market value of liberal arts (Axelrod 1982a; Johnston 1976). By 1951, Canadian humanities and liberal arts were in a parlous state of neglect (Massey 1951). They recovered amidst the general expansion of higher education from the late 1950s, but have never regained their 19th century pre-eminence (Bissell 1974; Johnston 1976; Gibson 1983; Reid 1984a).

A classic liberal education was well-suited to leaders "in a world of steam navigation, gunpowder and manuscript" (Halsey 1961a,458), but not to specialized, mechanized, industrial and urban 20th century society. Silver (1980) points to the middle classes' preoccupation with 'useful' knowledge in 19th century Britain as they sought social, political and economic power. Since they were trying to wrest power from the upper classes by adopting and adapting the latter's culture, the middle classes and the new universities co-opted classical education as well. Silver sees this as a deliberate identification of culture and knowledge with power. He and Brennan (1988) argue, with Bledstein (1976), that in the 20th century 'useful' knowledge has been stratified into expert knowledge at various levels of professional status, and that a new 'liberal vocationalism' has been the result. Bledstein (1976) also contends the growth, structure and emphases of the modern American university have been shaped by a culture of professionalism created by the emerging middle classes from the 1840s to satisfy their aspirations for upward mobility through a career.

In a compelling study with many Canadian parallels, Perkin (1989) argues 20th century British society has been dominated by professionals whose ideology of trained expertise, equality of opportunity, selection by merit and guarantee of reward has become a widely shared social ideal for personal aspiration and social organization. This social ideal is justified, in part, by social efficiency and avoidance of waste, especially of human talent. It is expressed in practical terms by, inter alia, the expansion of postsecondary education and by the welfare state. Wealth, power and status still come more easily to certain groups than others, though the ideals,
independence and security of reward based on merit and training now permeate all levels, groups and occupations. To Perkin it is not a traditional class society in which a small elite exploits a large proletariat, but "a collection of parallel hierarchies of unequal height, each with its own ladder of many rungs" (1989,9). The multiplicity of rival career hierarchies has fragmented society into competing elites in which a single dominant elite is hard to find, though Perkin observes a broad distinction between professions directed towards public service and those aimed at corporate profit. In such a social structure, knowledge is stratified according to ideals of service and profit, and their relative rewards. Stratification is overtly expressed in hierarchies of credentials. The 'credential inflation' of which Collins cogently writes (1979) is a forceful indicator of the determination of existing and aspirant elites to legitimate their professional status.

Trends towards a professional social ideal and proliferation of credentials have been abundantly evident in contemporary Canadian higher education. The urgency and potency of middle class aspirations gathered full force after the Second World War (Pike 1981; Axelrod 1982a; Guppy 1984; Curtis et al 1988). Professional and quasi-professional education and training assumed great significance in university priorities, and became the raison d'etre of college education. University historians record deepening post-war preoccupations with expansion of science, medical and education faculties. New faculties of applied science, engineering, health and business were created, and older, broadly based disciplines such as political economy were subdivided into new specialisms such as sociology, politics, economics and geography (Johnston 1976; Gibson 1983; Hayden 1983). Only rarely did a university opt instead to concentrate on excellence as a small liberal arts institution in the American tradition (see Reid 1984a on Mt. Allison University). Diversification and professionalization had an important side-effect of simultaneously complicating and loosening internal institutional alliances, and strengthening individuals' commitments to outside members of the profession or discipline.
One way English-speaking Canadian universities have strengthened their prestige has been to monopolize the more prestigious professional credentials. Emphasis on graduate programs and research has been another. Clark (1978), Bok (1986) and Silver (1980) have noted the shift of academics' roles in the USA away from teaching undergraduate courses because of pressures to earn a reputation and promotion through research and publications, and to reinforce their stature through graduate teaching. In Canada, interest in scientific research was spurred by realization in the 1914-18 war of Canada's dependence on British and European technologies and finished products (Ross 1975). Funds for research and graduate students began to trickle into the universities through the National Research Council, established in 1916 (Gingras 1989). The 1939-45 war intensified these developments, creating a 'cult of science' as university research supported the war effort and contributed directly to the domestic economy (Johnston 1976; Axelrod 1982a; Gibson 1983). Graduate studies and research have steadily acquired supremacy in Canadian universities since the 1950s, especially in professional, science and technology areas. The federal government has ensured its interests are served directly by creating national councils to allocate resources for research and graduate student support.

Legally, Canada has no national higher education system, but the federal research councils and the multiplicity of national associations of disciplines and professions have helped reinforce informal national hierarchies of universities and disciplinary 'operating units' (Clark 1978). Relative success in competition for research grants and graduate student support has become a hallmark of prestige for institutions, departments, and individuals. There are other indicators, too, that Canadian universities form loose national pyramidal structures and are linked by parallel networks of disciplinary and other prestige. In the 19th century, Canada's English-speaking universities looked largely to British and American models and standards (Morton 1957; Johnston 1976; Neatby 1978; Hayden 1983; Reid 1984a). In the 20th century, the old ties have been transmuted into a cosmopolitan outlook based on global traffic of ideas and people.
In contrast, college identity and prestige has been closely associated with an alternative ideology, a 'vocational ideal' with a strongly local bias. In an important analysis of credentialism and contemporary preoccupation with 'useful' knowledge, Collins argues the value of any particular kind and level of education (has come)... to depend less and less on any specific content that might have been learned in it, and more and more upon the sheer fact of having attained a given level acquired the formal credential that allowed one to enter the next level (1979,93).

Educational credentials permeate the occupational structure, and are reflected in hierarchies of knowledge within higher education institutions. The more scarce and valuable a credential and the profession to which it is attached, the more prestige tends to accrue to the institution. This observation helps explain postwar proliferation of higher level degrees. It is less helpful in explaining why Canadian colleges have not, on the whole, sought to expand their credential powers into degrees. Some new postwar universities incorporated pre-existing colleges or teacher training institutes (for example, Universities of Brandon, Guelph and Victoria). However, modern community colleges rarely lobbied for higher credential power till very recently. The 1990 creation of university colleges in BC is one example. The reason lies in the nature of community college culture and its vocational ideal.

In a comprehensive study of Canada's community colleges, Dennison and Gallagher record colleges' initial transplantation of university structures and rituals, commenting: "In all but what they taught and how they taught, they were more imitative than innovative" (1986,144). I will argue OLI's founders also incorporated university norms into the Institute's policies and practice from the outset. Dennison and Gallagher (see also Beinder 1986) argue, however, that the college movement has subsequently developed a unique culture, most of whose key characteristics were also evident in OLI. College legitimacy is dependent on conformity and contribution to this culture, though Dennison and Gallagher observe a tendency for colleges and others "to evaluate these institutions on bases appropriate to other kinds of institutions",
especially universities (1986,157). They argue this culture has several distinctive components (1986,144ff). One is the colleges' public accountability based on their service role, in contrast with universities which historically have also had a role as social critic. A key element of accountability is the necessity continually to justify one's existence. Secondly, college orientation to local or provincial interests encourages them to ignore extra-provincial concerns and concentrate on comprehensive provision for their immediate clientele. It may also encourage inter-institutional cooperation, though competition was as much the order of the day. A third, universal feature of college culture is their emphasis on approachability by all citizens, regardless of previous educational experience or social background. Dennison and Gallagher see the colleges' open admissions policies as a major strength, but note college faculty fears that accessibility means inferiority, on the grounds that

If their institution is truly accessible to all adults,...it loses the ability to control programme quality; programmes will only be as strong as the students admitted to them. Unless there are moderately rigorous admissions standards,...programme quality and institutional reputation will suffer (1986,147).

Students' heterogeneous backgrounds and interests affected two other characteristic components of Canada's colleges: the comprehensiveness of their curricula, and their orientation towards adults' needs. In both cases, college orientations have been shaped by corporate and political needs of Canada's economy as well as personal aspirations for career and social mobility. Adult basic education and second language training were high priorities from the late 1960s, occupationally-oriented education from the late 1970s. In several provinces, and especially BC, two-year general education programs linked to university degrees became substantial features of college curricula.

Dennison and Gallagher argue traditional features of status, such as alumni loyalty and campus atmosphere, are of questionable application to legitimacy in the college systems:
"School spirit" is...ephemeral when many students have multiple preoccupations beyond the college,...and when many students are simply at an age when proclaimed institutional identification is no longer a strong personal need....The general atmosphere of the campus of a college...is simply different from that of more traditional, more conventional post-secondary institutions (1986,148).

They further suggest status symbols such as large size and sophisticated facilities, while relevant to environments demanding economies of scale, are unnecessary to labour-intensive colleges emphasizing individual needs of learners. Although this aspect of their argument has its attractions, it accords ill with state demands in the 1980s for higher productivity, cost effectiveness, and expanded enrolments (see Chapters 7-9). Colleges' criteria for horizontal legitimacy include some traditional indicators set by the universities, but their main focus is elsewhere. The predominant image of Canada's colleges is of open, comprehensive, heterogeneous teaching-only institutions with local horizons.

Legitimation of Stratification and Allocation

As noted earlier, postwar policies supporting expansion of Canadian higher education were justified on two sometimes contradictory grounds (Anisef et al 1985). First was a widespread belief that higher education was a key to economic productivity and material prosperity. Second was an equally pervasive belief that higher education offered an important route to greater social equity. Both implied mass, not elite higher education, but collided over higher education's role as gatekeeper to knowledge and credentials. As Perkin puts it:

Postindustrial society... demands contradictory goals from the university. On the one hand, modern society needs an elite of highly trained specialists, bureaucrats, technocrats, scientists, engineers, communications experts, and so on. On the other hand, it faces a demand for mass higher education partly because the expanding service sector cannot be wholly met from the children of the traditional privileged classes, partly because the talents required by the new elites are widely dispersed throughout society, but mainly because a knowledge-based society and science-based industries and services require a far wider dissemination of training and skill than in any previous age (1984,45).
Marchak argues Canadian politics are based on liberal premises, regardless of changes in governments over time (1988,23). This liberal ideology supports the idea of a state whose function is to reflect and serve the general will or common good, partly by helping individual citizens develop their talents and abilities so that they may compete fairly for scarce resources. In terms of higher education, this implies removing external barriers to access, such as economic background or geographic location. Thereafter it is more or less up to the individual (Anisef et al 1985,10). This view was reinforced in the 1950s and 1960s by the near-universal popularity of human capital theory. According to this theory, investment in higher education has sound economic returns for both the individual and society, and fosters economic growth by encouraging technological innovation and increasing labour productivity (Schultz 1961; Bladen 1965). The human capital model implied exclusion of a particular class or group represented economic waste and under-investment in a potent resource. With growing emphasis on university credentials, barriers to higher education meant barriers to social mobility and personal prosperity. Equal opportunity in education became both a moral and an economic imperative (Runte 1981,28).

Critiques of the human capital model appeared in the early 1970s, questioning the interconnections of higher education, earning capacity and improved productivity, or arguing higher education was not a successful antidote to poverty and discrimination (Karabel & Halsey 1977,308; Runte 1981,21; Silver 1983,257ff). Others argued more expenditure on education would not necessarily improve quality of education (for example, Wilkinson 1986). There were suggestions the limits of expansion had been reached as costs spiralled and graduate underemployment and unemployment rose. Some claimed earlier Canadian human capital studies were methodologically faulty and over-estimated the rates of return to the individual (for example, Hettich 1971; Dodge 1972; Stager 1972b). Such doubts helped justify reductions in the growth rate of higher education funding in the 1970s. They did not defeat the basic premise. Instead, a new version appeared, granting investment potential only to those programs
deemed by the state to demonstrate direct application to labour force demand (Runte 1981, 25). The 1980s educational crisis was no longer a matter of liberal responses to social pressure for economic expansion, but a reaction to declining economic competitiveness. Moreover, "the rhetoric...moved from wider access and support for those who were failing in the system, to overall quality and the boosting of, particularly, the scientific and technological base" (Silver 1990, 14).

While postwar Canadian economies flourished, a broad social consensus existed that higher education was an important way to accommodate rising social aspirations and improve the economic prospects of disadvantaged social, cultural and regional groups (Anisef et al 1985). In the less prosperous 1970s, and even more in the 1980s, the emphasis on access was increasingly challenged by liberal and neo-conservative groups. Graduate unemployment and underemployment, coupled with spiralling costs, fuelled liberal opposition to further expansion. Others equated accessibility with loss of quality (Anisef et al 1985, 3), typically without close examination of differential circumstances of students on entry. In the 1980s, reports commissioned by a neo-conservative federal government concluded mass higher education had been largely achieved in the main, accessibility was no longer a significant problem, and renewed attention should be devoted to quality in research and centres of excellence (Johnson 1985; Macdonald 1985; Can. Sen. Stdg. C'tee on Nat. Fin. 1987).

Studies of access have focussed mainly on young people's participation in higher education (or lack of it). OLI's adult clients were those people, some years later. Accessibility has undoubtedly improved in some respects since 1960. Then, the national participation rate of 18-24 year olds (the most common index of accessibility) was only 13.5% (Pike 1980). By 1984-85 it was 23.7% (Gilbert & Guppy 1988, 163). In broad terms, gender imbalances have reduced. The social heterogeneity of college students' backgrounds suggests colleges have been successful democratizing agents (Dennison 1981; Guppy 1984; Dennison & Gallagher 1986). Yet critics of
access policies have produced abundant longitudinal evidence that post-war Canadian universities have been places of privilege for school-leavers from the professional classes (Porter 1965; Porter et al 1973; Pike 1980; Guppy 1984; Mehmet 1979; Anisef et al 1985; Guppy et al, 1988). Aspirations to a full-time university education have been constrained by lower socio-economic status, gender, geographical location, and the effects of these on secondary schooling. Far fewer rural youth attend university than do their city counterparts (Anisef et al 1985,32).

These broad generalizations contain much diversity. Anisef et al (1985) elucidate the differences in provincial educational structures and systems, and problems of defining and assessing participation rates. The experience of women in post-secondary education is a notable example relevant to OLI because women always comprised a majority of its students. Women's overall participation rates have grown markedly since the late 1950s. The proportion of female enrolments in Canadian post-secondary education rose from 30% in 1962 to 45% in 1976 (StatsCan 1979,16). Gilbert and Guppy report women now comprise a majority of full-time college, and part-time university and college enrolments, and form over 50% of graduands in both universities and colleges (1988,164). However, while women have slowly made inroads into male-dominated professional disciplines such as engineering, medicine and business, they still cluster mainly in traditional arts, education and health science subjects. These subjects have been especially vulnerable to financial cutbacks in favour of science and technology and, as outlined above, tend to enjoy lower status in disciplinary hierarchies. There is some evidence women students tend to come from the urban middle classes rather than from working class or rural backgrounds (Anisef et al 1985; Gilbert & Guppy 1988).

Another problem with the debate on access lies in the definition of 'equality of educational opportunity'. As Silver points out, "equal opportunity implies equal opportunity to be unequal" because it allows renewal of inequality in each generation instead of changing the conditions
causing the inequality (1980,38). Defined thus, elites may encourage expanded access to
education in ways which do not significantly change the social status quo. One way has been
'cooling out' to the colleges those deemed (mainly by university gatekeepers) intellectually or
temperamentally unlikely to succeed at university (Clark 1961). Another, as Bourdieu (1984)
has argued, is to maintain an institutional climate in which faculty will continue to reproduce,
in succeeding generations of students, the cultural capital ensuring academics' own legitimacy
and prestige. To achieve this, students learn and absorb into their own lexicons a middle/upper
class culture or, as Perkin (1989) puts it, acquire a professional ideology. Access to that culture
is, predictably, more difficult for students from other cultural backgrounds, social classes, and
intellectual heritages. A third way elites seek to maintain the status quo has been to retain
'lower learning' as a central concept in all institutions of higher education so as to protect the
esoteric and sacred higher levels (Silver 1980). None of these strategies is simple or
uncontested, but all have reinforced the hierarchies of modern higher education.

Consequences for Institutional Legitimacy
The ideologies of human capital and of equal opportunity have affected Canadian institutional
legitimacy variously. They have confirmed the supremacy of 'useful' knowledge, contributed to
a relentless reliance on credentials to allocate institutions and people in social hierarchies, and
underpinned beliefs about social and intellectual purposes of universities and colleges. The
state's increasing intervention in institutional affairs, and the search for innovative structural
solutions to problems of equity are further consequences particularly interesting for this study.

Denominational control of Anglo-Canadian universities petered out in the 1950s, leaving them
to negotiate directly with their provincial governments over resources.6 The western provinces
had mostly adopted the American land-grant college model from the beginning, creating single,
publicly-funded provincial universities in each province before the first war.7 The 1960s
expansion encouraged the universities themselves, singly and in concert, to expend more effort
and resources on planning (Bissell 1974; Trotter & Carrothers 1974; Axelrod 1982a). Collections of institutions gradually gave way to provincial systems. Direct university-provincial government relations were replaced in the 1970s by buffer agencies, to "remov(e) from ministerial control (and therefore ministerial responsibility) matters which it is thought best in the public interest to put beyond the reach of day to day politics" (Trotter and Carrothers 1974,7; also Axelrod 1982a). Relationships between institutional and state officials continued to depend on private, informal networks, but were systematized and formalized as bureaucracies burgeoned (Sirluck 1974; Hayden 1983).

The human capital and equal opportunity theories justified public expenditure on higher education and emphasized vocational relevance. Governments could legitimately claim a right to determine the appropriateness and amount of education to be provided. Sirluck (1974) argues there were other reasons too. The emerging dominance of provincial governments in higher education financing was consistent with trends to consolidate the welfare state and assert provincial precedence over federal interests. Student militancy, and the apparent inability of the institutions to keep order, shocked and worried university administrations and governments. Fears of US domination of the universities were aired as staff were imported during the expansion years. Governments sought to steer research towards problems the state deemed relevant. Finally, the advent of unionization and collective bargaining could not be ignored by "the ultimate determiner of the resource flow" (Sirluck 1974,6).

Since governments controlled the terms of reference, membership and resources of the coordinating agencies, they could actively influence the 'rationalization' of the system, and 'accountability' of individual institutions, without appearing to interfere openly. Sirluck (1977) voiced the fears of many in the universities about loss of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, fears which would be increasingly realised into the 1980s as governments tightened their fiscal control (see also Morton 1977; Hayden 1983; Muller 1987). A difference may be
discerned between university-state relationships and those between colleges and the state. Where universities typically had legislative safeguards against external interference, the colleges were overtly designed as publicly accountable instruments of state policy. Dennison and Gallagher argue most colleges were established at a time when "decentralization of authority, responsibility, and power was politically fashionable and safe...public funding for colleges was almost lavish" (1986,186-87). Moreover, the colleges were victims of their own success; demand grew far more rapidly than expected and cost controls were required on the system as a whole. Controls were increasingly centralized and tightened from the mid-1970s and, in some provinces (especially BC), became almost draconian in the 1980s. The overall result was a strengthening of the stratification of the university and college systems, closely paralleling stratifications of 'useful' knowledge and credentials.

Another consequence for institutional legitimacy of interest here was a renewed questioning of the purpose of universities. This appeared as a reified liberal vs. vocational debate, and in increasing emphasis by the universities on 'excellence' in research, graduate studies and professional education, and equation of university credentials with professional, middle class ideals (Trotter & Carrothers 1974; Sirluck 1974; Morton 1977; Runte 1981; Axelrod 1982a). These accompanied a search for ways to resolve intractable problems of educational inequity and, simultaneously, to meet new challenges of rapid technological change. A 1976 OECD Review of Canadian higher education alluded to the importance of education at all levels for adults. With slower growth rates in school-graduates' participation in higher education, many universities grew more inclined to seek out adults. Morton encapsulated the issues thus:

"Across Canada, the greatest untapped pool of ability lies among those - a majority of them women - who grew past the age for higher education without its invitation even being extended....The need to recycle people as well as tin cans and newsprint becomes more urgent as the pace of obsolescence in expertise and technique accelerates (1977,187)."
The colleges were one solution, but could not offer the prestige of the universities. Pedagogical and disciplinary innovation became another solution, especially among the newer universities seeking their own legitimacy and unique identity. Traditional disciplinary boundaries softened as new specialisms attracted attention and interdisciplinary programs gained popularity. Bissell (1974), for example, neatly contrasts the disciplinary foci of certain departments at the University of Toronto with those at the new York University. In BC, Ellis and Birch recall Simon Fraser University's choice of interdisciplinary subjects, degree structures and tutorial patterns which often contrasted sharply with those of the other universities. Experiments were carried out with closed-circuit television, automated language laboratories and computer-assisted learning. ‘Cooperative programs', whereby students alternated full-time study with organized periods in the workforce, helped link theoretical, university-based learning with practical skills training. And, for some, the modern form of distance education offered another way of economically drawing disenfranchised people into higher education and, simultaneously, targeting programs to areas of economic or social need.

LEGITIMACY AND CHANGE IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

The recent history of distance education reveals it has occupied a contentious place in regional and national higher education systems and hierarchies. In the last 25 years, significant pedagogical and technological changes in distance education practice have affected the nature and kind of institutional legitimacy accorded to distance education by states and others in higher education. These changes include significant growth in enrolments, numbers and types of institution, and the varieties of program taught at a distance. In addition, distance educators have introduced alternative ways to develop and teach courses, and new structures and systems to organize and support the teaching. Finally, the nature of inter-institutional relationships has changed as willingness to collaborate breaks down traditional boundaries.
The changes have been an international phenomenon and it would be misleading to describe them only in terms of one country, though the Canadian experience is especially relevant here. Moreover, the Canadian literature does not reveal the nature and magnitude of developments in distance education as a field. Accordingly, this section draws on British and Australian literature. The British literature is particularly important because of the BOU's impact on the field worldwide. Similarities between Australia and Canada in geography, demography, economy and social life are sufficiently strong for the Australian distance education experience to be analogous to much of the Canadian experience. The English-language literature is extensive, but until the late 1980s was more often descriptive than theoretical or deeply analytical.

The Growth of Distance Education

Formal 'correspondence study' or 'education by post' began in the late 19th century (Erdos 1967; Harris 1967; Holmberg 1989). Queen's University started the first Canadian university level correspondence program in 1889 (Neatby 1978; Sweet 1986), but it was a rare element of university extension activity till the late 1930s when UBC, amongst others, began offering a small number of non-credit courses by correspondence (Logan 1958; Selman 1976). By 1967-68 approximately 121,600 students were enrolled in correspondence courses in Canada, of whom almost 88,000 were in government schools, and 16,000 in universities (Mackenzie & Christensen 1971). The rest studied at private, commercial schools preparing adults and young people for matriculation, or in grass roots adult education organizations.

The transformation of higher education at a distance began in the late 1960s with creation of open universities of which the prototype was the British Open University (BOU), established in 1969 (Tunstall 1974; Perry 1977; Rumble 1982c; Rumble & Harry 1982). New information technologies promised new solutions to demands for mass expansion of higher education among adults as well as school-leavers, demands which conventional institutions could not or would
not meet. Since then, distance education has become one of the fastest growing areas of post-secondary education in both advanced industrial and developing countries (Briggs et al 1987; Daniel 1988; Timmers 1988). The numbers of institutions, students and courses have grown enormously, and course development and teaching processes have altered markedly in nature, quality and sophistication (Perry 1984; Timmers 1988; Holmberg 1989). Holmberg (1989,4-5) distinguishes between large-scale and small-scale distance education operations. He suggests the former have an independence and authority conferred by their extremes of innovation and economy of scale. The latter tend to remain closer to mainstream education and encourage personal ties between teacher and learner. Canadian distance education institutions fall somewhere between the two. Enrolments in excess of 150,000 are common in the larger open universities, especially in Asia, but in Canada few exceed 20,000.

There is a dearth of Canadian statistics on university and college distance education enrolments, suggesting a continuing invisibility and lowly status here. Enrolment and other growth in the last 20 years is, however, indubitable. Nine universities offered credit distance education courses in Canada in 1969 (CAUCE 1970); by 1983 this had risen to 27 (Sweet 1986,171), three of which were single-purpose distance education institutions - Alberta's Athabasca University (created 1970), the Télé-Université de Quebec (1972), and OLI (1978). Comparable college statistics are not available, though Dennison (1986; 1989) reports a cautious but growing interest in teaching at a distance and/or using others' distance education materials to supplement their curriculum. Helms (1989,124) reports 29 universities and 10 colleges, plus six consortia, seven broadcasters, and numerous education ministries and private organizations teaching at a distance. In 1990-91, the Canadian Association of Distance Education Directory listed 446 members from 36 universities, 50 colleges and assorted other organizations.

Statistics Canada (1979, 35) records a quadrupling of part-time undergraduate university enrolments from 39,000 in 1962-63 to 171,000 in 1977-78, but does not further distinguish
distance education students. Dennison and Gallagher (1986, 267) complain Statistics Canada has not collected data on part-time (and distance education) students and faculty of colleges till very recently, so national college profiles are incomplete. Provincial statistical compilations do not clearly distinguish distance education from conventional part-time enrolments. Institutional reports of enrolment statistics do not always clearly state whether registrations are course enrolments, head counts, or full-time equivalent enrolments (FTEs). This last form can be misleading, since it conceals the number of people actually engaged in study at a distance. Hence, for example, the Télē-Université de Quebec more than doubled its enrolments from 1,300 FTE in 1978 to 2,830 FTE in 1981. This meant 4,965 people in 1974, 13,661 in 1979, and 25,000 in 1985 (Guillemet et al. 1986). Athabasca University enrolled 4,000 people in the late 1970s, doubled to 8,000 in 1984, and rose to 10,772 in 1987.10 Waterloo University offers the largest Canadian distance education program in a conventional university; this began in 1968 and enrolled almost 10,000 FTE students, or 18,882 course enrolments, by 1983 (Sweet 1986, 172; also Leslie 1978; 1979). OLI began with 2,955 course enrolments (or 332 FTE) in 1979-80, and reached 19,592 (or 5,967 FTE) by 1986-87 (see Appendix 1.3). In terms of size, OLI almost immediately became one of the most significant of Canadian distance education institutions.

Erdos (1967) limited the effectiveness of the correspondence method to those subjects whose basis of teaching is words, arguing these could be as easily written and read as spoken in classrooms (see also Wedemeyer 1971a; Holmberg 1969; Sims 1972). The BOU proved early in the 1970s that science and technical subjects could be brilliantly, if expensively, taught at a distance. In Australia, the large technical and further education system has shown that virtually any subject can be taught at a distance, from pig husbandry to tractor maintenance and grain handling (Edwards 1986). Liberal programs in humanities and social sciences, and professional programs for teachers have been the backbone of distance education degree studies in Canada, Australia and the UK. More vocationally-oriented programs have gained the ascendancy in the
1980s, especially in business studies, computing, education, health and applied science. The BOU developed an enormous non-credit, professional continuing education program, and now offers nine taught and research-based higher degrees, mainly professionally oriented (Bates 1989, 134; Harry 1990). Australia's Deakin University has led that country in developing professional graduate degrees for which demand appears constantly to be increasing. In Canada, however, graduate teaching at a distance is minimal. Until 1988, all three single-purpose distance education institutions were limited to undergraduate degrees. Elsewhere, distance education graduate work must be combined with periods of on campus study.

The Structure of Distance Education

Internationally the field has developed into an informal hierarchy headed largely by single-purpose institutions, that is, those teaching only at a distance (see Perry's 1984 survey; Rumble & Harry 1982). Most distance education operations, however, are part of otherwise conventional institutions teaching face-to-face on a campus. Known as dual-mode operations, their status is greatly affected by their relative position within the parent organization. Carl (1985) reports the relative marginality of distance education departments within most conventional Canadian universities, maintained by separation of their structures, funding and pedagogical techniques from normal decision-making and teaching channels. On the other hand, Jevons (1984) argues for parity of esteem between dual-mode and single-purpose models of distance teaching within the distance education hierarchy itself, because of the legitimacy conferred on the former by its equation with conventional standards. His is, in part, an argument for keeping distance education as close to the mainstream of educational practice and standards as possible.

Unlike conventional hierarchies, age has been a disadvantage to the institutional legitimacy of modern distance education. New single-mode distance education institutions have been justified by their leaders largely on the ground that conventional institutions were unlikely
readily to incorporate the necessary innovations. Perry refers to "immense inertia in the traditional system so that the force required to produce any change must be immensely powerful" (1978,5). Daniel and Smith (1979), writing of the genesis and early years of Athabasca University and the Télé-Université de Quebec, agree. They argue a high degree of institutional autonomy was necessary for a successful open university operation because, while it shared the fundamental mission of conventional universities, the means of achieving that mission were quite different. Paul (1989) reiterates the educational and managerial advantages of dedication to distance education without competition from more familiar modes of education. Even in those institutions with long histories of teaching at a distance, age and its concomitant customs and myths have hindered efforts to incorporate modern forms of distance education, rather than adding lustre to distance education's status.

Most Canadian distance education operations are dual-mode, but the single/dual mode dichotomy has been more extensively canvassed in the Australian literature; there, distance educators have argued distance education compares favourably with conventional education. 'External' students follow the same curriculum, are taught by the same staff, complete the same examinations, and perform at least as well as their on-campus counterparts (see Sheath 1969; White 1976; Smith 1976; Guiton 1978). Universities like Deakin and Murdoch encourage their students to mix their study modes, and full-time Deakin BA students use the same learning materials as their off-campus counterparts (Moran 1990a). In the mid-1970s the Australian government accepted that an integrated dual-mode model would better ensure maintenance of academic standards and parity with regular forms of education than a single national open university (Aust. C'tee on OU 1974; Smith 1975; Johnson 1983). Canadian dual-mode distance education operations appear to have shared Australian views on the advantages of integration and the importance of maintaining parity of academic standards (see Leslie 1978; 1979). In one important respect, however, the Canadian and Australian systems differ. Whereas in Australia, distance education students are part of the normal faculty workload, in many Canadian
institutions distance teaching is additional to normal load and/or paid separately (Mackenzie & Christensen 1971, 285; Leslie 1979, 38; Carl 1985). While this facilitates comparative cost estimates of on campus and distance teaching, it also helps maintain distance education at the margins of the educational establishment (Carl 1985).

The Systems of Distance Education

Whatever the organizational structure, the systems and pedagogies of modern distance education are a far cry from those of correspondence study. The new generation of institutional leaders distanced themselves from older forms of correspondence study widely viewed, often justifiably, as a second-rate alternative of last resort. Drop-out rates were typically very high. Communication was largely by mail and thus slow and subject to the vagaries of the postal system. Academic quality of printed notes was serendipitous, and reproduction quality often dreadful. Library and other resources were usually limited and slow to reach the student. Some face-to-face tuition was usually included to compensate for the gaps and inadequacies and, certainly in Canada, only part of a degree could be completed by correspondence (Erdos 1967; Childs 1969; Sheath 1969; Mackenzie & Christensen 1971; Sims 1972; 1978; Smith 1980). On the other hand, it was often the only form of education available, especially for people isolated geographically or otherwise. Correspondence educators were passionately committed to improving educational access and making the learning experience as rewarding and enjoyable as possible within the limits of technology and communication. The new generation of distance educators could not afford to carry the baggage of the myths, methodologies and reputation of correspondence study. During the 1970s they adopted a new name, 'distance education', to distinguish the new structures, technologies and procedures. The break with the past was neither immediate nor complete. Social and political commitment to improving educational access continued unabated; so too did the belief in empowering individual learners to achieve their goals.
A typical correspondence study operation comprised a very small number of people performing multiple tasks. In contrast, distance education characteristically comprises interlocking systems for course design and production, teaching and student support (collectively known as 'delivery'), and planning and management. New computer-based and telecommunications technologies have been enthusiastically adopted wherever they could be afforded, and have been important components in change and growth in each system. The way in which these technologies have been harnessed and modified has played a crucial role in supporting institutional claims to excellence and prestige.

The BOU pioneered the use of academic course teams to prepare course materials of a high pedagogical and physical quality (Tunstall 1974; Rumble 1982c; 1986a). The BOU model team comprises five to ten academics, an instructional designer, editor, a staff tutor, a course administrator, and a BBC producer. The team is further supported by graphic design, library, clerical and technical staff. Course design and production are complex tasks taking up to three years from drawing board to delivery to students. The end result, an integrated package of printed materials, audiotapes, science kits and television programs, is highly visible. Perry argues the course team concept is the BOU's most important single contribution to university teaching practice. He asserts "a course produced by this method will inevitably tend to be superior in quality to any course produced by an individual" (1977,91). At the same time, he admits it is a very expensive way of preparing materials, justifiable only if they are to be used by large numbers.

The BOU model became the benchmark against which distance educators in many countries would measure their own products and systems, regardless of Perry's caveat about economy of scale. It was expected that, "through the pooling of ideas, the institutionalization of constructive criticism, and specialist and cooperative efforts, a high quality course will emerge" (Moran 1990a,71). Developing a course in this manner is not easy. It is a cumbersome and
initially stressful process for academics unaccustomed to peer scrutiny of their drafts and teaching techniques. Riley (1984a,b,c) graphically describes the practical difficulties and group dynamics involved, and solutions found to the inter-personal and instructional design problems encountered (also see Crick 1980; Rumble 1986a,169-73; Parer 1989). To Perry (1977), the course team model was necessary to counteract the poor reputation of correspondence study and widespread scepticism of the educational value of television. Moreover, learning materials must compensate effectively for the lack of immediate help from the teacher, and must withstand public scrutiny in a way traditional classroom materials or teaching rarely face.

The course team model has since been adopted and adapted world-wide (Rumble & Harry 1982; Koul & Jenkins 1990). In addition, Smith (1980) describes four other common models of course development: the author plus editor; the educational adviser plus in-house faculty; contract author plus local faculty and instructional designer; and the 'intuition' model (where the writer has no support and one hopes for the best). Apart from the last, these models have in common the joint efforts of academic writer(s) and instructional adviser. Variations on the first two have become the predominant style in Canada. Seaborne and Zuckernick (1986) argue Canadian approaches to course design have been affected significantly by institutional commitment, or lack thereof, to distance education. This factor determines the human and fiscal resources devoted to course design, and the extent to which the institution sees itself bound to serve distant students. They further argue the delivery strategy – that is, choice of one or several media – is an important determinant of the institution's approach to course design.

In Canada, the telephone quickly became an integral part of many distance education programs due to its comparative familiarity and ready availability to both faculty and students, and to its capacity to bridge distance in an immediately personal way. Daniel and Turok (1975) also found audio-conferencing an economic alternative to face-to-face tutorials in low enrolment
By 1986, Robertson was arguing that telephone technology had become an indispensable tool and a routine part of delivery strategies (1986,283; also Burge & Howard 1990).

Seaborne and Zuckernick (1986,39) note Canadian institutions have generally followed either a dominant medium approach or a multi-media approach to course delivery. The assumptions here are that students learn in different ways, and there is no one best way to present information. Nevertheless, print has consistently maintained its hegemony over other forms of instructional media (Pittman 1987; Holmberg 1989,69). Indeed, in wealthy nations such as Canada, growing sophistication in instructional design has been matched (and indeed often surpassed) by the physical quality and technological capabilities of print production systems (Parer 1981; Bottomley 1986; Briggs et al 1987; Moran 1987; Pittman 1987). Waterloo University, on the other hand, has preferred to emphasise audio-cassettes (Leslie 1986), and three provincial educational broadcast networks have been created to teach through television. Of those taking a multi-media approach, Seaborne and Zuckernick (1986) distinguish between institutions relying on one in particular, and those evenly balancing their media choices. OLI and Waterloo exemplify the first category; Memorial University and Wilfred Laurier University the second.

Broadcast television's "capacity to mystify and confound" (Brown & Fortosky 1986,267) has exerted a powerful fascination on some educators and politicians, especially in BC. Helm (1989) observes an accelerating interest among Canadian distance educators in satellite- and computer-based communications bringing together a variety of technologies; for example, interactive video-conferencing, electronic mail, and voice and graphics transmissions. Bates, however, criticises Canadian distance education institutions for generally having "failed to integrate electronic media such as television and computers with textual materials...so that the unique presentational characteristics of television are exploited" (1989,137). He finds television
has been used mainly for relatively low cost sessions or one-off initiatives. Even at the BOU, whose image became quickly associated with television, the latter comprised only 5% of the instruction in the mid-1970s (Perry 1977,268). Ironically, Bates earlier reported (1982) a widespread reduction in the glamour and appeal of television and radio in Britain because of systemic and political difficulties and academic mistrust of audiovisual media.

The literature indicates a sense of unease about the role of face-to-face tuition in distance education. Perry (1975) admits the BOU's adoption of the (Australian) University of New England residential school model (see Crew 1976), and establishment of regional centres offering face-to-face tutorials, were necessary political compromises in the process of legitimating the new university. Most Canadian distance education operations seem to offer some form of face-to-face contact, by means of local learning centres, residential schools, laboratory sessions, seminars, and meetings with peripatetic tutors. The inclusion of face-to-face experiences is overtly justified as helping improve completion rates by overcoming learners' undoubted sense of isolation (for example, Kahl & Cropley 1986). Or it is argued that some subjects require hands-on activity in a laboratory or practice of skills under the eye of the instructor. At a deeper level, one senses most distance educators share, in varying degrees, the hegemonic belief that 'real' education occurs face-to-face, and are reluctant to eschew physical contiguity entirely.

Student services have become more sophisticated since 1970 but their purpose has remained fundamentally the same as in the days of correspondence study. Little difference may be observed between then and now in the depth, energy and sincerity of concern with students' welfare - an ethos more analogous to counselling services than to traditional registrarial systems of student administration (Erdos 1967; Sewart 1978; Gough & Coltman 1979; Gough 1979; Moran & Croker 1981; McInnis-Rankin & Brindley 1986). The change was more in the expanded range and combination of student services and in the priority accorded them.
Comprehensive student services were designed to personalize the relationship with individual students, help them deal administratively with the remote institution, and compensate for the lack of physical community (Sewart 1978; Moran & Croker 1981; McInnis-Rankin & Brindley 1986). The key limitation has always been resources. One initiative of the 1970s was the creation of local study or meeting centres (for example, Gough 1980; Castro et al 1985; Northcott & Shapcott 1986). Others included extensive academic and personal counselling networks (Gough & Coltman 1979; Moran & Croker 1981; McInnis-Rankin & Brindley 1986); study skills advice; careers planning; and more recently, specialized assistance for disabled students (Gough & McBeath 1981; Croker 1983). All these are aimed at supporting teaching and learning, and individual growth and realization of aspirations. Development of student services has not been without tension. Sewart (1978; 1979; 1981) called for better balance between the needs of the individual learner, and the mass production emphasis on learning packages. Paul (1989), McInnis-Rankin and Brindley (1986), and Bates (1989) argue that diversion of resources in Canadian distance education institutions towards production and telecommunications technologies has diminished the range and quality of support services. This reflects a continuing strain between two imperatives driving the nature and structure of distance education - concern for the individual learner, and mass instruction in an industrialized educational system.

Otto Peters' model of distance education as an industrial enterprise, outlined in Chapter 1, was apt. The management of sophisticated and complex course development and delivery systems demanded new types of personnel and organizational forms. Modern distance education has wrought changes in academic roles and decision making processes, and has encouraged the rise of the professional at the expense of the academic's traditional power. There are many variations in academic structures, division of labour, and degree of automation from one institution to another. Choices of structure have been influenced by institutional size, relative importance of distance education to the institution's overall functions, and preferred
communications media (see Koul & Jenkins 1990). Rumble (1986a,118) observes distance education systems are commonly based on functional divisions of course development, teaching, materials production and distribution, and administration. Other types may also be present. For example, temporary course teams exemplify a project structure and dynamic. There are outreach divisions such as learning centre networks and collaborative consortia. Rumble goes on to argue:

(D)istance education systems exhibit a range of features not found in conventional ones which make their management qualitatively different.... These include their use of instructional media with a concomitant requirement for specialist staff, the quasi-industrial processes of production and distribution, and the distance between themselves and their students which requires access to reliable and rapid means of communication for administrative and teaching purposes (1986a,163-64).

Such a system has several consequences. First, a professional class of print and audiovisual specialists, instructional designers, and student support staff assumes new power in decision making (see Riley 1984a,b,c; D. Harris 1987). This can conflict with the traditional power of the academic vis-à-vis students and within the organization itself. Second, the separation of course preparation from teaching can give rise to an academic hierarchy in which the tutor may have little control over a curriculum designed and written by others (Calvert 1982; Rumble 1986a). Peters observed the teacher alienation which can result (1989). One may question how different this practice is from the faculty/teaching assistant model common in North American universities. It may be a symptom of expansion in higher education in general, and an expression of financial pressures on faculty:student ratios. Third, the tutor's role as provider of information diminishes (the learning materials take over) while that of learning facilitator increases (helping the individual student interpret and utilise the materials). As the teacher's control is loosened, the potential for learner independence may increase. Fourth, the system itself is capable of great expansion in range and number of courses and students, especially when combined with telecommunications strategies. Together, these factors suggest significant shifts in the traditional role and authority of the academic towards more equality with other
professionals in the teaching process on one hand, and with students on the other. Less positively, industrialized distance education systems contain the potential for regulation and manipulation of knowledge and academic freedom by educational elites and, less directly, by the state in ways to which traditional classroom-based systems may be less amenable.

**Inter-Institutional Collaboration**

Universities have traditionally maintained fast their boundaries to protect their autonomy, standards and identity. Consequently, they have been wary of collaboration with other institutions, and ill-equipped to deal positively with external pressures for rationalisation through cooperative action. Inter-institutional collaboration is remarkably difficult to achieve to the mutual satisfaction of the partners. In countries like Canada and Australia, governments are increasingly demanding such collaboration as they press for rationalization of programs, higher productivity and ‘more scholar for the dollar’ (Axelrod 1982a). Collaborative ventures strengthen the claims of distance education institutions' to legitimacy. The economic argument is bolstered by the apparent compatibility of collaboration with ideologies promoting more educational opportunities. The desire to improve accessibility underpins most literature on collaboration in distance education.

Neil defined inter-institutional collaboration in distance education as "an active working partnership supported by some kind of institutional commitment" based on formal agreement between two or more organizations (1981,25). Others have specified kinds of collaboration ranging from low to high risk, including exchange of information, experience and consultants; collaboration on development, adaptation and evaluation of learning materials; establishment of credit transfer arrangements; and creation of new overarching structures (Moran 1986; Anderson & Nelson 1989). Konrad and Small (1986) propose that collaboration occurs at three levels of formalization - from informal and *ad hoc* arrangements through formal agreements to creation of a new agency, typically a consortium. Examples of all these exist in Canada, whose
distance educators have led the international field in experimenting with collaborative ventures

Distance educators have argued there are many potential advantages to inter-institutional
collaboration (Neil 1981; Mugridge 1983; Moran 1983; 1990; Pritchard and Jones 1985a; Konrad
and Small 1989). Collaboration may expand an institution’s capacity to provide breadth and
depth in particular subjects. More pedagogical and technological strategies are available as
approaches and facilities are shared. These strategies may, in turn, raise the standards of
learning materials and teaching. Cooperative course development may help build a critical mass
of scholars otherwise geographically scattered in relatively small institutions, and may enhance
research effort, although this has yet to be proven. There are financial advantages of cost
effective use of human and material resources, and political advantages in demonstrating that
cost efficiency. Institutional legitimacy may also be enhanced through partnership with
another, more prestigious institution.

The rhetoric about collaboration, however, does not match reality (Mugridge 1983; Pritchard &
Jones 1985b; Calvert 1986). Cooperation rests, above all, on trust among the partners. Trust
implies a willingness to eschew competition, and demands personal and institutional
relationships which can overcome politics and self-interest. There must be sufficient parity of
esteem and congruence of aims among the partners to convince each of the benefits to its own
status and purpose. Traditions of institutional autonomy, especially in certification and
standards, tend to militate against such convictions. A common result is mistrust of teaching
and standards elsewhere. This has been labelled the ‘Not Invented Here’ factor (Jevons 1976;
Bynner 1985). Another common problem is the incompatibility of organizational structures and
administrative processes, necessitating a questioning of institutional practice which can seem to
intrude into institutional autonomy. Other difficulties include practical problems of inter-
institutional communication; failures of implementation due to inadequate funds, lack of clarity
or real commitment; and ineffective handling of technical and human problems. Ignorance or suspicion of distance education techniques can hamper effective collaboration where a partner does not normally teach at a distance.

Despite these manifest difficulties, inter-institutional cooperation in distance education has burgeoned in the past decade, especially in Canada. Reported examples include OLI’s coordinating and collaborative activities (Mugridge 1983; 1989); bilateral arrangements between North Island College and Athabasca University (Mugridge 1983; Tayless 1986; Paul 1989); Ontario’s Contact North (Croft 1987; Anderson & Nelson 1989); the Ontario Educational Communications Authority (Waniewicz 1979) and other educational broadcasters; and five educational consortia in Alberta (Moran 1986; Paul 1989). Early indications are that these and other collaborative projects are slowly gaining legitimacy among the participants and funding agencies, as well as among students. They have in common that the institutions are eager to improve their status and expand their range of operations. These projects rarely involve the most prestigious universities, but proliferate at the middle and lower ends of traditional hierarchies. Projects often cross the binary divide. Other institutions use credit transfer, course sharing and other mechanisms to challenge conventions of knowledge hierarchies.

It is premature to assess the effects on institutional legitimacy of softening boundaries in these ways. However, the increasing popularity of such ventures suggests willingness to collaborate is becoming an important criterion of legitimacy within the distance education field. This view is reinforced by a growing trend towards international collaboration, either through commercial arrangements, or in some form of aid-related relationship between institutions. Developments are so new that little analytical or evaluative work has emerged as yet. Canadian examples include OLI’s links with Universitas Terbuka in Indonesia and Disted College in Penang; and Athabasca University’s ties to Ramkhamhaeng University in Thailand, and the Indira Ghandi National Open University in India. The Canadian and BC governments strongly supported
creation of the Commonwealth of Learning Agency sponsored by the Commonwealth of Nations
and based in Vancouver. It is the most ambitious attempt to date to develop world-wide
collaboration in distance education (see Briggs et al 1987; Cwth. Sect. 1987; Hubbard et al
1987).

Why Did These Changes Occur?
The pre-history of institutions such as OLI, the BOU and Deakin University reveals growing
interest among educators from the late 1960s in innovative ways of reaching larger numbers of
learners, especially working class and other people with little social power (Ellis 1973; C'tee on
Open Univ. 1974; Perry 1977). This interest alone was insufficient to force the establishment
of new institutions like OLI. The existence of, and growing fascination with, new information
technologies was also insufficient, per se, to determine the direction such institutions would
take. Both in combination were unlikely to have persuaded conventional institutions into major
emendation of admissions policies and educational practices. The catalyst for change was state
attraction to an approach promising a combination of mass access, lower unit costs and greater
economies of scale than conventional teaching offered, plus education and training of the
workforce without significant disruptions to the economic or social fabric of people’s lives.
The taint of old (and sometimes unfair) attitudes towards correspondence study lingered,
especially in more conservative higher education institutions. OLI, like the BOU, would owe
its existence largely to Ministerial determination amid heavy opposition from the educational
’establishment’.

The new organizing forms and techniques changed the financial structure of distance education
and the operational bases of distance education institutions’ relationships with the state. It
remains uncertain whether distance education is actually cheaper than conventional higher
education, and if so, under what conditions. Several costing models have been developed to
explain the possible economies of scale, and to compare conventional and distance education
costs (Wagner 1972; 1977; Laidlaw and Layard 1974; Snowden and Daniel 1980; Rumble 1981b, c; 1982b; 1986b; Perraton 1982b). Pioneering work at the BOU revealed its unit costs of undergraduate teaching were less than one-third those of conventional British higher education. The BOU's high enrolments ensured very low marginal costs of teaching and administration, even though fixed costs of course development and television were extremely high (Wagner 1972; 1977; Laidlaw & Layard 1974). Rumble suggests universities with less than 10,000 FTE students "are probably not cost efficient in comparison with conventional institutions, but may nevertheless be perfectly justifiable on other (non-economic) grounds" (1982b, 138). In contrast, Snowden and Daniel (1980), having adapted the BOU model to small single-mode distance education systems such as Athabasca University, argued smaller institutions could also achieve comparable levels of cost effectiveness to the BOU. They suggested measures such as purchasing ready-made courses at lower initial costs. In a survey of international experience, Perraton (1982b) concludes economies of scale are possible even in much smaller institutions, depending on choices of media and success in keeping fixed costs as low as possible. He notes radio is usually very cheap, print can be inexpensive, and television is remarkably costly.

The BOU's low unit costs have sometimes been unwisely cited by smaller institutions to justify their own costs, even though comparable economies of scale are clearly impossible. As Perraton (1982b) points out, there are significant methodological problems in costing distance education itself, let alone comparing one institution with another. There are difficulties in comparing like with like in terms of student participation (part-time versus full-time), and disentangling teaching from other aspects of the institution's work (Rumble 1986b). There are problems in allocating functions to comparable variables. Distance education, for example, incurs very different fixed costs of course development and distribution from classroom-based teaching; and faculty:student ratios are often very different from face-to-face education. Nevertheless, it has become almost an article of faith among many distance educators in countries like Canada, Australia and Britain that theirs is a cheaper, more cost effective form of education than
conventional face-to-face education. The argument pervades funding submissions and justifies new project proposals; it is too attractive an argument for governments to reject.

Similarly, distance educators commonly justify claims for further growth in terms of improvements in access to higher education, especially for disenfranchised adults. Whatever the reality in a given locality, distance education's democratizing potential is perhaps the single most commonly held value among practitioners everywhere. The difficulty, as noted above in relation to higher education in general, is that improving educational access does not necessarily equalize outcomes. Absolute increases in distance education enrolments since 1970 indicate access has greatly improved overall, as it has in mainstream education. Paul suggests, however, that Canadian degree-level distance education students come predominantly from white collar and professional occupations or parental backgrounds, and many have prior higher education experience (Paul 1989, 153). That is, such students come from similar social milieux as do their younger full-time counterparts. At the same time, British and Australian studies reveal gaps between students' current occupations and the social class or occupational background of their parents, suggesting distance education appeals to people already upwardly mobile (McIntosh et al 1980; Powles & Anwyl 1987; D. Harris 1987).

Canadian higher education students at a distance are overwhelmingly adults. Distance education's freedom from temporal and spatial constraints suits well people who are geographically or physically isolated, whose work or family commitments prohibit regular campus attendance, or who choose to fit education into their lives as and when it suits them. Powles and Anwyl (1987) report Australian students' principal reasons for studying at a distance are employment commitments preventing campus attendance, and residence too far from campus. Women, in particular, reported liking the freedom distance study gave them to choose when and where to study, presumably because of their additional responsibilities for childcare and home management. As we shall see, OLI students apparently felt similarly. McIntosh
(1979) notes also that the financial sacrifice of giving up work for full-time study precludes attendance for many women and men.

In Australia and Canada, distance education has long been the only educational route for rural people unwilling or unable to spend long periods in the cities. Cost efficiencies are dubious; the justification for state support of such programs has been largely political, especially where rural voting strength is disproportionate to the numbers living in the country. In the 1980s, distance education in Canada and Australia has increasingly catered for urban dwellers for whom class attendance is inconvenient or overly time-consuming. Paul (1989,146) observed that rural students frequently prefer more face-to-face and social interaction than distance education is typically able or willing to provide. Urban students, on the other hand, seem to choose distance education for the independence and convenience offered by not having conventional attendance requirements. In Australia, distance education's growing popularity among urban dwellers probably reflects the increasing number of graduate, professional and specialist programs offered, suiting occupations largely sited in cities. This may well be true of first degree programs in Canada, but graduate programs taught wholly at a distance are still a rarity here.

White observes distance education was "very much a male preserve" in Australia till recently (1976,92) but numerous studies (for example, see McIntosh 1979; McIntosh et al 1980; Pike 1980; Powles & Anwyl 1987; D. Harris 1987; Faith 1988; Coulter 1989) report that women consistently comprise over 50% of enrolments in most western distance education institutions (cf von Prummer 1985). Gough and Coltman (1979) note the strength of women's motivation to return to study, often in the face of greater difficulties than men, such as conflicting demands of childcare, home management and paid work. However, women tend to congregate in arts/humanities, and in professional areas traditionally dominated by women, such as teaching and nursing. These tend to be the largest, longest established distance education programs,
especially in conventional universities where distance education has been consistently marginalised, and it is hard not to link this marginalization to the lower status accorded both to these professions and to the education of women - 'second-class education for second-class citizens'.

CONCLUSIONS

Perry, describing why he took up the challenge of creating the BOU, says he "had long been concerned at the pitably inadequate standard of most of the teaching that went on in the established universities" (1977,xv). His intention was to accomplish changes in standards and techniques of teaching which would "ultimately spread back into the established universities and raise the standards of teaching everywhere" (1977,xvi). The course team concept, and the elaborate organizational systems making up the BOU model, were designed for this end as well as to cater for the very large numbers of disenfranchised adults with whom the Labour government was concerned. The distance education literature suggests Perry's goal is not yet fulfilled. Writers have been more preoccupied with proving distance education to be equal to conventional education. Yet there are signs that such assertions are not mere defensiveness. Rumble (1989) argues distance education techniques are being used in conventional settings and the boundaries are blurring. Faculty reflections suggest, not only have they found teaching at a distance rewarding, but also that their experiences have changed the way they view face-to-face teaching (Evans and Nation 1989).

In Canada, distance education grew during a broader expansion of higher education. The twin driving forces of investment in human capital and improvement in educational equity steered higher education towards utility. Economic downturns in the 1970s and, especially, in the 1980s, helped open the doors to greater state intervention in higher education affairs. Distance education has become one tool in state policies demanding rationalization and higher
productivity. Improvements in the curricular and pedagogical quality of Canadian distance education courses help justify higher status within conventional hierarchies of knowledge and institutions. Canadian distance educators’ strategies and technologies are broadly similar to those of other modern distance education systems, and leading Canadian institutions have found recognition and prestige in the international field. Yet opposition to the idea and practice of distance education is still powerful, and its legitimacy contested, especially by others in higher education.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 2
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 A small antecedent group of colleges and institutes formed a base for this development, particularly the highly influential collèges classiques in Quebec.

2 Respective sources are Sheffield (1970,417); Statistics Canada (1979,13); and Macdonald Commission (1985,741).

3 Sources respectively are Statistics Canada (1979,35) and Macdonald Royal Commission (1985,741).

4 Quebec refused to allow its universities to accept direct grants and they received none until 1959 when a complicated tax transfer agreement was struck by the Quebec and federal governments, the forerunner of the EPF (Sirluck 1974).

5 British Columbia has been one of the worst offenders. In 1977-78, for example, the EPF transfers comprised 78.9% of BC operating grants; by 1984-85 they were 104.3% (Can. Sen. Stdg. C'tee on Nat. Fin. 1987,18).

6 See, for example, histories of universities such as Mt. Allison (Reid 1984a), McMaster (Johnston 1976), Manitoba (Morton 1957), and Winnipeg (Bedford 1976). In Quebec, the bonds remained till the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s freed the education system from church control.

7 The University of Alberta in 1906, & University of Saskatchewan in 1907. The University of British Columbia's first Act was passed in 1890, another in 1908; teaching began in 1915 (Logan 1958). The University of Manitoba was an exception; created in 1877 by combining three denominational colleges which thereafter came increasingly under government influence (Morton 1957; Bedford 1976).

8 Author's interviews with John Ellis, Daniel Birch.

9 The first publicly-funded correspondence program in BC began in 1919 in response to a lighthouse-keeper's request for schooling for his children (McKinnon 1986,194). The founding head of BC's Correspondence School Branch was William Gibson. His son, Bill Gibson, a UBC scientist, a friend of Minister Patrick McGeer, & Chair of the Universities Council of BC, was closely involved in OLI's creation and championed its development.


11 Renée Erdos, interview with author. Erdos' long and impressive career in correspondence study began in Australia in the 1940s, continued in Africa from the 1960s, and included multifarious international activities and connections with international agencies.

12 For Britain see McIntosh et al (1980), D. Harris (1987); for Australia see Powles & Anwyl (1987); Anderson & Vervoorn (1985). Again there are difficulties with Canadian studies which do not readily distinguish between part-time on-campus and distance education students; however, see Guppy (1984); Pike (1980; 1981).
CHAPTER 3: HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

THE ENVIRONMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia’s geography, economy and politics have profoundly affected the province’s educational life, and the province’s terrain, climate and demography are fundamental to an understanding of its higher educational history. British Columbia (BC) is a vast (950,000 sq. km), topographically and climatically complex region whose physical extremes have contributed greatly to a persistent ‘frontier’ quality in BC society, to the homogeneity, isolation and self-reliance of hinterland communities, and to a notable division between metropolitan and rural allegiances (Robin 1978; Ellis & Bottomley 1979; Ellis & Mugridge 1983; Barman 1991).1 Physical factors have also affected significantly the location of universities and colleges, and access to post-secondary education.

British Columbia’s population grew rapidly after the Second World War, from 818,000 in 1941 to 1.6 million in 1961, and 2.7 million in 1981 (Barman 1991,363). The 25–44 age group, distance education’s major clientele, was the fastest growing age group in the 1970s and 1980s. The traditional source of postsecondary students, the 15–24 age group, actually declined as a proportion of the total population.2 People have concentrated in the southern part of BC, leaving vast tracts of land in the Interior and north occupied by small, isolated communities. Proportional distribution of population has remained remarkably stable since the 1930s, with approximately 54% located in the Lower Mainland, in and around Vancouver, and a further 18% on Vancouver Island (Barman 1991,371). Although postwar growth in some interior towns was dramatic, in 1981 only three cities in the southern and central Interior had over 50,000 people: Prince George, Kamloops and Kelowna (Barman 1991,375).3 At most, 50,000 people then lived in the half of BC north of Prince George (Ellis & Bottomley 1979; Forrester & Chow 1979). In contrast, the population of Greater Vancouver and the lower Fraser Valley rose from
420,000 in 1941 to 1.36 million in 1981, attracted by manufacturing, processing and service industries (Miller 1975; Barman 1991,374). City growth stimulated new interest in municipal politics and citizen protests about the dangers of increasing urban sprawl. Planners promoted decentralization as a way of preventing overcrowding in Vancouver, and of encouraging economic growth elsewhere (Hardwick 1974; Miller 1975).

Since European settlement, BC has relied on extraction and processing of natural resources, especially forest products, mining, fishing and agriculture. Robin notes "British Columbia has long been a 'company' province and the large enterprise, rather than the small family homestead, is the dominant shape on the social landscape" (1978, 29). In the pattern of small, single-enterprise towns scattered throughout the Interior, the local economy and social well-being are heavily dependent on the variable fortunes of the particular industry in national and international markets. Nevertheless, Barman argues rural BC has been "slipping away" in the postwar years, with family agricultural holdings replaced by large-scale operations, and closure of small population centres (1991, 337). Wealth has concentrated in Vancouver, held by local business people, professionals, and corporate managers of resource industries largely owned and controlled elsewhere in Canada, the USA or overseas (Marchak 1975; Resnick 1985). One significant consequence was a geographic polarization, with hinterland resentment of the "economic parasites" in the Lower Mainland who preyed on those in the less developed areas while generating little wealth themselves (Barman 1991, 293-94). BC socio-economic elites tended to look nationally to centre and right wing political parties. Locally, they looked increasingly to the Social Credit Party (Resnick 1985, 36).

**BRITISH COLUMBIAN POLITICS**

British Columbia's politics have resembled no other Canadian province. Firstly, the moderately left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP) has consistently enjoyed almost half the popular vote
since World War Two, in contrast to its third party status in federal politics (Robin 1978; Blake et al 1981; C. Harris 1987; Barman 1991). Robin attributes this in part to a social structure marked by "extreme social cleavages based primarily on class differences" (1965,675). The NDP has been closely aligned with a strongly-organized labour movement in the cities and company towns, and with professionals, intellectuals and civil servants (Robin 1965; 1978; Blake et al 1981). Its chief rival, the Social Credit Party, relied historically on the farm vote, but by the 1960s recruited from a wider social base, claiming itself the party of prosperity and, hence, employment (Robin 1965,683). Secondly, the two major Canadian centre/right-wing parties (Liberals and Progressive Conservatives) were decimated at BC provincial level in 1952 and have never recovered. Their place was taken by the populist, pro-free-enterprise, maverick Social Credit Party (Socreds) whose base was almost entirely provincial.4 Thirdly, despite the NDP's popular support, Social Credit has held power almost continuously since 1952, losing only when the right-wing vote split in 1972, and in 1991.5 This is partly attributable to strong rural support and persistent gerrymandering in favour of rural constituencies (Robin 1965,682; 1978,53; McGeer 1972,231; Greer 1978). It is also due to the Socreds' populist emphasis on unbridled economic development. Education, health and social welfare came a poor second to emplacement of technical and physical infrastructures to aid free enterprise and encourage tertiary and service industries (Robin 1965; Sherman 1966; Barman 1991). Resnick portrays BC's postwar political culture as 'frontier capitalism', in which

(transport, communications and power) mega-projects characterized the state's role in the economic arena and frugality its social and cultural functions. (Premier W. A. C. Bennett's) was not a laissez-faire version of the state, but one harnessed to the maximization of individualistic and profit-making ventures....His government's role was to help sell B.C.'s resources - to foster specialization in those activities which capitalism on the periphery could perform best. (1987,8; also see McGeer 1972; Robin 1978; Lower 1983; Barman 1991).

One corollary of this policy was the necessity to keep the NDP from power. Another was a marked lack of enthusiasm for supporting education and social welfare though it was Socred funding which laid the base for BC's present higher education system. On the other hand, the
Socreds' approach allowed proliferation of ownership of radio and cable television licenses, and by the mid-1970s there were 78 individual cable operators. Although access to radio and cable television in the 1960s and 1970s was inversely proportional to distance from Vancouver, television had an enormous impact on rural community life, bringing in the outside world and offering alternatives to old community social activities. The advent of satellite and related telecommunications systems in the early 1970s was accompanied by "a growing belief that the long term well-being of the province lies in the creation and application of high technology to all three industrial sectors" (Ellis & Mugridge 1983,2).

The NDP won power in August 1972, and lost it in December 1975. Its first two years in government coincided with a boom in the local economy, giving the government the wherewithal to support an ambitious program of social legislation (C. Harris 1987,4; Resnick 1987,9). Public ownership increased; expenditure on education, health, and social legislation rose sharply; and the public service bureaucracy burgeoned. The NDP's third year coincided with a provincial and international downturn which, combined with significant government over-spending and mismanagement born largely of inexperience, strengthened the Socred opposition (Kristianson 1977; Resnick 1987; C. Harris 1987).

During 1975, the conservative political forces realigned in BC under the Socreds (now led by W.A.C. Bennett's son, Bill), to fight the NDP. By September, most of the sitting Liberal and Conservative MLAs had defected to the Socreds (Kristianson 1977; C. Harris 1987). One notable defector was Dr. Patrick L. McGeer, neurological scientist at the University of British Columbia, Liberal MLA since 1962, one-time provincial party leader, and trenchant critic of old-style Socred policy (McGeer 1972). Although he hesitated for some months before changing allegiance, McGeer's electoral popularity had been slipping since 1966 (C. Harris 1987,73). McGeer had made no secret of his determination not to sit in opposition again (Kristianson 1977,21,28). Entering the next election as an incumbent Socred offered the best
chance for personal electoral success and political advancement. The Socreds welcomed McGeer and his Liberal colleagues because of their personal status and long parliamentary experience, and because they brought with them a solid political base in establishment Vancouver (C. Harris 1987,63; Barman 1991,324).

Social Credit returned to power in December 1975 but, apart from raising taxes to help balance the books again, left many of the NDP’s social reforms in place during their first term (1975-79). High rates of economic growth from 1976 to the early 1980s meant the government could sustain both pro-business policies and high expenditures on education, health and social welfare (Nichols & Kreiger 1986,10; Resnick 1987,10). Virtually the only academic in an anti-intellectual party caucus, McGeer was appointed Minister of Education. Bennett also set McGeer to reorganise BC Hydro and the Insurance Corporation, and allowed McGeer to pursue his fascination with telecommunications. McGeer says he was left ‘to get on with it’; he did so with gusto.8

EXPANSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

As the 1960s began, publicly-funded higher education in BC comprised the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, its affiliated Victoria College, on Vancouver Island, and a scattering of small, non-degree institutions. The oldest, UBC, opened in 1915 after 25 years of abortive efforts by a determined few to establish an intellectual focus for the province (Logan 1958). Victoria College began as a teacher training institution in 1920. Established in the US land grant university model, UBC offered professional programs from its early days, especially in agriculture and medicine. Even so, by the 1960s the province was still relying heavily for its professional class on already-trained migrants, and on training undertaken elsewhere in Canada and overseas (Macdonald 1962; Barman 1991,301). Pressures of demand elsewhere made this supply less reliable. Meanwhile, economic prosperity in BC, rising high
school completion rates, and increased demand by women for higher education added to demand for more higher education opportunities in BC. Social Credit was less enamoured of the human capital and equity arguments pervading other Canadian governments because of its overwhelming emphasis on free enterprise, in which success was reckoned in financial terms and achieved through the individual's own efforts. Without direct funding to the university, and federal willingness to finance technical training, BC's higher education system might have developed more slowly than it did.

The turning point came in 1962 with a Report chaired by in-coming UBC President, John Macdonald, recommending rapid and urgent expansion of places and types of institution in BC. The Report is significant for several reasons. It catalysed a transformation in the topography of BC's higher education, and laid the foundations for future criteria of institutional legitimacy in BC. Moreover, the Report markedly influenced the educational thinking and policies of several key figures in OLI's history - the Minister, Patrick McGeer, and Deputy Minister, Walter Hardwick, who created and helped nurture it, and OLI's second Principal, Ron Jeffels. Hardwick and Jeffels helped draft Macdonald's Report. McGeer presented it to parliament and later acknowledged his own policies as Minister were partly designed to complete Macdonald's vision. Hardwick helped orchestrate wide public support which the government could not afford to ignore.9

Macdonald's Report embodied society's fears of the USSR's newly-acquired technological superiority. He epitomised prevalent attitudes towards higher education as an investment in human capital. He believed Canada's lagging position in science and technology hindered social and economic prosperity. Macdonald saw part of the solution in a substantial increase in the capacity of graduate schools. This implied improvements in quality and quantity of faculty, facilities and research funding so that the cream of Canadian academics and students would no longer be lured overseas. His report was as much a blueprint for UBC's future as it was for
provincial higher education. In contrast with the expectations of his predecessors, Macdonald's UBC was to become a university of international stature (a Harvard of the Northwest), with comprehensive and highly regarded teaching programs, especially at graduate level, and research activities which would attract top quality in students and faculty.

At the same time, Macdonald recognised the magnitude of emerging demand for post-secondary education in BC, with which UBC alone could not be expected to cope. Nor should UBC be solely responsible for mass undergraduate education if it was to concentrate successfully on excellence in graduate and research work. Enrolments at UBC had doubled from 6,403 in 1955 to 12,950 in 1961, and at Victoria College had risen four-fold (from 397 to 1,739) in the same period. Both were expected to treble again by 1970 (Macdonald 1962:3,14). Macdonald's solution was to expand the number of institutions and tiers as well as places and subjects. He proposed two new universities and a network of two-year colleges similar to the American community college model. Although he was careful to marshall an 'equal but different' argument, it is clear Macdonald saw the colleges as a means of catering for people of apparently lesser intellectual ability. They would provide a 'cooling out function' (Clark 1961) for the many unable or unwilling to meet rigorous academic standards of the universities. They would cater for lower level, and skills-based orders of knowledge, leaving intellectual supremacy to the universities, especially UBC.

The government accepted all but Macdonald's financial recommendations. Victoria College became the University of Victoria (UVic) in 1963. Simon Fraser University (SFU) was established in Burnaby, at the edge of the rapidly growing lower Fraser Valley, and began teaching in 1965. The government somewhat reluctantly created the BC Institute of Technology (BCIT) in 1964 to capitalise on federal funds for technical and vocational training. By 1978 BCIT had been joined by four other special-purpose institutes with provincial mandates, some of them incorporating earlier, smaller organisations. Vancouver City College was established
in 1965; nine other community colleges were created by the Socred government before its defeat in 1972; the NDP added another four in 1974-75. Nine colleges were in non-metropolitan areas; all five institutes were based in Vancouver. Two very small, private denominational institutions also gained some government support. The Catholic Notre Dame University, created at Nelson in 1950, was permitted to grant degrees from 1961 but survived with difficulty. The government closed it in 1979 and replaced it with the David Thompson University Centre; it too struggled to survive and was finally closed in 1984. A Protestant group created Trinity Western College in the Fraser Valley in 1962; it gained degree status in 1979 and in 1985 gained university status (Barman 1991,302).

Although the government initially greeted the magnitude of Macdonald's enrolment and cost estimates with scepticism, reality far outstripped his expectations. Total university enrolments rose from 30,537 in 1967 to 43,307 in 1978. Total college numbers rose from 6,837 to 41,678 in the same period (McGee 1984,4). These represented a growth rate of 23% in full-time, and a remarkable 79% in part-time enrolments. Whereas in 1967, part-time enrolments comprised 41% of college and 14% of university students, in 1978 they had risen to 61% and 28% respectively. Since full-time students were overwhelmingly in the 18-24 age range, it was clear that adults were returning to study in significant numbers, especially as part-time college students. Expenditure on post-secondary education also increased massively in absolute terms, even though, under Social Credit, BC spent less on post-secondary education than any other province (Macdonald 1962,96; McGeer 1972,36). Macdonald estimated UBC's operating costs would quadruple from 1965-1971, to about $16 million (1962,97). The rate of expenditure quickened as the system expanded, and under the aegis of a more sympathetic NDP government. By 1974-75, total university operating grants were $117 million; they continued to grow in absolute terms after Social Credit regained power, reaching $200 million by 1978-79.
By the mid-1970s, then, BC's public higher education institutions comprised two sectors: the universities, and the colleges and institutes, divided by mandates, roles and prestige. Only the universities could award degrees and conduct research, or provide the more prestigious forms of professional preparation and graduate programs. The colleges were more devoted to their immediate constituencies and to a 'vocational ideal'. When Social Credit regained power in 1975, the universities and colleges were still a collection of institutions rather than a coherently organised system. However, a discernible hierarchy of universities existed, at the apex of which was UBC. There were also signs of horizontal legitimacies within each sector, based on shared norms of purpose and practice. Status in the emerging system was, however, far from static or uncontested.

THE UNIVERSITIES PRIOR TO 1978

In the 15 years to 1978, UBC's successive Presidents implemented Macdonald's vision of a large, pre-eminent university with a significant presence in the international academic arena.¹⁷ In Canada, UBC looked to compete with universities like Toronto and McGill. The University extended its hold on professional education, graduate programs and research in BC, especially in prestigious areas like medicine, science and technology. Like other modern universities, UBC was a collection of 'organised anarchies' (Baldrige et al 1978), made more so by devolution of power into the faculties in the late 1960s. As an institution, however, UBC became increasingly conservative and cautious about moving beyond traditional normative standards of teaching and research. The impression lingers that, so determined were UBC's policy makers that the University become a great academy, it took them to the 1980s to realise UBC had reached that goal. By then, the University's leaders no longer needed to fear threats from other BC institutions, especially ones like OLI. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the University maintained a conservative stance towards academic standards and teaching methods. Obstacles to part-time study were only reluctantly removed in 1972-73. Open admissions
policies were rejected on the grounds they would allow in 'low ability' students. Continuing education was treated as a peripheral activity. 18

Created in 1936, UBC's Department of Extension gained a reputation in the 1950s for its largely non-credit work in more remote areas of BC, the 'Living Room Learning' programs of the 1950s being a notable example (Layton 1984,5). The Department was a major casualty of budget cuts by President Macdonald in 1963-64 and struggled for the remainder of the decade against indifference and lack of interest in continuing education within the University. 19 As one part of Continuing Education, correspondence studies shared in the Department's marginalization, and credit enrolments dropped steadily, reaching a low of 486 in 1972-73 (Selman 1975,39). The number of correspondence credit courses offered fluctuated around 15, mainly in arts and the occasional commerce subject. 20 Many UBC faculty considered correspondence study a second-rate form of education. 21 Given contemporary technologies, teaching strategies, and miniscule resources, the low completion rates and faculty scepticism were not surprising.

Prior to the late 1960s, Extension and Correspondence Studies relied on UBC's President and Board of Governors for financial and moral support. As academic planning and resource powers devolved to faculties, the Department found it necessary to woo the Deans and Faculties as well. 22 In 1970, a restructured Centre for Continuing Education (CCE), and its Guided Independent Studies unit (GIS), retained administrative responsibility for part-time credit programs, including correspondence, but academic responsibility was firmly located in the Faculties. Fragmentation of correspondence courses into separate Faculties helped render distance education invisible. This may have encouraged 'normalisation' of distance education into some faculties' structures and programs, but also reduced distance education's potential to acquire a recognised, legitimate place within the University as a whole. Fragmentation also
seems to have weakened UBC's capacity to assert institutional leadership in the face of government plans in 1977-78 to meet non-metropolitan educational needs.

The University of Victoria (UVic), as a former affiliated college of UBC, chose to retain its well-established norms and structures when it became a university in 1963. In 1972 there were three faculties - arts and science, education, and fine arts. By 1976, under the impetus of President Howard Petch's determination to expand UVic's sphere of influence, five other professional schools had been added (UCBC 1986). The new schools' aggressive pursuit of resources and legitimacy occupied much of the 1970s. UVic catered particularly to Vancouver Island residents, an inevitably limited market. UVic did not seek to become a large university, but Petch and other UVic administrators believed its continued prosperity and status demanded a wider hinterland. The Interior, and the Kootenays in particular, became an important recruiting ground, especially for social work students.23

UVic created an Evening Program in 1948, and began teaching, face to face, at off-campus locations in 1960; first at Nanaimo, later at Trail and Prince George (Layton 1984). Most of these were education courses; indeed the Faculty of Education specialized in the training of rural teachers and in-service training for rural superintendents (Haughey 1985,94). The Division of Continuing Education expanded from 1974 under the influence of an energetic new Assistant Director, Glen Farrell. With several like-minded colleagues, Farrell persuaded the University to experiment with new telecommunications technologies, and to extend UVic's range and variety of off-campus teaching.

Unlike UVic, which sought legitimacy through conformity with established norms, Simon Fraser University (SFU) looked to establish its reputation through innovative organizational structures, a heavy emphasis on tutorial modes of teaching, and an interdisciplinary approach to parts of the curriculum (UCBC 1986). However, its early emphasis on professional programs
was limited largely to education. Efforts to overcome this limitation in the 1970s brought SFU into conflict with UBC, in particular. SFU also encouraged part-time enrolments. By 1973, 19% of SFU’s undergraduate enrolments were part-time (Layton 1984,9). Under the impetus of John Ellis (Professor of Education and variously Director of Graduate Programs and Dean of the Faculty of Education), SFU began teaching some of its professional education programs at off-campus sites.24

The newly-elected NDP government strongly advocated improved access to higher education. This stirred university activity, especially among the continuing educators meeting as the Tri-University Committee.25 Some of its members would play important roles in OLI’s history. All three OLI Principals were members at one time or another. Another influential member was John Blaney, who moved from UBC to SFU in 1974 as Dean of Continuing Studies. From 1971–74 the Committee pressed hard within the universities and in government circles for creation of a new provincial agency and provincial degree to enable part-time students to complete degrees, and to provide new educational opportunities for adults.26

In terms reiterated in later Commissions and reports, the Committee pointed to changing patterns of study, as more people were reluctant to commit a block of years to continuous study straight after school. The growth rate of undergraduate full-time enrolment was slowing, and new on campus programs offered by individual universities would only compete for a shrinking pool of students and reallocate existing populations. Meanwhile, the colleges, especially those in non-metropolitan areas, were graduating many two-year academic program students who wished to complete undergraduate degrees without the prohibitive cost or dislocation of full-time study. Educational technologies were now too expensive to duplicate at all facilities and would be more wisely shared. However, adult students seeking to complete degrees faced multiple obstacles. The concept of institutional ‘ownership’ of a student made inter-university movement almost impossible and inter-university transfer credit could only be negotiated on an
individual basis. Institutional policies on mature students, admissions, residential requirements, degree structures and timetables differed. Evening and off-campus offerings were unpredictable and students could not be assured of completing their chosen programs. Students in non-metropolitan areas had virtually no opportunity for completing the third and fourth years of a degree through any coherent program unless they were willing and able to move to the city.

The Committee noted ideas being bruited in educational circles of a fourth provincial university in the Interior, and/or for a separate university expressly for part-time students. It sought instead a provincial institute for continuing education which would offer an eclectic general degree on behalf of the three universities. The institute would be a credit bank or educational broker; its degree would be recognized by all, being, in effect, common to all. The institute would have no independent academic resources; its faculty and courses would be those of the universities, though new degree patterns would be developed to facilitate movement among institutions. Academic governance would be through a combined Senate elected from the Senates of the universities. Students would be qualified people not presently enrolled at any university, nor likely to be able to do so. A new academic agency was needed because the Committee could not envisage the universities agreeing to give up control over their own degrees or significantly change their policies and practices.

The Committee was right. The idea generated some short-lived enthusiasm but no action (Layton 1984,10). Ellis was sceptical of the universities' motivation to coordinate and integrate their activities, commenting "each of them can go a fair way yet before they step on each other's toes too painfully."27 The colleges were apparently alarmed at the prospect of a credit bank infringing on the range and flexibility of their own offerings and threatening their still fragile viability. Institutional status was too precious and precarious a commodity to risk by lowering institutional barriers and collaborating with each other. Nevertheless, the rhetoric of
the Committee's report and subsequent submissions was repeated, consciously or not, in the reports of the Winegard Commission (1976) and Carney's Distance Education Planning Group (1977), both crucial steps to creation of OLI. The Committee's lack of overt success may have discouraged its members but their influence on subsequent trends and events should not be underestimated. For one thing, the number of policy makers and active figures in the BC higher education scene was small and people were well known to each other. For another, they were able to exert more and wider influence as they changed jobs during the 1970s.

In a variation on the provincial agency concept, Ellis (1973) separately proposed creation of a "BC-style open university", adapted from the youthful British version. Ellis pointed to two central assumptions of the BOU: that many people could benefit from higher education but were unable to attend a campus, and that it was possible to offer a high quality education away from a campus. He noted progress had been made towards the former in BC, but insufficiently so. He recognised the latter implied "profound instructional, social and economic consequences" and understood the BOU's views had not yet been widely endorsed in Britain (1973,12). Moreover, Ellis argued, there must be a "goodness of fit" of an open university with its environment. What worked for the BOU would not necessarily work in BC. He added it would take external governmental pressure to force the changes which would be needed in and between the universities. These were prophetic words; Ellis deviated little from this concept when he came to create OLI. At this stage, there was a flurry of interest in educational and government circles, but as Ellis later said, the idea was premature.28

The NDP entered the 1974-75 fiscal year in a strong revenue position and increased education expenditures from $610 million to $754 million.29 The Premier offered special funding if the universities would develop "bold, thoughtful and imaginative programs" taking research and teaching "to where people are."30 Behind the political rhetoric was a move by the university deans of education and the Minister to increase funding to teacher education without disturbing
normal funding arrangements and internal university political balances. Most of the grants, therefore, were used to expand pre-service and graduate teacher education. The three universities mainly chose traditional, classroom-based projects located either at central campuses, or at larger non-metropolitan centres. In the latter case they either based faculty there, or used 'parachuting professors'. Each university received just over $1 million in 1974-75 for Innovative Programs, the forerunner of the Socred Non-Metropolitan Programs vote. It was a very small proportion of the $117 million allocated that year to the universities.

The University of Victoria devoted most of its $1 million grant to on-campus activities, though $288,000 was allocated to an extended campus Elementary Internship program in the Faculty of Education (Layton 1984,10). Haughey argues UVic held back from experimenting with new approaches such as distance education because of the deeply-ingrained conservatism of the older faculties of arts and science, and of then-President Hugh Farquhar (Haughey 1985,92-95). With a new President (Howard Petch) and Director of Continuing Education (Glen Farrell) in 1974-75, UVic became more willing to innovate. SFU allocated a third of its $1 million to extension programs, expanding its education credit courses taught face-to-face at Interior venues, and its Native Teacher Education program at Mount Currie. In 1975 SFU began a degree completion program in psychology and biological sciences at Kelowna in cooperation with Okanagan College. Some faculty were based locally; others visited from the SFU campus; conventional classroom teaching methods prevailed. However, the grant was also used to develop ten correspondence credit courses, enrolling a total of 52 between 1974-76 (Layton 1984,9). SFU gained valuable experience of distance teaching, but cost efficiency was impossible.

Most of UBC's $1.2 million grant also went to Faculty of Education programs taught, mainly face-to-face, throughout BC. In addition, the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) received $150,000 to expand its correspondence credit courses. CCE set out to improve the instructional
and presentation quality of learning materials, and experiment with telephone teaching and videotaped programs.\textsuperscript{34} Thanks to a combination of government grants, amendment of policies to facilitate part-time study, and utilization of some of the new technologies, UBC's correspondence enrolments began to climb from their 1972-73 nadir of 486, reaching 1000 by 1976-77.\textsuperscript{35} Completion rates, however, remained disturbingly low, a factor to which some university administrators would later point to support their arguments against distance education. The rate was approximately 58.4\% in 1976-77, though 18-20\% of enrolments at any one time were not actually 'attending', so that registration and completion rates were probably lower still. This compared with completion rates at the BOU of 65\% and the University of Waterloo of 75\%.\textsuperscript{36} Nevertheless, by the time the Socreds returned to provincial power in December 1975, UBC's distance education program was more firmly established than at almost any previous time.

\textbf{THE COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES PRIOR TO 1978}

Macdonald (1962) envisaged a community college system for BC similar to the American model.\textsuperscript{37} The college would cater for the vocational and technical education needed by a society adjusting to technological changes in the workplace. The college would also offer first and second year undergraduate academic programs from which a student could transfer, with credit, to the universities. Jeffels believed the college system might have been still-born without transfer arrangements (1972a,10). They were acceptable to the universities for two reasons. First, the universities determined standards and curriculum through their influence on a network of subject articulation committees. Secondly, the universities could point to college transfer as a loosening of university entry restrictions without diminishing university standards.

BC's colleges were designed to respond to their local communities, to cater especially for part-time adult students, and to be a "democratizing force in post-secondary education" through
open admissions policies, low tuition fees, and flexible teaching timetables (Dennison 1979, 34). They were expected to be within commuting distance of the majority of students (Beinder 1986, 7). Frank Beinder, of the BC Association of Colleges, recalls the enthusiasm and naivety of the early years: "We were developing student-oriented institutions dedicated to expanding the life chances of people through open access and responsiveness to community need" (1986, 23). Policies of open access, local relevance, and comprehensiveness of curriculum have permeated college debates and planning ever since.

The colleges were initially established under the Public Schools Act, responsible to school boards; several were housed in school premises in their early stages. In the late 1960s conflicts arose over college identities. College councils argued the lack of individual identity was seriously hampering recruitment and retention of good faculty, the stature of the colleges, and their continued recognition by the universities (Beinder 1986, 33). Although the link to the school system may have encouraged sensitivity to local issues, the school boards were ill-equipped with finance or experience to deal with the complexities of comprehensive and increasingly sophisticated post-secondary institutions, particularly since the system's priorities were unclear (Jeffels 1972a; Beinder 1986).

Through the 1970s several moves were made to clarify the nature and role of the colleges and to weld them into a provincial system. One of the first was a 1973 Task Force on the Community College, established by the NDP Minister of Education, Eileen Dailly, to examine colleges' mission, finance and governance, and extension of their activities. The Task Force clarified the comprehensive tasks of a college as career, vocational and technical programs, university transfer programs, adult basic education, adult education, and educational advisory and community services (L'Estrange 1974, 34). A high priority was given to meeting the educational needs of people geographically, socio-economically or physically disadvantaged. Comprehensiveness was a cardinal virtue, but each institution interpreted its priorities
differently, so college and institute identities and boundaries remained somewhat unclear throughout the decade.

In 1975, Dailly created four new colleges in more remote, less populated parts of the province—northern Vancouver Island, the east Kootenays, and the northeastern and northwestern regions. These colleges were barely functioning when McGeer, a sometimes trenchant critic of college performance and purpose, was appointed Minister of Education in the new Socred government. Beinder defends the decision to create more colleges as a "clear demonstration of the public mood in those exciting times" rather than an excessive stretching of the argument for access (1986,119). It may have been a politically astute attempt to woo rural voters away from the Socreds, and to ameliorate metropolitan/rural tensions, but conventional college teaching methods were an expensive way of expanding educational opportunity. It was, moreover, difficult to see how such small institutions could ever provide comprehensive programs of consistently high quality, using traditional teaching methods.

One of the new colleges chose an alternative route. In doing so, North Island College (NIC) laid claim to being BC's first distance education institution (although its Principal, Dennis Wing, preferred the term 'open learning'). NIC's clientele base was approximately 100,000 people in small, isolated fishing, logging and mining settlements over 48,000 rugged square kilometres of northern Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland. Rather than impose difficult travel on students, NIC completely decentralized its largely part-time educational delivery, using community learning centres in small population centres. NIC combined face-to-face teaching, individualized learning materials (mainly purchased from outside the province), television and computers, and mobile learning units. By 1978 the College enrolled 1,429 students, 70% of them in first year academic transfer courses, mainly through an arrangement with Athabasca University (McGee 1984, table 21A). It was a respectable number for the region's population, but left the College financially precarious and educationally vulnerable. A
self-pacing system meant that enrolment statistics included unknown numbers of inactive students. One unique feature was NIC's tutor-facilitators (mostly part-time), who were selected for their breadth of teaching skills and knowledge rather than in-depth subject expertise. The tutors' role was firstly to facilitate learning by promotion and encouragement, and by encouraging independent learning skills; secondly to teach in their own area of expertise; and thirdly to give disciplinary backup to other tutors. It was an unorthodox and interesting solution to the problem of inaccessibility, but raised doubts in some educational quarters about the quality of, and approach to teaching.

COORDINATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Relationships between the BC universities and provincial government were distant prior to the NDP's election in 1972 (Trotter & Carrothers 1974,40). It was a measure of Socred disinterest that no government approval was required for new university programs, and the universities received one-line grants. The Universities Act (1963) included an Advisory Board, representative of the universities and Ministry of Education, to recommend to the Minister on university funding. In practice this came to mean that the three universities reached agreement among themselves on division of government funds. The Act also established an Academic Board dominated by university representatives which advised the Minister on academic standards and development of universities and colleges. This body came mainly to be concerned with overseeing standards of academic transfer programs from college to university through a network of articulation committees.

The NDP sought to reconcile public accountability with university autonomy by creating an intermediary body, the Universities Council (UCBC), in 1974. Its members included university representatives and lay members appointed by the Minister. UCBC was "to ensure a greater sensitivity to social needs in the development of university education" and required the
universities to consult with each other to minimize duplication of facilities and programs (Trotter & Carrothers 1974, 41). The Council's first years were spent in developing mechanisms for receiving budget submissions, allocating resources and approving program proposals, and developing policies on access, extension and continuing studies, and innovative teaching methods. These had not long been in place when OLI was established.

Although mostly concerned with school graduates and full-time students, an early Council committee report on access also pointed to problems of particular relevance to adults, directly connecting stagnation of economic growth and personal prosperity with those areas of BC most beset with access problems. The committee reported very significant differentiations between participation rates of children of well and poorly educated parents, and between children of people in professional and manual or semi-skilled occupations. Even more marked was the finding that 72% of geographic variations in BC participation rates were due solely to regional factors such as high school program and academic standards of the school attended. Only 28% of the geographic variations resulted from different socio-economic structures. This meant, for example, a school-graduate from Terrace had about one-third the chance of going on to academic post-secondary education than a student from North Vancouver. The committee concluded there was in BC "a clear denial of equal educational opportunity, a lack of access which is correlated with the socio-economic status of the potential student" (1977, 7). In later life, those school graduates would face no fewer (and possibly more) barriers to educational opportunity, even if they moved to the city.

Relationships between the state and BC's colleges were always much closer and more direct than between the state and the universities. The 1973 Task Force on the Community College recommended colleges be given corporate status and independence from school boards. To overcome the somewhat piecemeal development which had occurred in the preceding decade, the Task Force also proposed creation of a Provincial Advisory Committee, reporting directly to
the Minister on system needs and planning.\textsuperscript{48} There was little support in colleges themselves for the idea of a mediating or coordinating agency. Indeed, Beinder recalls "massive resistance" to the prospect of such centralisation (1986,25). Fisher comments, however, that government involvement in institutional affairs was generally accepted as a 'fact of life' in most colleges.\textsuperscript{49} The NDP lost power before the policy was fully implemented. McGeer and his Deputy, Walter Hardwick, acted quickly to create a Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977), removing colleges from school board control and establishing a strongly centralized labyrinth of coordinating councils and Ministry bodies.

The Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977) provided for three coordinating bodies: the Academic, Occupational Training, and Management Advisory Councils. Fisher believes this structure was largely designed in response to pressures within the Board Commission on Vocational Training (1977) for a tripartite management of all vocational, technical and trades training by government, industry and the unions. Such an arrangement was unpalatable to the government, but Hardwick and his advisers apparently concluded there was no easy way for the government to reject the idea completely, given the strength of both industry and unions in BC. Strengthening the existing embryonic academic coordinating body (the Academic Board) would balance authority over resource allocation but not allow industry or unions too much power.

Neither council, however, dealt with the approximately 40% of college budgets covering facilities, libraries and administration, so the Management Advisory Council was created. Fisher claims the 'Big MAC' (as it was quickly dubbed) was originally intended to comprise chief executive officers of the colleges, as Hardwick and his university colleagues assumed the Principal was the spokesperson for the institution.\textsuperscript{50} However, the college boards and their chairs had not yet shaken off their school district heritage, wherein the board chair spoke for the institution. In the face of such resistance, the MAC's membership was changed to the chairs of college boards. To complicate matters still further, Hardwick also formed a Ministry
Standing Committee on Continuing Education to protect this area from the other bodies which he viewed as being uninterested in continuing education, and to enable him to exert some direct control over this area.\textsuperscript{51} The Councils never had total responsibility for resource allocation. The Ministry retained discretionary powers over some specified funds, including new developments, and kept the Councils starved of support staff so the management of much Council business was actually conducted within the Ministry.\textsuperscript{52}

Fisher sees the legislation as a series of compromises and mistakes rather than as a deliberate Ministerial attempt to divide and rule. Gallagher agrees, seeing the Act as a pragmatic result of Hardwick's and McGeer's desire to experiment with coordination. Fraser believes the Act was "capricious and inappropriate,... dismembering an integrated college system and setting up rules which ran counter to any kind of integrational activity at the local college level." Taylless recalls the difficulties of dividing fields of knowledge into 'academic' and 'vocational' categories for Council approval, and argues Council members were inappropriately qualified to make informed decisions.\textsuperscript{53} It seems no one, in colleges or Ministry, liked the complexity, labyrinthine bureaucracy, and disharmony involved in the coordinating mechanisms. Many were relieved when the Councils were disbanded in 1983.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Expansion of higher education in BC began in the 1960s under a Socred government not noted for its interest in educational matters. The universities were left to establish their identities and acquire prestige with relatively little state interference until the mid-1970s. The colleges, on the other hand, were initially treated as 'overgrown' schools, and were never free of the prospect of direct government intervention. The 15 years prior to OLI's creation in 1978 was spent, not only in expansion of institutions in all directions, but in efforts to define the nature
and role of the various institutions in BC. Institutional legitimacy depended on the clarity and acceptance of these definitions.

UBC's overall position at the apex of BC's institutional hierarchy went unchallenged on traditional criteria of legitimacy such as its age, quality of faculty, students, programs, research and facilities, and its cosmopolitanness. However, the university's tendency to institutional conservatism in matters of access and pedagogical standards inhibited its capacity to find new ways to meet educational needs of new constituencies, especially adults. UVic clung to conventional teaching methods till after Farrell's arrival in 1974. SFU, on the other hand, was created in a spirit of experimentation, and its legitimacy depended in part on success with less conventional pedagogies and curriculum.

Dennison (1979,36-37) found the colleges attracted a much broader population, in socio-economic terms, than did the universities, but they had still not established a clear identity or public image. Some wanted major emphasis on university transfer programs, others to concentrate on technological and semi-professional courses. North Island College argued its dual-mode, 'open learning' model fitted the demographic and other constraints of smaller non-metropolitan colleges better than traditional face-to-face methods. The colleges' 'comprehensive' mandate was ill-defined. It was also difficult to implement, given inevitably small enrolments in rural areas, and the impossibility of cost efficiency. Nevertheless, by 1978 the colleges were serving an important dual function of increasing access and improving workforce skills. The state could demonstrate its commitment to equity and investment in human capital in an economy where technological mastery might help ameliorate the 'roller-coaster' effects of reliance on external markets.

In 1978, almost all the institutions were very young, their policy makers still feeling their way in an embryonic and uncertain system. The coordinating Councils and Ministry bodies were
equally youthful. Long range planning and formula funding were policies and techniques of
the future, but the embryo of centralized control was already visible in the government's fiscal
power and the mechanisms of the Colleges Act. Less visible controls also existed in the
intricate web of personal relationships among a fairly small group of senior administrators and
officials who met regularly in professional, academic and social forums.
1. Barman (1991) eloquently describes BC's natural features which have overwhelmed and
entranced visitors while engendering passionate loyalty from new and old residents.

25-44 age group rose from 25% of the total population in 1971 to 28% in 1978 and 32% in
1986. The 15-24 age group declined from 17.6% in 1971 and 18.5% in 1978 to 15%
in 1986.

3. Census of Canada, 1971, 92-702, Table 2. In 1941, Prince George had 2,000 residents,
Kamloops 6,000 and Kelowna 5,000 (Barman 1991,375).

4. The Social Credit movement first began in Alberta; by the 1950s, the BC version was
peculiar to that province.

5. Social Credit under W.A.C. Bennett, 1952-72; NDP under Dave Barrett, 1972-75; Social
Credit under Bill Bennett (son of W.A.C.), 1975-86; and Bill Vander Zalm, 1986-91.


7. Blake et al (1981) report that the public service grew by 88% from 1965-75; the number
of educational employees increased by 62%, in contrast to 35% nationally; institutional
employment, especially in health care, rose by 107% in BC.


9. Author's interviews with Ronald Jeffels, Walter Hardwick, McGeer. Macdonald's
relations with Bennett were apparently cordial. Hardwick recalls Bennett told
Macdonald he was prepared to receive the report favourably, but then tried to minimize
its impact by scheduling its tabling in the legislature to coincide with a major opposition
speech. To help offset this, Hardwick and others orchestrated leaks to the press prior to
the Report's release. The President closed UBC for a day, and they sent busloads of
students all over BC to collect signatures for a 'Back Mac' petition. It was signed by
250,000 people and presented to the legislature by McGeer.

10. Trebling the two institutions' enrolments would have given a total of 44,067. Actual
combined university and full-time college non-vocational enrolments for 1970-71 were
53,378 (StatsCan 1979,48; 1984,21; McGee 1984,4).

11. Macdonald quoted Schelling: "True education makes for inequality, the inequality of
leadership, the inequality of success; the glorious inequality of talent, of genius" (1962,
23).

12. The Technical and Vocational Schools Act of 1961 provided some $800 million of
federal money on a 3:1 basis with provincial funds for capital and operating costs of
new vocational technical institutions. The BC Socred government was so indifferent to
education that it nearly missed out altogether on these federal funds which were so tied
that the Socreds could not use them for other purposes (see McGeer 1972,28ff).

13. The predecessor to the Emily Carr College of Art and Design began in 1925. The
others were the Pacific Vocational Institute (amalgamated with BCIT in 1985); the
Pacific Marine Training Institute (created in 1975); and the Justice Institute, formed in
1978 and taken over by the Attorney-General's Department in 1986.

Extrapolated from McGee (1984, tables 1 & 2).


For example, see President Walter Gage's Long Range Objectives C'tee, Mins of UBC Senate, 8 Oct 1969 [UBC Archives: Box 5-1]; President Douglas Kenny's 1977 view (flying in the face of evident unmet demand) that the needs and opportunities of young people and of the growing workforce were being reasonably provided for ("The problems and challenges in a time of steady-state enrolment", *UBC Reports*, 23(13), 26 Oct. 1977); President David Strangway's positive response to government proposals in 1989 to allow some colleges to offer full degree programs, thereby allowing UBC to concentrate even more on graduate work and research ("University system to grow by 15,000", *Vancouver Sun*, 20 March 1989).

UBC Senate Mins., 22 March 1972, Box 5-3, 5595; 23 May 1973, Box 5-5, 5867-70, 5874; 12 Sept. 1973, Box 6-1, 5913; 24 April 1974, Box 6-2, 6156-58 [UBC Archives]; Selman (1975; 1976).

Part of Macdonald's bid to strengthen UBC's research, graduate and professional programs, despite being granted only 80% of his 1963-64 budget bid by government. See Selman (1975; 1976,36).


Jindra Kulich (CCE, UBC), interview with author.

Gordon Selman, interview with author.

Haughey (1985); Glen Farrell, interview with author.

Layton (1984); author's interviews with John Ellis & Daniel Birch.

Comprising two representatives of each university, this committee went by various titles from 1964 till its disbandment in 1981, including the Joint Universities Ad Hoc Committee on Continuing Education, the Inter-University Committee on Continuing Education, the Tri-University Committee on Extension, and the Tri-University Committee. It was best known under the last title.


Ellis to D. K. Strand, 13 Dec. 1971 [SFUA: 24/0, 1/3].
28 Ellis, interview.

29 Health, human resources and welfare were increased by similar proportions; the NDP raised the minimum wage level to $2.25 per hour in Dec. 1973, the highest in Canada, and planned to raise it again to $2.50 in 1974.


31 Birch, interview.


33 Birch (interview) also comments Farquhar, a former dean of education, was reluctant to upset existing status hierarchies within UVic by favouring education unduly.

34 Jindra Kulich, interview; GIS Hist. File, 10; *CCE Annual Report 1976/77*, 10 [CCE Archives].

35 *CCE Annual Reports* 1973-74 to 1976-77 [CCE Archives].

36 A. Campbell to R. A. Shearer, 10 November 1977, GIS Hist. file.

37 Also Hardwick, interview; Giles (1983). Brothers, then Minister of Education, was impressed by the Californian college system; Macdonald and Hardwick were familiar with mid-west and eastern examples also.

38 Beinder was closely associated with the college system from the outset, as a leading member of school boards & trustees associations, chair of the Selkirk College Council, and especially as President and then Executive Director of the BC Association of Colleges till his retirement in 1984.

39 The colleges came under the Public Schools Act because, Macdonald argued (1962,87; also Beinder 1986,1-21), the Boards of School Trustees were the most knowledgeable and expert bodies in BC in financing and developing educational facilities.

40 Chaired by Hazel L'Estrange. See also Beinder's account of his membership of the Task Force (1986,112-120).


42 The mobile units, the invention of NIC staff member Don Salter, were custom-built motor-homes equipped with sleeping accommodation for the tutor-operator and fitted with a variety of audiovisual equipment, a computer terminal, and learning materials (Forsythe 1979). They travelled weekly to small remote communities, enabling students to combine study at home with personalised tuition and meetings with other students.

43 Interview record, D. Wing, K. Forsythe, J Bottomley, P. Carney, 21 July 1977 [Franklin CF1]; Forsythe 1979; Beinder (1986).

44 Interview record 21 July 1977 [Franklin CF1], comments that NIC was "quite defensive about its systems since they have been heavily attacked in the past. We saw one evaluation of the Athabasca programs which discredited them as a teaching device." The author visited NIC's centres and mobile units in 1981. Their effectiveness in
providing academic advisory and learning services was undoubted; their ability to teach complex subject disciplines and skills through the medium of a generalist tutor was less obvious.

This was in fact quite a change from the early days of UBC; prior to World War 2, UBC's budget came under close, often personal scrutiny by the Minister of the day, and attempts were made on several occasions to interfere in the academic policies and programs of the University - see Logan (1958); Horn (1988).

UCBC, Annual Reports, 1974-77.

UCBC, Report of the Ad Hoc C'tee on Accessibility, (Vancouver, Jan. 1977); see Appendix 2 in particular: John Bottomley, "Working paper on the post-secondary education accessibility situation in BC."


Grant Fisher, interview with author. At the time, Fisher was Principal of Camosun College; in 1979 he became Executive Director of the Program Services Division in the Ministry, and went on to become Assistant Deputy Minister.

Chief executive officers of the BC colleges and institutes were titled "Principal" during the time this study covers; nowadays they are titled "President."

Fisher, interview.

Paul Gallagher, interview with author; he was Principal of Capilano College in the 1970s and later became Principal of Vancouver Community College.

Author's interviews with Fisher, Gallagher, Bruce Fraser & John Tayless.

The Open Learning Institute of BC (OLI) was formally established on 1 June 1978 with the power to award its own undergraduate degrees in arts and sciences, and offer non-degree credentials in career, vocational, technical and adult basic education subjects. OLI was charged to do so by distance education means, and to work with other institutions. The Institute straddled the binary divide and fitted comfortably into neither university nor college arena. Its creation was greeted with suspicion, hostility and surprise in many quarters of higher education. OLI appeared to thwart vested interests and threaten some institutions' viability. There was much scepticism about the standards and quality possible for an institution eschewing the only 'real' way to teach - that is, face-to-face. There was also a widespread ignorance of the nature and practice of distance education. Some of the opposition OLI's leaders faced in 1978 softened over the years, but much of it persisted. Perceptions of distance education and OLI, and threats to the Institute's legitimacy may be traced to OLI's genesis. This chapter therefore examines government and institutional policies and actions from the electoral victory of the Social Credit Party on 11 December 1975 to OLI's formal inauguration on 1 June 1978.

SOCIAL CREDIT, McGEER AND HARDWICK

At the 1975 election, although the NDP returned only 18 seats to the Socreds' 35, the NDP still retained the 39% of the popular vote which had won it power in 1972 (Barman 1991,361). The NDP had made important long-term inroads into almost all non-metropolitan electorates, becoming as much a party of the interior and northern parts of BC as of Vancouver (Blake et al 1981,21). Social Credit had encouraged large-scale, resource-based firms throughout the province; their workforces were typically strongly unionized. This no doubt gave the Socreds strong incentive to hold on to their traditional rural electoral powerbases by improving services to non-metropolitan areas. At the same time, thanks partly to the Liberal defectors, the
Socreds enjoyed new support among the professional and corporate middle class in Vancouver. Social Credit remained populist, conservative and anti-intellectual, but apparently inclined to retain much that the NDP had instituted. They responded to an economic slowdown and rising unemployment in 1975-76 by raising taxes, and cutting public expenditure. Education and health still accounted for over 50% of the total budget in 1978, but McGeer's plans were shaped in a political environment indifferent to higher education needs.

A Vancouver boy, Dr Patrick McGeer grew up in a political family, his uncle, Gerry McGeer, being a controversial right wing mayor of Vancouver in the 1930s. He joined UBC in 1954, and combined an increasingly illustrious research career as a neurologist with an active political life. McGeer was first elected as a Liberal MLA in 1962 and served a short term in the early 1970s as provincial party leader. His seniority, experience and reputation ensured his switch to the Socreds brought appointment to a senior Cabinet post following the 1975 election. In Politics in Paradise (1972), McGeer set out a liberal democratic vision of government in BC which would balance concern with resource development with attention to sunrise industries and high technology, expand and improve accessibility to education, and provide better urban planning, environmental protection, tighter financial control, and more responsible bureaucratic management.

McGeer saw the Macdonald report as the "outstanding single document on higher education produced in British Columbia", its main defect being its silence on technical and vocational training. He shared Macdonald's view that excellence in BC's higher education required diversification of opportunity, both in the kinds of educational experience offered and in the places where it could be obtained (Macdonald 1962,19). McGeer analysed BC's higher education in 1972 as badly under-funded, and geographically and socially closed, criticising Social Credit's indifference to higher education's potential to enhance economic growth and technological mastery. He argued education could be the strongest ally in dealing with
"unpleasant" aspects of society - "unemployment, dreary jobs, pollution, social unrest," and proposed five ways of opening up the higher education system (1972,39-41). The first was to provide an adequate number of places, distributed round the province. The second was to increase points of entry into the system, through ladders or tiers of access. Thirdly, he sought to reduce the exclusivity created by arbitrary educational hurdles, by easing admission requirements, making education more appropriate to adults' needs, and expanding part-time programs. McGeer's fourth measure was educational television which he saw as "the greatest untapped educational resource of all", and which must occupy an important share of educational planning in the near future. Finally, he wished to improve labour force skills, in the belief that education could be the salvation of the unskilled, the uneducated, and the unemployed.

McGeer's 1972 vision contained the seeds of his later policies as Minister of Education. He observed, in hindsight, that the major gap in BC's higher education system in 1975 was "our inability to deliver advanced education to people who were outside the mainstream," geographically or because of age or financial circumstances. His first introduction to distance education seems to have been early in 1976 when, at Hardwick's instigation, he visited the BOU. McGeer and the BOU's Vice Chancellor, Walter Perry (an eminent physiologist) got on well together, and McGeer was very impressed with the quality of the BOU's science courses and its distance education model. His first impressions never faded, and strongly influenced the version he sought for BC.

However, whereas the BOU was created by a left-wing government eager to open up higher education to the working classes (Tunstall 1974; Perry 1977), McGeer is widely viewed in BC as an 'elitist' with a passionate interest in science, technology and telecommunications. 'Elitist' here means a view that the university is the true place for high quality research and the most intellectually able students. Some educators suggest McGeer saw distance education as a form of 'cooling out', meaning in this case, providing a university education to larger numbers,
especially to a non-traditional clientele, without intruding on the university’s elite preserves.

To quote Gallagher:

His concern was more quality than access in my view. He saw the potential of satellites as a way of providing...less expensive education to a broader range of people so that other institutions like his own (UBC) could then focus their energies on the really important work and the more traditional role of the university.6

Others suggest McGeer was impatient with university conservatism and unwillingness to respond quickly to new economic and technological circumstances. For example, Birch comments:

McGeer was very interested in innovative high tech. approaches to education. He was convinced that things like the hook-up of universities, teaching hospitals, industrial settings, whether through cable or other mechanisms, would be a way of delivering education in the future. That we had to move in the direction of finding ways of delivering high quality education to the entire province.7

At the same time, McGeer’s belief that economic and social progress demanded a more scientifically proficient society drove his desire to expand science education.8 One solution would have been to strengthen college roles and activities to this end, since the colleges were more widely scattered than the universities and had strong local affiliations. However, McGeer was apparently somewhat contemptuous of the educational quality of most colleges and disliked the strong faculty unions, so was disinclined to believe the colleges would take a lead in the educational and technological developments he envisaged.9 This attitude may account, in part, for McGeer’s determination to centralize coordination and planning of the colleges and institutes. His desire for centralized control was equally evident in his approach to core curriculum in the school system.10

One of McGeer’s first moves as Minister of Education was to appoint Dr Walter Hardwick as his Deputy Minister.11 Hardwick, too, was born in Vancouver and first met McGeer when they were schoolboys in the early 1940s.12 At that time, Vancouver’s population was only
275,000 (Barman 1991,374), and middle class social networks were small. Hardwick joined UBC in 1959 as an urban geographer. While doing graduate work in Wisconsin and Minnesota he was impressed by the burgeoning comprehensive regional college model and the University of Wisconsin's use of radio and television for teaching adults at a distance.13 Hardwick arrived home to a Vancouver changing beyond all recognition, and became increasingly concerned about the social and environmental damage being done to Vancouver and BC by over-concentration of population and resources in the Lower Mainland. As early as 1958, Hardwick was arguing for decentralized post-secondary education in BC to help counteract demographic pressures, encourage qualified professionals to move to the country, and generate economic and social prosperity in BC's hinterland. As he says:

I was early on struck about the very centrality of post-secondary education in this province. Although we had a tradition going back into the 1920s of correspondence education for children, there was no equivalent at all for adults. There wasn't even equity of opportunity for institutionally-based post-secondary learning....Everybody had to come to the Lower Mainland. This basically meant that you drained the interior communities of young people and the prospects of them going back to play a significant role there seemed to me to be quite problematic.14

Decentralization and the quality of life in Vancouver have remained abiding passions for Hardwick ever since. In the 1960s and 1970s he took an active part in Vancouver municipal politics, and advised provincial governments on economic growth and educational needs in various BC regions.15

Farrell describes Hardwick's philosophy as a commitment "to the idea that the degree to which a jurisdiction invests in human resource development determines how well they do in economic development terms."16 He became increasingly interested in adult education during the 1970s, believing adults had received all too little priority in education, to the social and economic detriment of BC society. Hardwick was appointed UBC's Director of Continuing Education in July 1975. He came to his new job of Deputy Minister in January 1976 having already visited the BOU, whose model of distance education impressed him as having potential for BC,
especially through use of television. Hardwick has been described as a pragmatist and populist, less elitist perhaps than McGeer. A Liberal, Hardwick never became a Socred.

Both forceful people whose views, once fixed, were hard to change, the two men forged a formidable partnership once in power. Both were imaginative, fascinated by technology, and impatient with institutional immobility. They brought to politics and educational administration an irreverence and distaste for administrative niceties and conventions. Some felt they ignored their Ministry staff when it suited them, and sometimes communicated poorly their intentions; others enjoyed the ambiguity and 'breath of fresh air'. Perhaps as a result of their research backgrounds, they were inclined to experiment with new institutional forms rather than try endlessly to change existing institutions. Fisher suggests Hardwick's philosophy was "let everyone compete and the cream will rise to the top." This attitude was nowhere more visible than in the alternatives canvassed for provision of distance education in BC.

EDUCATIONAL COMMISSIONS 1976–1977

Determined to stamp his own mark on BC's higher education system and complete Macdonald's vision, McGeer moved quickly to commission a series of reports on post-secondary and adult education. The (Winegard) Commission on University Programs in Non-Metropolitan Areas was appointed in May 1976 and reported that September. It overlapped in time and shared some public hearings with reviews of continuing and community education chaired by Ronald Faris (1976), and of vocational, technical and trades training chaired by Dean Goard (1977). From the tone adopted and issues addressed in these reports, it is clear McGeer and Hardwick briefed their authors to take account of technological needs of the BC economy, the educational potential of new telecommunications technologies and modern distance education techniques, and non-metropolitan pressures for educational access. Certainly, all identified a sense of deprivation among non-metropolitan residents, and an unmet demand for educational
opportunities which did not require people to leave home. For the first time, 'distance education', with its new emphasis on telecommunications media, was seriously proposed as a government and institutional option, and justified within prevailing rhetoric about economic prosperity and lifelong learning. The reports indicate public interest was intense, especially outside the Lower Mainland, and the Minister and his Deputy had read the mood correctly.21

Despite demands for decentralized training from every non-metropolitan centre he visited, Goard concentrated on central coordination of the fragmented, complex collection of programs and interests, thereby conforming to McGeer's centralist policies and industrial and union pressure (see Chapter 3 on coordinating councils).22 He merely recommended equality of opportunity in vocational training be ensured throughout BC without indicating how it might be achieved (Goard 1977,50).23 Faris (1976) based his recommendations on the belief that satisfactory opportunities for lifelong learning were basic to development of education in BC. This belief in the importance of lifelong learning was also strongly voiced in OECD's 1976 review of Canadian education. Faris identified as high priorities the development of programs in adult basic education, English as a second language, public affairs, labour education, and programs designed for women, the disadvantaged, handicapped, elderly and migrants. He also recommended creation of a provincial 'open college' employing audiovisual and other distance education methods as well as face-to-face tuition to help reduce geographic, social and economic inequities in access. The concept was similar to the earlier proposals of the Tri-University Committee but devoted now to sub-degree vocational programs and lower level undergraduate academic transfer courses (see Chapter 3).

The Goard and Faris reports made their mark on government policy and OLI's mandate, but it was Winegard's report (1976) on which most publicity and debate centred. Winegard covered familiar ground: the impossibility for non-metropolitan citizens of completing a first degree without re-location to the city, inadequate inter-university transfer arrangements, the lack of
technical and professional educational opportunities in the hinterland, and difficulties of
terrain, climate and extremes in population density. He agreed with UBC that the remedy must
combine significantly increased opportunities for degree completion with maintenance of
traditional university standards of academic excellence; the remedy must also be economical.

Winegard's solution was creation by 1990 of a multi-campus university, beginning as a
separately funded Division of SFU, with four small non-metropolitan centres. Ten to twelve
faculty would be located in each centre to teach four or five majors in conventional fashion;
they and others at the main campus ('parachuting professors') would also offer courses at a
distance, using techniques and communications media similar to those of the BOU (see Chapter
2), for those unable to attend the centres. The Division would offer upper level degree-
completion programs in arts, science, commerce and education. These would come mainly from
SFU's programs, but SFU should cooperate with UBC to offer professional programs in
forestry, and with UBC and UVic to offer nursing. Winegard also recommended creation of a
separately funded unit of the community colleges to provide a core of first and second year
academic courses - possibly his version of the Faris recommendations for an open college. In
this way a full degree program would be available.

Winegard's recommendations ran counter to UBC's proposal for a series of university centres
located in community colleges but staffed and run by UBC. They would clone UBC's
traditional pattern of face-to-face education on the grounds this was the only way to ensure
maintenance of established degree standards.24 UBC did not allow for those who could not
attend such centres. Yet UBC had the best-established university-level distance education
program, which could have been expanded given the resources. UVic, at that time, was more
interested in safeguarding its student markets in the Interior, especially around Nelson
(Winegard 1976,10; Haughey 1985,93ff). Winegard's choice of SFU may have been influenced
by his favourable reaction to Blaney and SFU's advice to the Commission.25 SFU used the
examples of its highly regarded teacher training programs, small off campus teaching program
at Kelowna, and directed independent study courses to support its interest in expanding further
in the Interior. The University's limited number of professional programs was a drawback, but
its reputation for innovation in curriculum and teaching suggested a willingness to consider
unconventional ways of solving the problem.

THE INTERIOR UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS BOARD

By early 1977, then, McGeer and Hardwick had reports evincing a need to deliver education in
ways significantly different from traditional campus-based forms, and a demand for a wide
range of educational programs throughout the province, especially for adults. It seems likely
they were already contemplating some kind of new provincial distance education agency as a
consequence of their contacts with the BOU.26 Their options were still open, however, and
they responded rapidly. The Ministry conducted follow-up studies on adult basic education,
educational provision for the disabled, and the need for an open college.27 The Colleges Act
(1977), including the coordinating councils, catered for several aspects of the Goard
recommendations and centralized control and planning of college activities, so that many of the
Faris recommendations could be gradually accommodated.

The universities were given an initial $200,000 for detailed planning of non-metropolitan
programs ($120,000 of which went to SFU), and $3 million was earmarked in the 1977-78
Education budget for expansion of non-metropolitan programs. In June 1977 an Interior
University Programs Board (IUPB) was created to oversee these developments (Layton 1984;
Haughey 1985). SFU was asked if it were willing to implement Winegard's proposal. McGeer
made it clear he expected the universities to cooperate under the aegis of the IUPB to produce
a single, coordinated plan, but almost certainly thought it unlikely.28 And indeed, an unseemly
conflict developed over the next year among the three universities, with UBC and UVic
unwilling to cede control or territory to SFU. The willingness (noted in Chapter 3) of the university continuing educators to cooperate through the Tri-University Committee was not emulated by more senior university administrators.

There were two arenas for conflict, the IUPB and the Universities Council, which enjoyed an unclear and uneasy relationship with each other. McGeer created the IUPB with the approval of the Universities’ Council (UCBC) to recommend to UCBC, and thence to the Minister, on disbursements from the non-metropolitan funds vote. The Board was not a formal body of UCBC but was regarded as an ‘unlegislated committee’ of the Council. The Council’s Program Coordinating Committee took over the Board’s functions when it was disbanded in June 1978, following OLIP’s creation. 29 John Bottomley argues the IUPB was a stop-gap mechanism enabling Hardwick to disburse monies allocated in the 1977-78 fiscal year for non-metropolitan programs, and by-pass usual channels to minimize anticipated inter-institutional rivalry, while continuing planning for a provincial distance education agency of some kind. 30 The Board comprised four non-metropolitan people appointed by the Minister, one by UCBC, and one by each of the universities. 31 Non-metropolitan interests could therefore prevail in the Board but be overturned by the university-dominated Council committees.

Despite its odd status, the evidence suggests the universities treated the IUPB as a firm policy initiative and funding mechanism for their non-metropolitan plans. A considerable proportion of the funds were devoted to professional non-credit courses (33% in 1977-78 and 25% in 1978-79). 32 As the Universities Council had not previously funded non-credit courses, this connoted a significant change. The result was increased university commitment to professional continuing education, and an implication they, and distance education, should be kept separate from mainstream university practice.
The Board conducted its own review of Winegard's proposals, concluding student demand for third and fourth year programs in the Interior was likely to be small, and that Winegard's centres would not meet his own economic criteria. They would be "at best a minimal service at a very high cost per student." A single new provincial university in the Interior seemed equally unfeasible, but the Board chose not to abandon the idea entirely. At the same time, it regarded distance learning programs as "the only form of university service that can be made available on a regular basis to persons in many isolated communities" and was prepared to recommend extensive support for such developments. The debate over the form and control of such distance education programs proceeded within that framework.

UBC argued Winegard's structure would dilute academic standards and quality of graduates, and waste precious education dollars on a dubious form of education for which the actual level of demand was uncertain. Moreover, a contractual arrangement through SFU might diminish UBC's pre-eminence in professional and graduate education and research, by relinquishing in some way UBC's own academic controls. UBC revised its earlier proposal to Winegard, arguing now for mini-faculties of arts in two centres, alongside the local college but controlled entirely from UBC and offering regular UBC courses in arts and education through face-to-face instruction.

UVic's main concern was to ensure it had a more active role in mainland education, especially in professional areas like education and social work. SFU's potential dominance was important insofar as it might limit this ambition (Haughey 1985,97ff). IUPB funds paid for development of six new off campus credit courses in social work and education, complementing the 19 offered in 1976-77 to 345 students. The University also took an active part in educational experiments on the Hermes satellite later in 1977, and expressed interest in offering programs in the Kootenays, using the campus of the by now defunct Notre Dame University at Nelson.
Despite initial reluctance about the substantive recommendations, SFU accepted Winegard's overall concept. A senior planning committee (including Blaney and Ellis) prepared a detailed proposal in the first half of 1977 to solve the "connected problems of making available university programs of continuing high quality and of stimulating economic development in areas distant from the major population centres." Its views were publicly apparent by May; a draft discussion paper in July made them explicit; the final report was complete in September, and accepted by SFU's Senate shortly thereafter. The timing is significant because of Hardwick's contemporaneous, potentially conflicting activities. The SFU plan was a powerful, cohesive, well-researched argument combining a province-wide distance education system with a series of specialist university schools located in larger Interior centres. SFU anticipated total operating costs of nearly $1 million per annum each for the distance education program and each school. The University rejected the concept of classroom-based, local university centres, arguing they would not solve the accessibility problem. The range of courses in a mini-faculty would be severely limited, and academic standards might well slip with insufficient 'mass' of faculty in any one discipline to encourage specialization, research and intellectual stimulation. The centres would suffer from remote control by the university proper, and would not contribute to regional development or provide job-market skills unless their programs were geared to that region.

The SFU plan defined distance education as:

an education program where the student undertakes to complete a course of studies with material prepared by faculty who remain, for the most part, at a distance from him (sic). In most cases the student is responsible for determining the place and time of his (sic) study. Instructional materials may include a full array of media, from print to video cassettes. Two-way communication between teacher and student occurs through written and printed words, telephone, and recorded information. Students may be assisted by local tutors and other students and, depending on course requirements, may meet the teacher in intensive seminars, short courses, or laboratory sessions.
As a definition, it foreshadowed Keegan’s 1980 taxonomy of distance education, and harmonised with contemporary understandings of the field (for example, Holmberg 1969; 1978; Mackenzie & Christensen 1971; Perry 1977). The SFU Committee was at pains to distinguish their version from older forms of correspondence study, arguing the latter’s deficiencies could be rectified through a coherent curriculum expressly designed for teaching at a distance, academic department responsibility for the quality and supervision of its program, empirically-based course development procedures, and provision of local tutorial and administrative support services. In a clever adaptation of the BOU structure, the distance education program would be coordinated from the main SFU campus, with an administrative unit located in each regional university centre, and other outreach study centres as needed. This administrative unit would also support the work of the specialist regional school, the second aspect of the planning committee’s proposal. Each school would offer an interdisciplinary, upper-level degree-completion program, with a quasi-professional and job market orientation appropriate to the region. The first, a School of Resource Management, was proposed for Kelowna; others might follow in professional education, the arts, management, applied social sciences, technology and energy science, and health science.

It was an excellent proposal which would have assured good standards and quality, in an original fashion. It failed for two reasons: the unwillingness of the universities to cooperate, and the threat UBC saw in SFU’s wish to expand into resource management and other professional areas. In addition, although distance education was hardly a high priority in UBC or UVic, they were reluctant to give SFU exclusive rights to the field. SFU insisted in December 1977 it be designated the only provider of distance education, claiming only SFU was ready to offer programs at a distance. If others were involved, SFU would be pressured to become a ‘credit bank’ which it was not prepared to do. Clearly defined and funded roles would ensure efficient use of funds and greater accountability. The efficiency and effectiveness of SFU’s proposed regional support system would be impaired with more than one
university in the field. In this context, inter-institutional cooperation meant only a division of territory on the basis of expertise and non-competing interests, with SFU acceding to UBC responsibility for professional programs, and to UVic's interest in social work and public administration. This SFU was unwilling to do. SFU's bid for exclusive rights over distance education is ironic in the light of later arguments OLI should not have just such control over distance education in BC.

Between December 1977 and April 1978 the proposals moved back and forth between the IUPB and the Universities Council, the former approving, the latter rejecting them. Most attention went to the Resource Management School proposal which UCBC eventually, and reluctantly approved.44 By that time, the question of provincial distance education had taken a very different turn. It is curious that, throughout the debate over university distance education programs, virtually no reference was made to McGeer's and Hardwick's other distance education plans. It is as though the SFU plan and arguments within the IUPB were occurring in another realm, divorced from the Ministry and college concerns. McGeer and Hardwick made no secret of their interest in some kind of new provincial distance education agency from mid-1977, but the universities were either not listening, or not yet concerned. The inter-university conflict over non-metropolitan programs undoubtedly helped convince McGeer and Hardwick that the universities could not, or would not, act in concert to coordinate offering of university programs in non-metropolitan areas.45 This had been only one of their options, however, and only a partial solution to the question of provincial access to all levels and types of postsecondary education.

DISTANCE EDUCATION PLANNING GROUP

The tenor of SFU's proposals was known in May 1977, prior to formal establishment of the IUPB in June. Had McGeer and Hardwick intended to accept that proposal, or to regularise
the IUPB’s status, they would probably have given a somewhat different brief to their Distance Education Planning Group (DEPG). They created the DEPG as a Ministry group in May 1977, bypassing normal bureaucratic channels to appoint a journalist and media consultant, Pat Carney, as its chair. The DEPG’s task was to advise Hardwick on development of a "system for the delivery of educational programs and services to students throughout the Province studying in a distance-learning mode". Hardwick specified this covered adult basic education and English as a second language, vocational and technical training, and university and college courses at all four levels of undergraduate study, for adult learners. He maintained a close watch on its work, conducted some of its meetings and negotiations, and oversaw drafting of the final report.

Group members had first to learn about the nature and techniques of distance education as it was now being practised elsewhere in Canada and the UK. Hardwick’s and McGeer’s growing interest in television and telecommunications steered the Group towards a definition of distance education closely tied to technology. Over the next six months the DEPG compiled an extensive inventory of people, resources, facilities and programs capable of incorporation into a provincial distance education system. The group concluded that predictions of a slower economy for the 1980s meant retraining and upgrading would increasingly be the path to employment and higher incomes (Carney 1977). They identified the clientele as those isolated from traditional learning opportunities by constraints of time (such as shiftwork), social space (for example, under-educated adults, high school dropouts), geographic space (beyond commuting range of a campus), physical space (elderly, physically handicapped, institutionalised), and those preferring a self-paced learning style. No reference was made to redress of educational discrimination on grounds of gender or race, though both were contemporary and contentious issues. While specific unmet needs varied, the Group agreed the program priorities were adult basic education (literacy, numeracy, school completion), employment-related education, and academic education, ranking third and fourth year courses
last. Many colleges saw the latter as irrelevant or of limited interest to their clientele, a view McGeer and Hardwick rejected.

The Group quickly concluded the first barrier to distance education was the unfamiliarity of BC educators with the nature and capabilities of modern distance education; the task of compiling an inventory became also an educational process. In addition, they decided 'show and tell' projects were needed to demonstrate the possibilities of distance education. These were all defined as audiovisual media, including satellite and cable television, audio and video, and telephone (separately or linked). The predominance of print in most other contemporary distance education programs world-wide was minimized.

One 'show and tell' program became the Group's most important activity. The Satellite Tele-Education Project (STEP) provided experience and definition for the kind of distance education agency Hardwick envisaged, as well as bringing BC into the satellite communications arena. McGeer, on announcing it in September 1977, said: "We must bring the educational mountain to Mohammed. Television is one medium that can replace bricks and mortar very effectively, delivering learning right into the living room". The BC government assumed responsibility for program production, delivery and support, and the federal government provided and operated the satellite network and ground stations. The project tested the use and networking of educational institutions to deliver education through interactive communications among teacher and students, and use of the satellite as a means of equalizing the costs of transmitting educational information and resources province-wide. Between mid-October and mid-December, about 95 hours of interactive broadcasting was distributed over a network of five sites connected to a broadcast-receive terminal at BCIT. Eleven agencies, including the three universities and two community colleges, participated. Though the programs were well-received, they were prepared with haste and left some with a false impression of the time, expertise and effort normally involved. Bottomley (1981) points out, moreover, that although
Hardwick later argued the project was cheap, participating institutions committed substantial and unrecorded amounts from their own budgets to enable the project to operate.53

The STEP project generated much interest in the higher education system but DEPG records, especially of discussions with college personnel, reveal widespread ignorance of recent developments in distance education and the use of information technology and telecommunications in teaching. There was also considerable scepticism about their potential in local regions. The DEPG Report identified numerous objections and problems, including an ingrained conservatism in universities and colleges which had militated against academic credibility for educational innovations. Many institutions considered funds inadequate to mount new programs in any mode and foresaw difficulties in achieving economies of scale. Some regions, especially the north, had limited access to communications media such as cable television, and to reliable postal and transport services. There was concern about the time-consuming nature of curriculum development if high-quality learning materials were to be produced. Faculty feared distance education would threaten conventional programs, jobs and control over their teaching. Others were concerned about the inadequacy of student support services; the lack of appropriate training opportunities for faculty members in course preparation and delivery techniques; and constraints on cooperative use of learning materials imposed by legal and practical problems of copyright.54 These were formidable objections and the DEPG made little effort to solve them; that was a task for the new agency.

The DEPG was instructed from the outset to plan a new organization including an educational television service.55 Group members assumed the organization would be primarily concerned with course production (print, audiotapes, video programs, educational television) and the mechanics of delivery (post, courier, telephone services, television, and library services), rather than with the actual teaching. By August they were calling it an 'Institute for Educational Resources', whose role would be to draw together resources at the community level, supply
technical and professional expertise, and contract with institutions and particular educators to produce programs in a selected area.\textsuperscript{56} There is some suggestion the Group considered proposing the new institute award its own credentials,\textsuperscript{57} but the DEPG Report, in whose writing Hardwick was closely involved, stopped well short. Instead, the Group recommended creation of a new educational institute "as the provincial agency responsible for the development of distance education and delivery systems".\textsuperscript{58} The institute should be primarily a 'utility agency' supporting the post-secondary education system, providing centralized services for delivery normally through existing institutions. The language obscured any intention that the institute award its own credentials. The detailed recommendations concentrated on the agency's responsibilities for developing cable and satellite television communications, implicitly defining such forms of educational technology as the major characteristics of distance education.

Larry Blake, then Principal of Fraser Valley College, observed in June 1977 that "the proposed Institute is feared as a controlling device, not as a service device".\textsuperscript{59} Opposition remained muted so long as the intention appeared to be the latter. Hardwick's intention to "press forward on establishing a core curriculum for guided individual learning at a distance" cannot have assuaged fears of central control.\textsuperscript{60} The centralist implications of the 1977 Colleges Act were just becoming clear, too. The DEPG Report, released in December 1977, was widely interpreted in the higher education system as a 'service device'. Ministry officials (often not fully briefed by Hardwick) were still describing it as such in February 1978.\textsuperscript{61} Hardwick, despite his involvement in its drafting, had no intention of accepting this more limited role. As he said later:

\begin{quote}
If it is going to have any legitimacy, it is going to have to have its own right to grant degrees. Otherwise you will be entirely captive of the other institutions. So once we made the decision that we had to go for an Institute, we had to give it that kind of power or else it would be self-defeating.\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}
The DEPG emphasised the vocational and other non-degree needs of non-metropolitan citizens. McGeer and Hardwick tended to ignore these and spoke mainly in terms of degree provision. Theirs was the language of university faculty, for whom real status and credibility belonged in university standards and traditions which were second nature to them. As already noted, both were impressed by the BOU's quality and success in these terms, and the BOU served as their point of reference for standards in distance education. To quote McGeer:

If we could have snapped our fingers and created an open university exactly modelled on the Great Britain style with a companion institution to cover the things that were non-university, we would have done it.63

That was not financially or politically feasible, and McGeer and Hardwick were growing impatient with institutional obfuscation and slowness. They tried the next best option, a quick solution using the BOU.64 The BOU was by now capitalizing on worldwide interest by offering its services for a fee, and selling its course materials. In November 1977, McGeer told the BOU he planned to create an open university along similar lines, but establishing its credibility in BC would not be easy. He therefore proposed, in effect, a branch campus of the BOU to operate in BC. The local agency would act as an educational broker, enrolling students on behalf of the BOU, and administering course delivery using BOU course materials and examinations, and tutors approved by the BOU, for an Open University degree. Hardwick continued the negotiations, which remained highly confidential in BC till February 1978.65

Meanwhile, Hardwick contacted John Ellis at SFU to ascertain, in confidence, his interest in heading a new distance education organization. Hardwick was vague on details. Ellis had known both McGeer and Hardwick for many years but had had little personal or professional contact with either in recent times. He had no political connection with any party. He was surprised but interested. He had concluded SFU’s proposal was doomed in the face of "nit-picking and squabbling" among the universities, but remained convinced that a high quality form of distance education offered the only feasible alternative and that something positive
must be done, and soon. His motives were later questioned by some former colleagues at SFU who felt betrayed; this soured some individual relationships and adversely affected some of SFU's official attitudes towards OLI. Ellis was contracted as a Ministerial consultant from the fall of 1977, but saw little of McGeer at that time. Moreover, and importantly for later events at OLI, Ellis was not involved in any of the discussions with the BOU or the decision to enter a formal arrangement with it.66

By December 1977, McGeer's and Hardwick's drive towards a new provincial institute was solidifying. The IUPB was operational but it was clear the universities would not cooperate in distance education. The satellite broadcasts had been successful, and the DEPG's Report, published in December, recommended a service agency. The BOU reacted positively to McGeer's proposal for a branch campus of some kind. And a prominent BC educator was interested in heading the new organization. The media publicised some elements of the DEPG Report in December but, from their later surprise and outrage, it is unlikely the universities or colleges were aware McGeer wanted a more elaborate institution awarding its own credentials, and closely linked to the BOU.67

In December McGeer proposed to Cabinet the creation of a British Columbia Open Learning Institute, under the Colleges Act, to

deliver programs throughout the province using distance-education methods, including printed courses of study, books, radio, cablevision, and tutors based at regional colleges. Programs will be on university, technical, career, and vocational subjects. The institute will provide a mechanism for coordinated delivery of programs, many being handled in an ad hoc fashion. It should lead to a core program of universally transferable courses leading to a BA degree.68

The Institute would use existing BOU courses adapted for Canada by a team of BC academics. These would combine with the IUPB programs, the materials production capability of the Provincial Educational Media Centre and underutilized facilities in universities and colleges,
and a computerized library catalogue project of the universities and colleges. Sir Walter Perry, the BOU's Vice Chancellor, and McGeer signed a letter of intent in February 1978 to implement a program of inter-institutional cooperation in relation to the open learning institute announced by the Minister on 18 February. The cooperative agreement stopped just short of the branch campus idea. The BOU would provide advisory, consultancy and training services to help BC set up an open learning system and procedures, plus arrangements for joint use and exchange of BOU and Ministry (OLI) courses. BOU staff might be used as external examiners for BC students. It would be an academic rather than commercial relationship, but the first step would be acquisition of BOU materials for assessment for BC purposes.

Ever impatient, and before Cabinet formally assented to the proposal, Hardwick initiated purchase of single sets of BOU course materials in late December 1977. The BOU materials purchases bedevilled relationships between Hardwick, the Ministry and OLI for several years, raising questions of ownership, copyright fees, logistics, location and use, and leaving lasting, inaccurate impressions that OLI failed to use BOU materials worth $1 million. In fact, the total paid was $306,000. Hardwick retained control over almost all aspects of the purchase and subsequent, complex negotiations over use of the materials which never belonged to OLI. The following February Hardwick asked the Tri-University Committee to assess the appropriateness of BOU and other distance education materials and systems preparatory to creation of the Institute, and to consider how the three universities might collaborate to develop or support a degree completion program. Two weeks later he withdrew his offer of funds to help this process, suggesting the Committee as created was "modestly premature" and "not quite the mix of people needed to do the job ahead." The Committee no doubt felt insult had been added to injury. Instead, Hardwick used the Academic Council as the mechanism for assessing the material and (especially) paying for it, on the grounds that OLI would be created under the Colleges Act. He did, however, request UCBC to help in the selection and
assessment of courses. The Council seems merely to have been a "laundering" mechanism for funds Hardwick put together from various sources before the end of the financial year.

With McGeer's announcement of the new provincial institute, and agreement with the BOU, a storm broke over his and Hardwick's heads. A service agency in a subordinate position like the Provincial Educational Media Centre was tolerable, even helpful. A BOU-clone awarding its own credentials threatened the educational hierarchy, institutional territory, funding priorities, and established educational mores. The university presidents were furious, complaining bitterly about lack of consultation, and the impossibility of planning their own non-metropolitan programs with the prospect of "a government-controlled university giving courses by itself." SFU's Vice President Academic, Brian Wilson, pointed out what OLI and others would reiterate and prove later. Many of the British courses would be inappropriate for BC students because of cultural bias, and the proposal was based on misconceptions of the BOU's use of technology, especially the extent of its reliance on television (actually comprising only about 5% of instructional time but 25% of BOU costs - see Perry 1977). Wilson criticised the move as yet another example of "Canada's branch plant mentality". Other critics harped on the huge cost of television compared with its educational value, high potential costs of the whole enterprise, expectations such expenditure would be wasteful and inefficient, the likelihood of restricted course choice, and inapplicability of the model and British courses to Canadian and local needs. Even Carney, Chair of the DEPG, obliquely criticised McGeer's decision to link with the BOU rather than create an educational utility as the Group had proposed.

College reactions were even sharper, and had two bases. One was opposition to the concept of provincial institutes on the grounds they contributed to centralization of educational and training services and reduced local control and comprehensive college mandates (Beinder 1986, 156-157). The other base was fear of the consequences of the new distance education institute for college enrolments, academic jobs, programs, comprehensiveness, and local pre-
eminence. Many, especially the smaller, newer colleges, saw OLI as a threat to their shaky viability. Many faculty believed distance education "by definition, is second-rate, is cheap and will deprive us of our jobs." The idea of a technologically-oriented OLI threatened others whose faculty agreements allowed them to resist technological change. Some principals rejected Hardwick's claim that the new institute would cater for people not already in the system, not least because they were already teaching at a distance or had plans to do so.

McGeer dismissed the criticism as the kind of reaction new ideas always met, saying "You are talking about such a tiny portion of the total amount which is spent on post-secondary education you would hardly notice it. It is not the size that is telling here. It is the concept." The Institute was part of a long-overdue revision of adult education in BC, and must be "a device for encouraging excellence in learning and, through that, for improving the quality of life of our citizens." The announcement with the BOU, said McGeer,

was merely to let people know that we were going to make available to the citizens of our province an array of superb courses and materials developed by that institution. It's not foisting a foreign educational system on British Columbia. What we are doing is entering as partners into a world-wide enterprise of preparing these open-learning materials.

The Institute, said McGeer, was also an expression of the government's policy to encourage high technology industrial development in BC, and create a network of specialized provincial institutes to produce marketable skills. McGeer asserted there was "a crying need" for third and fourth year academic programs for people "geographically, financially or psychologically prevented from attending one of our coastal universities". This conveniently ignored the DEPG's finding that sub-degree programs were more important and the IUPB's view that higher-level demand in the Interior was probably low. He insisted OLI would collaborate with existing programs and the government would not tolerate wasteful duplication of effort.
The initial shock once absorbed, the universities began to come to terms with the proposed new Institute, and to seek ways to influence or control some of its activities. The Presidents of UBC (Douglas Kenny) and UVic (Howard Petch) separately suggested to McGeer ways of organizing the university level work so as to bring it under control of a senate comprising appointees of the three university senates. Kenny also proposed that two institutions be established - the OLI as proposed, minus its university functions; and an Open University which would be a 'shell' organization whose academic decisions would be made by a universities-appointed senate. McGeer rejected the idea. Simon Fraser reluctantly altered and restricted its distance education program objectives to professional programs in kinesiology, criminology and education. College resistance abated not at all.

Opposition notwithstanding, the Open Learning Institute of British Columbia was created on 1 June 1978, through Order-in-Council 1429, under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977). McGeer defined its Statement of Mission as provision of programs of study leading to a first degree in arts and science, and programs of study in career, technical and vocational areas, and adult basic education. To this end it was to "manage needed support services; develop and acquire courses, programmes of study and learning material and distribute them by distance education methods", and was to enter into relationships with other organizations in BC and elsewhere to do so. An amendment to the Universities Act (1974) to give OLI degree granting powers was proclaimed on 27 July 1978. The real task of creation lay ahead.

**CONCLUSION**

OLI's creation was justified as the best way of catering to the varied educational needs of an unknown proportion of the 46% of BC's non-metropolitan citizens. The underlying reasons for catering to these needs were largely economic: that is, based on the public and private benefits of investing in human capital, and on the advantages of decentralizing BC's population. The
public rhetoric was largely couched in terms of social justice: that is, the social desirability of improving educational access. An Open Learning Institute, teaching at a distance, was by no means the only way of doing so.

Fully implemented, SFU's proposal for a provincial distance education system would have changed SFU's teaching program dramatically, probably far more than its proponents realised. It would, however, have given adults throughout the province the opportunity to complete degrees in a wide range of subjects, especially if cooperation could have been achieved with the other two universities. An effective inter-university credit transfer system could have been devised had the political will been there to insist on it. In educational terms, the proposal was a less startling and affronting innovation than a discrete organization like OLI, and might have had an easier passage in achieving academic credibility within the universities.

The Faris and Goard recommendations, on the other hand, could have been accommodated by strengthening college mandates, staff expertise and budgets, especially those of the struggling new colleges in more remote areas. The colleges' local orientation and experience in teaching adults could have been used to advantage in extending tentacles into the furthest corners of their regions. The Ministry's existing media services could have been augmented to offer centralized materials preparation and production facilities. Such moves might not have cost less in dollar terms than OLI; they would undoubtedly have cost less in tension, fear, uncertainty and opposition in OLI's early years.

McGeer and Hardwick chose another route. There was an element of hubris in creating a new provincial institute, but also a pragmatic political judgement that a separate institute, with powers similar to its BC peers, was the only way to ensure their goals were met. Yet the new Institute had a number of unique, innovative but disturbing features which affected its credibility and status. As created by McGeer and Hardwick, OLI was a hybrid organization
crossing the conventional divide between universities and colleges. Moreover, it combined a potentially contradictory credential and service mandate, though that was not so apparent at first. OLI’s mandate also implicitly allowed for a flexible laddering of educational opportunity from adult basic education to degree level. If implemented, this might genuinely overcome some of the barriers to access entrenched in conventional higher education systems, and improve the prospects of equal educational outcomes. However, McGeer and Hardwick did not emphasise OLI’s unique breadth and comprehensiveness in their campaign to have the concept accepted. Their focus and rhetoric justifying OLI’s creation were firmly fixed on the Institute’s university-level activities.

The shape and flavour McGeer and Hardwick gave to OLI came directly from their perceptions of the BOU, and their interest in experimenting with new telecommunications technologies. They ignored or misunderstood the actual nature and practice of distance education by the BOU which relied heavily on print and local tutorial services and was becoming cautious of television. Moreover, they somewhat naively believed all that would be required was quickly prepared, ‘wraparound’ materials to compensate for the ‘Britishness’ of the BOU materials. They saw ‘distance education’ as a technological form of education from the beginning, and would probably have applauded Peters’ industrial model as the most efficient way to deliver education at a distance (see Chapter 1).

These perceptions coloured their subsequent dealings with OLI, the resources they gave the Institute, and the attitudes they passed on to Ministry officials. However, they did not build their definition into the mandate OLI received, thereby laying a base for future conflict with OLI’s leaders over the meaning and practice of distance education. Seeds of conflict were also sown in giving OLI a dual role of credential provider and service agency. The former suggested one set of parameters for seeking and being accorded legitimacy. The latter suggested a different set.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 Walter Hardwick (interview with author) recalls McGeer, when Minister, returning home to Vancouver from Victoria each weekend to work in his laboratory. He and his wife (also a scientist) maintained a steady output of scholarly publications and research reports which ensured his continuing international reputation despite a heavy political and Ministerial workload. Others interviewed also commented on McGeer's high academic reputation and extraordinary capacity for hard work.

2 C. Harris (1987); Barman (1991); Paul Gallagher, interview with author.

3 McGeer (1972,21); McGeer, interview with author.

4 McGeer, interview.

5 Author’s interviews with Jack Blaney, John Bottomley (1990), Grant Fisher, Bruce Fraser, Paul Gallagher, John Ellis, Daniel Birch, Glen Farrell.

6 Gallagher, interview.

7 Birch, interview.

8 Author’s interviews with McGeer, Hardwick, Fisher, Bottomley (1990), Ian Mugridge.

9 Bottomley, interview (1990). Hardwick (interview) and John Tayless (interview with author) comment on the technological change clauses in faculty agreements which enabled them to avoid using television or other technological devices in teaching.

10 Giles (1983); Birch, interview.

11 A post which, though a political appointment, is the administrative and policy head of the Ministry bureaucracy.

12 Hardwick, interview.

13 The Extension Department of the University of Wisconsin pioneered the use of radio and telephone in the USA for distance teaching. Its head for many years was Charles Wedemeyer, a leading figure in correspondence studies circles. See Chapter 1 on concepts of distance education.

14 Hardwick, interview.

15 Hardwick was an Alderman of the City of Vancouver from 1969-74; Hardwick (1967); in 1975 Hardwick advised NDP Minister of Education, Eileen Dailly, on educational and economic problems in the Kootenays.

16 Farrell, interview.

17 Hardwick, interview.

18 Blaney, interview; Fraser, interview.

19 Fraser, interview; Fisher, interview.

Public meetings were well attended, and the number of private and institutional submissions and briefs substantial – 251 to Winegard, 199 to Faris, and 173 to Goard.

Goard (1977); Fisher, interview; Fraser, interview.

Goard's recommendation for creation of an Occupational Training Council was accepted and implemented in the coordination framework created following passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977). OLI received some of its funding through the OTC.

UBC Sen. Mins. 15 Sept. 1976, Box 7-1, 6619-6621 [UBC Archives].


B.C. Ministry of Education, Adult Basic Education (Victoria, 1977); Adult Basic Education for the Handicapped (Victoria, 1977); Report of the Open College Committee (Victoria, 1977); Report of the Employment-Related Education Sub-Committee of the Open College Committee (Victoria, 1977).


Interior University Programs Board, "Report on the Board's Activities until 5 June 1978", OLA Archives (hereafter cited as IUPB Report). Bottomley recalls that the Board's relationship with UCBC, and its own funding were so unclear that its members had great difficulty being reimbursed for travel expenses for meetings (pers. comm. RD, 22 Aug. 1990).

Bottomley, interview (1989). Then a research consultant at the UCBC, Bottomley was secretary to the Winegard Commission and the IUPB, a member of the Distance Education Planning Group, and an assistant to Hardwick who had also supervised his PhD.

Minister's nominees: James S. Pritchard, an accountant of Prince George; Lloyd J. Hoole, manager of a radio station in Cranbrook; Dr Dugal MacGregor, a research scientist at Summerland; and J. Frederick Weber, a radio and cable TV station proprietor of Terrace. UCBC nominee: Randolph Harding, of Silverton. University nominees: Dr George Pedersen, then Vice President Academic at UVic; Dr Ronald Shearer, an economist and Assistant to the President, UBC; and Dr Brian G. Wilson, Vice President Academic at SFU.


38 IUPB Report 1978,4; Layton, (1984,21,24); Haughey (1985,101-102); Farrell, interview. Notre Dame University in Nelson closed in May 1977, amidst declining enrolments and insufficient funding. Hardwick preempted $1 million of the $3 million for Interior programs for purchase by the government of its assets. The IUPB rejected UVic's first proposal for a feasibility study in 1977, but later supported a revised proposal in 1978. By 1979 UVic was offering later year courses in education and fine arts at the David Thompson University Centre.

39 Gordon Selman (interview) notes the SFU Senate only narrowly agreed to accept Winegard's recommendation that SFU take responsibility for non-metropolitan programming.


41 "Distance education system proposed for B.C.'s Interior", *SFU Week* 8(3), 19 May 1977; Proposal for a distance education program, draft discussion paper, July 1977, SFU Planning C'tee; SFU Planning C'tee Report.

42 SFU Planning C'tee, 24.

43 Brian G. Wilson to IUPB, 2 Dec. 1977 [GIS Archive].

44 "UCBC committee rejects Kelowna resource school", *SFU Week* 10(11), 16 March 1978; IUPB Report 1978; Layton (1984,20); John Bottomley, pers. comm. RD, 22 August 1990. This was not the end of the matter; Layton (1984) continues the story of SFU's attempts to set up a School in Kelowna, culminating in the Universities' Council decision in February 1979 not to go ahead, apparently for the self-same reasons - 'wrong' program, 'wrong' site, 'wrong' university. SFU, ironically led now by George Pedersen, who had earlier opposed the proposal while Vice President Academic at UVic, said it had no further desire to plan alternative university colleges as envisaged by Winegard, and the entire process created 'unfortunate' tensions among the players.

45 McGeer, interview; Hardwick, interview.

46 Hardwick to principals & presidents, 17 May 1977 [Franklin CF1]. As well as Carney, the DEPG comprised personnel of the Ministry of Education and UCBC, including Derek Franklin and John Bottomley. Although not a member, Glen Farrell of UVic was also an active participant and sounding board.

47 Record of meeting (then called Education Resources Group Work Plan), 9 May 1977 [Franklin CF1].

48 Record of DEPG meeting, 2 June 1977 [Franklin CF1]. Members visited every college and university in BC, meeting not only with top administrative echelons, but also with
middle level personnel responsible for continuing education, outreach programs, and audiovisual media support. They also talked to senior staff in public and private corporations (e.g. BC Hydro, Cominco, Alcan) and professional associations (e.g. BC Society of Engineering Technicians, BC Employers' Council).


50 The STEP project was one of the last of a series of US and Canadian experiments with the geostationary Communications Technology Satellite (Hermes), which was a forerunner of the ANIK B satellite launched in 1978 and used to transmit Knowledge Network programs.

51 BC Ministry of Education, Information Services, "Background to an Open Learning Institute" (Victoria, March 1978) [GIS Archive].

52 Progress Report to 31 August 1977 [Franklin CF1].

53 Also see Progress Report to 31 August 1977 [Franklin CF1].

54 DEPG Report 1977, 88-92; interview records with several people at each college confirm the Report's summary [Franklin CF1].

55 Interview record with L. Blake, 3 June 1977; Interview record with G. Lawrence, 4 June 1977; Carney to Jeanne Sauve, Federal Minister of Communications, 9 June 1977; Interview record with officials of Fed. Dept communications & W. Hardwick, 22 June 1977 [Franklin CF1].

56 DEPG planning session, 26 Aug. 1977 [Franklin CF1].

57 Unsigned, undated draft (probably Nov. 1977) [Franklin CF1].


59 Interview record with L. Blake, 3 June 1977 [Franklin CF1]. Blake chaired the Ministry's Open College Committee in 1977, investigating distance delivery of first and second year academic courses.

60 Hardwick to L. Blake, 7 July 1977 [Franklin CF1]; McGeer was also encountering much opposition to his efforts to install core curriculum into the school system (Giles 1983).


62 Hardwick, interview.

63 McGeer, interview.

64 Hardwick, interview.

65 Bottomley, interview (1989); Bottomley to Ellis, 13 June 1979, [PF: BOU]. He participated in the negotiations as Hardwick's assistant.

66 Ellis, interview.
"B.C. to get higher education programs through TV, radio, newspapers", *Vancouver Sun*, 10 Dec. 1977. McGeer talks of a "futuristic distance education program" about to be unveiled, modelled along lines of the BOU, & using TV as its main component; part of it to be operated from the colleges, & the rest on its own in isolated areas.

P. L. McGeer, submission by Social Services Committee to Cabinet, 12 Dec. 1977 [Franklin CF1].


Bottomley (as secy of IUPB) to Hardwick, 23 Dec. 1977 [PF:BOU].

Hardwick to J. Cox (BOUEE), 8 May & 26 June 1978; Bottomley to Ellis, 18 June 1979; Ellis to Jim Pritchard, 28 Aug. 1979; Bottomley to Ellis, 18 June 1979 [PF:BOU].


Agreement between Ministry of Education and Academic Council, signed Hardwick & Ian McTaggart-Cowan (Chair, AC), 22 March 1978; Hardwick to W. Gibson (Chair UCBC), 29 March 1978; Bottomley to Ellis, 18 June 1979 [PF:BOU].

President Pauline Jewett of SFU, in "Open University agreement results in academic anger", *SFU Week* 10(8), 23 Feb. 1978; "Open university on TV angers academics", *Vancouver Sun*, 18 Feb. 1978. Bottomley (interview 1989) & Hardwick (interview) recall a meeting called by McGeer with the Presidents to inform them of his intention to establish an open learning institute. They were incredulous and extremely angry; President Petch stormed out.

"Open University agreement results in academic anger", *SFU Week*, 10(8), 23 Feb, 1978.


Pat Carney, "Distance education: the need is there", *Vancouver Sun*, 30 March 1978.

Author's interviews with Ellis, Hardwick, John Tayless, Gallagher, Fisher.

Gallagher, interview.

BC Ministry of Education, Information Services, "Background to an open learning institute" (Victoria, March 1978) [GIS Archive]; Beinder (1986,162-163).

"McGeer invites universities to work with open institute", *SFU Week*, 10(9), 2 March 1978.

McGeer, 'Address to the British Columbia Continuing Education Administrators' (Vancouver, 28 April 1978) [GIS Archive]; also "Electronic university 'an exciting venture''", *Vancouver Sun*, 29 April 1978.

84  *ibid.* p.303–306.


86  Blaney to Ellis, 31 July 1978 [PF:Tri-Univ.C’tee].


88  Board Mins., 14/15 Sept. 1978.
CHAPTER 5: TO SURVIVE AND PROSPER: THE INSTITUTION 1978-1980

Institutions are so much part of modern daily life that we take for granted their myriad rules, regulations and ‘ways of doing things’. The magnitude and complexity of interlocking structures and systems become peculiarly evident when a new, multi-faceted institution is created. OLI's founders approached their task, perforce, on several fronts and levels simultaneously. The initial overriding imperative was survival. In practical terms, this meant rapid emplacement of organisational structures, systems and curriculum which turned ambiguous or confused promises into hard reality. Simultaneously, OLI's leaders (its Board and senior administrators) began the arduous and complex task of establishing amicable relationships outside the Institute. Both processes were essential to OLI's assertion of its right to survive and prosper, and to find an appropriate place in BC's hierarchy of learned institutions. Both helped gradually to define distance education as OLI would practise it. That definition, too, would be integral to OLI's status within the horizontal legitimacies of BC's higher education sectors, and the field of distance education. This chapter examines the organizational framework OLI created under Ellis' leadership from 1978-80. Chapter 6 considers the curricula and external relationships OLI built during the same period.

PEOPLE, PLACE AND COMMUNITY

OLI's first Board of Governors comprised six community representatives and three university members (see Appendix 2). Four of the community representatives had been on the Interior Board. Five of the six were from non-metropolitan areas and, till 1982, the Board benefitted from a genuine geographic representation of the province. Community members were business people or professionals; two owned and ran radio or television stations. The university members did not formally represent their universities, but came with senior status and access to top university policy-making forums. Jim Pritchard, an accountant from Prince George who
had chaired the IUPB, was elected Chair of the OLI Board, and Betsy Macdonald, from Vancouver, was elected Vice Chair. The Board's first task was to appoint John Ellis as Principal, on secondment from SFU for two years to August 1980.¹

Ellis already had a distinguished career as an educator. He joined UBC's Education Faculty in 1959 from the school system. In 1965 he moved to Simon Fraser University as a foundation Professor in the Faculty of Education, later serving terms as Director of Graduate Programs and Dean of Education. Ellis had recently worked on a multinational teacher education project in Indonesia, a connection which would prove invaluable for OLI some years later.² He held strongly to an ideal of quality in teaching as well as in research, but did not see high intellectual quality and standards residing only in traditional pedagogies and university organizational structures. Ellis demonstrated his willingness to use innovative educational strategies through his leadership in SFU's field-based Professional Development Program dispersing teacher trainees throughout the province, and in an equally decentralised masters degree program. Ellis' interest in distance education as a means of improving educational access in the Interior had been sparked by a visit to the BOU about 1970 (Ellis 1973; see Chapter 3).

During the 1970s Ellis was a member of the Tri-University Committee and participated in the SFU committee planning the University's response to the Winegard recommendations (see Chapter 4). He was also a founding member of the Capilano College Board and member and secretary of the 1974 Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education in the Kootenay Region. He thus came to OLI with first-hand experience in institution-building, meaning the initiation of policies, organizational structures and systems from first principles, and with over a decade's experience of university (and college) governance. Ellis described himself as pragmatic; others saw him also as an effective manager who saw OLI's development as much in managerial as in
Ellis immediately appointed John Bottomley as Institutional Planning, Research and Analysis Officer. Bottomley provided continuity with events and people preceding OLI's creation. An urban geographer whose doctoral adviser had been Hardwick, Bottomley had worked with the Winegard Commission, Distance Education Planning Group, IUPB, and UCBC. Ellis also seconded two SFU staff: Sid Segal, Assistant to SFU's Vice President Administration, who became Bursar and Director of Administrative Services; and Jack Paterson, Ellis' former Administrative Assistant, who became Director of Public Information and Secretary to the Board. Only Ellis and Bottomley had any prior knowledge of distance education methods and practices elsewhere. Ellis kept staff numbers to a minimum at first, and relied on secondments till the basic organizational structure and budgets were clear.

Early in 1979 the Board confirmed Segal's continuing appointment as Director of Administrative Services and Bursar, and appointed four other Directors on secondment or two-year contracts. Thereafter staff numbers grew rapidly, from 15 in March 1979 to almost 100 by July 1980. The new Directors came from orthodox educational backgrounds and had little or no knowledge of distance education practices on their arrival. They were chosen for their academic and administrative abilities, their knowledge of the BC higher education system, the credibility their expertise and reputations would lend the fledgling organisation, and their enthusiasm for the challenge.

Ian Mugridge was appointed Director of University Programs. A graduate of Oxford and the University of California, Mugridge had worked in SFU's history department since 1967, serving terms as Department Chair, and as Assistant Vice President Academic. Ellis described him as "astute and thorough" with "a solid commitment to recognised norms of the academy". Alan
Dawe, the Director of Adult Basic Education (ABE), had been Chair of the large English and Modern Languages Division of Vancouver Community College since 1971, had published extensively, and was viewed by Ellis as "an excellent teacher (and) a fine administrator". Denys Meakin was appointed Director of Program Operations and Registrar, covering student support and, initially, tutoring. A former chemist, Meakin had been Director of Admissions at SFU and Registrar of the College of the Bahamas. His strengths would be especially in designing the complex, integrated student records systems and credit transfer arrangements OLI would need. The post of Director of Career, Technical, Vocational Education (CTV) was filled in February by Derek Franklin, on secondment from the Ministry of Education. Franklin had been a member of the (Carney) Distance Education Planning Group, and had extensive experience of CTV education in BC. Thus five of OLI's eight most senior early staff came from SFU. Only Dawe and Franklin were not 'university' people. OLI's normative criteria and standards for higher education were inevitably dominated by university rather than college culture, and SFU's styles and standards percolated through to the infant OLI.

OLI's first offices were in uncomfortable Ministry premises in Burnaby. In March 1979, OLI moved to an unprepossessing former car sales building in a light industrial area of Richmond. It looked like a warehouse (and much of it was), with none of the familiar symbols or physical layout of conventional campuses. It was not an impressive physical image for a new organization seeking status in the educational community. Inside, the space rented was immediately inadequate for both staff and storage of course packages. Two trailers were set up on the lawn adjacent to the main building to house the overflow, and a church hall was rented a mile away. Poor lighting, plumbing, ventilation and over-crowding did not help morale. Warehousing space was almost exhausted by March 1980 when the Ministry finally approved expansion of the lease (providing OLI found the funds). The correspondence suggests some Ministry officials almost wilfully misunderstood OLI's facilities needs, both for space and for
sophisticated computing systems to integrate systems in ways conventional institutions did not need.\textsuperscript{7}

Over-crowding and poor environment notwithstanding, the atmosphere hummed with activity and anticipation as the first students enrolled and courses began. Segal summed up the excitement: "It was a lot of fun. It really was a glorious opportunity, a once in a lifetime chance to set up everything fresh."\textsuperscript{8} Relationships and communications were very informal at first. As the operation became more complex, and the numbers of staff increased, the informality diminished. Mugridge and Segal emulated Ellis’ style of ‘management by walking around’, ameliorating the potentially stifling effect of emerging hierarchies. There were, for example, mercifully few formal in-house committees till 1982.\textsuperscript{9}

**FIRST PRINCIPLES, PLANS AND BUDGETS**

In view of the widespread opposition to OLI, Ellis moved at prodigious speed to put in place OLI’s basic framework and secure its survival.\textsuperscript{10} In September and October 1978 the Board considered program priorities, organizational structure, and budgets for 1978-79 and 1979-80. There was necessarily an element of tentativeness and ambit claim about the proposed policies and budgets. For Ellis, the prime consideration was "a system - in particular a delivery system - which works: one which serves students and respects taxpayers". However, the principles formulated in these papers mixed educational and social values with political pragmatism and administrative practicality. They set the first physical and ideological boundaries of the new organization, and shaped its educational character and cultural norms throughout the ensuing decade.\textsuperscript{11}

The first principle asserted OLI’s independence. It was the Minister’s prerogative to set the general boundaries within which OLI would operate, but the Board would determine its own
priorities and methods to meet that mission. Ellis felt it imperative for its legitimacy that OLI be, and be seen to be, independent of McGeer and Hardwick, who had identified themselves so personally and closely with the Institute's creation. He distanced OLI from some of their earlier speculations about use of technology, the simplicity of adaptation of purchased materials, and accuracy of previous analyses of need and priorities. The Board agreed "an institution should assume its own set of directions and objectives" and "not try to second guess the Minister's intentions". It was a predictable strategy for those steeped in university traditions of autonomy from the state. Interestingly, Fraser suggests this "early institutional chauvinism" actually inhibited collaboration with other higher education institutions in the early days because so much attention was given to asserting independence and individuality.12

A second principle was that students should receive not only a 'quality' education the equal of anything in BC, but also should have the same certainties in their 'contract' with OLI as a student with any other BC higher education institution. Ellis justified this on educational, moral and survival grounds. The criteria for 'quality' were not specified, but Ellis was aiming for parity of prestige with BC's universities, however subjectively determined that parity might be. The certainty principle implied that coherently sequenced programs, guaranteed availability of courses and qualifications, compatibility of the curricula with the system, and appropriate teaching strategies and support services should be in place when students began. This in turn emphasised OLI's role as direct provider rather than service agency.

Who, then, would be OLI's students? Describing OLI's role as "meeting the unmet need", Ellis claimed as potential students those geographically remote from campus-based institutions, those socially remote (finding such institutions intimidating for various reasons), those with work schedules or family responsibilities inhibiting regular attendance at classes, the handicapped, and people who prefer to study independently.13 OLI's students would be "those citizens worst served by existing instruction. Those best served are characterized by academic success,
relative affluence, cultural motivation, health, leisure and central location. Those ill served can be assumed to have the opposite characteristics."¹⁴ This claim of clientele changed little in later years, although the proportion of metropolitan students rose markedly. No reference was made then, or later, to disadvantages linked to gender or race, although over half OLI's students were women from the beginning. Neither was any reference made to social class, though by inference, many students would come from lower socio-economic groups unable to gain access to higher education by more conventional methods. OLI anticipated a 'quality' education for such students must include extrinsic and intrinsic motivational support in the appearance, sequencing and content of learning materials and student support mechanisms to help them overcome their earlier disadvantage. OLI's attitude here implicitly recognised the educational consequences of social inequality and many students' lack of familiarity with the cultural milieu and norms of distance education.

Accepting that OLI's students were to be adult citizens of BC, no matter where located or how situated, led to a third principle. OLI's delivery strategies should ensure all students genuinely had access to its programs. BC's physical and demographic complexities, and the difficulties of telecommunications and other access to more geographically remote areas, would significantly affect implementation of this principle. So too would assumptions about the educational effectiveness of the various possible media. From the beginning, television was downplayed in favour of printed and audio learning materials and telephone tutoring. These media posed fewer technical problems or questions about their pedagogical respectability.

The fourth founding principle also mixed educational and political pragmatism. The Board agreed OLI's "unusually broad and complex mission... demanded a range and quantity of interaction greater than any other post secondary institution in BC," and special efforts to obtain public and institutional goodwill. This would be achieved best by ensuring OLI's programs conformed to the existing system. The system compatibility principle contradicted
McGeer's and Hardwick's vision of a BOU-style degree with large, interdisciplinary courses. Ellis had asserted years before that the BOU degree, if imported to BC, must be adapted to fit the BC system (Ellis 1973). Now he argued OLI's survival depended on compatibility. Students must be assured their credentials were acceptable elsewhere.

From these founding principles came four program objectives for the period to 31 March 1979, an organizational structure, and budget proposals for 1978-79 and 1979-80. Their language made abundantly clear Ellis' concern for academic quality, institutional credibility and a firm administrative base. Work began simultaneously on all four program areas, but with different timetables. The University and ABE programs would begin in September 1979, CTV and a continuing education project by television in January 1980. There was a sense of urgency in these timetables, heightened by Hardwick's insistence that teaching begin as soon as possible. There is some evidence Hardwick pressed OLI to start teaching even earlier than it did, by making minor adaptations to the BOU material already purchased. Ellis was determined the infrastructure must be in place first, and coherent programs designed. He wanted to enrol students as fast as possible to indicate OLI was a reality, but it was necessary to "avoid unmanageable organizational stresses and strains occasioned by too rapid growth in program and staff". The first step was acquiring the funds.

McGeer admits he had no money to start up OLI. The new-look Socred government was no more pro-education than the old party had been. Operating grants for higher education were still growing in absolute terms, but the provincial government share was only 21.1% in 1979-80; the rest came from federal transfer payments. There was little room for new projects. McGeer found it difficult to marshall Cabinet support for an organization attracting so much initial criticism, though Premier Bennett was apparently supportive. McGeer's solution was to "cadge a little money here and there from the budget until I had enough to get (OLI) going." Once McGeer had cajoled funds from an antipathetic Treasury Board, Hardwick was equally
adept at hiding them in unlikely places - to the reluctant admiration of some of his Ministry officials.19

OLI's budget submission for 1978-79 totalled $1.5 million, including $512,000 for audiovisual equipment and activities. The 1979-80 request totalled $5 million, assuming an increase in full-time equivalent staff numbers to 96 by March 1980. Of this, approximately $800,000 was for a continuing education project to test the use of television. Some of OLI's costings were necessarily speculative, and in some respects may have been an ambit claim, but they were meticulously detailed and impressively cohesive.20 The submissions met solid resistance within the Ministry of Education, and it was April 1979 before the 1979-80 budget was finally confirmed. The 1978-79 budget fared well; OLI received $1.3 million in start-up monies. The Ministry severely cut the 1979-80 budget request of $5 million to $3.6 million (see Appendix 1.6).21

Part of the difficulty was that Hardwick and McGeer had not expected how high OLI's submission would be, and had insufficient reserves to meet the request. Other factors were equally important. Ministry officials were ignorant of OLI's purposes and needs; unfortunate comparisons were drawn with North Island College's expenses; and Hardwick was disappointed with OLI's cautious stance towards delivery. Ellis, Pritchard and Segal found senior and middle-ranking Ministry officials knew little of OLI's mission, were unclear about Hardwick's intentions, and misunderstood the nature of the new enterprise. Hardwick and McGeer kept their dealings over OLI largely separate from the regular bureaucracy and Hardwick was not always an effective communicator within the Ministry. Whereas later budgets went through the various Councils, the first ones were handled through Hardwick's office.22 The bureaucrats did not understand a key feature of a modern distance education system: the high fixed costs of course development. Their allocation practices were based on annual teaching costs, a relatively cheaper element of OLI's financial structure.23
Hardwick and his officials had one other unorthodox institution, North Island College, with which to compare OLI, though the latter’s plans were very different. Hardwick apparently expected OLI’s budgets would emulate NIC’s comparatively inexpensive operation. Ellis argued there was no comparison, since OLI must develop its own courses and teach across a broader and multi-layered spectrum. He suggested NIC’s exceptionally favourable contract with Athabasca University helped underwrite NIC costs to a significant extent. He also pointed to an artificiality in NIC’s accounting because of its self-pacing policy, suggesting the College was funded for students who, while technically enrolled, may not have been active for some time.24

OLI’s early budget difficulties were compounded by Hardwick’s resistance to the type of organization and policies for course development and delivery which OLI’s policy makers were proposing. He (or his officials) found the proposed scale of operation unrealistic, the salary levels proposed too high, and he was unconvinced some functions were necessary. The space request was too large, exceeding Ministerial guidelines, and the computing services envisaged were grandiose. Hardwick was concerned OLI intended to develop original materials and handle course delivery independently of existing institutions, rather than buying in courses and sharing in delivery in some (unspecified) way.25 The conflict illustrates a growing divide between the ambiguous, vague McGeer/Hardwick vision of a provincial distance education system delivering BOU and other materials, especially via television, and Ellis’ vision of an institution devising and controlling its own programs, conforming with the BC system, and guaranteeing accessibility to all BC adults. Hardwick was impatient with Ellis’ caution about logistics and appropriate pedagogies, and concerned OLI might not seize the opportunities he saw to hand. At the same time, this may have been the first occasion on which Hardwick was faced with detailed estimates for a distance education program and establishing a new organization. For all their political acumen and ability to circumvent bureaucratic convention, he and McGeer had little experience of the mechanics (and real costs) of managing a large
organization, a factor which sometimes frustrated Ministry officials as well as institutional leaders.26

The main casualty of OLI's first budgets was the continuing education by television project and, with it, any real likelihood OLI would use television extensively. OLI eliminated this project altogether; half measures were impossible, and cable television was still not technically accessible throughout BC. Ellis believed it more important to use OLI's resources to put the new organization on a firm administrative and pedagogical footing, regardless of McGeer's and Hardwick's wishes. Television stayed in the budget as a line item of $1.00; it remained thus for some years, to symbolise OLI had not completely abandoned the medium. Meanwhile, other budget reductions slowed the planned rate of course development and helped influence OLI's decision to employ no full-time faculty. The program objectives and timetables remained intact, making it all the more remarkable that OLI offered its first courses only 15 months after the organization came into existence.27

GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Board and Principal
The wide Board agenda and budget vicissitudes of the first year were the forum in which Ellis and the Board shaped the latter's role and its relationship with the Principal. Ellis and Board Chair, Jim Pritchard, believed the Board should determine broad policy, and the Principal should recommend and implement policy. Both saw the clarification and separation of powers as essential to OLI's healthy development. This approach conformed with well-established norms of relationships between university presidents and their governing boards. A few Board members initially expected the Board not only to set policy, but to manage the organization - to sign the cheques, and decide financial and academic details. They also assumed deference should be paid to Ministerial views to an extent most contemporary university boards would
find unacceptable (ironically, UBC's first President, Frank Wesbrook, would have agreed with
them - see Logan 1958; Gibson 1973). These were attitudes derived from school board practice
though now dying out in most colleges (Beinder 1986). There were apparently some fiery
exchanges in early meetings as the relationship was settled. One member refused to endorse
many early Board decisions, including its first budgets.

Ellis' and Pritchard's view prevailed. The first Board (whose membership remained constant till
1981-82) was apparently strong and cohesive, questioning but supportive of Ellis and his staff.
The university members helped smooth the sometimes difficult relationship with the
universities. Fraser recalls the strength of Board members' commitment to the goal of expanding
educational access. Segal notes the valuable range of Board members' expertise in academic,
telecommunications and financial areas. A few had personal connections with Social Credit but
until the mid-1980s there is no indication members were appointed for blatantly political
reasons or saw themselves as obligated to party or Minister. Indeed, the Board's main weakness
was its failure to lobby Victoria effectively, a failing for which OLI probably paid in later
negotiations over OLI's role as provincial coordinator of distance education.28

One curious aspect of Board/Ministry relations was OLI's acquiescence to Hardwick's request
that Bruce Fraser, the Ministry's Executive Director of Postsecondary Programs, sit on the
Board as a non-voting member to provide liaison with the Ministry. No such arrangement
existed elsewhere in the college or university sectors. Fraser does not believe Hardwick
intended him to be a 'watchdog', nor did Hardwick attempt long-range manipulation of the
Board through Fraser. Rather it seems to have been due to intense curiosity on Hardwick's
part and a desire to have information fed directly back to him rather than coming through the
bureaucracy. For his part, Fraser viewed his role as helping OLI deal with legislative hurdles
and ensuring an easy flow of information to and from the Ministry. The latter was much
needed given the ignorance of most Ministry officials of OLI's nature and purpose.29
Under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977), and McGeer's interpretation of it, OLI was required to have a Board of directors, a Principal, a Bursar, and a Program Advisory Committee (PAC) in each of its three credentialled program areas. This last requirement made OLI unique in BC. The colleges were required to have only one such committee covering all programs. Unlike university senates, the PACs (as required by the Act), were creatures of the Institute Board, and had no statutory power. McGeer's motives in insisting on three PACs are unclear. The effect, however, was to give the Board more exclusive power over academic matters than its university or college counterparts. Moreover, the way OLI actually used the PACs gave the Principal and senior officers more untrammelled freedom of action than they could expect elsewhere. The university presidents had expected the University PAC to become a kind of joint senate, a vehicle for university influence on, if not control of, OLI's university curriculum. Ellis took a more management-oriented approach. He, Mugridge and Ron Jeffels (Ellis' successor), saw a Senate-like body as too cumbersome and slow. Control over academic policy remained firmly in the hands of senior OLI staff and the Board, and the PACs had advisory power only.

The CTV and ABE Program Advisory Committees were established too late to play a significant formative role in planning the initial programs, and they apparently never became effective planning bodies. Their meetings, called at the behest of the relevant OLI Director, were irregular and infrequent. This was a pity, since OLI probably under-utilised the mixture of expertise and networks represented by the largely external memberships. The University PAC, dominated by academics chosen by Mugridge and Ellis, seems to have functioned more effectively. Mugridge used the Committee fairly consistently though it, too, met irregularly after the first flush of activity in 1979 till its demise in 1984. Correspondence between Mugridge and committee members indicates great interest and dedication on the latters' parts.
The PACs were part of the paraphernalia of OLI's objective legitimacy (Trow 1984), but served a somewhat limited role in OLI's consultative and decision making processes.  

Organizational Structure

Athabasca University and the BOU provided the main models for OLI's early structure. Athabasca's structure was the more familiar, its two divisions of Learning Services and Institute Services emulating the academic and administrative divide in many Canadian universities. The BOU then comprised four groups of programs (faculty), student services (including a decentralised system of regional centres), production and distribution, and bursarial functions (Perry 1977; Rumble 1982c). Ellis first chose a structure akin to the BOU; with amendment in late 1979 it became more like Athabasca University. In both versions, the divisions of labour departed markedly from traditional separation of academics and administrators. They illustrate well Peters' perception of distance education's industrial character (1969; 1971; 1989).

In contrast with the now-mountainous and labyrinthine structures of the older universities, OLI's first organizational structure was flat, with six Directors reporting directly to the Principal - administrative services (Segal), student services (Meakin), program support services (Maurice Hedges), University Program (Mugridge), CTV (Franklin), and ABE (Dawe). The Principal's Office comprised institutional research (Bottomley), information and Board secretariat (Paterson), and the library (Rosemary Cunningham). The structure combined the advantages of speedy communication and informality of decision making with the disadvantages of an overly wide span of control for the Principal, and awkwardness in intra-OLI coordination. That awkwardness was exacerbated by OLI's extremely fast growth. It came to a head in the hectic summer of 1979, with extreme pressures to complete course preparation and production, publicise the programs and enrol students, and set in place the teaching and support mechanisms necessary in time for fall offering. The new staff were enthusiastic but untried, as were the systems they were simultaneously creating and operating. The easy and informal
communication among the first small group was replaced by a more complex network of competing tasks and opinions. Tensions appeared over procedures, role interpretation, and integration of activities. They widened into territorial conflicts as each group consolidated its power and spans of action. As planning moved into implementation, it became clear that a more hierarchical structure was needed to integrate and adjudicate across the various jurisdictions.

An immediate area of tension appeared over lack of coordinated production schedules, whose importance to a distance education program no one fully comprehended at first. In conventional educational institutions, scheduling means classroom timetables and the last-minute rush to have class materials printed. It must have been a sharp reminder of the difference in OLI's aims and methods. Scheduling problems were never fully resolved, but as a first step Ellis brought Program Services under Segal's direct control, redesignating him Dean of Administrative Services. Coordination was also needed among the programs. The three Directors faced different external environments and internal curriculum requirements, but had similar problems of how best to prepare and teach courses. Ellis combined the three groups into one division, appointing Mugridge as Dean of Program Development (soon retitled Academic Affairs) as well as Director of University Programs. Meakin, as Director of Program Operations (student services) continued to report directly to Ellis. This immediately reduced the span of the Principal's control while opening the way for more coherent academic policy development and, especially, integrated implementation.34

Other tensions developed in different attitudes among the program directorates to course development roles, course formats and academic standards. Conflict emerged over the relationship between development and teaching. In an effort to resolve these, Mugridge introduced three structural changes. First he created a Division of Course Design, comprising instructional psychologists, editors and other specialist staff, appointing David Kaufman as its
Kaufman had joined the University Program as an instructional designer in April 1979 with a background in engineering and computing as well as educational research and evaluation. Secondly, Mugridge persuaded Ellis to transfer responsibility for tutoring from Program Operations (Meakin) to Academic Affairs. Tutors would be the primary source of advice for course revision. Hiring, firing and supervision of tutors were academic decisions, and there was a natural flow of interest and responsibility from course development to course operation. Thirdly, Mugridge proposed coordinators should be appointed for groups of subjects such as humanities, sciences, and social sciences. The Program Directors' roles changed, perforce. Each was now responsible for course planning and approvals, appointments of course writers and consultants, scheduling of course preparation and production with Kaufman and Hedges, and tutoring, evaluation and revision of their courses. They would be assisted by a small number (never sufficient) of coordinators.

No Full-Time Faculty

The most startling and original feature of OLI's structure was its lack of full-time faculty. The reasons for OLI's decision are intriguing and the consequences far-reaching. Hardwick and Ellis concurred that OLI should not follow the BOU model of massive course teams of tenured academics. Both recall Walter Perry's advice in 1978 not to employ a tenured faculty because, he said bluntly, "Most of these people have got one course in them". That is, each person's expertise holds for only a small number of courses; thereafter, their teaching and research interests may conflict with the institution's curricular needs. Perry's private advice flatly contradicted his public view (1977,91-2) that full-time staff were crucial because they have a loyalty to the organisation and a primary concern for its students which a consultant or seconded person lacks. The element of truth in Perry's harsh comment convinced Hardwick that OLI should be an enabling structure drawing on the universities' academic credibility to give OLI legitimacy by contracting in university expertise as needed. Hardwick, like McGeer, was no supporter of faculty unionization, and they probably found attractive the idea of
avoiding any such encumbrances. Ellis was more perturbed by the BOU's "needlessly bureaucratic, complex, time-consuming and expensive" course preparation process involving large course teams of in-house academics and instructional specialists.38

Perry's advice was reinforced by W.A.S. (Sam) Smith, a former SFU colleague of Ellis and Mugridge, now President of Athabasca University. Having hired faculty on traditional criteria, Athabasca seemed to be having similar difficulties to the BOU and, moreover, to have problems with some faculty whose teaching skills were inadequate to the demands of teaching at a distance. Industrial disputes at Athabasca around this time may also have affected the tone of Athabasca leaders' advice to Ellis and Mugridge.39 Ellis and Mugridge worried about the dangers and expense of taking on trappings of a traditional university - time and funds for research, study leave, a research library - for which OLI had neither the resources nor the mandate. Even had OLI been able to afford full-time faculty, Mugridge was convinced it was wiser in the early years to buy in specialist expertise for a particular course and then hire as many tutors as needed. Having decided to offer courses in a significant range of disciplines, many of whose enrolments would inevitably be low, it was hard to justify the expense of hiring the range and number of full-time faculty needed. Further, it was doubtful the Ministry would be forthcoming with the level of funds necessary to allow OLI to employ significant numbers of faculty.40

The consequences were extensive. OLI had to take seriously its mandate to collaborate with others in the educational system in order to obtain specialist expertise and credibility. OLI coopted a widening circle of BC academics to advise on or write courses whose quality and standards could not be easily impugned. An external academic imprimatur was built into each course. Taking advice from outside became the norm. Calvert found this worked well in the early days but later became cumbersome and led to procrastination and delays in planning and writing courses. Mugridge and Segal found the no-faculty model clarified the division between
development and delivery, making it easier to manage planning and schedules. The disadvantage here was that it exacerbated the isolation of tutors who had no disciplinary community or role models. Mugridge was also pleased by the shift from traditional university emphasis on faculty to academic administrators and professional specialists.41

DESIGN AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS

As outlined in Chapter 2, modern distance education is characterised by interlocking systems for course preparation and production, teaching and student support, and system management. Like many distance education organizations starting in the 1970s, OLI's senior administrators looked to the BOU's approach. OLI also looked to other Canadian models, notably Athabasca University. The most profound difference, affecting much of OLI's operations, came from the decision not to employ full-time faculty. The systems and strategies OLI adopted for course development and delivery also reveal a tension between bureaucratic systems designed to maximise cost efficiency and productivity, and those aiming to meet needs of individual students. Because it completely separated course development from teaching, OLI may have found it easier to pursue both aims.

Course Design

In constructing a 'course package', OLI's designers expected it must be able to stand alone - that is, the package contains all the information a student needs, organized so the student can negotiate meaning and develop intellectual or other skills. Holmberg (1982b) describes the result as 'guided didactic conversation' (see also Kaufman & Bottomley 1980; Kaufman et al 1982).42 Thus it would be possible for the most isolated student to take a course, the OLI icon being a woman living in a northern lighthouse, communicating via radio telephone.43
The decision to employ no full-time faculty made the course designer central to negotiation of content, meaning, degrees of difficulty, and ways of presenting material for any given course and thus, central to quality control. Mugridge and his colleagues modified the BOU and Athabasca course team models and course design process. A course was prepared by a team of course writer, course consultant (both on contract), and course designer, with back-up support from audiovisual, graphic design and other specialists in OLI. Mugridge initially expected most writers would be tenured academics with established reputations. Many were, but OLI gradually found many of its writers among the "young and hungry." These were typically assistant professors attracted by the challenge of innovative pedagogies and reasonably lucrative financial return. Drafts were examined by an academic consultant, normally drawn from senior academic ranks in BC - people with academic prestige whose imprimatur would indicate the course's intellectual worth.44

The course designer's role intruded into domains many academics would consider their own:

To a course designer, the word 'design' means three things: instructional design, editorial design and visual design, all of which overlap and are interconnected. Instructional design means analysing the learning skills and tasks, and determining how they may best be taught. (At first glance it may seem that instructional design should be part of the writer's responsibility, but knowing how to do something and knowing how best to teach something are quite often two different things.) Editorial design means revising, reorganizing or even rewriting a manuscript so that the writer's message is absolutely clear. Visual design means physically organizing the text and illustrations so as to facilitate reading and learning. The design process, taken as a whole, can take anywhere from two to six months, depending on the writer's skill, the writer's sense of organization and commitment, his (sic) accuracy, his fastidiousness and his willingness to cooperate with other members of the course team.45

Most OLI course designers had at least a masters degree and experience in teaching or another aspect of education. Their credentials lent them a certain authority in dealing with academics but it was not always enough. They had also to persuade writers and consultants that the designer's distance education and instructional design expertise was as important for the course's quality as the writer's disciplinary knowledge. None of this came instantly. 'Course
designer' was a new category of job, requiring people with patience, meticulousness, and an ability to put themselves in the position of the student and convey that to the course writer and consultant. They had to understand the psychology of learning and the most appropriate communications media for the subject. Much had to be learned on the job. Mugridge acknowledged the multiplicity of skills required but hoped to find people who could "keep a weather eye on the whole process of developing a course". He later reflected the designers "were more human than we gave them credit for.... (T)hey... just settled into doing things in a particular way.... so they didn’t make the best use of their own resources and the other resources that were available." In particular, since hardly any designers had prior experience of using television in teaching, they tended to ignore it once the early decisions were made not to incorporate television extensively.

Communications media

Ellis' insistence on certainty in contracts with students, and genuine accessibility of OLI's programs to all BC adults, affected OLI's choice of communications media. Ellis believed subjects and students should determine the communications media used, not the reverse. The choices were print, audio or radio, video or television, home laboratory and other kits, and computers. There was apparently no demur in OLI from the idea then prevalent in Western circles that a successful distance education course comprised a mixture of media and teaching strategies (see, for example, Holmberg 1969; Sims 1978; Perry 1977; Wentworth 1978). The Board and senior administrators accepted the equally prevalent view that the most educationally satisfactory way of teaching at a distance was to use printed materials of high instructional and technical quality (Pittman 1987; Holmberg 1989). Printed materials could be used anywhere, anytime. They could be revised comparatively easily, and readily reorganized into other course configurations.
Audio and radio appeared to offer an economical and effective way of communicating with students. Waterloo University, for example, had almost a decade’s experience of distance teaching mainly via taped lectures. Leslie (1978; 1979) found audio helped alleviate the loneliness of the long distance learner and improved completion rates. However, OLI staff do not seem to have canvassed radio as a major medium and chose cassette tapes as a valuable supplement to printed materials rather than as prime sources of instruction and communication. The explanation probably lies in the hegemony of print; its very familiarity gave it highest utility and value both to learners at all levels and to those preparing and teaching the courses.47

Television was another matter. Although it was technologically possible to reach all BC homes via satellite receiving disks, such devices were far from universal and delivery was very expensive in the late 1970s. The cable system served about 80% of homes in BC but virtually all the residual 20% resided in the remote areas OLI was trying to reach. The alternative of mass reproduction of videos was then uneconomical and logistically difficult to distribute. Production costs would also be very high and would severely limit OLI's capacity to deliver an extensive range of courses. Some Board members were enthusiastic about television’s educational potential. The whole Board was, nevertheless, adamant that OLI’s educational media must not disenfranchise potential students, though Fraser was disappointed at what he saw as an overly conservative stance on the issue. It was simply too soon to move headlong into television as a prime medium of instruction, despite McGeer’s and Hardwick’s pressure. Behind the practical considerations, however, it seems Ellis and his colleagues were, at best, lukewarm about the educational value of television. For one thing, they found evidence on its effectiveness, especially from the BOU, to be equivocal; its value seemed limited to certain kinds of learning activity in certain subjects (see Bates 1982; 1984). For another, Ellis believed requiring students to use a scheduled television component in their course would effectively reintroduce the traditional time/place constraints of campus institutions. This lukewarm
attitude was quickly embedded in OLI's pantheon of "the way to do things" and became difficult to amend once technical problems of access were overcome in the 1980s.48

The BOU had shown science could be taught well outside the traditional confines of the laboratory, but spent $15 million per annum on home kits, and required extensive workshop and warehousing facilities. OLI could not hope to emulate these, an important reason behind Mugridge's caution over science courses (see Chapter 8). As for computers, they were seen in 1978–80 less as a medium of communication (electronic mail, for example) and more as a means of teaching students certain quantitative skills. Many students probably could not afford the expense of a computer, so OLI would have to supply them in some way. The Board reacted cautiously in 1979, more on resource than educational grounds. Computers were later installed in the regional centres for student use, and limited numbers were made available for rent during particular computing courses.49

Acquiring and Adapting Others' Courses

OLI had immediate access to the large collection of BOU film and print materials Hardwick had bought, but used few of them over the years, partly because television did not play a central role in OLI's programming, and partly because their modification was not a simple matter. The adaptation required of BOU courses exemplified the most complex of any modifications OLI ever undertook. First, the courses were far larger than the typical North American course and required judicious cuts to fit OLI's 3-credit structure. Secondly, they closely integrated content, media of presentation and teaching strategies. Since OLI did not use television or video extensively, alternative ways were needed to present the material. Thirdly, culturally specific terms and values needed modification or explanation. New assessment materials had to be prepared, together with student and tutor manuals leading both through the material, to set an 'OLI tone' and standards.50
Canadian courses presented fewer challenges for modification. OLI’s course design system was strongly influenced by its growing relationship with Athabasca University, both institutions acknowledging potential mutual advantages of trading and exchanging courses. Apart from buying two courses from Athabasca to start its University Program, OLI seconded an Athabasca course designer, Ellen Curtis, in July 1979 to help develop its course design system and induct inexperienced designers. Work began in mid-1979 on cooperative development of three courses. Mugridge and John Daniel (then Athabasca’s Vice President Learning Services) decided their respective five-year plans included about 60 courses which might be commonly developed. That led to an agreement for mutual involvement in the planning stages, and thence to efforts to harmonise formats, nomenclatures and assessment requirements.

Once the jurisdictional dust settled between OLI and the three BC universities, UVic and SFU (and later UBC) agreed to sign over to OLI rights to some of their undergraduate courses. A modest fee of up to $5000 was stipulated, but UVic apparently did not actually charge OLI, probably thanks to the good offices of Sam Macey, UVic’s Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and an OLI Board member. Ellis told the Board that the universities’ courses were not of sufficiently high quality to be used without upgrading and modification but the costs involved were about half those of preparing courses de novo. Of the 18 university courses OLI offered in January 1980 (its second semester of teaching), seven were purchased and adapted from UVic, SFU and Athabasca, setting a pattern which strengthened in succeeding years (Kaufman & Bottomley 1980). Having no full-time faculty helped OLI avoid the dampening effects of the ‘Not Invented Here’ factor which has inhibited course exchange and acquisition in many distance education systems (Jevons 1976; Bynner 1985).

Teaching Strategies

Course delivery was partly determined by OLI’s choices over communications media. Beyond this, however, was the difficult task of balancing belief in the importance of learners'
independence with belief in the desirability of interaction with the teacher, adviser and other students (Daniel & Marquis 1979). OLI's leaders chose to develop parallel systems of tutors and student advisers, using a combination of mail, telephone and regional centres. With greater emphasis almost inevitably placed on the programs and course development systems in OLI's first two years, the teaching and advising systems developed somewhat later from basic principles set in 1979-80 and are examined more closely in Chapter 8.

Though courses were ostensibly devised for complete student independence, OLI's leaders expected this to be the exception, not the norm. If the materials replaced the conventional instructional role of providing information, a tutor was still needed to help the student negotiate its meaning and incorporate it into her or his knowledge, as well as assess the student's progress. Peters (1969; 1971) had warned of the alienation tutors could feel through lack of control over course content and from their own isolation from the organisation. The dimensions of the problem at OLI only emerged after several years, but Mugridge initiated almost immediately a custom of annual tutor workshops for training and mutual support (Calvert 1982).

Meakin defined the tutor's role: to help students interpret the materials, give extensive feedback on their work through comments on assignments and via the telephone, and assess assignments and examinations papers. This implied a system allowing a relationship to develop between tutor and student over a whole course rather than one in which the tutor was a faceless person marking assignments at random. The relationship was initiated by the tutor through a telephone call at the beginning of semester and followup calls at regular intervals. The telephone was to become a vital umbilical cord joining student and OLI, and tutor and Institute.
Communications media were different, but OLI's policy makers expected the tutor to be similar to an instructor in a campus-based university, and set their standards accordingly. Tutors were subject specialists whose qualifications would be accepted for teaching a similar course at a BC university. Like university teaching assistants, they were employed on a per-course contract. Unlike university assistants, but like OLI's students, the OLI tutor was freed from campus in time and place. She or he could live anywhere in BC, and work at times convenient to her and the students. SFU and UBC defined their distance education tutors' roles in similar ways. At SFU, the tutor/marker might be the course author, another university faculty member, or a graduate student. At UBC, the faculty member writing the course typically taught it for the first year and acted thereafter as supervisor (and sometimes tutor) for the next several years. At North Island College, on the other hand, the tutors were full-time 'learning facilitators' helping students in a particular locale studying any NIC course (Forsythe 1979; McInnis-Rankin & Brindley 1986).

**Student Support Services**

Student support services have been accepted in postwar conventional higher education as indispensable, if peripheral. Orthodox student administrations tend to focus on systems rather than on students, on outcomes rather than process. As was outlined in Chapter 2 above, academic advising, personal counselling and student advocacy have combined with administrative and records functions to become central components of a distance education system. They are designed to enhance learners' independence and recognise learners' differences and personal needs. The student adviser's role at OLI followed this pattern, mediating the organization and the student. Mugridge summarised it thus:

> Our students are not, by and large, extensively schooled or, frequently, overwhelmingly successful. Above all, they are not here. To me, that means that they must be treated with great sensitivity, tact and understanding; that we must get across to them the impression that we exist to help them as much as we can.
Sensitivity to learners' needs did not imply patronising 'spoon-feeding', but rather a variety of reassurances to students that the institution had faith in their ability to meet their learning goals. In designing the adviser role, Meakin emphasised assistance with access to OLI and study in general; advice on program and course selection, financial aid, credit transfer and learning skills; and advocacy for OLI and for the student within a decentralized structure of regional centres. He borrowed heavily from the BOU and Athabasca models, but avoided their emphases on personal counselling (Sewart 1978; McInnes-Rankin & Brindley 1986). Many OLI advisers had graduate qualifications in counselling psychology but it never became a specific prerequisite. Dick Scales was appointed Senior Adviser in July 1979 to set up advisory mechanisms and develop an accompanying student recruiting system. Originally a school teacher, Scales had worked in non-metropolitan areas since 1964, in adult and vocational education, and had been Dean of Student Services and Registrar at the College of New Caledonia (Prince George) since 1970.55

Decentralized regional services were an important element of OLI's outreach and student services, for two reasons. The advisers could do much of their work by telephone or mail, but Ellis and his colleagues were convinced face-to-face contact in 'shopfront' centres would greatly enhance OLI's relationship with students. Some functions could only be handled regionally – for example, administering placement tests, organizing local self-help groups, or acting as mail collection points during postal disruptions. Secondly, if OLI's role was to take education to the people, it should be seen to do so. OLI should belong to its clientele through visible presences in major provincial communities. The regional centres' staff would be invaluable in establishing working relationships with community colleges, school districts, and local representatives of government departments, industries and other constituencies with power to affect OLI's well-being. The centres were not envisaged as locales for face-to-face teaching as were SFU's centre at Kelowna or UVic's at Nanaimo. They were to be the place of first call
for the prospective student, a source of information and advice on all aspects of OLI's operations for the enrolled student, and the face of OLI in the local community.\textsuperscript{56}

Meakin proposed a three-stage development of regional centres, based on resource availability, with the eventual aim of covering all towns of any size in BC. The first centres would be in the more highly populated areas, including one at OLI headquarters in Richmond, and gradually extending into smaller communities. By October 1980, there were seven centres in operation - at Richmond, Prince George, Kelowna, Victoria, Terrace, Castlegar/Nelson, and Kamloops. Remote students were assigned to the special care of the nearest adviser, and Meakin hoped funds would allow advisors to visit small communities periodically.\textsuperscript{57} Hardwick became somewhat alarmed at the potential proliferation of regional advisory centres by OLI and numerous other educational agencies in the late 1970s. However, five of OLI's centres were established in cooperation with a regional college. One, in Victoria, was a tripartite agreement involving a downtown 'shopfront' centre for OLI, Camosun College and UVic, the latter two institutions being based in suburban areas away from major public transport routes.\textsuperscript{58}

\textbf{OLI'S FIRST STUDENTS}

OLI's creation was attended by a certain faith that adults would wish to study at home, and that there really was a significant unmet demand. The numerous inquiries preceding OLI's creation implied as much, but quantification was uncertain and OLI's leaders had to plan their curricula and teaching strategies without the comfort of knowing the real demand for particular programs or location of students. Bottomley produced, with some difficulty, three scenarios for 1979-84 based on what seemed reasonable assumptions. The highest posited a 1979-80 enrolment of 750, and 3,400 for 1980-81. Net course enrolments far exceeded hopes, attaining 2,955 and 7,531 respectively (see Appendix 1.3).\textsuperscript{59} OLI was well on its way. Ellis had the student numbers to prove the need and confirm OLI's security of tenure. To achieve this, OLI
ran an intensive media campaign from June to August 1979, in which Ellis featured prominently on radio and television. Ellis took the need for good public relations very seriously. OLI had received poor press in the lead-up to its creation, but positive publicity was essential to reach directly to BC citizens who were frustrated by obstacles to completing their educational aims or who had barely formulated their educational hopes. It was also essential to stamp on the public mind an impression of OLI's character: its openness to any would-be learner, and its approaches to distance education. By September, over 4,000 enquiries had been received, generating 732 enrolments in fall 1979, predominantly from non-metropolitan areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Ellis returned to Simon Fraser University in August 1980, tired but able to claim OLI's existence was firmly grounded in a comprehensive combination of programs, students, staff and operational systems. He brought to the Institute a mixture of energy, administrative ability, political pragmatism, toughness, commitment to improving educational opportunities, and caution about the desirable and possible methods of doing so. Ellis stamped his personality and educational vision firmly on OLI, determined the Institute would be an organization whose intellectual quality conformed to university norms, and whose practice of distance education would equal any modern distance education institution. He laid heavy emphasis on meticulous, coherent planning and effective, economical administration. Mugridge and Segal shared these values, and followed suit. Ellis' successor, Ron Jeffels, found in place an efficient, purposeful organization which was surviving well and beginning to prosper.

The principles underlying OLI's organization and systems deviated little from those Ellis had enunciated in 1973 against a backdrop of the BOU model. Even then, he had rejected many of the BOU's means as inappropriate to the BC environment, while accepting its goal of opening access to people educationally disenfranchised. Ellis shared that goal with McGeer and
Hardwick but it is surprising that, in appointing him OLI's first Principal, they paid so little attention to Ellis' conviction about the 'goodness of fit' between distance and conventional education in BC, and his caution about the costs, accessibility and educational validity of television. It is easier to assert, with hindsight, what the McGeer/Hardwick vision actually was. At the time, their statements were still somewhat ambiguous. Their lack of clarity appeared in OLI's mission statement which did not define distance education, nor specify the nature and priorities of OLI's service role.

By 1980, the basic structures and systems were in place, driven by the fundamental principles of system conformity, certainty in students' contracts, accessibility to all BC adults, and independence from the state. The structures and systems borrowed from others' experience, and conformed with contemporary mainstream norms and standards. OLI's decision to eschew a full-time faculty would prove to be a unique contribution to the developing field of distance education. It also had far-reaching consequences for the way OLI organized and presented knowledge. The evidence suggests, however, that the reasons for avoiding a conventional faculty model were pragmatic, not ideological, and had little to do with OLI's search for status in the distance education arena.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 5
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 Agenda Papers and Minutes [Bd: 5 June 1978]; Bruce Fraser, interview with author. Ellis' secondment was agreed by SFU Board of Governors and President Pauline Jewett with no demur, and ratified by OLI Board, 9 Aug. 1978.


5 An approximate figure because of regularising of temporary appointments, and variations in ways personnel figures are shown in budget and expenditure papers and OLI Annual Reports.

6 Ellis to Selection Ctee, 8 Nov. 1978 [PF: Personnel]; Paterson to Ellis, 14 & 15 Nov. 1978 [Bd: 17 Nov. 1978]; Ellis to Hardwick, 28 Nov. 1978 [Ac.Aff:M0E#1].

7 Corresp. Ellis and Segal, with various in MoE., Hanson-Erb Architects, Richmond Holdings (lessor), the Board, & Mike Battistel (DP & Ancill. Services, OLI), Oct. 1978 - June 1980 [PF: Space Requirements]; Segal to Jack Fleming, MoE, 7 June 1979 [Ac.Aff: MoE #2]; Segal to Ken Plant, MoE, 27 Oct. 1980 [PF: Data Proc.].

8 Segal, interview.

9 The '3M Co.' - a group comprising Ellis, Mugridge, Segal, Dawe, Franklin, Meakin, Paterson and Bottomley - met almost weekly till September 1979, dealing with a mixture of operational matters and policy proposals. An informal Course Development Group transmuted into an Academic Affairs Committee by April 1980. An Administrative Committee was created in the wake of the reorganisation in late 1979. More informal groups met regularly within each Directorate; it was through these, and Ellis' regular contact with senior staff, that most business was enacted, though formal records were rarely kept.

10 Ellis, interview, & pers. comm. RD, 13 Feb., 1991; Bottomley, interview (1990); Segal, interview; Board, 8 Aug. & 14/15 Sept. 1978.


12 Author's interviews with Ellis, Walter Hardwick, Bruce Fraser; Paterson, Board Retreat 15 Oct. 1978 [Bd]. An immediate example was a concern that OLI’s prime mission should not be confused with add-on functions such as McGeer’s proposal that OLI assume responsibility for a BC Union Library Catalogue.

13 Ellis, radio interview (station unknown), April 1979, OLA Library AV collection.

14 Paterson, "Interpretation of statement of mission" 17 Nov. 1978 [Bd].
OLI’s start-up funds came from three sources: the $2,425,000 capital line item in the colleges and institutes’ vote for establishment of distance education support systems; a $450,000 line in a Ministry contingency fund; and the $3 million non-metropolitan university programs budget – Min.1.5(c) [Bd: 5 June 1978].


Author’s interviews with Paul Gallagher, Fisher.

Segal to Ellis, 23 March 1979, Ellis to Pritchard 27 March, Min.5.c.k, [Bd: 9 April 1979]; Hardwick claims responsibility for the symbolic $1.00 line; others say it was Fred Weber or Ellis.

Author’s interviews with Pritchard, Ellis, Bottomley, Fraser, Segal, & Fisher.


Ellis to OLI staff, 12 Sept. 1979, Ellis to OLI Directors, 17 Sept. 1979 [PF: Personnel]; Ellis to Board, 7 Nov. 1979 [Bd: 9 Nov. 1979].

Mugridge to 3M Co., 8 March 1979 [Ac.Aff: 3M Co.]; Ian Mugridge, interview.


The only other such contemporary organization I know of is Britain's National Extension College, but it did not offer its own credentials, and was mainly concerned with sub-degree work in the 1970s (Jenkins & Perraton 1980). Closer at hand, NIC bought in almost all their courses and employed 'tutor-facilitators' to cover a range of subjects, but they and a small group of other faculty provided an academic core of the College (Forsythe 1979).

Ellis, interview; Hardwick, interview.

Gail Crawford, Senior Instructional Designer, Athabasca University, interview with author; Spronk (1987).

Author's interviews with Ellis, Segal, Mugridge, Hardwick, & Bottomley (1990).

Author's interviews with Mugridge, Segal, Ellis, Jocelyn Calvert, Jack Blaney.

Course design process in Mugridge to Goard, MUSC, 6 July 1981 [Ac.Aff: MUSC].

Ellis, interview. Such images are a useful benchmark for designing teaching and support services. OLI's is still essential for the Agency's views of its functions and clientele even though, by the mid-1980s, a more realistic image was a city worker.


Course designers' comments in Mugridge to Dean Goard (MUSC), 6 July 1981 [Ac.Aff: MUSC].


Bottomley, "Discussion of the adaptation of British OU materials for OLI courses" [Bd: 9 March 1979].

Ellis to John Daniel (AU Vice Pres.) 24 May 1979 [PF: Personnel].


Meakins to Board, 27 March 1979 [Bd: 9 April 1979]; McInnis-Rankin (1986,71-76); Ellis to Board, 10 May 1979 [Bd: 10 May 1979].


Bottomley, "OLI regional enrolment projections 1979-84" [3M Co.: 29 May 1979].

The campaign included radio 'promos' 15-20 times a week all over the province ('Live and Learn'), advertisements in all provincial and local daily and weekly newspapers, 80,000 brochures dropped into householders' mailboxes and sent to libraries and community centres, news releases, and radio and television interviews.
Paterson to Board, 29 June 1979 [Bd: June 1979 mailing]; Ellis to McGeer, 6 & 13 July 1979, Ellis to Hardwick, 13 Sept. 1979 [Ac.Aff: MoE #2]; Ellis, and later Jeffels, reported to each Board meeting on recent PR activities.

Ellis, interview; Ronald Jeffels, interview.

Chapter 5 examined the ‘inside’ of OLI, as it was created and grew in 1978-80. I turn now to OLI's four program areas and the curricula their Directors developed in this period. OLI's curriculum was, in a sense, the bridge between OLI and other higher education institutions in BC. Positive judgements about OLI's academic quality were critical to its survival and prosperity. The impetus for, and standards of quality came from within the Institute, but the programs had to take the external environment into account. This chapter also examines the institutional relationships OLI developed with the universities, colleges and the state, which intersected with OLI's curriculum development and its emerging policies defining and practising distance education.

THE CURRICULUM TAKES SHAPE

Clark (1978) notes that stratification of disciplines and credentials occurs within as well as between higher education institutions. At OLI this was evident in the disproportionate influence on curriculum and pedagogy wielded by the University Program. OLI's overall status inevitably depended heavily on its performance in the highest level of knowledge with which it engaged. Moreover, the majority of OLI's senior personnel came from university backgrounds, bringing with them common values about hierarchies of knowledge, standards and quality. OLI was too small and resource-poor to be able to differentiate extensively and cost effectively between modes of course development, production or delivery, so the demands of the highest end of the hierarchy were likely to prevail. The University Program was inherently more complex than the Adult Basic Education Program which began at the same time, and occupied more energy, time and resources. Uncertainties surrounding the Career, Technical, Vocational Program meant curriculum development followed the other two, so that it took advantage of principles and procedures already in place. In addition, it appears Mugridge's success in early
internal power struggles ensured his attitudes towards academic quality, student needs and administrative efficiency (largely shared by Ellis) shaped overall policy and practice in admissions, course design and teaching.¹

Mugridge’s proposals for various aspects of the degree structure became overall Institute policy, applicable to all programs. They were practical consequences of the founding principles and program objectives, and indicated OLI was setting as a baseline for its institutional legitimacy the normative standards of BC universities’ undergraduate teaching programs. Thus, all programs would be open to BC residents aged 18 or over (though younger students might enter under certain circumstances). Preparatory work might be recommended, but not required. Institutionally-paced learning would encourage higher completion rates and be more useful to students at all levels than self-pacing (the policy then prevailing at Athabasca and NIC). Students should be able to complete a degree in reasonable time, using manageable and coherent blocks of material to be covered in a limited period. The academic year would comprise three 14-week semesters. This meant courses would be comparable in length with other BC university and college courses. Courses should normally carry three credits and be completed in one semester, but longer courses should be allowed where appropriate. The weighting conformed well enough with the slightly different structures of the three universities, but would later prove constricting for CTV and ABE courses.²

The University Program

The basic principles and structure of the University Program were intricately related to analyses of potential course development and teaching strategies, and admission and transfer credit policies.³ They were also intimately affected by OLI’s resource capacity, and by expectations of the standards and quality likely to be acceptable to the external university community. OLI decided to offer its own undergraduate degrees in arts and sciences, equivalent in merit and credit value to those of the universities, and providing a broad but rigorous liberal education
rather than a career-oriented training. The alternative — offering a degree under the auspices of a BC university — was unacceptable since OLI would not sufficiently control its curriculum and would "condemn itself to being viewed as of lesser status". Reciprocal credit transfer provisions would be built into the curriculum and degree regulations to allow students to complete degree studies begun elsewhere or to prepare for professional training. OLI's courses would therefore conform to BC university curricula and standards. Ellis was especially concerned to avoid "the festering sore of 'unassigned credit', an issue of growing seriousness in colleges....Unassigned credit comes close to academic fraud." This was presumably an oblique criticism of NIC, 35% of whose academic courses then received unassigned credit and 30% no credit.  

The degree structure bore more resemblance to SFU's BA than to those of the other universities, but was not incompatible with any. The degree, as designed by Mugridge, comprised 120 credits, at two levels, one corresponding to first and second year university courses, the other to third and fourth year. The lower level (60 credits) comprised specified introductory courses and subjects preparatory to areas of specialisation. The upper level (60 credits) required two areas of specialisation, each including a directed study course. The next issue was which fields of study to offer. OLI's limited resource prospects made it impossible for OLI to develop a range and depth of curriculum comparable with the universities'. Conventional emphasis on major studies was not feasible either. Mugridge predicted OLI's degree clientele were more likely to want a general degree, so a flexible degree structure was more desirable. McGeer and Hardwick wanted to offer the BOU-style degree dominated by large multi-disciplinary courses (see Chapter 4). Mugridge and his colleagues concluded radical changes in the curriculum itself as well as in the method of course delivery would only compound antagonism towards OLI.  

The system compatibility principle effectively ruled out interdisciplinary courses because of the problems of obtaining assigned credit status. This diminished the attraction of BOU courses but did not rule out selective division and adaptation
of their materials (see Chapter 5). OLI looked more towards Athabasca University, whose courses appeared more readily compatible with BC’s knowledge structures.6

The choice of fields was also affected by the Board’s decision to emphasise upper level courses catering for people who had completed two years of college academic courses. Consistently, the most heavily subscribed disciplines at colleges were psychology, mathematics, biology, commerce, sociology, English, geography, history and economics. Mugridge included computing studies also; demand was accelerating, but few BC colleges yet offered the subject. The nine proposed areas would allow OLI to accommodate SFU’s and UVic’s expressed desires for OLI to offer courses supporting their professional distance education programs. This became an understated part of OLI’s service role. Commerce was later dropped and introductory chemistry added. Resources severely limited the number of actual courses OLI could hope to mount. Mugridge and Ellis planned a curriculum of 114 courses, 85 of which made up the minimum for students to complete concentrations in two of eight disciplines.7

Mugridge and Ellis were acutely aware they had to consult people in each subject field, to ensure academic respectability and quality, and to demonstrate OLI’s willingness to cooperate with other universities and colleges. The first draft curriculum for each area was prepared by faculty from one or other of the three universities. The University Program Advisory Committee met three times in May and June 1979, examining Mugridge’s drafts of structure, course length and sequencing, and course outlines. The draft curriculum and structure was also sent several times to the Tri-University Committee (which Mugridge initially used in lieu of a Program Advisory Committee), to heads of the relevant departments in the three universities, and to deans of instruction at all the colleges. The proposal was examined, in whole or in part, by over 40 senior faculty in the universities, and an unknown number in the colleges.8
Most reactions to the structure were positive once limits on size and balance of concentrations were understood. Mugridge's explanations to the Tri-University Committee and others of how courses would be prepared and taught apparently allayed much concern about academic rigour and quality control. Criticism of course content was more pointed. Some was a matter of differing opinions about essential and desirable knowledge in a discipline, the kind of constantly shifting debate every discipline experiences. Most of the criticism was thus couched as an indication of omissions or imbalances in the draft OLI curriculum. A few critics considered the degree dull, overly traditional, "a kind of scissors and paste job on the traditional ranges and themes, and missing the opportunity for an exciting program especially geared towards OLI's students." Just what that meant was not specified.

The OLI Board approved the University Program in October 1979. McGeer had designated OLI's degrees the responsibility of the Universities Council in July. Throughout the design and consultation process the Program was described as a single degree. However, OLI presented it for UCBC's approval as programs leading to a BA and a BSc (in mathematics and biology), possibly because of McGeer's expectation OLI would teach science at a distance. The BSc. was rejected by the Program Coordinating Committee, probably because OLI could not itself sustain a full degree in science. Given the logistical and financial problems of delivering courses involving experimental work, and doubts about the level of demand, Mugridge and Ellis were not overly disappointed.

In the meantime, three courses were acquired to enable OLI to start teaching in September 1979. They served several purposes. One was to test OLI's delivery and support systems. Another was to demonstrate OLI's viability and claim its territory quickly. A third was to test the acquisition and modification of courses and explore desirable mechanisms for collaboration. Rights were obtained to a UVic English course, itself based largely on a BOU course; and to two Athabasca University courses, in psychology and administration. All were reviewed for
OLI by external consultants, and modified in some respects for OLI's purposes. By mid-1980 a further 17 university courses were offered (see Appendix 1.5), some purchased from Athabasca and SFU, others developed entirely within OLI. The purchase (at modest cost), and relatively small amount of adaptation required, made it possible for OLI to offer degree courses in only 15 months from its creation, compared with the 2 1/2 years it took the BOU to develop its first courses de novo (Tunstall 1974; Perry 1977). Even so, it was probably slower than McGeer and Hardwick had hoped. Ellis and Mugridge allude admiringly, if ruefully, to McGeer's support and encouragement coupled with "his exuberant impatience and not always private prodding" (1983, 19).

**Adult Basic Education Program (ABE)**

In a background paper prepared for OLI in July 1978, UBC's Gary Dickinson defined ABE as "the basic skills of reading, writing and comprehension which are required by every adult for adequate functioning in a modern technological society". The Ministry of Education defined 'basic education' for adults as schooling to Grade 12 completion level or its equivalent. 'Basic literacy' referred to education up to Grade 8 or its equivalent. In the late 1970s there were five routes to Grade 12 completion for adults in BC: a bewildering array of programs offered by school districts; the Correspondence Education Branch of the Ministry; colleges; the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission; and a General Educational Development examination. Many programs were not acknowledged or accepted by employers and senior educational institutions, the one exception being the Ministry's Adult Interrupted Program (the Dogwood Certificate). Some 25,000 adults participated in ABE courses each year, but Dickinson categorised approximately 24% of BC residents over 15 years as 'undereducated'. The largest number were in urban areas, but proportions of rural under-educated were significantly higher. Especially disadvantaged groups included Natives, migrants, the unemployed, and occupational groups such as foresters, miners and fisherfolk.
By the time Alan Dawe arrived in January 1979 the Board had approved a rapid tempo for course development, assuming one thrust would be towards the Dogwood Certificate (Grades 11 and 12). Ellis had already established cordial relationships with Bruce Naylor, new Director of the Ministry's Correspondence Branch, and other Ministry officials. Ellis accepted ABE would have a high priority for OLI and be very popular, though his comments to Hardwick suggest a certain intellectual distance—"ABE does not appear to be a field in which scholarship, careful analysis or first-rate research abound". Hardwick encouraged cooperation, but made it clear coordination of ABE across institutions was the Ministry's responsibility. In practice, Naylor readily recognised deficiencies in the forms and structures of his Branch's adult program and the need for revision of many of its materials. He and Dawe seem to have concluded quickly that the Correspondence Branch should concentrate on courses for school-age students (its official mandate) while OLI directed its efforts towards adults.13

Dawe proposed OLI should start with two ABE programs, one leading to Grade 10 completion, the other to Grade 12, both based on the Ministry's Guide to the Core Curriculum (1977). Grade 10 courses covered reading and writing, basic arithmetic, the Canadian community, and fundamentals of science. Grade 12 completion required essay writing/reading, and contemporary affairs, and allowed two options from mathematics, literature, principles of science, and a foreign language. Both were developed in collaboration with the Correspondence Branch, structured so a student could finish in a minimum of one year's study. Other programs, such as basic literacy training and English as a second language, would follow as need was established, and "an efficient but not intimidating" testing program would be introduced to help students re-enter secondary education at the most appropriate point to their interests and abilities. Once up and running, it would be possible to adapt some courses for use in CTV programs.14
Within OLI, Dawe was something of a 'one man band', a loner whose tight hold on his program avoided some of the internal tensions of the other, more complex programs. The ABE Program Advisory Committee did not meet till November 1979, well after teaching began. It could but endorse Dawe's priorities, and turn its energy to forward planning of basic literacy, numeracy and life skills programs.15 Outside OLI, Dawe moved quickly and effectively to reinforce cordial relations with the Correspondence Branch. Cooperation with that Branch was to include program planning, course writing and reproduction; sharing informational services to students, admissions and placement tests, and monitoring student progress; and Ministry certification on completion of OLI's program. Naylor even envisaged a time when the two agencies would act as 'field offices' for each other.16

Dawe was quite quickly forced to change some of his approaches to course preparation and teaching, bringing them in line with University Program practice. Unlike the latter, whose course writers were all part-time, Dawe first used a full-time contract team of four subject specialists to prepare the first ABE courses at both levels. Each was responsible for her or his own subject but worked as one team to develop a consistent tone and style in the courses. This proved less successful than Dawe had hoped. The deadline pressures were intense, the contract writers did not complete all the work, and Dawe eventually wrote some of the material himself in addition to his own heavy workload.17 A second change was made to pacing. Dawe gave the first year's intakes the option to complete their courses in either one or two semesters because he was uncertain of the pace appropriate for most. By January 1980 he was convinced students could cope well with a single semester. Indeed, they might do best if asked to complete an appropriate amount of work over a shorter period. The two-semester option was phased out in September 1980, bringing the ABE Program into line with the University pacing norm.18
The ABE Program quickly proved successful, partly because it was smaller and simpler than the University Program, and had to satisfy fewer external vested interests. The courses were highly regarded outside OLI and found a ready market in colleges and school districts as "a valuable resource for ABE practitioners". In addition, a decline in financial support by Canada Employment and Immigration for ABE students may have made OLI's distance education program more attractive to would-be students who could not leave their work. The Ministry's support proved a boon, not only because the reciprocity agreement expanded OLI's selection of courses immediately, but also because its accreditation of OLI's program as a Dogwood Certificate gave it a credibility and status enjoyed by few others.19 Neither Dawe, nor anyone else at OLI, seems to have found the Ministry's control of the curriculum unacceptable, or to have considered there was a choice. The boundary between OLI and the Ministry was permeable from the beginning.

ABE's lowly status in the hierarchies of knowledge probably obscured or diminished OLI's achievement in the eyes of some senior OLI administrators. Nevertheless, OLI's provincial leadership in the ABE field was an important example of horizontal legitimacy. Within that field, OLI quickly asserted and retained a high prestige for most of the 1980s.

Career, Technical and Vocational Education Program (CTV)

Career, technical, and vocational education (CTV) programs in BC colleges and institutes covered an enormous range of subjects, types and levels of program, occupations and skills. Their only commonality was an unabashed connection to employment opportunities and employers' needs. CTV included preparatory, apprenticeship, technical and para-professional programs, some pre-service, others in-service and upgrading. Many required "hands on" training with complex and expensive equipment. The multiplicity of government, corporate and professional jurisdictions and agencies interested in CTV made it a political minefield. Union, state and corporate tensions behind the Board Commissions (1977) and the Occupational
Training Council (OTC) encouraged caution in entering the field as a new and untried institution. The Distance Education Planning Group's Report (1977, see Chapter 4) had nevertheless identified employment-related education as a high priority for distance teaching. Ellis and the Board wisely decided to move cautiously in assessing where OLI could effectively meet large, demonstrable demand without undue conflict with other vested interests.20

In 1978 there were very few CTV courses available at a distance in BC. As already noted, NIC's students in the late 1970s were predominantly in the academic transfer stream, though the College expanded its ABE and CTV programs in the 1980s. In 1979 the BC Institute of Technology (BCIT) had 2,000 enrolments in 56 correspondence courses. Most enrolled less than 20 per course and half the registrations came from one provincial ministry. BCIT planned to expand in the CTV area, and had been a key player in the 1977 satellite education (STEP) project. Large, well established and powerful, BCIT sat at the top of the college/institute hierarchy in BC. Ellis and Franklin evidently wished to reach an harmonious accommodation over the jurisdictions appropriate to each. Ellis' view was, in simple terms, "CTV distance should be divided between OLI and BCIT with OLI taking responsibility for 'C' and 'V' and BCIT for 'T'." It is unclear how far BCIT agreed with this. Distance education was never a major priority for BCIT but the market was sufficiently large to allow both institutes room to manoeuvre. BCIT later developed various distance education programs in career/vocational areas, especially business studies. OLI rarely ventured into the technical area on its own, not least because such subjects typically demanded 'hands-on' training which most people assumed distance education could not readily provide.21 A scattering of courses in the Correspondence Branch, professional associations and proprietary schools completed the count of CTV programs at a distance.

Early in 1979 the Justice Institute indicated its interest in cooperation over upgrading programs for police, corrections personnel and firefighters. Similarly, the Pacific Marine Institute
suggested cooperation in courses for fisherfolk and private boat owners. These were encouraging signs in a college sector climate still largely antagonistic to OLI. Gaps were apparent, too, in training and upgrading opportunities for health and human resources personnel (especially nurses), motel and restaurant operators, vocational counsellors, preparatory courses designed to help reduce the 33% drop-out rate among apprentices, and upgrading for tradespeople.22

Franklin’s policy guidelines for course length and weight, transferability, and admissions were identical to those of the University Program. At first, all courses would lead to a certificate; more advanced studies culminating in a diploma would be added later. There were two types of certificate – general and specific – each requiring 30 semester hours, of which at least 50% must be taken through OLI. Students could choose any courses they liked for the general certificate. This would give people more freedom than in many colleges where many courses were open only to students taking an entire program. OLI determined requirements for each specific certificate, in conjunction with accrediting bodies and employers; in effect taking on a gatekeeping role for the knowledge, skills and credentials of a particular occupation or profession.23

Franklin designed a clever and economical matrix of courses and certificates. Many courses could satisfy the needs of several certificates, so that only 38 courses need be developed for the first six specific certificates. Some preparatory or remedial courses would also be developed to improve accessibility and the chances of a student’s success. By 1983, these courses overlapped with ABE, and some certificate courses (especially in business studies) overlapped with the University Program, giving students ladders to higher levels of knowledge and credentials. By 1981, OLI had in place 20 courses for a general certificate, and the beginnings of four business certificates (in office administration, office management, small business management, and motel and restaurant management), three industrial programs (in construction management, industrial
supervision, and electronics), and preparatory courses in English and mathematics (see Appendix 1.5).

The economy involved in multi-purpose courses was significant. Most specialist certificates would inevitably have a limited market but, with high development costs, economies of scale in a distance education program can best be achieved by maximizing enrolments (Wagner 1972; 1977; Snowden & Daniel 1980; Perraton 1982b; Rumble 1986a). OLI's emphasis on management and business studies knowledge common to various occupations matched the increasing popularity of such fields and concentrated student numbers. By mid-1980 government agencies and employers were asking OLI's assistance in other areas as well. However, perennial shortage of regular funding severely limited OLI's ability to respond, and Franklin found himself hard-pressed to complete the certificate curricula already approved.

Continuing Education

The fourth program objective in OLI's mandate was continuing education, which Ellis considered well suited to transmission via television.25 As noted in Chapter 5, his first experimental project did not survive the 1979-80 budget negotiations. Other priorities intervened till March 1979 when Ellis proposed a modest start to a program of non-credit courses for personal enrichment or vocational purposes which might take any form suitable for the topic. Fees would normally be set to recover costs, and the courses would usually be free-standing - that is, OLI would not provide extra tutoring or other assistance. Two projects were set in motion. One was OLI viewers' guides and associated newspaper articles to accompany three television series - 'Connections' (about the impact of technology), 'The Music of Man', and 'Elizabeth R'. The other involved educational cruises.

During the 1980s a small number of non-credit, self-financing courses were offered outside regular programming, on topics like computing, conservation and outdoor recreation education,
metric system, life planning, and wine appreciation. Relegation of continuing education to a peripheral place in OLI's priorities and activities is somewhat ironic given the location of distance education programs within marginalized continuing education departments in many Canadian universities. Its lowly status highlights OLI policy makers' efforts to position the Institute in the mainstream of credentialled higher education.  

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE STATE

McGeer remained keenly interested in OLI's progress but, once it was operational, saw his main role as finding funds for it and protecting it from Cabinet and Treasury Board. He became preoccupied with other matters, including communications policy which would ultimately affect OLI through its relationship with the Knowledge Network. Hardwick, too, stepped back a pace, but remained directly and intensely interested in OLI's development. He met with the OLI Board on several occasions to press his views, and pressured Ellis and Mugridge on a variety of issues. The Institute's total reliance on government funds in the early years made it especially vulnerable to Hardwick's perceptions and policies. Nevertheless, Ellis retained a distance between OLI and the Deputy Minister.

OLI's leaders also faced a sizeable task in educating Ministry and Council officials about the nature of its distance education activities and their resource and curricular consequences (see Chapter 5). The complexity of colleges' and other institutes' relationships with the several coordinating councils created under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act has already been noted (chapter 4). With its broader mandate, OLI was in a difficult position. Segal prepared budget submissions in three formats for six bodies. To confuse matters further, in 1978 the Ministry introduced a complicated new activity costing method which Ministry officials and college bursars alike had to learn to use. Its premises and structure fitted poorly with OLI's financial requirements, and tended to work against OLI's interests. The process for submission
of budgets, analysis and verification by Ministry officials, and adjudication by the councils was labyrinthine and multi-layered. As if this were not enough, Premier Bennett restructured his Cabinet in November 1979, appointing McGeer to a new Ministry of Universities, Science and Communications (MUSC), and lawyer Brian Smith to the Ministry of Education. OLI's lines of accountability, sources of funds, and groups to be lobbied multiplied overnight, though it remained technically responsible to the Ministry of Education which continued to administer the Colleges Act and therefore the Councils.

The complexity and multiplicity of parties involved left OLI vulnerable to officials' ignorance of and prejudice about its purpose and operations. Fisher believes a wide consensus existed within the Ministry of Education on the importance of improving access, and a view that, since the Minister had now created OLI, it was incumbent on the Ministry to work with it. There were divergent views, however, on what OLI's purpose and methods were or should be. Ambiguities persisted about its role as service agency and credential-giver. Andy Soles (Associate Deputy Minister), Fisher and probably others with college backgrounds believed OLI might work best as a resource centre, working through the colleges rather than operating as an independent entity in competition with them. Ellis' dual emphasis on OLI's own programs and intentions to collaborate with the system did not remove the ambiguity. OLI's systems, structures and students did not conform to the norm either.

Within the Ministry only about 15 officials were involved in post-secondary financial and program management. Many of these had worked in the system for years and knew each other and people in the post-secondary system well. Fraser's, and later Fisher's, presence on OLI's Board probably eased some of the initial mutual ignorance about intentions and styles of operation. Ellis played the main part in developing relationships with senior Ministry officials, with Segal's support on financial matters. The Board's Chair, Jim Pritchard, had worked at Selkirk College under Andy Soles (now Associate Deputy Minister), and played an active role in
negotiations with the Ministry and Councils. A real understanding by bureaucrats of OLI's peculiar needs, however, came but slowly. Conflicts arose over OLI's needs for course development funds, its a-typical requirements for space and computing equipment, and its difficulties in conforming to standard formats for student data.

In some respects, OLI's relationship with the Ministry and Councils was similar to that of the other institutes and colleges. On the one hand, the institutions proclaimed their independence and autonomy; on the other, they did not firmly reject close bureaucratic involvement in resource allocation and planning as the universities would have done. College acceptance of bureaucratic intervention was widespread and long-established. Prior to creation of the Councils the Ministry had even allocated budgets line by line, which enabled it to influence strongly the nature and balance of programs, numbers and types of staff, and extent of support services. The Councils appeared to control more loosely, but the increasingly popular concept of system-wide planning effectively reproduced the status quo of centralized power. The key senior OLI staff came from university backgrounds and were not accustomed to such in-depth negotiations with the Ministry over budget matters (and thence over OLI's size, rate of growth and development and delivery strategies). There is little evidence, however, that OLI's leaders cavilled greatly at such intrusion into institutional affairs. This may have been partly an acceptance of the status quo in relation to college-government relations, and partly an acknowledgement of OLI's accountability as a publicly funded organisation.

With so many coordinating and ministerial bodies involved in higher education resource allocation, it is unsurprising that OLI fell between the cracks in 1979-80, first over its dual accountability to the Universities Council and the Academic Council, and secondly over the Occupational Training Council's responsibility to fund part of OLI's CTV program. UCBC approved new and revised programs of the universities. The Academic Council approved the colleges' first and second year academic transfer programs, and certain vocational programs.
UCBC was clearly responsible for approving OLI's third and fourth year university courses, but it was far from clear how, and by whom, OLI's first and second year courses should be approved. It was not that the Academic Council was antagonistic to OLI or its programs. Its Chair, Ian McTaggart-Cowan, had allowed Hardwick to channel funds through the Council to purchase the BOU's materials. He expressed keen interest in OLI's endeavours, defending it against college criticisms that OLI would reduce their enrolments, and smoothing Mugridge's way through some hostile articulation committees.37

In April 1979, McTaggart-Cowan informed OLI the Academic Council expected to review OLI's 1980-81 budget proposals for the first two years of the University Program and probably all its CTV courses. Ellis and Mugridge lobbied hard for the entire University Program to come under UCBC. They had conceived it as a coherent, integrated degree program which could not be logically or operationally separated into two components. Both Councils would have to consider the whole degree to render valid judgement on the portion for which each was responsible. The OLI degree's legitimacy would be acknowledged only if it underwent the same scrutiny and approval as the universities' degrees did, and UCBC's imprimatur was more prestigious than the Academic Council's. McGeer's decision was delayed by a provincial election in May, but in July he designated the entire University program the responsibility of UCBC.38 Even so, the confusion was not resolved, with severe consequences for OLI's 1980-81 budget. OLI sought $338,000 from the Academic Council for CTV courses, but received only $36,400. It seems McTaggart-Cowan and William Gibson, UCBC's Chair, misunderstood the purpose of the funds, conversed at cross purposes with each other about responsibility for them, and neither Council considered the proposals. It was a serious shortfall in an operating grant of $4.5 million, with enrolment well over estimates. No further allocation was forthcoming, however.39
This problem was largely unintentional, but OLI's difficulties with the Occupational Training Council were due to the latter's opposition to OLI and distance education. The OTC comprised representatives of government, industry and the unions whose main preoccupations were with technical, trades and apprenticeship training. In 1980 they declined to fund OLI's courses in these areas on the grounds that OLI's delivery methods were unacceptably untraditional and OLI should seek elsewhere for funds. After the OTC baulked at resolving the issue with OLI, Hardwick issued a sharp statement to the Council, pointing out it was placing its policy ahead of the government's and that it had an obligation to fund the OLI programs. This seems to have clarified matters somewhat though many OTC members remained unenthusiastic about OLI. Physical proximity to OLI - the OTC's offices were in the same building - seems to have helped not at all.40

RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Several aspects of OLI's relationships with BC's universities and colleges have already been explored in this chapter. These relationships were rarely simple or clear. Formal institutional policy, and the views of senior administrators did not necessarily accord with faculty attitudes towards OLI. Ellis wrote to Hardwick and McGeer in May 1979: "It is abundantly clear that there are those within the system who would wish us less than full success and would even wish us to be a source of embarrassment to you." The hostility, suspicion and fear ameliorated over the years but never quite disappeared. The antagonism formed a powerful backdrop to OLI administrators' decisions about what could be done as opposed to what might be done, and encouraged a subtle, but enduring siege mentality.41

Relationships with the Universities
Once OLI was created, the three universities concentrated their non-metropolitan energies in the direction of professional programs - UBC in education, forestry, criminology, social work,
agriculture, and health sciences; SFU in education, kinesiology and criminology; and UVic in education, nursing, social work and public administration. SFU abandoned its plans to expand its distance education arts program to concentrate on professional areas. UBC declared it would hold its existing ceiling of arts courses and limit future developments to specialised areas not covered by OLI. However, all three continued to offer arts courses, at a distance, in disciplines also taught by OLI.42

Despite these reasonably positive institutional responses, the university presidents' initial hostility towards OLI continued into 1980 and beyond. In public, UBC President Kenny damned OLI with faint praise, casting aspersions on its "glorified correspondence courses", and "massive expenditures" at the potential expense of the universities. This was neither just nor accurate, since OLI's total operating grant in 1979-80 was $3.6 million compared with the universities' non-metropolitan grant of $2.8 million and their total operating grants of $217 million.43 Although OLI administrators were invited to university forums, they felt "many of the representatives of the universities wished we would go away and leave them to their proper business".44 Kenny and SFU President, George Pedersen, joined forces to defeat Ellis' efforts to liberalise continuing restrictions on the number of distance education courses a student might take for university degrees, coordinate and improve credit transfer arrangements among the universities, and rationalise curricula to avoid duplication. Kenny and Pedersen accused OLI of duplication and waste by developing courses already offered by the universities rather than a distinctive curriculum "designed particularly for adults interested in completing degrees on a part-time basis".45 They did not make clear what such a program might involve.

At individual faculty level, as already noted, Mugridge received considerable help and support from people in the relevant departments in each university. Though scepticism about teaching without face-to-face contact remained, a willingness gradually grew to give OLI the benefit of the doubt. After all, OLI was unlikely to compete seriously with the universities for students
or status. The increasing involvement of faculty as consultants or writers not only coopted those individuals but made it more difficult for their peers to complain about an OLI course they had written or supervised.

Individual faculty views were probably influenced by the attitudes of powerful senior administrators and faculty who dominated decision-making in the Universities Council and each university. The attitudes of several key people at UBC and UVic subsided from hostility to neutrality or guarded support once they were sufficiently convinced OLI was no real threat to their university's status or plans, and that its course content and teaching methods were academically respectable. Mugridge commented that senior UBC staff like Cy Finnigan (Dean of Science), Ron Shearer (economics), Bob Smith (geography, Assistant and then Vice President Academic), and Dan Birch (Dean of Education, later Vice President Academic) criticised OLI trenchantly on occasions. However, once OLI had demonstrated its serious intent to maintain high standards, they became quietly very supportive of OLI's aims, methods and quality. Others, however, remained unconvinced intellectual quality was possible without face-to-face teaching, and were sceptical of the academic worth of a degree with so few options.46

At UVic, key administrators such as Glen Farrell, by now Director of Continuing Education, and Sam Macey, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and OLI Board member, helped give OLI entree to UVic courses and faculty. The Kootenays were then a major recruiting ground for UVic, and with the demise of Notre Dame University in Nelson, UVic (mainly Farrell) moved quickly to arrange a cooperative agreement with Selkirk College under the umbrella of the David Thompson University Centre. Mugridge was a member of DTUC's steering committee in 1979 but was unable to generate more than lukewarm interest by UVic, Selkirk or the staff at DTUC in a serious cooperative venture with OLI providing complementary courses or reaching students distant from Nelson.47 At this time, UVic and Farrell seemed to define distance education in terms of off campus teaching and telecommunications rather than in OLI's
On the other hand, UVic willingly linked with OLI and Camosun College to open a 'storefront' centre in downtown Victoria in 1980, and was the first to give OLI rights to its courses.

Though OLI developed more close links with Simon Fraser University faculty than the other universities, the relationship was fractious. Overt opposition to OLI's existence and ways of operating subsided but never disappeared. On the one hand, Ellis, Mugridge, Segal, Meakin and Paterson knew SFU intimately, had many friends and professional colleagues there, and brought into OLI concepts of education and organisation which had been strongly shaped by their SFU experiences. Mugridge's correspondence with SFU faculty over the degree program elicited mostly cordial and helpful responses. SFU agreed in 1979 to give OLI university students access to its library holdings. OLI paid salary, postage and other costs for a part-time reference librarian, but SFU charged nothing for usage till 1982.\textsuperscript{49} Arrangements were made amicably, and effectively, for co-development and production of chemistry and statistics courses in 1980.\textsuperscript{50}

On the other hand, some at Simon Fraser apparently felt aggrieved that Ellis, in particular, had 'abandoned' SFU when its distance education proposal was rejected in 1977. Others found the degree program unexciting and likely to encourage duplication, in contrast to SFU's own early policies of developing programs that complemented UBC rather than competed with it. Jack Blaney (Dean of Continuing Studies), Jock Munro (Vice President Academic) and others repudiated OLI's no-faculty model, believing strongly that the SFU model, where faculty prepared and taught (or supervised the teaching of) distance education courses was intellectually and pedagogically superior. Munro insisted stiffly on formal requests from OLI for permission to hire SFU faculty to write or review OLI courses, and relationships became strained over some early failures (by SFU staff, not Mugridge) to observe protocol. OLI staff later maintained they experienced a persistent resentment and resistance from certain senior SFU
staff which was perpetuated in operational relationships at lower levels. This did not prevent later collaboration, but made it a more tortuous process. It seems SFU perceived OLI as a threat even though that was neither necessary or likely.51

Relationships with Colleges and Institutes

College attitudes towards OLI in 1978-80 were similarly contradictory. Chapter 4 outlined the nature of college opposition which, in some cases, never disappeared. The college system was not monolithic; it included small, struggling colleges in remote parts of BC, large metropolitan colleges, and institutes with specialist provincial mandates. In the long run, the larger metropolitan colleges and institutes found OLI less of a direct threat than did the smaller non-metropolitan colleges. The former were protected by size, reputation and/or special mandates. Some of the latter were barely viable.52 There were distinctions to be made, too, between faculty hostility based on personal fears and scepticism about distance education, and institutional reactions and policies. Inter-institutional relations were inevitably affected by personal relationships and networks.

In July 1979 Ellis and Hardwick concluded OLI's and BCIT's views on distance education were "almost irreconcilable." It was 1984 before collaborative agreements were reached between the two.53 OLI staff moved very cautiously with Northwest College over creation of a regional centre in Terrace because of the College's antagonism to an OLI presence.54 On the other hand, OLI reached agreements reasonably easily with Northern Lights, Camosun, New Caledonia, Selkirk and Okanagan Colleges for cooperative use by OLI of college regional centres. Present and past connections were probably influential here. For example: the Acting Principal of Northern Lights, Rowland Grant, had been one of Ellis' first consultants (on OLI's organisational structure and student pacing). Ron Jeffels, now Principal of Okanagan, was a long-time supporter of extended access. Scales had come to OLI from New Caledonia and was presumably able to trade on connections there. Pritchard had been bursar at Selkirk.
A curious relationship developed between North Island College and OLI. NIC badly wanted more Canadian courses, especially at sub-degree level where its main source of supply was Coastline College in California. OLI's courses were an obvious solution. John Tayless, NIC's Director of Programs, believes the relationship which developed between OLI and NIC in this regard was a mutually beneficial, long-lasting one. However, Dennis Wing, NIC's Principal, was unconvinced of the need for OLI's existence as a separate provincial organisation. Wing was a forceful maverick who rarely lost an opportunity to proselytize his college's system of distributed learning centres and to chivvy principals and the Ministry alike to be more innovative in their approaches to adult learning. Even his colleagues recognised he could be difficult, but he successfully influenced the thinking of some senior Ministry officials and Principals as well as Hardwick. The latter seemed to see NIC as a preferable, more innovative approach to open learning even as he ignored its pedagogical problems and administrative obfuscations. After a brief 'honeymoon' period, Wing resumed vocal opposition to what he saw as OLI's conservative attitudes towards open learning and delivery strategies, and unnecessary competition with the colleges.

College principals were undoubtedly influenced by (and many probably shared) faculty views, but OLI's relations with colleges and institutes were also confused by uncertainties about its role as service agency or competitor in granting credentials. Had OLI settled for the former, local college sovereignty would have been less threatened. For example, OLI's ABE materials were marketed, at cost, to colleges and others, and OLI almost immediately reaped the benefits in prestige. Ellis was determined OLI must offer its own programs in order to survive and prosper, and gain the kind of credibility which would encourage others in the system to seek out OLI's services. Insisting OLI's programs be compatible with the system meant those programs would also compete with the system in some respects. The areas OLI most threatened in the colleges were probably the academic transfer programs. McGee did little to alleviate
these fears early on by declaring OLI was one way of improving what he saw as poor academic standards in most colleges. In 1980, the Council of Principals, in which Ellis actively participated, agreed on a policy on institutional relationships intended to defuse tensions over competition. Early drafts were thinly disguised efforts to delimit OLI’s territory and activities. Thanks to Ellis’ efforts, the final version was innocuous.

CONCLUSIONS

The policies governing the shape of OLI’s programs (their length, course weightings, etc.) were drawn directly from Ellis' and Mugridge’s SFU experience. The degree structure itself fitted BC norms reasonably well. Conformity with the system was a powerful motivation. Equally powerful, though more subtle, were the assumptions about knowledge, quality and standards which senior OLI administrators brought to OLI from previous university posts. As inchoate and qualititative as such values were, they lay behind much of the curriculum development work Mugridge and his colleagues undertook in OLI’s early years. Whether they were appropriate to the ABE or CTV programs remained to be seen. The initial overt parity in the Institute between the three Program Directorates slipped once Mugridge was appointed Dean of Academic Affairs. It was not a matter of favouring one area over others in terms of resources, but rather a matter of asserting an hegemony of university-born attitudes towards standards and styles of course development and teaching. At the same time, OLI’s open admissions policy, and assumptions about the nature and needs of OLI’s students informing its instructional design, indicated OLI was looking to provide a different kind of undergraduate experience from the conventional one.

It is unsurprising that the culture and socio-political assumptions built into OLI’s policies and practices were drawn directly from personal experience of university standards. Ellis and most of his senior staff had worked for lengthy periods in universities. Most of the middle-ranking
staff had at least one university degree. They reproduced in OLI the culture with which they were imbued, and set standards familiar from their own experience. Only a few, like Dawe, Franklin and Scales, had extensive experience of college mores and outlooks. It was not a matter of choosing between black and white. The colleges, themselves, had adapted much of their practice from university models. Their academic programs were bound to standards and curricula of the BC universities through the credit transfer and articulation system. Many of their faculty had university backgrounds. Furthermore, OLI closely resembled the colleges in two key respects: the comprehensiveness of its curricular range, and its devotion to openness.

There never was any question of OLI gaining full parity with the universities since it had no mandate to teach at postgraduate level or offer professional programs, and no money for research or the academic infrastructure to support it. OLI's legitimacy with the universities thus rested on acceptance of its undergraduate program, in a climate where universities increasingly looked to graduate teaching and research as the signs and standards of prestige. OLI was hoist on the petard of its system compatibility principle. By choosing to conform to existing curricula, Ellis and Mugridge ultimately ensured OLI students would receive credit transfer to the universities. In doing so, they guaranteed OLI would compete with the universities in ways it would not have done had its curriculum been non-traditional. The result was that OLI could reasonably aim for legitimacy at the bottom of the university hierarchy, and for prestige as a provider of high quality programs in the parallel arena of undergraduate teaching. OLI's degree status seems to have counted for relatively little in the college arena. The system compatibility principle again meant the Institute was inevitably perceived as competing with the colleges and other institutes. On the other hand, OLI's commitment to improving access, and the strategies and policies it espoused to achieve that goal, placed the Institute firmly in the ideological milieu of the college sector. Philosophical compatibility was not enough to deal with the fears of college faculty about OLI's supposed threat to their personal and institutional security.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 6
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 One could be misled by the greater extant documentation specific to the University Program's development than of the ABE and CTV programs. Dawe, for example, was renowned for keeping no files.


4 Ellis to Pritchard, 15 Feb. 1979 [Ac.Aff: MoE #1]; Bottomley, "Discussion of the adaptation of British OU materials for OLI courses" [Bd: 9 March 1979]. The BC credit transfer system allowed three assessments: no credit at all; nominated and directly equivalent status ("assigned credit"); and unspecified or unassigned credit which the student could count only towards general degree requirements, not towards a major sequence.


9 W. Cleveland (Dept. History & Assoc. Dean Arts) to Jock Munro (Kelowna School of Resource Management) March 1979 [SFUA: 24/0/1/8]; Munro to Daniel Birch (A’g. VP Acad., SFU), 11 & 12 April 1979 [SFUA: 24/0/1/8]; Mugridge corresp. with various at SFU, June/July 1979 [Ac.Aff: SFU]; Tri-U. Ctee meetings 1979 [PF: Tri-U Ctee].


21 This view about technical education has held sway in Canada, but in Australia the large technical and further education systems have long offered an extensive range of highly technical, skills-based programs in areas as disparate as grain handling, pig husbandry and motor cycle maintenance.
The Universities Council adjudicated funds for university teaching and related courses; the Academic Council awarded funds for teaching of first and second year academic courses and some CTV courses; the Occupational Training Council handled the administrative and overhead costs of colleges; the Ministry Standing Committee covered ABE teaching costs. The sixth body was OLI's Board.


"Ministerial shuffle draws mixed reaction", The Ring (UVic), 15(32), 30 Nov. 1979; Board papers, 7 Dec. 1979; McGeer to Pritchard, 17 Dec. 1979 [Ac.Aff: MoE #2].


Author's interviews with Fraser, Ellis, Pritchard, Mugridge, Segal.


Beinder (1986); Fisher, interview; Gallagher, interview.

Ellis, interview.


Dean Goard (MoE) to Jack Cooper (Exec. Dir., OTC), 3 March 1980, Hardwick to Ellis, 25 March 1980 [Ac.Aff: MoE #3]; McDonald report to Board, Min. 5-7 [Bd: 20 June 1980].

Ellis to Hardwick and McGeer, 31 May 1979 [Ac.Aff: MoE #2]; Farrell, interview; Birch (interview) observes Ellis' 'siege mentality' from his time at SFU and suggests it coloured Ellis' expectations of reactions to his policies. An undercurrent persisted long after Ellis' departure, suggesting the feeling was more pervasive.


Mugridge to Ellis, 28 Nov. 1979 [PF: Outlook Conf].


Haughey (1985); Farrell, interview.


Ellis, interview; Blaney, interview; Munro to Mugridge, 20 June, 30 Nov. 1979, Ellis to Pedersen, 22 June 1979, Munro to W. Cleveland (SFU), 27 July 1979, Cleveland to D. Stouck (SFU), 7 Aug. 1979, Cleveland to Mugridge, 7 Aug. 1979, Mugridge to Munro, 8 Aug. 1979 [Ac.Aff: SFU].

Enrolment statistics (McGee 1984,58) indicate the fears were unfounded in overall terms, since part-time enrolments continued to rise till 1982. See Appendices 1.1 and 1.2.

Ellis to Franklin, 16 July 1979 [PF: R. Scales].


Hardwick, interview.

Author's interviews with Tayless, Gallagher, Fisher; Wing to Pritchard, 21 Nov. 1978 [Bd: 1978].


Ellis to Board, 7 Feb. 1979 [Bd: 22 Feb. 1979]; Ellis, interview.
Mugridge, interview.

Ellis automatically became a member of the Council of Principals, and Pritchard automatically joined other Board chairs on the Management Advisory Council. BCAC's Exec. Director, Frank Beinder, wooed OLI to join it; it did so in Nov. 1979 [Board, 9 Nov. 1979].

CHAPTER 7: RESTRAINING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE 1980s

OLI was created at the end of a period of unprecedented growth in all aspects of Canadian higher education. Few higher education administrators would ever admit to having enough funds to do all they wanted. However, while growth continued, the BC colleges and universities flourished. The growth rate slowed at the end of the 1970s. Terms like 'rationalisation', 'coordination' and 'accountability' signalled the period of prosperity was ending and state involvement in higher education affairs was accelerating. As Chapter 5 showed, OLI did not start with a financial carte blanche, and its programs and range of operations were immediately constrained by the level of funding McGeer was able to extract from a generally unsympathetic government. Compared with the 1980s, the 1970s were a halcyon period for BC higher education. OLI's history from 1980 must be seen against the backdrop of the Social Credit government's reaction to a severe recession in the early 1980s, and its efforts to treat higher education as an instrument of state policy. In briefly outlining salient aspects of the Social Credit Restraint policy and its consequences for higher education in BC, this chapter serves as an extended introduction to OLI's in-house policies and external relationships during the 1980s.

THE RESTRAINT POLICY

BC ended the 1970s in reasonably buoyant economic style as GDP continued to grow and immigration swelled the population, especially outside the metropolitan areas (Forrester & Chow 1979; Forrester & Hamaura 1983). Social Credit pursued pro-capital policies, including its own large construction projects, without pruning education and welfare expenditures. This changed dramatically in the early 1980s as the government responded to the impact of a severe worldwide recession.
Provincial dependence on natural resources, and high levels of US corporate ownership, made BC especially vulnerable in the recessionary climate. Schworm (1984) reports tight US monetary policies pushed up interest rates, thereby reducing investment, housing construction and purchases of consumer durables with severe flow-on effects to the BC economy. BC suffered from major declines in construction projects, world metal prices, demand for forestry products, and tourism revenues. Reduced personal incomes lowered consumer purchases and depressed the trade and service sectors. Unemployment in BC doubled from 88,000 in 1980 to 166,000 in 1982 and rose further to 192,000 in 1983 - that is, from 6.8% to 12.1%, to 13.8% of the workforce. Personal income, housing starts, retail sales, and investments all dropped sharply from 1981, while bankruptcies doubled (Schworm 1984,4).

The Socred government responded by increasing tax revenues and cutting expenditure and employment. Premier Bennett announced a program of government spending cuts in February 1982, and briefly enjoyed some public support for government restraint, though ‘wage roll-back’ policies hinted at what was to come (Nichols & Kreiger 1986,19; Resnick 1987,11). Social Credit won convincingly at the May 1983 election (though the popular vote remained a close split between the NDP and Socreds), but did so without any indication of the sweeping measures Bennett planned. In July 1983, the government introduced an extraordinary array of legislation designed to deregulate government functions; reduce the public sector by 25% through dismissals, privatization and reorganization; reduce trade union power by gutting collective agreements; eliminate many social welfare and citizens’ rights provisions; and centralize control of individual college and school budgets and higher education and regional planning. Collectively, these measures were called the Restraint Policy.

This comprehensive onslaught on social policies and trade union rights called out a massive, outraged public reaction. An intense, but short-lived coalition (Operation Solidarity) of unions, women’s groups, ethnic minorities, tenants, teachers, faculty and students formed to fight the
The government's initiatives with rallies, protests and strikes. A general strike was narrowly averted in November 1983. Undeterred, the government rammed through most of its program in 1983-84 and continued to legislate in similar vein through to 1985 (Nichols & Kreiger 1986; Kilian 1985; Resnick 1987). By then the economy was showing signs of recovery, though unemployment levels were expected to remain high for the rest of the decade.

Schworm (1984) considers this fiscal policy a disaster which exacerbated the recessionary crisis and damaged long term prospects for renewed growth and investment in BC. Resnick argues the Restraint policy was based on a neo-conservative ideological stance that "economic growth and public spending were incompatible and that public sector activities were generally inefficient and 'unproductive' when compared to those in the private sector." However, "a government loudly proclaiming the need to get 'the state off our backs' saw no inconsistency in enhancing its own powers" by extending and centralizing control over the education and welfare systems. Nor did it see any inconsistency in funding its own infrastructural and economic mega-projects, some of which achieved very large losses (Resnick 1987, 13-15).

EFFECTS OF RESTRAINT ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Although the Socreds' policy of fiscal restraint was not announced formally till 1982, a scaling down of higher education and its re-direction towards greater economic "relevance" and accountability began in the Ministry of Education in 1980. McGeer had instituted five-year planning by the colleges in 1979. After McGeer's move to the new Ministry of Universities, Science and Communications (MUSC) in December 1979, the Ministry of Education under Brian Smith initiated changes in the resource allocation process (from modified incremental to modified zero-based budgeting) which facilitated choice by the funding agency of one activity over another. In 1981, the government made its program priorities explicit, demanding institutions prepare their budgets on a 'worst scenario' basis, and ignoring college protests about
the inadequacy of the mechanisms and process and the political and industrial relations impacts of the exercise. A 'quick fix' special allocation of $4 million was made to mount post-secondary programs in vocational skill-oriented areas including health and service industries which could "show a substantial employment effect in the current year." This was but one of several attempts in the early 1980s to produce immediate employment effects of educational programs.2

As gloom descended on the institutions about their financial futures, a group of principals of Lower Mainland colleges and institutes met in October 1981 to attempt self-regulated coordination and rationalization rather than having it done to them by government. They were cynical about the lack of coherent long-range planning or sense of direction emanating from the Ministry, mistrustful of the Ministry's capacity to plan rationally, and fearful of portending draconian budget cuts. They also recognised problems among the institutions of territorial imperatives, competitiveness, and marginality and over-decentralization of some operations. The group, in which OLI's Principal, Ron Jeffels, was very active, continued to meet till late 1983, but effective action was stymied by the difficulties of overcoming territoriality. The group was also hampered by Ministerial requirements for institutional planning and financial documents that emphasised individuality rather than collectivity - a subtle 'divide and rule' that belied state rhetoric demanding collaboration and resource-sharing.3

The government incorporated its system priorities into a mission statement and objectives for the college system for 1982–87. Although discussed extensively throughout the college system, few substantial amendments were made between first draft in March 1982 and the final version of May 1983. The document, and its later elaborations, exemplified a neo-conservative attitude towards higher education as a tool of state economic policy. The goal of meeting individual, economic and societal needs was couched almost entirely in terms of occupationally-related programs. Goals of quality, lifelong educational opportunities and accessibility were described
in terms of economic and employment relevance and cost effectiveness. Traditional college
commitment to comprehensiveness was redefined as systemic, rather than institutional
comprehensiveness. That is, the province would provide a comprehensive range of programs,
but those of low economic priority in a particular region would be eliminated; others would be
rationalized across BC. The colleges applauded the attempt to bring coherent planning into
post-secondary education but criticized (to little effect) the redefinition of comprehensiveness.4

State program priorities were blatantly instrumentalist. At the top came employment-oriented
programs providing entry-level or higher level skills and occupational upgrading. After that
came ABE (including attention to special education programs for the disabled), and only then
academic and general education and support services. Colleges were expected to maintain a
core of university transfer programs (and bear in mind OLI's academic offerings), but priority
went to programs the government asserted had strong student demand and high immediate
employment potential - electronic, information-processing and computer-related programs
(including business and applied science), health-related programs including nursing, and
vocational programs tying in with a provincial Training Access (TRAC) initiative. Such
government assertions begged questions of what student demand really was, and how far
demand was influenced by government and corporate economic needs, rather than genuine
popular pressure. The mechanisms for apportioning funds within each Council's budget
ensured the government could control the total amount available for each priority.5 At the
same time, the government's policies undermined the pre-eminent position of academic transfer
programs within colleges' internal hierarchies, and directly threatened faculty jobs and stature.

College boards' opposition to the government's measures was concerned more with means and
extent than with the state's basic right to determine policy and goals. That right appears to
have been accepted from the very beginning of the college system, on the grounds that colleges
were accountable to the people (who paid for them) through the government they elected
The ethos of a community college as a means of career-related training was also deeply embedded, so it is unsurprising college administrations had little difficulty with the principle of emphasising CTV, particularly as a means of helping BC through the recession. Many were concerned by implicit government assumptions that education or training should or could be assessed by immediate consequences within the workplace, and that only subjects with direct ‘relevance’ to employment were important. The BC Association of Colleges (BCAC) rejected the Ministry's workforce demand model as self-defeating, inaccurate and inequitable, arguing the open access model was the only fair approach to provision of training, and at least as effective in matching student demand and requirements of the economy. Others warned of the long-term dangers of assessing quality by relevance, cost effectiveness and demand without distinguishing also creativity, intellectual maturity, and generalized knowledge. These concerns went largely unheard by McGeer and the other Education Ministers during the full flush of the Restraint period.

There had been complaints in both university and college sectors for some time about the inadequacy of funds to meet their objectives. The first warning of heavier cuts came with the government's announcement of a two-year Restraint program limiting increases in education budgets to 12% for 1983 and the cost of living for 1984. However, a third of the way into the 1982-83 financial year, the two Education Ministers (then McGeer and Vander Zalm) announced an immediate reduction of $12 million and $8.5 million in the universities' and colleges' budgets respectively. For each of the next two years, the universities suffered further cuts of 5% of the previous year's vote. Total college-institute allocations were cut by $14 million (2.5%) in 1983-84 and a further $11 million in 1984-85, representing an absolute cut of 8% over three years during which inflation ran at 17% and enrolments jumped by 11.4%.

The Education Ministries themselves were significantly affected by Restraint. The Ministry of Education reduced its staff by 32% over 1982-85 (7% above the government's overall target for
the public service). Managerial salaries and benefits were frozen; the Ministry was reorganized, and savings of 21% effected in its operating budget (Fisher 1985). The Ministry of Universities, Science and Communication remained until the beginning of 1986, when it acquired the post-secondary department of the Ministry of Education and was renamed the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education. McGeer lost his seat in the 1986 election. In January 1987 the Ministry gathered in job training from the Ministry of Labour and was again renamed, this time as the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. Each titular change symbolised the state's increasingly overt emphasis on higher education as an economic tool.

The universities responded to the funding cuts by imposing unprecedented enrolment quotas, massively increasing tuition fees, and eliminating faculty and staff positions. By 1984-85, UBC's annual shortfall was $18 million, and its President, George Pedersen, resigned in March 1985 in disgust. One may note here the UBC shortfall was three times OLI's provincial grant. Added pressure was placed on the colleges by government demands for higher productivity (measured by contact hours, class size and administration), increased enrolments, predetermined state priorities for programs, differential allocation of dollars per student through formula funding introduced in 1983, and special targetted funds. The system cost per student contact hour (in constant dollars) declined 10.9% from 1981-84, while services increased 24.2%. The price was faculty layoffs, industrial action, loss of a sense of direction in the colleges, and further relegation of control over curricula and services to the state. The educational climate grew "oppressive, full of uncertainty, frustration, distrust, demoralization." Economic, cultural and political arguments for restoring higher education to manageable levels fell on deaf political ears or were dismissed by government as tainted by vested interests.

In addition to the budget cuts and imposition of state program priorities, two groups of Restraint legislation had a significant and lasting impact on BC's higher education system. The
first involved amendments to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1983. The three advisory Councils were abolished and colleges and institutes reported henceforth directly to the Minister of Education. Few mourned the loss of the convoluted and often conflictual reporting and resource allocation mechanisms, though the BC Association of Colleges had wanted one intermediary council analogous to the Universities Council.\textsuperscript{13} That Council survived until 1987, after McGeer had lost power. Many college leaders seem to have preferred the prospect of unmediated connection to the sources of power. The direct relationship reinforced a sense of competitiveness among colleges and institutes, contradicting other government policy insisting on coordination and collaboration. Minister Heinrich saw the move partly as a cost-cutting exercise, partly as a control mechanism: "(B)y cutting back on the use of these bodies I want it understood that the Ministry of Education is to administer education in this province - and if it can't do the job then we'll examine the ministry".\textsuperscript{14}

The BC Association of Colleges vigorously protested the other amendments, to no avail. School district representatives were removed from college boards. The minimum number of members was reduced, and set terms of office were abolished (Kilian 1985; also see Ungerleider 1987). All board members were now appointed by the Minister and held office at the Minister's pleasure, opening the way to blatant patronage appointments. Changes in OLI's Board in 1985-86 were but one example. All the experienced, long-time OLI Board members were replaced by new Ministerial appointments, many of whom were closely connected with the Social Credit Party. The implications were a further reduction in institutional autonomy, and a more overt use of state power to influence legitimacy of institutions and knowledge.

The other area of Restraint legislation impacting on higher education concerned industrial relations. The Public Service Restraint Act (1983) allowed employers to terminate appointments where there were insufficient funds, the organizational structure changed, or programs were eliminated. In the colleges, seniority rights were lost, and the protection against technological
change built into faculty agreements was removed (Beinder, 1986, 212-3). Without the Act, the colleges and universities could have laid off tenured faculty only with the greatest of difficulty. Managements probably liked it as little as the academics, and UBC's Pedersen went so far as to resign. In-house relationships inevitably became conflictual and changed permanently the collegial, professional relationships pertaining hitherto. Senior administrators and boards were caught between the Scylla of the Ministry and Charybdis of faculty and staff associations. The Compensation Stabilization Act (1982, amended 1983) negated conventional collective bargaining mechanisms by enabling the government to control salary levels, demand productivity increases to justify remuneration increases, and freeze compensation for senior personnel.

University grants dropped precipitously but allocation methods changed little within the Universities Council which distributed the pain evenly rather than choose among the universities' priorities. The government was able to control allocations to the colleges more closely. From 1981, directions to colleges and institutes were so explicit about financial details and modes of presentation required, the institutions had little room to manoeuvre. Colleges complained lead times for budget preparation were inadequate, budget information from the Ministry was insufficient and confusing, and the Ministry over-emphasised short term initiatives for immediate result. Small wonder, then, that a formula funding concept was greeted with cautious approval when first mooted in 1981. Some saw it as a way of removing subjective and political considerations from resource allocation, simplifying the allocation process, and introducing a means of long-term planning. The simplicity was misleading, as the formula also proved insensitive to qualitative factors (such as OLI's need for development funds), and it was open to data manipulation and inequitable funding levels for different subjects and pedagogies. These fears were well-founded. The 'instructional units' on which the formula was based were weighted according to government program priorities, and
calculations for institutional grants reduced colleges' capacity for independent decision-making.\textsuperscript{16}

McGeer was one of the few Socreds sympathetic to higher education but his power over educational policy diminished from December 1979 when he moved to the new portfolio of Universities, Science and Communications, leaving behind the rest of post-secondary education. Although he may have had private qualms about the excesses of Restraint, McGeer insisted the cuts to university budgets and inroads into university autonomy were necessary. He had been warning the universities for some years that the government would act for them if they did not reassess their goals towards more emphasis on intellectual excellence, tighten their admissions and assessment standards, and become more cost efficient and economically relevant.\textsuperscript{17}

The Ministry of Education was left at the mercy of a series of Socred ministers with little apparent interest in higher education \textit{per se}, and a willingness to push through the government's agenda regardless of the conflict involved. Education does not seem to have been a popular portfolio for Cabinet members. There were five Ministers of Education in six years.\textsuperscript{18} It was not till Stan Hagen was appointed Minister of Education in January 1987 that OLI's senior administrators felt they were dealing with a Minister who would listen and was genuinely interested in higher education. It probably helped that Hagen's wife had been a distance education student earning a SFU degree, and he had practical (if vicarious) experience of what was involved.\textsuperscript{19}

Minister of Education Jack Heinrich told the BCAC in May 1984 "we have entered a recovery pattern but... it is too delicate to expect a rapid return to the golden years of funding." College and university leaders do not seem to have been reassured, and 1984-86 represented the nadir of funding and other difficulties.\textsuperscript{20} Base operating grants to colleges for 1986-87 increased only 1.6% over 1985-86, and were still well below 1981-82 levels in real terms. The
government could (or would) not fund the institutional program profiles it had determined early in 1986 and actually dropped enrolment targets by 1.11%. Instead, it announced in February 1986 a three-year Fund for Excellence in Education intended to return $600 million to the college and institute system. Its rhetoric claimed state commitment to quality and growth in higher education opportunities without disguising its intention that the funds so provided would be targetted specifically to support established and emerging industries, especially in the service sector, and "provide the technological and entrepreneurial edge to maintain the competitiveness of our basic resource industries." Money from this and other, smaller targetted funds dribbled through to the institutions over the next 18 months, and grants at last began to increase in real terms in 1987-88. Financial recovery was slowly and painfully on its way, but institutional autonomy and authority had been irrevocably diminished in favour of the state.21

As a new institution, OLI was especially vulnerable to the effects of Restraint. There had been no time to develop the kinds of bulwarks against external intrusion which the universities and older colleges had erected over the years. Government policy was by no means the only external influence on OLI's policies and practice during the 1980s, but resources and the way they were distributed deeply affected what OLI did and how it went about it. The next two chapters pursue this further.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 7
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 Bottomley, "Environmental scan 1983", & "Environmental scan update 1984-89," both based on an extensive collection of economic and social indicators by government, industry and social welfare organisations [PF: MoE 5-Year Planning Docs.].

2 Lorne Thompson (MoE) to C & I Principals, 6 April 1981, J. Newberry (MoE) to C & I Princs., 20 July 1981, Paul Gallagher (Chair, Council of Princs.) to Fisher (MoE), 5 Oct. 1981 [Ac.Aff: Council of Princs.].


13 MoE news release 34-83, 7 July 1983 [PF: News Releases]; BCAC news release, 20 Sept. 1983, Heinrich to Unruh (Pres. BCAC & OLI Bd. member), 22 Sept. 1983, Unruh to Heinrich, 30 Sept. 1983 [Bd: 21 Oct. 1983]; Beinder (1986, 215ff); Fisher (interview) recalls the incompatibility of the Academic and Occupational Training Councils, but he and Gallagher (interview) believe the MAC was gradually becoming an effective coordinating agency which should have been allowed to remain.

14 Heinrich, address to BCAC, reported in MOE news release 34-83, 7 July 1983 [PF: News Releases].

15 Kilian (1985, 144); Beinder (1986, 213-5); Bottomley, interview (1990).


18 The Education Ministers were: Brian Smith to August 1982, Bill Vander Zalm to May 1983, Jack Heinrich to October 1986, Russ Fraser to January 1987, then Stan Hagen.

19 Bottomley, interview; Mugridge, interview.

20 Heinrich speech to 17th AGM of BCAC, 25 May 1984 [Bd: 22 June 1984]. Jeffels called several meetings of heads of colleges, universities and school districts in the Lower Mainland during 1984 to discuss the educational crisis; the gloom was palpable and disillusionment with the government and Ministry extensive [PF: Meetings Officers of Educ.].

21 Heinrich (Min. Ed.) to Sam Macey (Chair, OLI Bd), 2 April 1985 [PF: Budget 85/6]; Russell Fraser (Min. Ed.), "Call for proposals from colleges and institutes: Fund for Excellence in Education", Feb. 1986 [PF: Funds for Exc. in Ed.]; Newberry (MoE) to Nigel Hannaford (Chair, OLI Bd), 11 April 1986 [Bd: 9 May 1986]; Min. 10, Council of PrinCs. meeting, 31 March 1987 [PFL BC Council of PrinCs].
Within OLI, the 1980s were a time for consolidation, modification and expansion. As the hopes and policies of the first two years were realised, staff settled into patterns of institutional behaviour which confirmed OLI's identity as a distance education institution. These patterns helped OLI reinforce its status in the complicated hierarchies of BC's higher education system. The Institute's curriculum and organizational procedures were notably affected by instrumentalist state policies and conflict over the purpose of higher education and distance education. Financial constraint highlighted persistent tensions between the industrial approach to distance education and concern for individual learners' needs.

A NEW PRINCIPAL

Ellis handed over to the new Principal, Ronald Jeffels, in July 1980 and returned to Simon Fraser University. Jeffels had been Principal of Okanagan College since 1974, a professor of French at UVic and UBC for 23 years before that. He had worked on the 1962 Macdonald report, had participated in continuing education forums, and was a long-time advocate of extending educational access to non-metropolitan areas (see Chapter 3). His combination of university and college experience must have been particularly attractive to a Board seeking credibility from both sectors. Jeffels had long been convinced that education's goals were to "furnish the mansions of the mind" and feed the life of the spirit as much as to produce skilled and knowledgeable people. He was also convinced that education was, no matter how delivered, essentially a matter of self-direction: "You are under the pool of yellow light at night with the armed Bic and the tyrannical sheet of white paper and the books." He was renowned for his command of language. Classical, military and literary allusions and colourful metaphors peppered his correspondence, and he was much in demand as a public speaker, a task he relished, not least because of its public relations importance for his institution.¹
Jeffels took a somewhat military and deferential attitude towards Ministerial authority, likening his relationship with McGeer, for example, to that of general and private (so much so that some of the Minister's staff nicknamed McGeer 'the general'). He was a reluctant lobbyist, who apparently visited government offices in Victoria as rarely as possible. He maintained an invariably courteous but gentle approach in correspondence with Ministers and officials. He perhaps believed forceful insistence on OLI's special needs should not be necessary. McGeer's fondness for OLI was indubitable, but that of other Ministers and Ministry officials was much more problematic. Nevertheless, OLI by no means followed ministerial dictate blindly during Jeffels' tenure. Where Ellis was cautiously positive about new educational and telecommunications technologies, Jeffels was frankly uncomfortable, describing himself as

an unreconstructed telematiphobe and compudata agnostic (who consigned) to a technological hell such modest advances as word processing and the microcomputer. I find neither relevant to my vital processes: I am an advocate of the green eyeshade, black sateen cuff-protectors, and quill pen school of written communications.2

This view proved a major stumbling block in his relationship with Hardwick and supported OLI's continuing preference for written communications rather than electronic media.

**THE IMPACT OF RESTRAINT ON OLI'S GROWTH**

Jeffels inherited an Institute on sound organizational footings, demonstrably popular with its student clientele, and beginning to carve out a place in the BC system. Almost immediately, he and his colleagues were faced with the consequences of stymied plans and inadequate funds for their purposes. OLI could not follow the established universities and colleges in reducing existing programs, staff and activities. It was rather a question of stunting the rate of first growth, and finding alternative ways of maintaining and expanding OLI's activities despite financial exigency. In particular, OLI's senior administrators used the Institute's distance
education systems to advantage. They achieved some economies of scale through larger enrolments in courses where the heavy developmental costs had already been incurred. In addition, buying in and adapting courses was cheaper than developing them from the ground up. Having no permanent full-time faculty writing or teaching courses also helped since OLI had no problems of academic redundancy, upgrading or redeployment to bedevil its academic labour relations and program development. The rate of growth slowed. There were fewer courses in development, and courses were revised more slowly than hoped. Planned new posts were deleted, and expensive technological innovations were scaled down. Segal's deft conservative financial management ensured a small year-end surplus which alleviated some of the worst problems and allowed a cautious purchase of much-needed printing and computing equipment. These patterns continued even after provincial economic recovery began in 1985. Not only were they a response to continuing financial fragility, but they had become part of the institutional mythology of how distance education should be practised and how outsiders perceived OLI.

The majority of OLI's income derived from operating grants from the Ministry of Education and MUSC, but the proportion dropped steadily through the 1980s from approximately 90% in 1980-81 to 70% in 1987-88 (see Appendix 1.6). Tuition fees provided OLI's second major source of income, growing steadily as OLI's clientele expanded, from 9.3% of gross income in 1983-84 to 17% in 1986-87. University course fees rose 50% from 1981-88, while CTV fees went up 87% and ABE 72%. OLI's policy of gradual annual increments somewhat softened the blow for students compared with the universities' sharp fee increases during Restraint.\(^3\) Contracts, commercial sales, and international projects accounted for the rest of OLI's income. These activities assumed greater importance through the 1980s, driven by a search for alternative sources of funding (strongly encouraged by government) and OLI's growing reputation as a service agency for materials and distance education expertise. Most were designed only to cover real costs and returned only minimal profits till 1985-86 when a more
entrepreneurial attitude was encouraged with Hardwick's and Farrell's closer involvement with OLI.

Segal prepared OLI's 1980-81 budget in anticipation of 3,500 course enrolments. Twice that number enrolled, and the number of courses doubled, but no additional government funds were forthcoming. OLI's 1982-83 net budget request represented a 61.5% increase on 1981-82 in the expectation of a 32% increase in students and 56.1% increase in course numbers. The projections were close, the funds were not. The difficulty was compounded by the Councils' and Ministry of Education's practice of allocating funds, especially for new courses or programs, largely on the basis of instructional rather than developmental costs. This worked to OLI's disadvantage, since its major front-end costs were in development, but the Ministry and its Councils persistently ignored or downplayed OLI's peculiar needs.

OLI's first Five-Year Plan (for 1981-86) was finalised in December 1981. The Plan's main thrust was to complete the disciplines or subjects already under way, and initiate courses and programs according to the patterns laid down by Mugridge, Dawe and Franklin in 1979. It called for greater emphasis on joint ventures with other post-secondary institutions, and contract arrangements with non-educational organisations seeking learning packages to help train and upgrade their workforces. The Knowledge Network's existence could not be ignored. However, the Institute insisted its plans to expand its use of television were contingent on adequate funding, and OLI's first commitment was to complete already scheduled programs which had little recourse to television. Provincial operating grants to OLI in the 1980s in no way kept up with growth rates in number of courses and enrolments (see Appendix 1.7).

The Universities Council did not take from OLI any of the $12 million excised from the university vote in the middle of the 1982-83 budget year, but the University Program suffered equally the 5% reduction on previous year's allocations in 1983-84 and 1984-85. The Ministry
of Education withdrew $113,000 from OLI's initial 1982-83 vote. In the next two years, the Ministry's allocations were about 87% and 91% of OLI's calculation of minimum need based on its Five-Year Plans which the Ministry had approved. OLI's requests thereafter were considerably scaled down from original plans. As a further complication, allocations during much of the 1980s were not announced till well into the financial year. OLI, like the other institutes and colleges, could make only tentative plans and hope for the best.9 Ironically, the combination of reduced funding and increased enrolments supported OLI leaders' claims of the Institute's cost efficiency. The cost per course enrollee in the University Program, for example, dropped from $1,132 in 1979-80 to $334 in 1983-84.10

After some internal debate in 1981, Mugridge and his colleagues rejected the option of restricting enrolments. The Board insisted OLI's open admissions policy was a basic tenet of OLI's mandate and must not be lost. Instead, OLI cut its internal allocations (except for tutoring services which were deemed already at the minimum level required by students) and decided to concentrate on 'low' technology such as audio and teleconferencing rather than television. Later budget submissions were more cautious since the Ministry of Education's base level was what could be done next year with this year's dollars. Course development, production formats and equipment, student services, and administration were cut to the bone.11

OLI's leaders apparently did not consider the option of eliminating one of OLI's three Program areas (the fourth, continuing education, was still miniscule anyway), although the question of abandoning one or more certificate programs was briefly raised in 1983. In any case, separate funds were allocated to OLI for each Program area, and reducing or eliminating one Program would not have meant more money for the others. Instead, OLI's Five-Year Plans, budget submissions and expenditure plans from 1980-88 reveal the Institute tried time and again to convince funding bodies of its need to reach minimum levels of comprehensiveness comparable to other institutes and colleges. Jeffels argued, for example, that allocations allowed no growth
to an "emerging institution seeking to build up a critical cluster of courses available to students." He feared if OLI could not maintain its rate of course development, many business students (CTV's largest group) would soon have taken all OLI could offer and their desire to complete certificates or diplomas would be frustrated; this would leave both OLI and its students in an invidious position. The arguments were not persuasive enough. OLI narrowly avoided this fate by ensuring many courses could serve several programs and imposing stringent priorities on subjects needed to complete minimal programs.12

OLI's second Five-Year Plan (1983-88) was finalised in June 1983, after release of the Ministry's Mission Statement for the college and institute system. The Plan formed the basis of an individual mission statement for OLI in March 1984 and annual updates thereafter.13 Compliance with the Ministry's narrow 'means-ends' format (goal-objective-strategies) gave the Institute little opportunity to argue its case in any coherent way. Jeffels likened it to "methods used in reasoning by the mediaeval scholastics." OLI's plan indicated reluctant acceptance of the inevitable (reduced funding, and primary emphasis on job-related training), but warned the Ministry's approach to increasing productivity and emphasis on job-related training endangered OLI's original and primary goal of providing lifelong learning opportunities for adults. Furthermore, state policies raised the spectre of restricted enrolments, loss of the open admissions policy, and interruption of the rate and rhythm of course and program development. The 1983-88 Plan reiterated OLI's key concern with adult learners not served by other institutions, and emphasised the primacy of individual needs of learners (an implicit contrast to state economic policy). OLI also insisted that

(while there could be) no doubt about the influence of the scientific, the technical, and the technological on future society... the preparation of citizens able to understand and deal with the complex human and social problems of the future cannot and should not be neglected. The social sciences and humanities will perhaps be more important than ever on the novel frontiers of tomorrow.14
If the early 1980s had been difficult financially for OLI, the mid-'80s were worse. UCBC's university grant to OLI for 1985-86 was 95% of the 1984-85 grant. Jeffels persuaded McGeer to hold it steady at the 1984-85 level, promising the 'extra' money would be used for course development, especially of science courses for which McGeer was then pressing hard.\textsuperscript{15} The Ministry of Education allocation for 1985-86 reduced OLI's previous year's grant by 8.2% or approximately $500,000, a far higher reduction than almost all other colleges or institutes. The new funding formula (see Chapter 7) apparently worked to OLI's disadvantage at this time, with its base of equivalent full-time students and contact hours, weightings in favour of vocational and orientation programs and against academic programs, and emphasis on instruction rather than development.\textsuperscript{16} It is not clear whether uncertainties about OLI's future relationship with the Knowledge Network also played a part here. Certainly, OLI's budget picture began to improve slowly after OLI's new role was decided in 1985, with base budget increases from 1986-87, allocations of some funds through the Fund for Excellence, and the hope of funds for new initiatives under other government votes.\textsuperscript{17}

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Given the lengthy fiscal gloom, OLI's curriculum development patterns in the 1980s showed a remarkable quality of persistence and hard work by the staff, plus a willingness to make economical use of certain distance education techniques, and a capacity 'to make necessity the parent of invention'. Although 'academic' courses remained a pre-occupation, subject emphases changed in both University and CTV Programs. A strong vocational orientation competed with the liberal arts and science approach originally espoused by McGeer, Hardwick and OLI's founders. A trend towards laddering of knowledge and credentials began to emerge.
Career, Technical, Vocational Program

After emphasising the University Program for the first two years, attention in OLI turned especially to career, technical and vocational education in the early 1980s. It is likely this would have occurred anyway, given the paucity of provision of CTV courses by distance education and the vast range of potential programs and courses which OLI might cover, but the spurt of activity was also encouraged by government priorities for job-related training. By definition, CTV programs neatly fitted state policy that post-secondary education should meet labour force needs. They were fairly short (one-year full-time equivalent for certificates, two years for diplomas), and focussed on information and skills required for a specific level and type of job. Their structure was well-suited to initial training and to upgrading. OLI's flexible faculty arrangements gave the Institute an advantage over other institutes and colleges, since programs could come and go as demand dictated. Moreover, since it catered for adults already in, or seeking to return to the workforce, OLI could argue its programs were especially valuable because they did not take a person away from work at a time the economy could least afford it. Students agreed. By 1980-81, 45% of OLI's enrolment was in CTV courses, and remained so for most of the 1980s (see Appendix 1.3). The question for OLI's leaders, then, was not whether the Institute should blindly accept government pressure for job-oriented education, but which programs OLI could most usefully and realistically mount within government subject priorities.

Two CTV streams merged in June 1982 with Dick Scales' appointment as CTV Director (replacing the retiring Derek Franklin), and abolition of the Provincial Programs Division Scales had run since 1980. Franklin had preoccupied himself with one stream: the general diploma, and six specialist programs laid down in his 1979 matrix. By 1984, Scales had added electronics, electrical generating systems, and preparatory courses in English and mathematics to the CTV profile, and plans were well advanced to offer diploma programs in computing and business studies providing a ladder from the certificate through to degree level. The Division
of Provincial Programs grew out of Scales' work negotiating creation of OLI's regional centres, and a search for contracts outside OLI's regular credit programs. These were courses and programs developed with, or on behalf of, colleges, professional associations and employers. They included accounting courses, health-related programs (dental assistant certificate, and a graduate nurse refresher course), technical programs in drafting and power engineering, and trades courses for journeyman (sic) upgrading and heavy duty mechanics. Success was relatively slow till the Ministry began to insist on, and reward financially, collaborative projects from 1983 on.18

The first stream of credit programs was already well within government priorities. The second fitted high demand areas as designated under Restraint, and government requirements for collaboration. There were, as Ellis had said in 1979, so many potential fields for distance education programs under the broad CTV category that OLI's planning was necessarily a somewhat opportunistic exercise, constrained only by resources and political implications of entering other institutions' territory. Scales saw the government's priorities for career and vocational training as a major opportunity for OLI, providing the Institute redeployed its resources accordingly and accelerated introduction of new programs. He argued OLI should concentrate on CTV programs that would be funded as industry training programs and demonstrate their direct applicability in the workplace. His was a pragmatic view of opportunities OLI should seize, but one at odds with Jeffels' concern that quality involved more than relevance, and that education should "furnish the mansions of the mind."19

There was apparently as little concern at OLI as there was in the rest of the college and institute system, with the concept that accrediting bodies or sponsoring agencies should assert influence over curriculum and standards. Obtaining the formal approval of an accrediting body became an automatic, and important part of CTV (and ABE) course development, and representatives of the accrediting body were often deeply involved in course planning or
writing. OLI's CTV programs were accredited by the relevant bodies, such as government ministries, power and construction authorities, professional accounting, nursing and dental associations. There was, however, some unease within the Institute over the prospect of OLI providing courses for too specific a sector of industry or business. The CTV Program Advisory Committee agreed in 1980 a balance must be maintained so general student needs were met. Contracts with non-government bodies thereafter usually ensured courses were not restricted only to employees or affiliates of that organization. The boundaries of institutional autonomy were subtle and shifting.

CTV course enrolments rose from 3,412 in 1980-81 to 8,875 in 1986-87, with one sharp dip in 1983-84. In 1980-81 OLI listed 24 CTV courses in its calendar; by 1987-88 this had risen to 97, with a large jump in offerings in 1984-85, but plans outran reality. The 1983-88 Five-Year Plan, for example, staked OLI's interest in courses ranging from a homemaker/nanny program to forest and engineering technologies, post-basic nursing, early childhood education for daycare workers, apprenticeship training courses, and tradesperson qualification courses. A few eventuated but the CTV Division had great difficulty completing the original set of certificate programs. Not only were developmental funds constrained, but as the Institute aged so did its courses, and revision loads became heavier. Many courses applied to more than one certificate, and most were offered three times a year until 1983-84, when a six-semester academic year was instituted. It was not till 1983-84 that students could take a certificate program entirely through OLI, and some (for example, electronics) were still unfinished in 1988. In-house and external evaluations of OLI in 1982 recommended the Institute give its highest priority to CTV, implying the University Program should take second place. Mugridge noted tersely CTV was receiving all the funds allocated to it, and virement from other programs was forbidden by government.
The majority of CTV courses came under the loose, and increasingly popular, heading of 'business studies'. Wordprocessing and computing courses mirrored the rapid spread of computers in the workplace, though students' access to appropriate hardware was problematic and efforts to develop a full computing certificate or diploma were unsuccessful. This was partly solved by an agreement in 1984 with BCIT which enabled students of both institutes to take the other's courses towards a business certificate or diploma. The agreement gave OLI students a laddered access to BCIT diplomas in administrative management systems, financial management, and marketing management, but access was effectively limited to people able to attend classes at BCIT.23

Franklin and Scales moved cautiously in the political minefield of apprenticeship and upgrading trades training, whose complexities and inadequacies had been expounded by Goard (1977) but not satisfactorily resolved under the aegis of the Occupational Training Council. Provincial efforts to overhaul apprenticeship arrangements were renewed in 1980. They strengthened as the recession bit deeper into the forestry, mining and manufacturing/processing industries, and new technologies and methods streamlined and modernised industrial practices.24 Despite the Council's lingering suspicions of OLI, it was not averse to the Institute filling gaps in preparatory English and mathematics courses, and teaching theoretical aspects of trades training at a distance. The latter lent itself well to collaborative efforts. In one arrangement, for example, BC Hydro provided the course writers and OLI the instructional design and production; in another, OLI and the Pacific Vocational Institute developed, respectively, the theoretical and 'hands-on' aspects of an electrical generating systems program.25 In January 1983 the government instituted a new entry level training program (TRAC), much of whose common core was suitable for teaching at a distance. The Ministry commissioned OLI to provide instructional design services to the team preparing the common core, but little else ensued.26
OLI's first foray into health-related programs began in 1979 with a proposal that OLI take over a dental assistant's upgrading program originally developed by the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and enrolling 100-140 students in BC a year. The College of Dental Surgeons had previously administered it but could not easily reach smaller communities, so favoured a distance education approach with a clinical component provided by members of the College. With Ministry funding, and active assistance from the College of Dental Surgeons, the materials were revised for BC certification and the program was first offered in 1983.\textsuperscript{27} The second program, also beginning in 1983, was a graduate nurse refresher course offered jointly by Kwantlen College and OLI to graduate and registered nurses seeking to return to the workforce. It combined independent study at a distance with clinical experience, this time in local hospitals, and was readily accredited by the Registered Nurses Association of BC.\textsuperscript{28} The refresher program accorded well with another OLI nursing course, this time at university level - an Athabasca University course offered by OLI at UVic's behest.\textsuperscript{29}

**University Programs**

Acquisition, modification, and commissioning of university courses to complete the eight BA disciplines continued through the 1980s. Lack of resources significantly contracted the rate of development, and delays in course writing and production made progress somewhat erratic, so that by 1981 full OLI sequences were still available in only two disciplines. Mugridge relinquished direct control of the university area in March 1983 with appointment of Walter Uegama, former Dean of Studies and Acting Principal of Selkirk College, as Director of University Programs. The change was a measure of the growing workload and complexity of Academic Affairs. Despite unsteady progress in completing the complement of BA courses, OLI introduced new degrees during the 1980s and undertook extensive investigation of a third, in science. One of the new degrees, a Bachelor of General Studies, was proposed in 1983. Its implementation was caught up in creation of the Open University Consortium of BC (see
Chapter 9). The B.Gen. Studies amended and expanded OLI's provision of educational opportunities for a liberal arts degree.

The second degree, a BA in Administrative Studies, began in September 1980 as a modest proposal for a new BA concentration linked to appropriate CTV courses. Jocelyn Calvert, the University Programs Coordinator, noted the high level of demand for commerce and business administration degrees at UBC and SFU, neither of which offered these programs at a distance. BCIT and almost all colleges offered certificate and/or diploma programs in administration which were very popular. So too were OLI's own CTV and University courses in accounting and management, particularly with men aged 21-40 who had some post-secondary education but not, as yet, a degree. The universities, however, gave very little transfer credit towards their commerce or business degrees. Response within OLI was immediate and positive, but for a full degree not merely a concentration in the BA. UCBC gave the BA Admin. Studies a somewhat reluctant blessing in June 1982, first obtaining a ruling from McGeer that OLI would not contravene its mandate by offering what could be seen as a professional degree. The first students enrolled in 1983. Two years later, agreement was reached with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC so students could obtain professional certification articulating degree and ICA studies through OLI.

The degree structure and standards were very similar to OLI's BA, and courses were interchangeable. The basic premises were that the program must accord with accepted university standards, offer educational access others did not, have social and economic utility to BC citizens, and incorporate new technologies where feasible. Generous credit transfer provisions (up to 75% of the degree) encouraged laddering of studies from certificate to degree. UBC's business degree followed the fairly prescriptive American model. OLI instead followed the SFU structure giving students wide choice in their first two years, followed by specialization in later years. This was partly a matter of resources. OLI could not hope to
offer the large number or wide range of specialist courses UBC provided. In addition, OLI sought to balance the body of specialist and technical knowledge required for an administrative career with other intellectual and cultural interests, on the grounds that "in the long run, actual knowledge gained is not as important as the attributes the student develops in the process of gaining it."33 This attitude epitomised the kind of solution the universities typically found to the dilemma in professional programs of simultaneously developing the broadly educated person who also has specialist skills (Silver & Brennan 1988).

University reaction varied: UBC's concerns were relatively minor, those of SFU and UVic more substantial. UBC's Bob Smith and SFU's Jock Munro were apprehensive about OLI's intention to give credit for life or work experience (using a 'challenge examination' process). UVic's Jim Cutt was more concerned the large amount of possible credit into OLI's degree would limit the Institute's scope to provide "a distinct and consistent academic component" in the degree. Munro reiterated the SFU view that OLI's instructional model did not allow for continuing faculty input, and its lack of an academic Senate prevented the multi-level, intensive scrutiny such proposals would receive in the universities. Mugridge was more sensitive to Cutt's and Munro's concerns about a shortage of appropriately qualified faculty to write and teach the courses (an increasingly serious problem for the universities themselves), and potential overlap or competition with UVic's new Diploma in Public Sector Management. The problematic scarcity of course writers was partially overcome by buying courses in from Athabasca University and the BOU (4 and 11 respectively by 1987). UVic and OLI later agreed to give OLI students access to three UVic computing courses and a major option in public sector management.34 Its limited range, and OLI's overall position, ensured there was little prospect of the BA Admin. Studies degree gaining parity of prestige with the universities' degrees in the near future. However, the approval process was much easier than it had been for OLI's first BA degree. The Institute's quality and academic standards were being recognized, and its stature enhanced thereby.
Expectations of strong demand only partially explains why OLI chose to introduce a new degree at so inclement a time. The arts degree was not nearly complete, the prognosis for university funding was gloomy, and the in-house pace of course development had slowed down. OLI had barely demonstrated its educational quality and effectiveness as a distance education provider. No evidence was found to suggest the government pressed OLI to move in this direction, although McGeer eased its passage by declaring it within OLI's existing mandate. In fact, there was some concern in the Universities' Ministry that it should not fund re-vamped CTV courses at the expense of OLI's eight BA disciplines.35

Part of the attraction within OLI of a new degree was the opportunity it offered to design something different from the BA, more closely aligned to practical needs of people already working in some area of administration or management. Some university critics had labelled the BA "pedestrian". Hardwick continued to impress on OLI his view that its degrees should be innovative and different from others in BC.36 It is likely some of these views were shared within OLI. Scales, for example, saw the degree as a way of giving the University Program "a more contemporary, forward looking image", demonstrating OLI's commitment to be a complementary partner in BC's post-secondary system.37 Another explanation is that there was no escaping the contemporary climate extolling professional studies over liberal education as a means of attaining the "professional social ideal" (Perkin 1989). OLI's efforts to build a solid reputation would be enhanced by entering the prestigious arena of university-level professional studies and demonstrating it was successfully meeting a significant demand.38 Thirdly, unlike the BA, the administrative studies degree would not duplicate or compete with other university distance education programs. The market was potentially substantial among college and certificate graduates, non-metropolitan residents, and city dwellers who could not readily attend campus classes. Government demands for increased productivity added weight to OLI's imperative to build rapidly a strong student base. Fourthly, the program could be built
relatively inexpensively by using existing courses, and the new administrative studies courses themselves could be used within the BA, so it was in no way a matter of developing a degree from scratch.

One intriguing outcome of the BA Admin. Studies was probably pragmatically rather than ideologically motivated. By applying some courses to both the degree and CTV diploma programs, and by establishing a generous credit transfer policy, OLI created a genuine ladder of opportunity. In theory, a student could move with almost no impediment directly from an ABE program through certificate, job-related studies to theory and practice at degree level. The dovetailing of courses, and deliberate planning of subjects across credential barriers potentially breached some of the cultural and social barriers traditionally reinforcing knowledge hierarchies. Although OLI staff were undoubtedly committed to increasing access at all levels of OLI's programs, the laddering policy was originally introduced as much because of financial exigency as for ideological reasons. It is doubtful OLI staff themselves were fully aware in the 1980s of the potential challenge the laddering arrangements offered to traditional strata of knowledge and location of people in the knowledge hierarchies.

The BA Admin. Studies fit readily the intellectual and social approaches of OLI's University Programs staff; a science degree did not. After the Universities Council rejected Mugridge's proposal for a B.Sc., in 1979, OLI developed sequences in mathematics and biology in the BA. Mathematics involved complicated typesetting problems but could be readily taught at a distance, especially once television became a viable option. Biology was more problematic. Mugridge negotiated access to laboratories of colleges and schools. The cost and complicated administration of laboratory sessions at pedagogically appropriate, and personally convenient times, presented continuing difficulties. Nevertheless, by 1984 Calvert was considering how progressively to complete sequences and revise OLI's 18 science courses in an environment of rapid scientific change and small enrolments.
This was not enough for McGeer. Though enormously proud of OLI, his one major
disappointment was its failure to develop a science degree, by which he meant: 'pure',
laboratory-based, empirical science, especially physics and chemistry. He had seen it work at
the BOU and wanted a similar program to be available in every corner of BC. Having set in
train an open university consortium for BC in mid-1984 (see Chapter 9), McGeer insisted it
include a science degree. Over the next two years, McGeer exerted pressure for speedy
development of a degree teaching people how to do science, rejecting the idea of one leaning
more towards scientific literacy. McGeer's motives are not entirely clear. By emphasising
'pure' science, he implied the degree would not be directly vocational in nature. It may be
McGeer believed the Institute should offer this kind of science degree if it were to have a
'proper' university program, yet his own elitism would suggest such programs belonged to the
most prestigious universities.

McGeer brought in the BC Science Council to advise on curriculum and ways and means and,
frustrated by what he saw as OLI's dilatoriness, demanded monthly progress reports from the
Institute. McGeer believed OLI could not mount a science degree by distance education
because it had no one with the necessary mixture of scientific expertise and vision to
counteract the humanities and social science perspectives of its leaders. He conveniently
ignored the huge cost of BOU science courses, the economies of scale they could achieve but
BC could not, and the question of whether there really was any substantial, unmet demand for
pure science in BC. 40 McGeer was right in believing OLI's leaders were unenthusiastic about a
'hard' science degree. Mugridge later acknowledged he had no wish to introduce what he saw
as a wasteful, expensive degree with very small tangible benefits for BC citizens. McGeer was,
however, mistaken in his view OLI leaders procrastinated over designing a curriculum. Thanks
to his pressure, OLI commissioned three reports from distinguished scientists on appropriate
curricula and teaching strategies, sought advice from scientists at all three BC universities,
Waterloo University, the BOU and several Australian universities, and undertook substantial market research and costing.\textsuperscript{41} Debate centred especially on curriculum, demand and cost, and occurred against a backdrop of consolidating the new open university consortium, the worst years of financial exigency, and accelerating moves to amalgamate OLI and the Knowledge Network.

The first question was the kind of degree: should students do science, as McGeer wanted, or learn about science. The former was much more logistically difficult to mount, and potentially far more expensive. It ran into the usual problems of competition with the universities, and would present students with difficulties in fitting study into their working and personal lives. Equally important, the consultants, MUSC officials and OLI’s market research concluded what was needed was more scientifically literate people rather than more scientists:

\begin{quote}
The greatest obstacle to moving the BC economy from a resource base to a technology base is not a shortage of scientists and technologists, but a lack of critical understanding of science and technology on the part of those responsible for operating the economy.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

A peculiarly OLI flavour was added. The degree should facilitate transferability from science studies elsewhere, give graduates of technology programs at sub-degree level a ladder to a science degree, serve an augmentation function for people employed in science-oriented work, and provide opportunities for improving scientific literacy in the general population. Courses should be acquired rather than developed in-house, to save money and avoid duplication, and development and teaching strategies should maximise inter-institutional collaboration. The structure as eventually agreed in 1987 conformed overall with OLI’s other degrees, and included major concentrations in mathematics and computing, science and technology policy, physics, and chemistry.\textsuperscript{43}

A major objection of several Board members, as well as Mugridge, Jeffels and some OLI staff, was the disproportionately high costs of any science degree to the likely level of demand, even
though science and applied science were becoming more popular in BC in the 1980s. In 1986 Calvert estimated annual development and delivery costs of the degree at $551,000, rising to $839,000 in four years, for a potential enrolment of 214 FTEs when fully operational ($3,920 per student). OLI’s total university vote was then approximately $1.7 million, representing $3,181 per student (23% lower). It was a moot point. Once again, McGeer resisted the financial implications of mounting the degree properly, and probably could not have persuaded Cabinet to fund it anyway. He rejected OLI’s request for first phase development monies, though he continued to press for the science degree. After he left politics, and in the midst of amalgamation negotiations, the Joint Steering Committee’s submissions for additional resources under the Fund for Excellence included monies for science, but its priority steadily diminished during 1986-87 and funds were not forthcoming. The degree was formally approved, but not introduced. It was too expensive, toologistically difficult, and demand remained uncertain.

Adult Basic Education Programs

By the time Alan Dawe resigned as ABE Director in June 1982, the Grades 10 and 12 programs were almost fully in place. OLI’s ABE Coordinator, Douglas Cronk, maintained the cordial relationship with the Correspondence Branch after Dawe’s departure, and ABE packages continued to sell despite, or perhaps because of, Restraint. Nevertheless, ABE enrolments peaked in 1982 at 4,214, declining gently but steadily thereafter in common with experience elsewhere in BC. Education Minister Vander Zalm’s personal commitment to special and adult education protected these programs during the early days of Restraint, but from 1983-85 Ministry funds were steadily cut back for all ABE activities in BC. Within OLI, a cogent consequence of reduced funding was the Institute’s failure to replace Dawe with a full-time Director. Instead, and after considerable disagreement within OLI and the Board, Mugridge gave Walter Uegama, the new Director of University Programs, temporary responsibility for the ABE program as well. While at Selkirk, Uegama had been involved in establishment of a new
ABE program, but otherwise had no background in the area. Mugridge justified the move entirely in terms of OLI's financial difficulties. It also signalled a diminution in the internal significance accorded to ABE.48

OLI's 1978 program objectives defined ABE as grades 10 and 12 completion. Other possibilities, such as basic literacy and English as a second language, were delayed till the first priority was in place. By 1982, it was evident a coherent development plan for ABE's next stages was needed. Opinions differed on what OLI should include as 'basic literacy'. To Dawe and a number of Board members it meant remedial modules or courses on English grammar, spelling and arithmetic to upgrade academic skills. To OLI's student advisors it also meant information packages and courses on careers, life skills and, especially, re-entry to the workforce for women. Some Board members and senior staff felt such courses were inappropriate and "could not meet the high standards to which OLI is committed". This attitude accorded ill with institutional commitment to helping individual learners acquire the skills to complete their study objectives, and with OLI's student profile which was predominantly female. It suggests a resistance to making explicit OLI's role in improving access for women as women, rather than as non-metropolitan residents and so on. For the first time, a boundary delineated OLI's academic respectability at the lower end of the credentialled knowledge hierarchy. Those courses OLI did develop in 1983-85 fell into the academic skills-upgrading category.49

Dawe's other area of interest was English as a second language. He joined school correspondence educators from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia in February 1981 to plan a series of four courses based on print, audio, drawings and video. Bruce Naylor of BC's Correspondence Education Branch chaired the editorial board for the project, and Dawe acted as executive editor, with responsibilities for funding and liaison with UBC's Language Institute which was engaged to prepare the first course, with costs to be
shared among the provinces. The project was beset by difficulties from its inception; it began without guaranteed resources and funds ran out during preparation of the second course. Management and communications problems exacerbated the situation. The project very nearly failed altogether, and OLI’s credibility was questioned for a time by its partners. Mugridge rescued it by negotiating a commitment in 1985 from Employment and Immigration Canada to fund development, production and delivery of the rest of the program. This was the first time CEIC recognised distance education as an acceptable form of instruction.50

Continuing Education

Demand in BC for job-related and personal enrichment courses in the 1980s was indubitable, especially among women and among people in the workforce (Devereaux 1985). If OLI had started with a stronger orientation to service than to credentials, and if there had been resources, Mugridge and his colleagues might have had more incentive to define a major continuing education role for OLI. As it was, OLI maintained a tentative presence in the area by offering a small number of non-credit courses during the 1980s, and (till 1983) sponsoring non-credit telecourses broadcast over the Knowledge Network.51 Ministry policy downgraded continuing education during Restraint and institutional programs suffered accordingly, with non-metropolitan colleges losing over half their adult education positions in the mid-1980s.52

Three factors changed OLI’s position from 1985. First, the portending amalgamation of OLI and the Knowledge Network, and Hardwick’s renewed involvement in OLI affairs, encouraged more expansive approaches to use of telecommunications and information technologies. Second, Glen Farrell, appointed OLI’s Acting Principal from September 1986, brought with him the perspective of a long-time continuing educator more concerned with opening up lifelong learning systems than with distinctions between formal and non-credit programs.53 Third, economic recovery from recession was accompanied by substantial provincial and federal initiatives to improve access to job-related education and on-the-job-training.54
These factors combined in two projects in which Hardwick and Farrell took close personal interest. Both originated in the Knowledge Network but involved considerable input from most areas of CLI. One, the Working Network Project, combined a specially designed interactive television documentary with community television broadcasts, and electronically linked government employment and training staff to provide education and employment training information and services to people seeking to enter the workforce or change jobs. Almost $1 million was provided, in two stages, for the project. The second project, the Discovery Training Network, matched employers' training needs with training resources, and set up an 'electronic highway' to deliver the training locally. The BC government and CEIC provided matching funds for a total budget of $2.8 million. The scale was larger than any single project OLI had undertaken previously and signalled a new direction for the forthcoming Open Learning Agency.55

**DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEMS AT WORK**

Jeffels made little attempt to alter the basic formal organizational structures and systems he found on his arrival in July 1980. The early 1980s were characterized by increasing systematization and bureaucratization as experience, resources and technological changes modified institutional culture. It was a constant struggle to prevent rigidity in ways of thinking and behaving in an environment encouraging routinization of practice and procedure.56 An internal self-study and external Institutional Evaluation, conducted in 1982 in accordance with the Colleges Act, produced a snapshot of an organization, aged four, in which the mythologies, aspirations, stresses and limitations were plainly visible. Both internal and external evaluations evinced pride and pleasure in OLI's accomplishments to date. Some of the numerous problems and gaps they elucidated were a sign of healthy internal diversity; others could be solved only
by external political means or by efforts to improve in-house communications and decision-making.57

The early 1980s were also characterized by a growing interest within OLI in new computer-based and telecommunications technologies, and experiments with their use in course preparation, delivery, and administration. Television continued to exercise a powerful political influence on OLI policies and external relations (especially once amalgamation negotiations began), but the new computing technologies were to have far greater consequence for OLI's educational effectiveness, cost efficiency, identification with the 'cutting edge' of technology in education, and reputation in the wider distance education community.

Course Development and Production

With a structure and process in place for course development, and the first rush of course production over, the 1980s showed a steady trend to greater regulation and systematization of OLI's course development and production, accompanied by an increasing interest in electronic publishing techniques. Financial constraints and government demands for greater productivity goaded the search for more effective, cheaper and faster ways of organizing and doing. Both trends would probably have emerged anyway as the realities of students, courseware and repetitive cycles of development, production and teaching shaped the working lives of OLI's staff and suggested how to practise distance education.

Kaufman (1982) drew on Peters' industrial model to describe OLI's course preparation as an industrial and social process whose inherent contradictions could produce creative tension and severe stresses. Kaufman found the social relationships in course preparation were affected by hierarchies of differential power, personality and ego, collegiality and cooperation, fear, frustration and resentment, novelty, and heavy workloads. Similarly, Bottomley, who was appointed Director of Program Support in 1981, proposed a close equation between materials
production and distribution at a distance education institution and at a manufacturing plant, but concluded the products were different since the true product of an educational institution was the educated individual (Bottomley 1982). This enabled him to account for tensions between academic design groups seeking greater flexibility, innovative designs and frequent revisions, and the production division wanting more system, fewer options, standardisation of product and longer shelf life of materials. However, Bottomley minimized two items of significance. One was the impact on OLI planning and pedagogies of the course manufacturing process and related considerations of cost efficiency and effectiveness. The other was the importance of the course package itself, which was produced and marketed as a product apart from OLI’s own teaching programs.

As they acquired more experience of course preparation, the designers understood better the range of problems and possibilities inherent in the idiosyncratic relationship between designer and writer. It was a fine line, as one designer put it, between "mule-driving" and collegiality. Some relationships were smooth and uncomplicated, others were frustrating, hilarious, or fraught with tender egos. Some led writers to praise the designer’s confidence, tact and skill; a few ended with OLI cancelling the writer’s contract. OLI’s experiences with course writers were similar to those reported elsewhere (see Chapter 2), though power relationships differed because OLI’s writers were not full-time staff committed or obligated to OLI’s policies and mission.58

OLI’s standards for structure, writing style and academic content were intended to be consistent, but also had to be negotiated course by course according to the author, content, and nature of the discipline. Kaufman and his colleagues designed a course blueprint in 1980 which, with minor modifications, delineated the basic structural requirements and standards of an OLI course thereafter. The course blueprint was part of a broader OLI systems model intended to allocate responsibilities, delineate information and communications flows, and
improve predictability of workloads, planning and budgeting. The writer specified learning objectives; course length and sub-division into topics or themes; number, type and timing of assignments; in-text formative tests; and practical exercises. Calvert found the specifications especially useful for the many course writers who had never before systematically written down their teaching materials. The designers soon learned the necessity of devoting time to preparing the blueprint. Writers who produced incomplete blueprints with inadequate course outlines typically wrote poor courses. Authors were asked to be simple and direct in style. The designers found many academics wrote poorly to begin with; others insisted on unnecessarily complex and jargon-ridden language. The designer relied on the consultant and writer for judgements about accuracy of content and scope and level of intellectual difficulty. She or he had to steer a path between such decisions, and her own judgement about quantity, clarity and meaning from a student perspective.59 The course blueprint could not prescribe the intellectual quality of a course but did establish a framework for pedagogical standards which all writers were expected to meet.

The systems model also proposed a reasonable designer workload should average three courses and one major revision per annum, and an 8-month development/production cycle. This was a pious hope; workloads in 1981 were up to 25% heavier than intended, and courses sometimes took three years to complete. The blame was typically attributed to late submission of manuscripts by the course writer and need for extensive editing or re-writing by the course designer. That, certainly, was the weak point in the system and one over which OLI had relatively little control. However, there were also other reasons associated with OLI's structure and modus operandi. Some of the delays were occasioned by two strikes, in 1981 and 1983, and slow return to normalcy. The imperative urgency of a deadline was ameliorated by OLI's academic calendar in which most courses were offered each semester with, from 1982, six start dates each year. Each course involved numerous individuals, different kinds of expertise, and a multiplicity of steps which might be both linear and concurrent. Designers sometimes felt
quality was being sacrificed to quantity and speed, but there seems to have been a willingness to persist with some courses or writers longer than was perhaps practicable given resource and time limitations.  

Delays in pre-production typically meant Program Support (the group producing the learning materials) received materials in sections; it might print and store the first before the last were written. It was not uncommon in the early 1980s for students to receive a course package in several pieces, affecting their ability to work at their own pace and costing OLI more than necessary in postage and labour. Some advisers and tutors claimed the late or partial arrival of course materials contributed to drop-out. Segmented production sometimes had deleterious effects on the internal consistency and cohesion of a course. Designers were dealing with more writers, courses and stages of development than they could reasonably manage, and Program Support could not control workflows so as to meet deadlines. By mid-1982 new course completions had dropped to a trickle though workloads were as heavy as ever and the printery produced about 20 million pages per annum. With the government's Restraint policy making every dollar count, there were external as well as internal pressures to resolve workflow problems.

Structural and personal tensions appeared in the operations of Academic Affairs in 1981, suggesting the 1980 structure (see Chapter 5) was counter-productive and it was preferable to return to three program divisions, each containing its own program coordinators and designers. Comprehensive planning and scheduling mechanisms were patently needed to coordinate multiple timelines and production stages so courses were produced on time and to budget. Mugridge disbanded the Division of Course Design early in 1982, returning the designers to program divisions, and appointing Mary Ann Williamson to coordinate course development and copyright, and ameliorate the scheduling nightmares. He then created a tiny new Division of Educational Technology (headed by Kaufman) to explore uses of new educational technologies,
develop systems of course and tutor evaluation, and coordinate institutional research and in-
house training. It proved a controversial and not wholly successful move and, although
Mugridge continued to assert the necessity of institutional research and evaluation, he abolished
the Division a year later. Course completions picked up in 1984 but soon declined again.
There was room for further improvement in OLI's monitoring and project management systems,
but limits to the control which might be exerted over course writers.62

In the pervasive computerised climate of the 1990s it is hard to remember that only a decade
ago typewriters were still the predominant tool for manuscript preparation and revision.
Television continued to play a dominant, contentious role in OLI's external relations, and the
Institute's continuing reluctance to embrace television as a major communications medium
coloured some external perceptions of it as educationally conservative. However, a real and
more important revolution began quietly within OLI in the early 1980s as its leaders and course
developers adopted and adapted increasingly sophisticated electronic publishing tools to improve
the physical and pedagogical quality of the finished article, speed up course development and
production, and save money.

OLI used a wordprocessing system for data entry of final copy and phototypesetting from 1979,
but it was only in 1982-83 that course writers began submitting wordprocessed scripts. The
designers then realised the potential of computerised text processing for improving manuscript
creation and cost efficiency while reducing delays in preparation and transmission. OLI's first
experiment, in 1983, linked course writer, consultant and designer by microcomputers,
communications software and telephone modems to develop OLI's first two university-level
chemistry courses from their separate workplaces. It was a resounding success. The team
members found themselves more forthcoming over criticisms and willingness to revise, yet it
was easier to rewrite and edit, and a sense of excitement and stimulation adhered to the process
throughout. The writer felt more of an equal partner in the editing, and the designer found it
easier to train the writer in preparation of distance education materials. There were marked savings in time for transmission of drafts among team members, editing, mark-up and typesetting (Kaufman 1984; Mugridge 1985a; Timmers 1986; Timmers & Mugridge 1986).

Shannon Timmers (a course designer at OLI since 1980) created a computerised course authoring template incorporating house style, layout and mark-up guides, and variations on the standard structural elements of an OLI course, which quickly became the base of OLI course development and production. The template ran the risk of rigidifying knowledge presentation, regardless of disciplinary needs, but Timmers argued:

> By using computers, we can quickly take apart elements of a course and then recombine them in different ways. Structural elements can be separated from pure content. Universal or iterative elements can be saved or shared, even with other institutions (1986, 23).

Clearly, the way these techniques were used would affect traditional boundaries between disciplines, and the shaping and control of knowledge. OLI's immediate imperatives, however, were to make the course development and production process more effective and efficient, double up on course use so as to save money and expand student options, and collaborate with other institutions with different needs. The computerised course template proved readily adaptable. OLI transferred it to two South East Asian universities, and it underpinned development of mathematics courses with the BOU in which the materials were created, communicated, edited and produced using a computer network between the two countries (Timmers 1986). The scale of OLI's activities was tiny compared with the BOU or many new South East Asian open universities, but these techniques were capable of enormous expansion and repetition. Moreover, thanks to earlier decisions to concentrate on printed materials of the highest possible quality, OLI's course development and production system was, by the late 1980s, one of the most sophisticated of any English-language distance education institution.
Teaching and Support Services

Physical visibility of faculty and students reinforces an institution's solidarity and legitimacy to its own members and onlookers as well as reminding policy makers of their constituencies. The non-presence of faculty and students at OLI's Richmond campus did not indicate their lack of importance to OLI's decision makers; far from it. It did, however, affect relations and communications between teachers and students and between each group and those at Richmond. It also affected the relative significance assigned to forms of instruction and support services and the centralisation of authority in Richmond.

The government's Restraint policy limited prospects for extensive forays into teaching by television or other expensive telecommunications means. Advent of the Knowledge Network (1980) gave OLI the technical means, but not the additional funds needed to teach via television. Potential credit and non-credit telecourses and programs supporting OLI courses were identified as early as August 1980, but the Board and senior staff were unwilling to redistribute resources to cover the costs, remaining adamant television should be largely adjunctive to print materials. Neither education Ministry was willing to provide a supplementary grant in 1981-82 for tele-teaching, and OLI's television responsibilities were thereafter caught up in the broader question of OLI's mandate and future relationship with KNOW. Within OLI, Scales urged the Institute should position itself to monopolise the tele-course field and take advantage of recent American experience. He had some success till 1982 when resources to support pre-packaged tele-courses ran out. Extensive original programming remained out of the financial question. Few course developers had previous experience with audiovisual media and with little encouragement from the top to pursue it more actively, there were few incentives to incorporate the unfamiliar medium into mainstream OLI courses. This began to change from 1985 with closer proximity to the Knowledge Network. A provincial open learning system and 'electronic classroom' seemed more feasible (see, for example, Mugridge 1987).
Amendment of the pacing system and academic year in 1982 represented a significant change for Institute, students and tutors alike. Mugridge had originally established a university-style trimester system of three consecutive semesters of four months duration, each culminating in examinations. Most OLI policy makers remained convinced of the merit of pacing students, even at the expense of some student independence. Crawford's 1981 study of completion rates in the same course at OLI, Athabasca and NIC concluded OLI's superior performance (at 58%, over double those of the other two) was attributable to OLI's pacing system. By 1981, however, a single pacing structure no longer sufficed for the diverse periods required for mastery of content and skills in subjects and levels as varied as history, shorthand, mathematics, and electronics. Some OLI staff argued, too, that entry only three times a year militated against accessibility by denying motivated new learners the chance to begin immediately. The system should permit students to start, stop and learn at their own pace to the maximum extent possible. There were also mounting practical problems for students and administration in the existing trimester system. Registry staff found it increasingly difficult to cope with the peaks of enrolment workload at much the same time as examinations. Too many students were seeking to take supplementary, rather than regular, examinations, because they could not complete all required work beforehand.

Meakin's novel solution, introduced in September 1982, comprised six overlapping semesters each year. The normal period of instruction remained four months, but courses could be taken over a longer period if need be. Six examination periods were set accordingly, and students could request to sit an examination two, four or six months after entering a course. The new system resolved most of the previous problems and helped Registry bear the weight of enrolment growth in the 1980s without expanding staff numbers. The rhythm of the course development system was also affected, as there was no longer an imperative to complete courses by one of only three dates in the year. The new system improved flexibility in course length
and made it easier for OLI to offer skills-based courses. Above all, it worked greatly to
students’ advantage, allowing people to begin studying within eight weeks of enrolling, and
choosing the pace at which they worked.\(^{64}\) This was one case where the usual tensions
between satisfying individual learners’ needs and requirements of different fields of knowledge,
and the imperatives of an automated industrialized system, were resolved to the benefit of all.
OLI’s academic year no longer conformed to norms elsewhere in BC. It did not contradict
mainstream patterns, but rather improved on them.

The characteristics and role of the tutor consolidated during the early 1980s. Teaching
practices settled in quickly to correspondence and telephone calls between tutor and student
centred on the printed and audio course package. Tutors were expected to call each student
shortly after enrolment and at various points during the semester, and to maintain regular
‘office hours’ for individual callers. These activities were based on findings elsewhere that
personal contacts between tutor and student promote student motivation and persistence by
enabling frequent discussion about academic progress, and by fostering feedback in an informal
atmosphere (Sweet 1982). To be an effective telephone tutor, OLI found they needed similar
teaching skills to those of any good university or college tutor, plus an ability to work without
visual cues in developing rapport with students. Orientation manuals, tutor workshops and
training sessions were devised to help train tutors in telephone skills and other techniques for
teaching students at a distance.\(^{65}\)

Contact with students was primarily one-to-one, but Academic Affairs’ interest grew in 1983 in
prospects of using audio-teleconferencing for both administrative and teaching purposes.
Neither telephone teaching, nor teleconferencing involving more than two people, were new
techniques but many of the earlier technical problems had been overcome and there were now
opportunities to make use of BCIT’s bridge to connect up to 10 locations around the
province.\(^{66}\) Teleconferencing was inexpensive compared with other forms of
telecommunication. OLI staff suggested that, with advance preparation and a well-structured
design, teleconferencing could be a valuable tool for course planning and administration, and
for teaching small groups. Tutors' responses were more lukewarm. Many thought one-to-one
contacts preferable, to encourage diffident students, enable them to work at their own pace,
and allow them flexibility of when and where they studied. There does not seem to have been
strong enough impetus within OLI's senior ranks to push teleconferencing as a major tool till
the later 1980s when closer proximity to the Knowledge Network sparked new interest in a
mixture of educational media for communications.\(^{67}\)

The tutors were expected to be as academically qualified to teach their subject as any
counterpart in a university (degree courses) or college (CTV and ABE). In 1983 over 80% of
CTV and ABE tutors lived in the lower mainland, but 54% of University tutors lived
elsewhere.\(^{68}\) Some had regular jobs and worked at OLI for personal enrichment, experience
and extra income. Others had been caught in the educational squeeze and relied financially on
sessional work at OLI and other universities or colleges. A third group, mostly women, were
housebound by children or other commitments. For them the job of tutor was not only a
source of income but also an important means of keeping their academic credentials current
ready for later full-time return to the workforce. The job was piece work, more analogous to
cottage industry:

> the knitter in an Irish hamlet, producing Aran sweaters of the same design over and
over, subject to monitoring for quality, poorly paid, and having little to say about the
marketing of the product (Calvert 1982).

Calvert (1982) found most tutors believed they played a major instructional role and were free
to communicate their own interpretations of learning materials, notwithstanding the
predetermined nature of course content and presentation. They also enjoyed the flexibility and
independence of their work, the satisfaction of working with adults who were often very highly
motivated, and the feeling that their encouragement and help were instrumental in student
success. Tutors’ main complaints confirmed Peters’ fears (1989) about the industrialization of teaching. They felt alienated from administrative and curricular decision making, and isolated from their peers and colleagues in Academic Affairs. There was occasional resentment of quality control and productivity monitoring mechanisms, and many felt insufficiently paid for the type and volume of work. Apart from the isolation, such complaints could as well be made by tutors in a large conventional university department.

Piece work in industrial society has traditionally been open to exploitation of workers in little position to resist. OLI had no exact analogies to follow either in setting pay rates or in defining the role itself, although UBC and SFU paid their correspondence tutors piece rates. The Institute miscalculated, at the outset, the nature and amount of work involved, and tutors’ rates of pay fell well behind increases in the cost of living as BC moved further into recession. Senior OLI personnel were evidently sympathetic to the tutors’ position, and would probably have amended the remuneration provisions more substantially in 1981 had not state financial and industrial policy intervened (see Chapter 7). Pay levels were raised a little in October 1981, and the methods and levels were changed significantly in September 1982. By this time, however, the government’s Compensation Stabilization Program was in force, strictly limiting increases in compensation. OLI had neither the funds nor the legal latitude to make real improvements till 1985.69

Senior staff were also aware of, and concerned about, tutors’ isolation and the difficulties of encouraging allegiance to the Institute. Tutor workshops were organized annually, to foster social contacts among tutors and between them and OLI personnel, conduct professional development programs, and involve tutors in planning and policy development. They were expensive to organize, and Jeffels saw them as poor substitutes for regular personal contact with tutors. Some efforts were made to involve tutors in course revision, though never with much success or consistency. Mugridge and Calvert created the part-time role of senior tutor
in the University Program in late 1982, partly to alleviate Calvert's workload as University Program Coordinator, and partly to provide a disciplinary bridge between tutors and Academic Affairs. A similar system was instituted in CTV later in 1983, following recommendations in the Institutional Evaluation. Calvert found the senior tutors a valuable way of ameliorating tutor isolation, monitoring performance, and identifying problems early. Mugridge reflected, however, that isolation was inherent in the style of distance teaching adopted by OLI and could never be wholly overcome.\textsuperscript{70}

The other 'front-line' people connecting OLI with students were the advisers and admissions staff at Richmond headquarters and the regional centres. Their roles, the range of services and the manner in which they were provided manifested a quickly and deeply embedded perception in OLI of the nature of the adult distance learner and the kinds of advice and support she or he typically needed. The initial assumptions, borrowed from the BOU and Athabasca and laid down in 1978-80 (see Chapter 5), were reinforced by experience and rarely disputed within OLI. Policy and practice were directed towards overcoming the reticence and lack of confidence of many students, and towards encouraging their independence as learners. In this sense, student support counteracted some of the 'industrial' tendencies of other parts of the system. However, support services, in practice, were affected by resource availability and an almost inexorable push towards systematization and efficiency of organization.

The 1982 Institutional Evaluation confirmed the centrality, to students and Institute, of the adviser's role in informing, advising and reassuring students concerned about course selection, credit transfer, career planning, study skills, and practical aspects of their study. The advisers' genuine care for students was an important asset for OLI. At the same time, the difficulty of juggling competing priorities and demands for OLI's scarce resources meant that, although course registrations doubled between 1980 and 1984, no additional posts were created in the Registry.\textsuperscript{71} Structural and morale problems became apparent in 1981. Workloads had become
excessive and uneven; horizontal and vertical communication flows were poor; and the advising
and records sub-systems could no longer handle the volume and complexity of tasks. With over
500 students each to support, the advisors found it difficult to develop or maintain personal
relationships with more than a very few. They found this frustrating, though students
themselves commented favourably on OLI’s services.\textsuperscript{72}

One impressive result of the paucity of resources and pressure for organizational efficiency was
the streamlining and integration of on-line computer systems to maximise administrative
mechanization and the time available for direct attention to students. Beginning in 1981,
Registry and Data Processing staff developed a Distance Education and Training Resource
Management System (DETReMS) to manage student admission, registration and records,
academic progress and examination schedules, tutor and student financial data and, by 1986,
production scheduling, courseware inventory and despatch, and revenue management (Mugridge
1985\textsuperscript{a}; Timmers & Mugridge 1986). The system attracted much interest among distance
educators elsewhere in Canada and overseas as a cost effective and efficient example of how
technology might be harnessed to distance education needs. By combining into the one data
base all the information relevant to each student’s passage through the Institute, DETReMS
highlighted the interdependence of each activity in an automated educational system (Mugridge
1985\textsuperscript{b}).

The importance attached within OLI to its advising services makes the more surprising the
savage cuts to them in 1984–85. The Terrace, Kelowna and Nelson-Castlegar centres were
closed, advising and clerical positions eliminated, advisers’ hours reduced, and computer
communications downgraded, representing a total cut of $164,000 or 22\% of the advising
budget. The reasons were ostensibly financial, at the nadir of OLI’s fiscal fortunes. There was
also ambiguity and conflict within OLI about the purpose and utility of regional centres, and
external political pressures for rationalisation and inter-institutional collaboration. The Board
was most reluctant to close any of the centres, though Ministerial failure to replace members whose terms had expired reduced the influence of non-metropolitan Board members on OLI policy making at this time. For Meakin, Mugridge and the advisers, the cuts were a matter of personal and professional anguish. They feared, too, that new student intakes and re-registrations would decline, completion rates would reduce, and students might fail without adequate support. It was not so expressed, but the effect might be a return to the 'bad old days' of correspondence study. Jeffels, on the other hand, was more doubtful about the efficacy and accessibility of a small number of far-flung centres, and was not as wedded to their continued existence as Meakin and the advisers.

OLI had originally intended to add more regional centres as student demography demanded. The seven existing centres functioned as information, community liaison and student support 'shopfronts'. Meakin initiated a review of the regional centre model in January 1984, partly because of impending cuts and partly to examine whether services could be provided satisfactorily in other ways. The model was by now subject to conflicting stresses from Ministerial criticism that OLI's independent centres duplicated costs and services of colleges, government demands for inter-institutional collaboration, and some college views that OLI's centres were an unwarranted intrusion into their region. At the same time, Student Services' burden increased from 1983 with introduction of an inter-university consortium, new CTV and non-credit programs with different administrative requirements, and collaborative arrangements with several colleges. The cuts exacerbated an already stretched student support system. Amelioration of OLI's financial situation in 1985 allowed some restoration of advisers' positions, hours and services in existing centres, but no reopening of those closed. Instead, the advisers began to travel more, and leaflets and 'self-help' materials were prepared for prospective and active students.
Consolidation of OLI's distance education systems and practices, and shared vicissitudes of fiscal constraints, helped OLI's organizational maturation and shaped its institutional culture. The early cosiness of a small, relatively collegial organization disappeared in the wake of two lengthy strikes which were partially externally induced, and the lay-offs and hours reductions (affecting 31 people) forced by retrenchment in 1985. A new organizational structure began to take shape under Jeffels' successor, Glen Farrell, as the Institute moved towards formal amalgamation with the Knowledge Network in the late 1980s.

Labour Relations Within OLI

The various attitudes towards hierarchy and power structures revealed by the 1982 Institutional Evaluation and circumstances of the 1981 and 1983 strikes confirms OLI consolidated and bureaucratized its operational patterns quite quickly. The Evaluation affirmed widespread staff pride in OLI's achievements to date, and professional satisfaction in the knowledge that in a very short space of time we have developed a respected educational product.... (T)here is immense satisfaction in knowing it is being delivered to large numbers of people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable or unwilling to attend traditional institutions.

The Evaluation and aftermath of the 1983 strike also showed widespread concerns about vertical and horizontal communication breakdowns in the Institute, and a feeling of many at lower levels that senior managers were overly isolated from OLI's day to day life. Communications problems of some kind were predictable given the speed with which OLI had grown, and the inevitable inability of people, structures and systems to keep abreast of the changes. Unionization of most of OLI's staff in 1980–81 probably added to the divisiveness by highlighting relative lack of power and grievances about salaries and conditions. Some concerns arose from specific systems and procedural problems, many of which were dealt with in a
flurry of subsidiary reviews and modifications made during 1982-83. Others were probably normal tensions caused by personal aspirations for higher status or inter-personal conflicts. Some were directed at styles of senior managers, including the Principal.76

Jeffels came to OLI with few preconceptions about distance education, or desire to change an organization he found soundly organized and effectively operating. He was less directive than Ellis as a manager, with a philosophy that "You never interfere until things go wrong, provided you have got a plan. Don't put a leprous forefinger into somebody else's gruel because all you will do is arouse animosity and they will hate you."77 His laissez faire style was essentially a passive one, relying on the Deans and Directors for policy initiation as well as implementation. He wrote marvellous letters of commendation, solace or congratulation to individual OLI staff members on personal matters. He was at his best boosting morale during crises such as the two strikes, but in more normal times was criticised by some for his apparent remoteness and lack of assertive vision. Jeffels himself saw his role as largely an external one, improving OLI's credibility and status. He was well regarded in some college circles as an erudite, highly articulate colleague, and was active in numerous educational and public forums but, as previously noted, was a reluctant lobbyist of government.78

The two strikes were lengthy and exhausting, and had significant short term impact on almost every aspect of OLI's activities. Course development, production and space renovations were virtually suspended, budget expenditure and other plans and discussions over tutor salaries and conditions were delayed, and negotiations with Ministries and institutions were held up. A lengthy postal strike exacerbated problems during the 1981 OLI strike, but on both occasions all students applying were registered, received their materials, and were taught. With almost 80% of staff on strike, the bare necessities were maintained by the non-unionised senior group under Segal's leadership as Strike Coordinator. OLI remained open through dogged determination, punishing workloads, and Meakin's encyclopaedic knowledge of the student
Both strikes had a peculiarly OLI flavour, but were affected by provincial industrial relations policies and precedents.

The first lasted four weeks in fall 1981, following failure of the BC General Employees Union (BCGEU), representing almost 80% of OLI's middle and junior ranks, to reach agreement with OLI management on a salary and conditions package. The Union had gained entree to OLI in 1980 after staff narrowly voted against a 'fair comparison' method of determining salaries by comparing benchmark positions against others in BC universities, colleges and statutory organisations. This method, approved by the Board in April 1980, was favoured by the anti-union government which built 'fair comparison' into labour legislation. Hardwick also strongly believed 'fair comparison' was preferable to the adversarial unionized environment he believed impeded distance education and effectiveness of small institutions. Labour relations polarised at OLI over the next year. The BCGEU consolidated its membership, and 24 staff exempted under the Labour Code from the BCGEU bargaining unit formed their own OLI Staff Association with the blessing of Jeffels and the Board. This group accepted a fair comparison method of settling salaries and conditions.

The second strike was longer and more acrimonious, lasting six weeks from October to December 1983, in the midst of anger and public unrest about the government's Restraint policies. In summer, the government had announced it would proceed with a Public Sector Restraint Act, reducing the public service by 25%. It had also introduced a Compensation Stabilization Program imposing tight reins on salary increases and incorporating productivity as a central element to salary negotiations (Matkin & Spector 1983). Calvert suggests the OLI contract was a testing ground for the BCGEU's forthcoming negotiations with the government over the next public service contract. There are hints some staff were not as committed to the second strike as to the first, and were somewhat disenchanted with the union, but the picketline and other confrontations left scars which it was hard entirely to heal. On the other hand, the
strikes strengthened the camaraderie of shared adversity and added to OLI's folklore: for example, the rivetting image of Jeffels and Walter Uegama (Director of University Programs) carolling 'Jesus wants me for a sunbeam' as they packed course materials.82

The OLI Community

Disharmonious labour relations, the cementing of hierarchies and bureaucratization of OLI practice were counteracted by the multiplicity of personal and professional friendships, working relationships and shared experiences which glued the organization together. 'Schlock hops' raised money for United Way and brought staff of all levels and groups together. Others adjourned after work to continue debates about OLI's activities and policies in the more convivial and informal environment of a local pub. Staff turnover was low, suggesting employees were reasonably satisfied in, and motivated by their work. The first 'five year vets' celebration in 1984 honoured 45 of OLI's then 123 staff, and similar celebrations occurred in succeeding years. Visitors remarked on the vibrancy, energy and enthusiasm of staff in a busy, if confined environment. Space remained a constant problem, the subject of wry humour and inventive solutions: ABE courses 'cooked up' in the kitchen/lunchroom, and temporary takeover by a staff member (a woman, one hopes) of part of the women's washroom as an office.83 The in-house part of the 1982 Institutional Evaluation enabled most staff, regardless of level or job, to participate actively in Institute affairs. The process probably forged new inter-Directorate relationships and understandings of the work of others.

The shared adversity of heavy workloads, cramped working conditions, and uncertain external legitimacy blended with the shared pleasures of students satisfied, courses of high quality coming off the press, jobs well done and goals met. In themselves, they had little overt connection to OLI's search for status and credibility. Yet they were immensely important ingredients in the unique institutional culture and identity that, however difficult to describe, made OLI instantly recognizable to its staff and outsiders. Prestige and credibility were
impossible without that identity and the related belief that OLI's purpose and practice were worthwhile.

A NEW PRINCIPAL AND A NEW STRUCTURE

Chapter 9 pursues OLI's relationship with the Knowledge Network and provincial politics of coordinating distance education during the 1980s. In 1985, the government moved to amalgamate the two organizations. In September 1986, Jeffels retired and Glen Farrell took up the combined post of Acting President of the incipient Open Learning Authority and Acting Principal of OLI. Farrell came to BC in 1974 from Saskatchewan to continue his career in continuing education as Associate Director, later Director, of Continuing Education at UVic. While at UVic he was instrumental in developing the University's non-metropolitan and distance education programs, and developed an interest in television and telecommunications (Haughey 1985). Farrell succeeded Hardwick as President of the Knowledge Network in June 1985, by which time it was apparent KNOW and OLI were moving to a closer relationship.

Farrell continued many of the broad principles and policies from which OLI had developed, but changed their emphasis. To him, as to his predecessors, 'openness' meant both accessibility and learner independence. It implied learning is a lifelong process during which learning needs range from general interest to profound mastery. Educational provision must create access which fits the learner's circumstances. However, Farrell grew impatient with the term 'distance education', seeing it as an artificial distinction of a "toolkit of pedagogical methodologies" from traditional forms of instruction. The toolkit should be integral to a spectrum of educational provision. By coopting 'distance education', and what OLI actually did, into his preferred new term, 'open learning', Farrell distanced himself and the forthcoming Open Learning Agency from their predecessors:
Open learning connotes a system incorporating needs assessment strategies and collaborative inter-institutional relationships for the design, distribution and delivery of learning to maximize learner independence, to permit a smooth transition from one level to another, and to enable study at the most convenient place, time and pace. This is accomplished through the use of delivery methods which utilize print, telecommunication and other media with face-to-face tutorials in optimal combination to ensure instructional quality and flexibility for the learner. A system of Open Learning also provides for the assessment and accreditation of knowledge gained through prior activities, both formal and informal.

Ellis' solution to the question of improving access was to build an organization whose programs conformed with the BC system, and whose strength came especially from its credential powers. Farrell instead moved to emphasise more the idea of OLI as service agency, within his concept of a provincial open learning system. Ellis and Jeffels were, at best, lukewarm about television. Farrell saw television as a vital and potentially effective medium for communicating with large numbers of people, not only those actually enrolled in OLI courses.

Farrell brought a new vitality to the organization and quickly set about reorganising OLI in preparation for the anticipated new Authority or Agency. By early 1987 he had created four Components, each headed by a Vice President: the Open University (Mugridge); an Open College combining CTV and ABE (Scales); Administration (Segal); and the Knowledge Network (Lucille Pacey, a new appointee from UVic, replacing Farrell at KNOW). From September 1986 staff at all levels of both organizations devoted much time to re-examining and meshing together policies and procedures of the two organisations, and redesigning them to fit Farrell's concept of open learning.

CONCLUSIONS

No BC higher education institution escaped the excoriating effects of resource constraints in the 1980s recession, but few were in as invidious position as OLI, being a very new organization still trying to establish its ways of operating, its territory and legitimacy. Lack of resources, and tight government constraints on how certain funds might be used, inevitably helped shape
what OLI taught, to whom, and to how many. Government policies impinged heavily on in-house labour relations, exacerbating concerns over salary levels and, possibly, turning OLI into a benchmark case for state-BCGEU relations in 1983.

Lack of finances only partly explains, however, the shape of OLI's institutional culture and policies during the 1980s. The policies, procedures and programs initiated in 1978-80 had created their own momentum, and the 1980s were largely spent implementing and modifying them. OLI's emphasis on CTV programs, and the increase in CTV enrolments probably would have happened anyway, if OLI had developed as its founders planned. Institutional complexity was bound to increase as OLI expanded. Systematization and mechanization were predictable consequences, especially since Jeffels sought to change very little. Repeating tasks, to an institutional rhythm, almost inevitably softened the edge of newness and challenge of unfamiliarity. The emergence of internal hierarchies and communications problems was also predictable in a bureaucratic environment where jockeying for territory and power were normal and healthy signs of institutional life.

OLI's internal structure and systems did not resemble those of BC's other institutions, and did not converge towards the latter as the Institute settled into routinized rhythms of organizational life. The standards and expectations of quality implicit in OLI's course development and teaching practices continued to come predominantly from university-based norms. OLI's course materials were visible evidence of whether the Institute met those highly subjective standards. At the same time, accessibility remained a driving force, and OLI incorporated much of the colleges' ethos and culture into its policies on admissions, pacing and student support, and into its elaborations of the tutors' and advisers' roles.

Two of OLI's most novel developments had far-reaching consequences. The computerised data bases and programs for course development and systems management were sophisticated, highly
effective, and apparently cost efficient. They quickly attracted favourable attention in the
wider distance education field, and some were copied elsewhere. The software also began a
trend within OLI towards in-house electronic networks which would gradually change the way
people communicated with each other, and influence what was communicated. The course
development software and network links were received well by those involved, and enhanced
OLI's image as a distance educator. The software also held the potential for significant change
in how knowledge was conceived and packaged. OLI's second novel development was the
introduction of the concept of laddering studies through hierarchies of knowledge and
credentials. There were pragmatic reasons for easing credit transfer restrictions and allowing
students to choose from as wide a range as possible of OLI's extant courses. The longer-term
social implications were probably neither clear nor uppermost in OLI policy makers' minds in
the mid-1980s, though one obvious justification was the potential improvement in access
laddering might bring.

OLI's 1981-86 Plan for the first time articulated explicitly what the Institute meant by 'distance
education', defining it as "an educational process in which a significant proportion of the
teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner." OLI staff
almost universally used this definition until 1986. By not referring to any communications
media, it avoided Hardwick's identification of 'distance education' with television and
telecommunications. On the other hand, it sufficiently deviated from standard forms of
education to allow OLI to claim uniqueness, special expertise and special resource needs. The
definition implied distance education was a collection of techniques rather than a separate form
of education (a view strongly held by Mugridge). OLI's concepts of its own practice reflected
its political and educational roots in BC. In broad terms, they also conformed well with
mainstream thinking in the international distance education field.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 8
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1 "Furnishing the mansions of the mind", Cariboo College Chronicle, 3 (1), 20 Aug. 1980; R. J. Stewart (MUSC) to Jeffels, 9 Jan. 1984 [PF: MUSC]; author’s interviews with Ronald Jeffels, Bruce Fraser, Daniel Birch.


4 Segal to Ellis [Bd: 10 May 1980].


16 R. C. McCandless (MoE) to Coll. Princs., 14 July 1983 [PF: Budget 83/84]; Jeffels to Fisher (MoE), 10 Dec. 1984 [PF: Budget 85/86]; Newberry to Jeffels, 2 April 1985 [PF:
Budget 85/86. Segal (interview) says, however, he welcomed the introduction of the formula because it promised that after a few years, OLI would receive a higher rate per FTE than previous allocation mechanisms. Because of the way the formula built up incrementally, this did not apply in early years, when OLI most needed it.


21 The cause of the aberrant drop is unclear; college part-time enrolments rose that year, though other institutes continued to suffer a decline begun in 1981-82 (see Appendix 1.2); University enrolments rose markedly in 1983-84, so the CTV drop is unlikely to have been caused by the two-month strike in late 1983.


Min. 9-3, Board 12 June 1981; Min. 8-7, Board 16 Oct. 1981.


Mugridge to Jeffels, 3 May 1985 [Bd: 17 May 1985].


42 Ovenden, May 1986.


48 Minutes, Administrative Ctee, 11 Aug. 1982, OLA Archives; Min. 21-2, Board, 8 April 1983; Mugridge to Board re institutional evaluation [Bd: 18 July 1983].


53 Glen Farrell, interview with author.

54 At provincial level, through the Fund for Excellence in Education, and the Ministry of Labour's JobTrac initiative; at federal level, CEIC's Job Strategy Innovation Program.


56 Author's interviews with Calvert, Mugridge.

57 Self-Study; Ext. Eval.. The 9-person external team was headed by Dr W. A. S. Smith, former President of Athabasca University; the one other university member was from the University of Washington; other members came from BC colleges and institutes and other educational organizations.


See John S. Daniel & Ben Turok (1975); Norine Heselton, "The future of teleconferencing at BC's OLI", MBA research proposal, UBC, April 1983, OLA Archives, mimeo. The University of Wisconsin's huge telephone conferencing system began in 1965. The BOU began teletutoring in 1973 and in the early 1980s experimented with a telewritings system, CYCLOPS, combining telephone lines, graphics pens, and home television monitors. By 1983 in Canada, teleconferencing systems for teaching, administration and course planning were operating at Memorial and Western Universities, the University of New Brunswick and the Tele-Universite de Quebec.


Mugridge to Univ. PAC, 7 Sept 1982; Mins. Univ. PAC, 27 Jan. & 2 June 1983 [Ac.Aff: Univ. PAC]; Jeffels interview 9 Nov. 1990; Calvert, interview; Mugridge, interview.

Mugridge, Abstract for case study on OLI, 1986 [Ac.Aff: Int. Conf. on Info Tech.].


Min. 16-6, Board 15 March 1985; Minutes, Inst. Affairs Ctee, 12 June 1985; Min. 10, Board 21 June 1985.


Jeffels, interview.

Author's interviews with Jeffels, Mugridge, Bottomley (1990), Gallagher, Fraser.


"... and now the news", vol. 1, no. 3, 1984 (in-house newsletter).


Farrell, "Submission to the Royal Commission on Education from OLA", 19 March 1988, OLA Archives; Farrell, "Keynote address to the International Conference on Improving Teaching", UBC, 12 June 1989, OLA Archives; Farrell, interview.


The internal changes consolidating and defining OLI as a distance education institution during the 1980s did not occur in a vacuum. They affected, and were influenced by, OLI's relationships with external bodies with a stake in distance education. One such group was OLI's students, numbering over 13,000 people annually by 1987. Another group comprised distance education institutions elsewhere in North America and overseas, as OLI established its legitimacy in the international field. A third set of interactions took place within a trend towards more, and genuine, inter-institutional collaboration in BC. OLI's future, and its relations with the state were profoundly affected by moves to give OLI a central coordinating role in provincial distance education, and to amalgamate OLI and the Knowledge Network.

OLI'S STUDENTS

Enrolments and completion rates are important indicators of an institution's value in the educational marketplace. Student feedback can provide reasons for student choices. I have not canvassed in any comprehensive way the reactions of students to OLI and their learning experiences through the Institute in this study. The available data were incomplete and insufficiently detailed to allow ready correlation of gender, class and programs, or to indicate subtle trends in location, backgrounds and aspirations. Their interpretation here is merely a tentative, preliminary analysis. The documentary material on which the following discussion is based (see Appendices 1.1 - 1.4) was, however, the same summary data used by OLI's policy makers in their policy making, practice and public rhetoric.

Enrolments did not reach the heights envisioned in 1979 by Ellis in his futuristic 1983 Principal's Report to the Board, but grew significantly throughout most of the decade. When OLI was first created, many colleges were fearful it would reduce their clientele and viability.
That fear seems to have subsided somewhat in the early 1980s as college enrolments continued to grow, but remained an undercurrent in college reactions to proposed changes in OLI's role and mandate. Official government statistics did not distinguish between part-time and distance education enrolments, so it is not possible to compare like with like. OLI enrolments were shown in government reports as 'part-time non-vocational' registrations. As Appendix 1.2 shows, BC's part-time non-vocational enrolment rates slowed from the late 1970s. In all BC institutes but OLI, they regressed in the 1980s (repeating patterns elsewhere in Canada - see Chapter 2). OLI's enrolment rates, on the other hand, were almost invariably far higher than the other institutions. By 1982 OLI enrolled more distance education students than total non-vocational enrolments in all but one college.3 Moreover, as Appendices 1.1 and 1.2 show, OLI's enrolment growth rates far exceeded those of both total and part-time non-vocational enrolments in all sectors of BC higher education from 1980-87.4 OLI's rates also easily outran Canadian averages in the 1980s (see Anisef et al 1985,26).

It is still impossible to confirm whether or why initial college fears of OLI-as-competitor were justified. The available statistics suggest college fears were accurate in that OLI attracted part-time students away from institutions in both sectors. However, there were also other factors at work. First, OLI's growth partially reflected a natural growth curve for a new institution, compared with more stable enrolment bases elsewhere. Second, the recession and funding cutbacks seem to have pushed the college sector as well as universities into renewed emphasis on full-time enrolments and day-time class patterns. Many unemployed people who might otherwise have enrolled part-time (if at all), sought full-time studies as a way of improving job prospects as fast as possible. On the other hand, McGeer, Hardwick and Ellis had regularly responded to college complaints by arguing OLI would cater for people not served by existing institutions. Although OLI's student profile data is inconclusive, it does not suggest OLI's students were remarkably different from the colleges' and institutes' client bases in terms of social background (Dennison 1979; Dennison et al 1982; 1983). The difference was almost
certainly in terms of student choice about the most convenient mode of study, or choice of OLI courses (and degrees) their local institution did not offer.

Although OLI staff continued to assert OLI's particular success in reaching non-metropolitan clients, the proportions of non-metropolitan residents enrolling in OLI courses steadily declined from 71% in 1980 to 37.1% in 1987-88 (Appendix 1.4). This could imply students preferred face-to-face teaching in non-metropolitan colleges, but is an unlikely explanation given the overall decline in part-time college enrolments during the decade. It is more likely that urban residents were increasingly attracted by the prospect of incorporating studies into their lifestyles and commitments without time-consuming travel and classroom attendance. Urbanization of the Lower Mainland continued apace during the 1980s; by the end of the decade, over one million people lived in Greater Vancouver. Moreover, OLI's programs increasingly catered for people in service industries, small businesses, and occupations located in urban centres.

Association of distance with geographic isolation gave way to concepts of social, economic and temporal distance. Bottomley notes that OLI's university students in the later 1980s were predominantly metropolitan, while college students were mainly non-metropolitan. This may simply reflect the influence of the Open University Consortium in the former case, but begs more questions than it answers.

Age distribution remained remarkably consistent throughout OLI's history. Approximately 70% of students fell into the 21-40 age range, suggesting OLI programs suited people advancing their career aspirations. The recession was reflected in the numbers of unemployed students, which almost doubled to 13.7% in 1983-84, returning to 8.3% in 1987-88; and in a sharp drop from 1982-84 in those taking courses for general interest rather than specific credential goals.

The proportion of students whose highest educational qualification on entry was high school graduation or less declined steadily from 61.4% in 1981-82 to 48.6% in 1987-88 while those
with some college studies increased. Some of the shift was probably due to a gradual reduction in ABE enrolments, but it is also likely OLI catered increasingly for better educated adults. The trend reflects OLI's expanding role as a way-station for completion of studies begun, or to be finished, elsewhere. The numbers taking courses for credit elsewhere almost doubled, from 16.1% in 1981-82 to 28.1% in 1987-88, while those seeking a BA from OLI itself halved. The idea of a higher education institution as a way-station is an intriguing variation on the more usual indicators of institutional legitimacy in relation to quality and destinations of graduates. Traditionally, as Trow (1984) notes, universities have 'owned' their students in the sense that they have acquired a reflected prestige from their graduates' achievements. A significant proportion of OLI's students could not be so captured, since their ultimate credentials were awarded elsewhere. Yet OLI may have been crucial to achievement of their learning goals. Acceptance by the BC universities of OLI's credits was an equally crucial pre-requisite to this achievement. In this regard, OLI's degree credentials were less significant for its legitimacy than the Institute's capacity to fit individual student programs and lifestyles with readily accepted courses.

The available data does not permit correlations of student profiles by program. A significant proportion of working students (43-47% p.a. overall) were employed in lower paid clerical, service, technical and trades jobs, though approximately 14% p.a. of students worked in managerial, professional or teaching occupations. However, this may be misleading. Bottomley believes OLI's university students typically had some prior higher education experience and came predominantly from middle class occupations. That does not mean the students themselves had always been middle class, as McIntosh et al (1980) discovered when examining the social class backgrounds of BOU students. Bottomley also believes CTV students were generally from lower socio-economic backgrounds in which higher education had not figured prominently. His contention remains to be tested but would broadly accord with Canadian experience in other areas of higher education (see Chapter 2). If true, this would imply OLI
extended educational access to more people, especially those disadvantaged by geography, or
work or family commitments, but did little to redress inequities due to more deep-seated social
and cultural factors.\textsuperscript{6}

Women always comprised a majority of OLI's students in all programs, and apparently came
from across the occupational spectrum. If true, it contradicts other studies (see Anisef et al
1985; Kelly 1987; Gilbert & Guppy 1988) that women returning to full-time study in Canada
and other western nations are typically middle class because of the fees involved and
difficulties for working class women in giving up current paid employment. Part-time study at
a distance obviated the latter problem and probably helped women juggle competing demands
of work, family and study. However, in-house documents on OLI's mission, student profiles
and needs rarely referred to gender inequity, or the implications for student support, curricula
and teaching strategies of OLI's predominantly female student body. The geographic and other
disadvantages Ellis and his colleagues singled out certainly affected women greatly, but
improved social equity for women was apparently a secondary result of improving access so far
as OLI's policy making was concerned. In broad terms, OLI's emphasis on business, health,
service occupations, and liberal arts was likely to attract women looking to career opportunities,
and Scales targetted certain occupations already dominated by women. It is not evident,
however, that this was done with gender equity in mind so much as meeting a demonstrable
gap in the kind of subjects for which distance teaching was considered suitable. The one
exception was a Women's Access program funded partly by the Ministry of Education in 1981-
83.\textsuperscript{7}

Completion rates in distance education have long been controversial, and figures advanced
publicly by institutions have often been misleading and incapable of comparison because of
different bases of calculation. A Universities Council attempt to compare OLI, UBC and SFU
distance education figures in 1983 proved impossible for this reason. This is unfortunate
because high dropout and non-completions are one of the most frequent criticisms levelled at distance education. Institutional wariness to reveal the statistics may be due to fear they would be unacceptably low compared with the norm. Part of the problem is that the norm is not actually comparable, since it is usually based on full-time school-graduates whose reasons for staying or leaving higher education differ from those of working adults. A rare comparative study in distance education was made by Crawford (1981) of OLI, NIC and Athabasca students taking the same psychology course. She found OLI's pacing system resulted in double the completion rate (58%) of the others.

OLI calculated student persistence in two ways. One was net registrants after the official withdrawal period ended; the other was 'starters' – that is, students submitting at least one assignment. Students' chances of completing were assessed to be 10-15% higher if they overcame the major hurdle of the first assignment (an assessment confirming my own experience in Australia). Tutors' and advisers' telephone strategies were geared accordingly. Completion rates were consistently and significantly lower in ABE and higher in university courses. Mean completion rates improved from 1980, partly due to increasing numbers of returning students who were more likely to complete. The completion rates of ABE 'starters', who were the most at risk, remained consistently the lowest, hovering around 45-47% for most of the 1980s. The CTV starters' rates ranged from 50-65% according to time of year (lower in summer) till about 1984, when they seemed to steady. University rates were similar, but continued to swing seasonally.8

Two student surveys, in 1981 and 1983, indicated students dropped courses for personal reasons (heavy burden of other commitments, changes in work or life situations), difficulty of materials (especially for ABE students), lack of study skills, enrolment in more courses than the student could handle, or late receipt of materials. There also seemed to be a positive correlation between the quantity and quality of student/tutor contact and student success, especially in
relation to assignment feedback. The 1983 survey, of over 500 students, reported students enrolled at OLI because they preferred working on their own (31%), could not schedule campus attendance (26%), had no nearby alternative (20%), or wanted to study without interrupting job commitments (13%). Almost all were able to find the information they wanted about OLI and its programs. OLI's difficulties in providing sufficient advisers was reflected in the 20% of respondents who did not understand the adviser's role, and the 35% who had never spoken to an adviser. Of those who did consult an adviser, 82% reported their satisfaction with the encounter; 90% of students talking with their tutor reported a high degree of satisfaction with the latter's expertise and assistance. A surprisingly large number commented their course would have been easier if some of it had been delivered by television (41%) or audiotapes (22%), though a number commented on the difficulty of "scheduling one's life around TV". Eighty-four percent reported the course(s) had met their expectations. The most common problems encountered during study were domestic or personal difficulties rather than problems with study or instructors. Others stressed the advantages of working at their own pace, rather than to a rhythm imposed by other students or the instructor; not having to spend time and money on travel to classes; and being able to continue working while studying.

Student involvement in, and influence on OLI policy making was largely indirect, and overt student loyalty to the Institute was confined mainly to students working over lengthy periods towards an OLI credential. Consciousness of OLI's goals of improving educational accessibility ran through most policies and debates, and academic planning routinely drew on student profile data, but actual contact with students was mainly confined to the tutors and Student Services personnel. There were no students on the Board, but students joined the various Program Advisory Committees in 1981-82. With no campus or large-scale meeting places, division into widely differing programs, and geographic dispersal of students, there was little opportunity for political or social solidarity or conviviality, such as traditionally exists on conventional campuses. It is questionable whether OLI students, like part-time adult students
elsewhere, sought or needed the kind of collegiality considered a traditional and enjoyable part of student life. Most already had family, social and work patterns and contacts, and lifestyles into which study had to fit, in contrast with young full-time students for whom creation of lifestyles and networks revolved round their study. Encouraging institutional loyalty from such a disparate and preoccupied group was difficult, particularly given OLI’s physical invisibility.

**OLI IN THE DISTANCE EDUCATION FIELD**

OLI’s relations with organizations outside BC, especially overseas, illustrated the maxim that ‘prophets go unsung in their own country’. During the 1980s Mugridge and his colleagues steadily extended OLI's sphere of influence and activity into international distance education forums as well as intra-provincial collaborative projects. In so doing, they established a reputation for innovative organizational structures and systems, transferable and high quality computer software to support course preparation and administration, and expertise in creating and managing a distance education organization. OLI’s collaborative, aid-related and other activities in turn helped OLI validate its position within BC as the major distance education provider and channel for inter-provincial and international relationships. While the universities had, and were expected to have, national and international connections, it was unusual in the 1980s for the colleges and institutes to do so, certainly to the extent that OLI achieved. These relationships brought to OLI a touch of glamour and prestige the colleges could not match.

OLI was well known to the BOU from the outset because of Perry’s contacts with McGeer, Hardwick and Ellis, and a variety of exchanges between the two organisations (see Chapters 4 and 5). The question of OLI’s non-use of BOU materials continued to be a sore point between the Institute and Hardwick well into 1984, though OLI did directly acquire some BOU courses. Mugridge and his colleagues continued to assert the necessity of major modifications to BOU courses before being offered in BC. As well as unresolved confusion over responsibility for
negotiations, there were also complicated matters of copyright and licensing fees whose resolution was impeded by the intransigence of the BOU's agent, and by OLI's own marketing plans. Efforts in 1981 to collaborate over rewriting the BOU's foundation course in technology foundered on OLI's inability to fund its contribution, but indicated the Open University's willingness to treat with OLI on equal terms. In 1984 OLI, UBC, the Knowledge Network and the BOU joined forces to prepare a calculus course based on a BOU course, and in 1985 OLI brought a BOU mathematician to Vancouver to adapt another BOU mathematics course on real analysis.

OLI's relationships with other international distance education organizations stemmed from the BOU's '10th birthday party' conference in 1979. OLI's lack of full-time faculty and high level of industrialization aroused considerable overseas interest in its course development and production systems and software, teaching strategies, and integrated, computer-based system management. A steady stream of visitors from Africa, Australasia and Asia in the 1980s helped forge personal relationships and guarantee OLI's membership in an international network of distance educators. These relationships were enhanced by OLI's active participation in a major international conference on distance education in Vancouver in 1982, Mugridge's visit to Pacific Rim countries in 1984, and presentation of papers by OLI staff at international forums. Projects and formal relationships directly resulting from these contacts included acquisition of a course from Australia's Deakin University, and its subsequent adaptation in 1986 by that University's recently retired Vice Chancellor. Agreement was reached in 1986 with the Open College of the University of East Asia to offer BC's Dogwood Certificate and some university courses in Hong Kong. The connections thus forged probably influenced the Hong Kong government's decision in 1988 to create an Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong on remarkably similar lines to BC's OLI.
Relationships with Malaysian and Indonesian institutions, largely funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), were particularly significant for OLI's prestige. The first was a contract from 1983-87 with the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang (the only Malaysian university with a distance education mandate) to train chemistry and biology faculty in course writing for distance teaching. It complemented similar arrangements between USM and Deakin and Murdoch Universities in Australia. All parties rated the linked projects as highly successful and a further CIDA-funded contract followed in 1986, for OLI to provide technical training support to USM. A formal memorandum of understanding was reached between USM and OLI in 1984 to promote inter-institutional collaboration in course development, exchange of expertise and staff, and marketing arrangements between the two.

A separate joint venture agreement, partly funded by CIDA and the federal Department of Communications, was reached in 1987 between OLI and Disted Services, a new private college in Penang established by Malaysian distance educators, most of whom had been connected with USM. Disted's object was to deliver English language university programs to Malaysian and Singaporean students at a distance by acting as the agent of delivery for overseas institutions. The country's universities could not meet the demands on them, and government pro-Malay policies tended to disenfranchise many Chinese and Indian Malaysians from educational access. Disted enrolled and taught students on behalf of the accrediting institution, using the latter's materials and operating to the latter's specifications and standards. The project was warmly supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat in London as a significant demonstration project for other developing countries. The OLI Board saw it as an appropriate and exciting extension of OLI's collaborative and marketing activities but was initially cautious about accreditation arrangements. OLI adapted its DETReMS software (see Chapter 8) for use by Disted and added international electronic mail connections to facilitate communications and student assessment. A multinational Disted Consortium was formed in 1987, committed to resolve problems of international credit transfer and the meshing of different degree programs so
students would have access to as many of the courses offered as possible. OLI registered 170 course enrolments in the first intake in summer 1987.19

Another important relationship was forged with Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia's open university, established in 1984 as a key element in national educational strategy. It enrolled 57,000 in its first intake and was expected to register some 500,000 students around the country by 1990. Ellis, who had participated in multinational teacher training projects in Indonesia in the 1970s, was a CIDA consultant to the Indonesian government on Universitas Terbuka's creation, and initiated OLI's involvement. As a result, CIDA funded a tri-partite contract in 1985 for a 'counterpart program' matching senior Universitas Terbuka personnel with Canadians of similar rank at SFU and OLI. This quickly expanded into a three-year project with OLI helping the Indonesians design and implement an integrated computer-based management system based on DETReMS, and course development, production and delivery systems; develop teacher training programs at a distance; and create a structure for institutional and academic research at the University. The Universitas Terbuka joined OLI's memorandum of understanding with USM in 1986, with the aims of exchanging course materials between the two universities (both teach in Bahasa), and mounting joint staff training programs.20

Mugridge initiated a formal place within OLI for international developments in 1983 by seconding course designer, Shannon Timmers, to develop research and training activities, and explore potential sources of external funding and areas for collaboration. This occurred at a particularly difficult period for OLI's resources, and some within OLI were dubious about the potential cost and distraction from OLI's primary goals. Mugridge and Timmers led OLI's negotiations over the Malaysian and Indonesian ventures, and Timmers and others added to OLI's international activities through their participation in various research projects and workshops. Timmers also established a vital network of contacts with international funding agencies, professional associations, regional educational bodies, and private foundations which
spread OLI's repute and paved the way for future projects and funding. The demonstrable success of the first South East Asian projects was instrumental in persuading the Board to accept Mugridge's proposal in 1985 to create formally an International Development and Training Office (run by Timmers), but the Board insisted it be self-funding and in accord with OLI's mandate. Doubts about the place of international operations disappeared after Farrell's appointment as Principal in 1986. He was greatly impressed with the skilful negotiations, strong networks and effective projects Mugridge and Timmers had set in place. Farrell incorporated international developments with commercial activities into the President's office in the new structure.\textsuperscript{21}

Closer to home, Mugridge pursued relationships with universities in western Canada, either in one-to-one arrangements (especially with Athabasca University), under the umbrella of provincial agreements (as between BC and Alberta), or in a consortium of distance education bodies. Successful inter-institutional collaboration proved elusive, but the intention and tenor of the negotiations and agreements indicated OLI behaved, and was treated, as a major Canadian authority in distance education from the early 1980s.

The relationship with Athabasca University began cordially in 1978, at the urging of Hardwick and his Alberta counterpart, Des Burghofer. They signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1980 supporting (in rhetoric if not in dollars) inter-provincial collaboration based on OLI and Athabasca and aimed at economies of scale, cost effective use of resources such as satellite technology, and rationalisation of programs. An inter-provincial government committee was formed to implement the agreement, but it seems to have had no impact on either institution. Mugridge later complained OLI and Athabasca had found it difficult even to obtain knowledge of its activities. Ministerial interest in inter-provincial rationalization of effort persisted. An agreement was signed in 1984 among the four western provinces and two territories to formalise cooperation in development and delivery of distance education. It too seems to have had little
effect, but the lengthy negotiation process influenced the western university presidents to consider rationalising effort in distance education.22

Meanwhile, Athabasca’s experience, structures and systems were valuable guides to Ellis and his colleagues in setting up OLI (see Chapters 5 and 6). The two institutions signed a collaborative agreement in 1979, following which arrangements were made for two-way sales of courses, and cooperation in course sharing and development. The early enthusiasm for a close relationship faded from about 1982. There are hints of mutual misunderstandings. Some at OLI viewed Athabasca as too rigid and limited by its determination to pursue the conventional hallmarks of a university’s legitimacy. Some at Athabasca considered OLI’s multiple program mandate made it inferior to a ‘real’ university and compared OLI’s materials unfavourably with Athabasca’s more lavish production quality. The most significant factor in cooling the partnership with OLI, however, was probably Athabasca’s enforced move from Edmonton to the prairie town of Athabasca, a move which transformed the University and consumed its energy through the 1980s.23

In the early flush of collaborative spirit, OLI and Athabasca proposed, in 1981, a broader cooperation among western Canadian institutions offering degree studies at a distance. Operating under the auspices of the Council of Western Canadian University Presidents (COWCUP), a steering committee was created whose acronym was, briefly but wonderfully, COWCUDDLE (Consortium of Western Canadian Universities Delivering Distance Learning Education).24 Jeffels, and especially Mugridge, took a leading part in the Committee’s activities over the next three years, as it canvassed two main possibilities. Stephen Griew, President of Athabasca, preferred an inter-provincial credit transfer system. OLI favoured creating a pool of courses to which all could have access so as to avoid duplication of time, energy and money. Small-scale agreements resulted (for example, between OLI and the
University of Manitoba), but little else. The consortium foundered on an inability or unwillingness to overcome institutional mistrust and territorial imperatives. As Griew put it:

(We do not want any arrangement which) reduces institutional control over our own destiny, or which set(s) up a machinery that might increase the ease with which we might personally be disadvantaged.25

The inventories of courses, technologies, policies and plans which the Committee compiled confirmed OLI and Athabasca as the largest and most sophisticated distance education operations in the region, followed by Simon Fraser University. OLI's emphasis on print and teletutorials was consistent with most others in Canada's West. Video and television were still interesting areas for experimentation in the early 1980s but no one used them methodically or extensively.26

Unlike many other aspects of higher education, the USA has had relatively little influence on Canadian higher distance education; indeed, it could be argued the traffic has gone the other way.27 One example was OLI's relationship with the National (and then International) University Consortium, a combination of the University of Maryland, about 20 other American universities and colleges, and Maryland Public Broadcasting, funded in the 1980s by the Annenberg Foundation. The Consortium bought BOU courses and adapted them for American use, and gradually began to design its own courses along BOU lines, mixing print and television. Members used the courses as they saw fit, as degree or non-credit programs, on and off campus. With BOU encouragement, the Consortium wooed OLI (and Athabasca and the BC universities) in 1982 as a means of enhancing its own prestige and credibility through international connections.

OLI and Athabasca joined the IUC in 1983; the BC universities did not. Mugridge saw the IUC as a potential source of materials and avenue for sales, which would help OLI reduce its development costs (by 66% for those courses, as it proved), become more entrepreneurial, and
accede to political pressure to use more television. The move also demonstrated confidence about OLI's credibility with students and institutions, since the Consortium's courses were largely interdisciplinary and unlikely to attract direct credit for transfer in BC. In 1979 Mugridge had eschewed BOU courses for that reason; by 1983 OLI could afford to experiment with non-traditional curriculum. As the only single-mode distance teaching members of the Consortium, OLI and Athabasca exerted considerable influence over its choice of new courses, teaching strategies, and style of course development. Mugridge probably did not anticipate the degree of pedagogical and technical difficulty OLI designers would encounter in adapting IUC materials for BC purposes. Much of the Consortium's potential went unrealised, partly because of internal disagreements over objectives, management, and finance, but OLI's membership took the Institute into US arenas as an acknowledged expert in distance education.28

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

OLI's approach to inter-institutional collaboration was framed by its original mission statement, its leaders' belief that cooperation could enhance students' learning opportunities, their vision of OLI as a discrete, credential-granting body treating with other institutions, and financial exigencies and government pressure for rationalisation and higher productivity. Policy making was further complicated by continuing uncertainties over OLI's role as coordinator of distance education for the province. OLI came into being partly because existing institutions could or would not collaborate as the Minister wanted. Although cooperation was not specified in its mission, McGeer and Hardwick expected it to be a significant aspect of OLI's activities. Ellis saw the first requirement as creating a climate in the system in which cooperation could be possible; that is, an acceptance of OLI as a credible and non-threatening partner, and a willingness to consider joint ventures as intrinsically beneficial to each partner and their students.29
OLI never defined or developed a formal policy on collaboration as such, but the system compatibility principle and willingness to work with other agencies permeated most of its educational and administrative policies and interactions with others. Collaboration was an obvious strategy for implementing OLI's service role. The result was a diverse range of formal and informal activities giving OLI's administrators more extensive experience in inter-institutional collaboration than almost anyone else in the international distance education field in the 1980s.

Mugridge (1989) anticipated the benefits of collaboration for OLI to be a more effective service to students and improved cost effectiveness. Use of university and college faculty and the Correspondence Branch to write and validate OLI courses was one form of collaboration. Use of college facilities for laboratory sessions, student advising, and public information was a second. OLI's purchase and adaptation of courses from elsewhere was a third. Those involving joint course development and/or delivery were complicated and difficult to achieve amicably. Credit transfer was another form, not unique to OLI but raised to new levels as a credit bank and Open University Consortium from 1984. A sixth was sale of OLI materials to other agencies in BC and elsewhere.

The variable outcomes of a multiplicity of discrete joint ventures gave Mugridge and his colleagues valuable insight into the advantages and pitfalls of inter-institutional collaboration (Mugridge 1983; 1989; Calvert 1986). Many potential projects never moved beyond the drawing board. Some proved impractical; others suffered from lack of trust or conviction that distance education could help solve the problem at hand. Often they foundered on lack of money; one or other partner was unwilling to redeploy scarce resources for the purpose, or the government or another agency could not be persuaded to fund it. That they occurred at all was an indication OLI was a credible partner with something of quality to contribute. By 1985 OLI was involved in cooperative ventures (or plans for such) with all three universities and almost
all colleges. Mugridge commented that in marked contrast to earlier attitudes, "OLI has now reached the point where, at least at the administrative level, there is almost universal acceptance of our activities and of the potential for cooperation between the Institute and the colleges."30

The concept of collaboration in course development and teaching was new to most participants and the projects were typically fraught with practical and political difficulties, jurisdictional disputes and misunderstandings of the kind outlined in Chapter 2. Perceptions of OLI's role as service agency or equal partner in providing credentials also affected the dynamics of the relationship. Where OLI essentially provided a service, transactions were relatively simple. Where OLI was an equal partner, collaboration involved a complex interweaving of inter-institutional power manoeuvres. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests there was often strong enthusiasm among the partners for a genuine lowering of institutional barriers to mutual benefit. Mugridge notes the "extraordinary fiscal restraint" imposed on the system in the 1980s was an incentive to find "workable solutions...to the problems caused by tightly controlled and inadequate budgets" (1989,206). OLI's lack of full-time faculty was a significant advantage; it had none of the usual 'Not Invented Here' attitudes typically plaguing collaborative ventures (Bynner 1985). Other conditions for success in OLI's ventures included trust and parity of power between the partners (on both personal and institutional levels); recognition of mutual benefits likely to accrue; personal and institutional commitment to making it work; and simplicity and clarity of the goal and ways of achieving it (Mugridge 1989; Moran 1990).

Patterns of Collaboration

Each example of joint course development and/or delivery was unique, but patterns emerged in which OLI used its expertise and/or production capabilities, and its capacity to reach people outside conventional classroom settings. The patterns became more complex as the decade wore on. One relatively straightforward type involved preparation, production and, often, teaching of a course for a specific training purpose, typically for a non-educational organization.
1980 contract with BC Hydro to write two courses on electrical utility operations was one example; BC Hydro supplied the course writers and consultants, OLI the design, production and delivery. Later examples included contracts with organizations as various as Western Pulp, the Liquor Distribution Board, the Legal Services Society, and several provincial Ministries. In a 1982 variation on this pattern, OLI undertook the materials production, warehousing and distribution of training modules written and taught by Cariboo College.31

A second pattern involved joint design of a program in which OLI prepared and taught more theoretical topics at a distance, and the partner taught practical skills on campus. One example was two electrical generating systems courses developed and taught by OLI and the Pacific Vocational Institute from 1981. Another, which took almost four years to implement, was a dental assistant program adapting materials from Alberta and teaching them through a mixture of independent study and the College of Dental Surgeons’ mobile dental facility. The graduate nurse refresher program of OLI and Kwantlen College, which began in 1983, was a more complex, and highly successful, example of this type of collaboration. It combined Kwantlen’s experience in health education and refresher programs with OLI’s expertise in distance education development and delivery. Kwantlen provided course writer, consultant and instruction, OLI the instructional design, production, and mechanisms for teaching at a distance (including interactive video and teleconferencing). Local hospitals and other health services were also involved, as students combined independent study with four weeks of clinical experience. The Registered Nurses Association of BC accredited the program and students quickly found it an effective route back into the workforce. In 1986, OLI joined forces with the Vancouver Community College to resurrect a diploma program training college instructors (especially trade teachers) in fundamental curriculum development and teaching skills. It had previously been taught by UBC’s Continuing Education, but had suffered the depredations of Restraint. The collaborative program mixed distance education with various forms and times of attendance using four campuses outside the Lower Mainland.32
Another pattern of joint course development closely paralleled OLI's normal style of course preparation, and arose out of the OLI-Athabasca collaborative model. Learning materials were prepared by faculty at one or more universities, using OLI's instructional design and production expertise, with joint copyright and shared production costs, for use by all partners in their own programs. Several joint ventures of this type were concluded between OLI and SFU, apparently to their mutual satisfaction - for example, in chemistry, mathematics, geography, and social anthropology. SFU's willingness to cooperate in this way suggested attitudes there were changing towards OLI's academic quality. The University's attitudes softened further in 1984 as SFU sought to buy business administration and economics courses being developed on personal contract for OLI by SFU faculty. Academic quality could not here be questioned, and there were financial advantages to both institutions. Joint ventures of this kind with the other universities were rare but, as OLI harnessed electronic publishing and electronic mail techniques in the mid-1980s, a BOU calculus course was jointly adapted by staff at the BOU, UBC and OLI.33

Marketing was another, increasingly important aspect of OLI's approach to inter-institutional collaboration. The Board agreed early in 1979 that OLI's teaching materials should be available, at cost, to others in BC, with OLI retaining copyright, in the expectation such materials would be mainly used in the buyer's on-campus programs. In 1982, with gross sales averaging $9,250 per month, Segal created a marketing and public relations department to pursue revenue generation outside normal government funding channels. The move was in line with BC Treasury Board policy encouraging extramural income. The number of packages sold in 1982 equalled OLI's own enrolments, suggesting OLI was reaching double the number of people. By 1984, gross sales of course packages averaged $17,300 per month (some $200,000 per annum), to over 80 regular clients including all BC's higher education institutions, many school districts, government departments and business organisations, Indian bands, and
education bodies outside BC. The marketing policy neatly fitted the idea of OLI as a service agency, and quickly proved highly successful, not least because prices were reasonable. Net profits were small, for the same reason, yet a certain reluctance to market OLI aggressively persisted until 1987 when Farrell and Hardwick brought a more openly entrepreneurial approach to OLI’s activities. It is doubtful if the market could have sustained much higher prices anyway during the Restraint period. Over half the sales were ABE packages which were widely viewed as among the best available anywhere. For North Island College, which bought and adapted almost all its course materials, OLI’s course packages were invaluable; there was no need to re-tailor them to BC requirements and Tayless found their academic quality was exceptional.34

Models of Sectoral Collaboration

In 1984, in the midst of heated debates over expansion of OLI’s role into coordination of distance education in the province, two more elaborate and potentially far-reaching types of collaboration were initiated by the Ministry, with very different outcomes. One was an agreement reached among OLI, Selkirk College and the Knowledge Network to complement each other’s offerings and delivery methods, and share delivery, student services, advertising and costs. The Ministry’s aim was a model which might be extended throughout the college and institute system. Selkirk was an interesting choice as partner, not least because of former connections with the College of some of the main players. Andy Soles, the Acting Deputy Minister of Education, had been Selkirk’s Principal; OLI’s Director of University Programs, Walter Uegama, had been dean and acting Principal there, and OLI’s Board Chair, Jim Pritchard, had been its bursar. Selkirk had been a regular buyer of OLI’s ABE courses, but in 1983 began also to buy OLI’s university materials with the intention of offering them at a distance, for university transfer credit. Jeffels and others in OLI saw this as direct and unacceptable competition; Selkirk’s response implied it saw OLI as a provider of materials whose delivery should be left to the local college. Open conflict was averted, but the
difference in attitudes undoubtedly coloured later negotiations over a broad collaborative model.35

Grant Fisher and Ministry colleagues were enthusiastic about the idea of a trilateral model. Leo Perra, Selkirk's Principal, was apparently interested in preserving the College's regional learning centres which were threatened by Restraint, as well as expanding Selkirk's academic course presence in the region. Left to themselves, it is unlikely OLI's leaders would have initiated this venture. There were practical difficulties of meshing different administrative systems and educational outlooks. More importantly, they were concerned OLI's identity should not be submerged in that of another institution in the eyes of students or the educational community. Mugridge was by now convinced collaboration could only be effective when based on concrete objectives and intentions, and this model was too general. The model incorporated interchangeability of credits and mutual access to programs, separation of responsibilities for 'conventional' and 'non-conventional' instruction and use of KNOW, access for OLI students to Selkirk library, advising and other facilities, joint promotion of programs in the College region, and sharing of costs. It looked impressive but very little real collaboration actually happened. There was insufficient incentive, trust, or commitment to make something tangible from the words.36

In contrast, McGeer's insistence in 1984 that the universities and OLI create a consortium to offer their distance education courses jointly not only came quickly to fruition, but transformed OLI's University Program and relationship with the universities. The Open University Consortium of BC (OUCBC) was a direct result of government demands for greater rationalization and productivity in the Restraint period, and renewed uncertainty over OLI's role in provincial university distance education. For OLI, there were several motives for encouraging a consortium. Some senior staff believed OLI should have a more directive role in university education at a distance. There were clearly advantages to an arrangement which
both improved accessibility and made OLI's existing degrees more viable and comprehensive. At the same time, there was probably a reluctance to push too hard because of persistent institutional antipathy to OLI. Jeffels made no positive moves to annex new territory. The catalysts for the open university consortium, like the OLI/Selkirk model, were outside OLI; it was much to OLI's advantage, however, and senior staff played major roles in its shape and powers.

Though the picture was by no means as bleak as a decade earlier, it was still impossible in 1983 to obtain a BC university undergraduate degree exclusively by distance education through one institution. The universities offered 134 courses, and OLI 19 at upper levels; credit transfers supplied the rest. The norm that 'real' education demanded a face-to-face scholarly environment for both curricular and extra-curricular activities had been little dented by experience in non-metropolitan programs, nor by the growing number of people entering the universities with credits gained through distance education. The saving grace for many British Columbians was the extensive system of credit transfer.

The idea of credit transfer (award of credit by one institution for academic achievement at another) had been an integral part of university-college relations since the late 1960s. Using a complex provincial system of subject articulation committees to negotiate equivalencies, prerequisites and GPA standards, UBC and UVic normally granted a maximum credit of 50% of their BAs, and Simon Fraser up to 75% in its B.Gen.Studies. Since the flow of students was normally one way, from college to university, the latter could exert strong influence over college curricula, and maintain a 'gate-keeping' position over entry to degree completion. OLI began relatively cautiously, with a maximum credit of 50% of the degree based on Ellis' insistence on 'fit' with the system. Credit transfer was a major key to OLI's capacity to help students tailor-make programs to suit their needs or situations, and to its flexibility in inter-institutional collaboration. In 1981, as a sign of greater institutional self-confidence and
acceptance of OLI's academic quality, the Institute expanded its maximum credit to 75%, on the grounds that the lower figure often meant "imposing artificial and unnecessary restrictions on students whose academic careers have already seen more than their share of such restrictions."

In doing so, Mugridge and his colleagues implicitly denied control over the boundaries of a discipline or field must rest with the awarding institution rather than with the learner. They also risked the censure of those believing intellectual quality and standards could only be satisfactorily assessed through control from within the awarding institution, although they could point to SFU policy to support their case.40

In mid-1983, with debate heating up over OLI's role in coordinating provincial distance education, SFU's Jack Blaney resurrected the early 1970s' Tri-University Committee proposal for an inter-university agency to act as a credit bank to validate students' credit obtained from two or more sources (see Chapter 3). In March 1984 Farrell, on behalf of the three universities, proposed a consortium excluding OLI but including the Knowledge Network, to coordinate university distance education program development and delivery, and manage a credit bank. The proposal argued the wide span of OLI's mandate impaired its credibility as a degree-granting institution, its development plans had not been realised, and low enrolments in upper level courses suggested the Institute lacked academic legitimacy. This may have been a ploy to avoid the prospect, then being mooted in Ministry circles, of OLI gaining university status as well as degree-granting powers under a new scheme of coordination.41 OLI and McGeer rejected the criticism, and McGeer demanded a joint venture of the three universities, OLI and the Knowledge Network, to remove "artificial hurdles" to degree completion which were "no longer socially and financially acceptable". He wanted all four to offer arts and science courses at a distance, using KNOW as a transmission medium, with full credit transfer across institutions, and an external degree in addition to those already offered.42
In an influential paper shaping the subsequent debate and options, Walter Uegama, OLI's Director of University Programs, analysed credit banking and external degrees, defining the former as "a registrarial service wherein student claims to learning from external sources are validated and assessed and a transcript service is provided." Credits might include formal courses of other post-secondary institutions, learning through non-educational organizations, and assessed 'experiential learning'. BC already had in place a sophisticated version of the first. The second posed various problems which might be partially solved through course challenge. The standards, credibility and cost of the third posed significant problems. Experience elsewhere suggested a credit bank not attached to a nominated degree held little appeal for universities and students alike. An external degree would allow an award based on up to 100% credit for learning gained from institutions and sources other than that granting the degree. The New York Regents external degree was one example; Athabasca's BGS was another, receiving some 1000 applications annually. Uegama proposed an external degree capability for OLI, supported by an advisory committee from the universities.

Uegama's paper framed the work of a planning committee chaired by William Gibson, Chair of the Universities Council, and a longtime colleague and friend of McGeer. Members included Uegama, Farrell, Blaney, Hardwick and UBC's Bob Smith. Responses to the Uegama paper varied within and across the universities. Almost no one liked the idea of credit for experiential learning. The most positive were those like UVic's Farrell, UBC's Bob Smith, and SFU's Blaney and Yerbury, already committed to more open access, or philosophically attuned to adult learning paradigms stressing greater equality between learner and teacher. Others were nervous of the implied piecemeal approach of collecting apparently unrelated courses without demanding cores of general and specific knowledge, or were opposed to open admissions anyway. Basic harmony within the committee was maintained by a somewhat artificial avoidance of the contested questions of OLI's university status. As it became clear an additional provincial external degree would be cumbersome to manage, the committee accepted
Farrell's proposal that the degree be OLI's own, and management of the credit bank and other administrative mechanisms be housed in OLI. Although the universities were reluctant to give KNOW any place in academic decision making in the consortium, Hardwick (at one with McGeer on the underlying intent, and determined to involve KNOW, apparently prevailed in much of the discussion about ways and means.\textsuperscript{45}

The outcome was, as McGeer wished, a consortium of the three universities, OLI and the Knowledge Network to coordinate formally the planning and delivery of their off-campus programs, assuming some of UCBC's coordinating functions thereby. OLI's BA (Gen. Studies) degree became the vehicle for an 'open degree' by removing limits on credit transfer and developing mechanisms for assessing, validating and recording prior studies. Students enrolling in the OLI degree would have automatic access to other BC university BA courses, subject to prerequisites.\textsuperscript{46} McGeer accepted the proposal immediately, taking close interest in its implementation, though funds for its administration were slow in coming and much less than requested.\textsuperscript{47} There was a flush of publicity, mostly favourable, in which McGeer labelled the OLI program "everyman's (sic) university", catering for everyone regardless of age and background, not just "students in the upper middle class who are within commuting distance of their university."\textsuperscript{48} His rhetoric was almost identical to his justification of OLI's creation six years earlier. The Consortium was yet another effort to reconcile the tension between the traditional role of reproducing elites and newer pressures for mass higher education.

The Consortium created a Board of Directors, chaired first by Andy Soles, Acting Deputy Minister, and then by Hardwick. The Board was representative of the five institutions, and assumed the Universities Council's responsibilities and finances for non-metropolitan programs. In agreeing to join the Consortium and transform its BA degree, OLI established an Academic Council whose members represented the universities and KNOW; it replaced OLI's University Program Advisory Committee.\textsuperscript{49} History almost repeated itself. When OLI was created, the
universities had, unsuccessfully, sought control over its degree program through some kind of joint academic senate. A similar attempt was made again, but Jeffels moved quickly to dispel any such hopes, asserting the Council would advise OLI's Board which retained power over academic decisions on its own degrees. The Consortium itself removed, for a time, the prospect of OLI becoming also an open university. Ironically, it was Farrell who ensured the new OLA included an open university of BC.

In practice, the Consortium's policy decisions were largely taken by the Consortium's own Board; at operational level, decision-making rested with Mugridge and Meakin. By the time registrations began in November 1984, an operational model had been agreed and implemented by OLI and university administrators. The articulation network and administrative mechanisms settled in quite quickly. Maintenance of institutional responsibility for the conduct and standards of their own courses probably helped allay fears of diminished institutional and departmental autonomy. Attention then turned to delicate questions of duplication and redundancy of courses, and prospects for incorporating professional programs such as education, administrative studies and health in the Consortium. These were not fully resolved by the time OLA was created. The more risky aspects of a credit bank (credit for informal and experiential learning) were approached with caution, and took some years to implement.

The Consortium calendar, showing for the first time all the distance education offerings of the four institutions, demonstrated university barriers were slowly lowering. OLI's degree program swelled from a financially limited, small collection of largely incomplete major sequences into a diverse range of disciplines more akin to regular university BA degrees. Meakin feared the Consortium might actually reduce OLI's own enrolments initially because students would be more attracted by the universities. University enrolments through the Consortium approximately trebled from May 1985-May 1986, but at the most represented 21% of total enrolments through the Consortium. Although OLI's university enrolments did experience a
one-time sharp drop in 1984-85, Meakin's fears were unfounded. On the contrary, OLI's university enrolments rose overall from 4,953 in 1984-85 to 7,374 in 1987-88, suggesting the open degree increasingly found favour among BC adults.

**THE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK OF THE WEST (KNOW)**

OLI's patterns of collaboration during the 1980s were largely based on its own styles of distance teaching, in which television originally figured only lightly (see Chapter 5). Perceptions in OLI, the state, universities and colleges about OLI's potential and 'proper' role in providing or coordinating distance education in BC were inextricable from views about the potential and 'proper' role of the Knowledge Network (KNOW). To understand these perceptions and conflicts, and the events leading to amalgamation of the two organisations, it is useful to highlight aspects of the Network's history.

The Knowledge Network's creation exemplified BC populist politics at work. Neither Hardwick nor McGeer had any qualms about intervening again in educational affairs in what they felt was the public interest, and in order to prevent the bureaucratisation of non-conventional education as Hardwick, in particular, felt OLI was doing. There has persisted a view in BC education circles that McGeer and Hardwick created the Knowledge Network because OLI would not teach by television. The evidence suggests this is an accurate but overly simplistic explanation. They did not specify television (or any other medium) in OLI's mandate, though it later became clear their definition of distance education (teaching via television) was more narrow than that of anyone in OLI or in many other distance education institutions of the time. McGeer could have used his powers under the Colleges Act to force Ellis into different teaching strategies. That he did not suggests he and Hardwick recognised the technical difficulties of reaching through television the population they and Ellis agreed
OLI was to serve. Both McGeer and Hardwick commented later it was a matter of 'letting OLI find its feet', resolving the political and technical impediments to provincial access to educational television, and then working towards an amalgamation.55

With Ellis about to depart in 1980, Hardwick raised with the OLI Board the possibility of OLI assuming responsibility for a new telecommunications authority, but the Board's reaction seems to have been lukewarm and Hardwick preferred a new start.56 McGeer found Premier Bennett sympathetic to his plans, but money and general Cabinet support were limited. As McGeer put it, the idea of a new educational institution "was not the sort of thing votes are made of"; extending television to the furthest reaches of the province was.57 At the same time, power over telecommunications vested with Ottawa, not Victoria, and although the federal Department of Communications was cooperative in many respects, it would not (or could not) give the BC government control over satellite communications for BC, nor allow it to establish a government-controlled television station. McGeer and Hardwick apparently found irresistible a strategy simultaneously giving them the television capacity they sought and reducing an irksome federal power over BC. Although McGeer now denies he additionally saw government entree into telecommunications as a means of encouraging high technology developments in BC, Hardwick saw KNOW as one way to help BC become "the home of a significant intelligence-based software industry." In a series of clever, well-orchestrated moves, McGeer and Hardwick circumvented federal restrictions to create an educational telecommunications authority free of the usual regulations on Canadian content and methods of transmission.58

The Knowledge Network of the West Communications Authority (KNOW) was created as a non-profit society in May 1980, to cooperate with educational institutions and other agencies in "development, coordination and delivery of educational programs and materials"; operate a telecommunications network including an educational broadcasting operation; "foster, stimulate and participate in the development and production of high-quality educational programs and
materials"; and enjoin contracts for acquisition, sale and other dealings in educational programs and materials. They were ambiguous terms of reference containing seeds of conflict. Distance education was not mentioned specifically, though the evidence suggests McGeer and Hardwick equated it with educational television more explicitly than ever before. Thus, KNOW's role was to coordinate distance education program delivery. If, as did Hardwick and McGeer, OLI was viewed as a correspondence institution, KNOW could be seen as complementary to OLI's work. If, as the Institute's leaders did, OLI's work was seen as distance education, the two organisations might collide over coordinating powers.

Hardwick resigned as Deputy Minister of Education to become the first President of KNOW and Chair of its Board. He filled both roles till 1985 when he returned to academic life at UBC, retaining his position as Board Chair. The Board included Jeffels and was initially dominated by civil servants. It was later expanded to include political appointees and other educators, including (from June 1984) Glen Farrell, who became President in September 1985. By this time it was clear OLI and KNOW would shortly be amalgamated.

Growth was rapid in geographic coverage and potential viewers. In 1981, its first operational year, KNOW broadcast to some 50 BC communities with a potential viewing audience of almost 60% of the population. By 1985 it reached 250 communities and potentially over 90% of the population. Non-credit and credit course registrations (through educational institutions) rose from 1,199 in fall 1981 to 15,809 in 1985. Broadcasts were either live, interactive programs or pre-packaged materials purchased by the educational institutions and aired as telecourses which other institutions could also choose to support. Like everyone else, the Network suffered the chill winds of Restraint, though Hardwick's political astuteness and continuing connections with government and bureaucracy helped protect the fledgling organization. Provincial grants hovered around $3 million from 1981-84 when they rose to $3.5 million, and then (after an anxious period in 1985) to $5.2 million in 1986-87. Educational programming as a
proportion of total broadcasting over KNOW declined from 72% in 1981 to 56% in 1984, at which point the Network decided to accelerate its general, PBS-style programming. Audience surveys in 1987 suggested the strategy was popular, though funding remained a significant problem.63

Notwithstanding the growth, responses from much of the higher education system were lukewarm. Until 1984 the Network was not funded to produce original educational material and the government expected educational institutions to bear most of the burden of acquiring or making programs. This left KNOW dependent on them for enough programs, of acceptable quality, to maintain broadcasting schedules. Television programs were not a high priority in most universities and colleges during the Restraint period. For the most part, faculty and administrators saw television as entertainment (however highbrow) rather than as a legitimate or relevant pedagogical tool, so KNOW faced the task of educating providers as well as users in the educational potential of the medium. There were others, a converted few in many institutions, who already used television or saw it as an exciting way of communicating with students and a wider audience. Yet within their enthusiasm were also concerns about the Network's organisational and programming capabilities, and fears about competition and intrusion into institutional autonomy and territory reminiscent of those greeting OLI's establishment.64 Hardwick was determined the Network should be directed by educators, not technical specialists; jurisdictional tensions with educators in user institutions were thus almost inevitable, as were early criticisms that the Network's senior staff had no direct professional experience in managing or programming a television station.65 Unlike OLI, however, KNOW was clearly a service agency. This may have made it easier to develop a symbiotic relationship with territorially- and status-conscious institutions, and to gain acceptance of its activities, especially once the Network began to enjoy wide public recognition as BC's only PBS-type station.
OLI's leaders were politely interested in KNOW's creation. OLI supported, as general interest programs, many of the telecourses acquired and broadcast by the Network, and brought in some of its own - for example, television programs in the International University Consortium courses which came on stream from 1985. Jeffels, Mugridge and the Board maintained consistently Ellis' original stance that print was the most educationally and cost effective communications medium for distance teaching, and that television was a valuable adjunct:

It is imprudent to use television simply because it exists: there must be clear evidence that TV components support the learning process in a significant way; otherwise it should not be used.66

Jeffels and Hardwick, with very different personal styles and views about OLI and BC higher education, enjoyed a somewhat turbulent relationship. Hardwick, as KNOW President, continued to offer comments on, or criticisms of, OLI affairs in much the same proprietorial way he had when Deputy Minister. Jeffels recalls a "moated castle" attitude in both organizations encouraged "rivalry, disassociation and, on occasion, animosity," rather than the cooperation both were enjoined to espouse.67 Ironically, OLI complaints in the early 1980s about the Network's territorial ambitions sounded remarkably like earlier reactions of colleges to OLI's mandate, albeit tempered with sympathy.68

Relations between OLI and KNOW administrators were generally cordial but distant. OLI participated in two Learning Systems groups, established by KNOW to plan and coordinate programming for the universities and colleges. Scales chaired the Colleges Group; Mugridge joined the corresponding university Group; others of his staff participated in both, but there seems to have been little other regular contact at operational levels. Tayles suggests these groups helped develop new networks among the colleges, but Mugridge found them limited vehicles of collaboration because of a tendency in KNOW to acquire programs and only then ask institutions how they might be used.69 A difference in style and philosophy between people in the two organisations was evident in the distaste of many OLI staff for the
circumlocutory, jargon-ridden language in which many KNOW documents were couched, and which were taken to imply an inadequate comprehension of intellectual endeavour as well as, sometimes, a tendency to intrude into academic matters.\textsuperscript{70}

One issue exemplifying the ambiguity in KNOW's boundaries, and an unease in its relationship with OLI, was a long-running conflict over control and use of the BOU materials Hardwick had purchased in 1978.\textsuperscript{71} Complex and tense negotiations with the Open University Educational Enterprises (a marketing company legally separate from the BOU) extended well into 1984. The OUEE's intransigence over broadcasting, adaptation and re-distribution rights did not help. Although later admitting "we bought a lot of stuff as a pig in a poke" in 1979, Hardwick refused OLI's judgement it was no easy matter to carve up the BOU courses and prepare "wraparound" material, believing the OLI leaders "were not television people. They were not distance education people, and the will to make it work was not there."\textsuperscript{72} Yet OLI did not eschew BOU courses; as earlier noted, it acquired some secondhand (already adapted by UVic or the IUC), and collaborated directly with the BOU on others. The difference was that, whereas Hardwick was primarily concerned with the television components of BOU courses, Mugridge and his colleagues recognised these were a minor, if showy, part of a complex package based mainly on print. Hardwick retained personal control over negotiations as "the agent for BOU material in the province", though legal ownership of the purchased materials probably vested in the Ministry, and its jurisdiction over non-television materials was dubious.

Such an arrangement was probably quite acceptable to colleges like NIC, which saw KNOW as a valuable source of ready-made courses. It was less acceptable to OLI, partly because of the ambiguity over provincial roles in coordinating distance education, partly because of OLI determination to develop a coherent curriculum, and set and maintain its own academic standards and teaching media. Decisions over copyright, broadcast rights, adaptation and further distribution also involved academic decisions about content, curriculum development
and teaching strategies. Both parties recognised these were OLI's prerogatives but could reach no easy accommodation of authority over decisions.

PROVINCIAL COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Amalgamation of OLI and the Knowledge Network was, as Mugridge put it, "logical but not inevitable." OLI's assumption of coordinating powers over provincial distance education was also logical but not inevitable. OLI wanted coordinating power and resisted amalgamation, but in neither case was it a fierce fight. The debate centred on the service/credential ambiguities in OLI's mission, but no one seriously contested OLI's instructional role. Despite feints, delays and compromises, McGeer and Hardwick never really deviated from their long-term plan for one organisation providing the full range of programs and delivery types, and inter-institutional cooperation to deliver 'open learning' throughout BC.

The debate was protracted, bedevilled by lack of clarity in the formal mandates of both organisations about the nature and extent of their coordinating powers, and disputes over appropriate inter-system relationships, especially with the colleges. The Restraint policies also affected the tenor and outcome of the debate. The initiative rarely rested with OLI, but came from the ministries, almost certainly influenced strongly, behind the scenes, by Hardwick as well as McGeer. Jeffels' fatalistic view that the two should never have been separate, and merger was inevitable sooner or later, may well have dampened fires of opposition in OLI and allowed Hardwick more influence than he might otherwise have enjoyed. OLI's apparent passivity was also due to a widely shared fear inside the Institute of losing OLI's hard-won credibility by its imposition on the higher education system as an unacceptable centralised coordinating body. At the same time, such an expansion of power had considerable attraction, both for the potential improvements in access it presaged, and for the Institute's legitimacy in BC and elsewhere.
The Knowledge Network had barely begun operating when, in 1981, McGeer proposed a closer formal relationship between it and OLI, and Ministry officials sought a ‘quick fix’ to the problems of uncoordinated distance education programming. More colleges were starting tiny distance education programs and seeking additional funds for the purpose, even as the state determined to scale down and rationalize higher education. Little happened at this point, but the prospect of merger was sufficiently real to prompt the OLI Board to assert that, although it did not favour fusion, such an action was only acceptable if KNOW was subsumed into OLI. Rumours to the opposite effect increased the level of uncertainty within OLI and in the system generally over the next two years. The OLI Board consistently maintained its willingness to cooperate with KNOW and the rest of the system, but this said must not "change OLI’s status and integrity... or reduce in any way the high quality established by OLI for its courses or programs." Moreover, OLI did not wish to become "an agency simply preparing materials for other agencies to deliver." The state accepted the latter argument, the colleges did not.

The situation became more complicated and confusing in 1982 as financial cuts bit deeply and institutional and system mission statements crystallised the government’s intention to have ‘more scholars for the dollar’ (Axelrod 1982a). Ministry officials pointed out that, correctly or not, OLI and the Network were perceived to be in direct competition for money and students, and OLI and the colleges to be in competition for students. Although course development and delivery were functions of an educational institution, KNOW was acting aggressively to acquire television-based courses and then offer them to institutions. The Ministries were no longer sure which agency to fund for course development, among OLI, colleges, KNOW and the Provincial Educational Media Centre. The colleges were opposed to program funding being centralised in either OLI or KNOW, rejected the Ministry view that distance education should be the main solution to access problems, and reasserted the importance of comprehensiveness in regional colleges. On the other hand, most were increasingly willing to work with OLI on
particular programs or student services, to rely on OLI as the major source of distance education expertise in BC, and to accept OLI's status as a provincial institute.77

In mid-1982, at the request of the Treasury Board, officials of the two ministries launched an attempt to rationalise the service mandates of OLI and KNOW, to give the former responsibility for identifying, coordinating, developing and funding "open learning" programs with more than regional application, and the latter responsibility for scheduling and broadcasting them. The officials proposed some of the Education Ministry's media and print services should also be handed over to OLI and budgets be rationalised accordingly. OLI's response was largely positive, though Jeffels and his colleagues were insistent OLI should not be left to offer only those courses colleges did not wish to sponsor. OLI dismissed the idea of a fully joint Board with KNOW, and the prospect of taking over rejected Ministry services in a financially uncertain climate. The plan foundered on inter-Ministry conflicts as their operating funds were cut. The plan was probably also a victim of McGeer's disdain for college capacities for innovation, miscomprehension of some senior officials of the nature and techniques of distance education, and some officials' allegiance to their college roots.78

The OLI Board was an important casualty of the abortive plan. The terms of five of its nine members expired in mid-1982, including that of Jim Pritchard, the Board's much-respected Chairperson. The plan called for some common membership in the OLI and KNOW boards and the Minister refused to refill the places while OLI's future was unclear. Pritchard was eventually reappointed, to the relief of senior OLI staff, but the Board limped along for over 18 months before a full complement of members was restored (see Appendix 2). This inhibited the Board's effectiveness and credibility (for example in dealing with the 1983 strike), and reduced the strength of its moral support to OLI's senior administrators. Greater responsibility devolved onto Jeffels, Mugridge and Segal to negotiate OLI's future. The 1984 Board contained mainly new faces, including several with close connections to the Social Credit party. The
original Board was marked by its cohesive commitment to implementing the style of distance education espoused by Ellis, and the independent, politically neutral stances of its lay members. The break in continuity, and different educational and political orientations of Board members, probably contributed to the post-1984 Board's greater willingness to emphasise OLI's service role and move as rapidly as funds permitted into telecommunications media.\textsuperscript{79}

The rejection in 1982 was merely a delay; the plan continued to evolve through 1983, in the context of OLI's own Mission Statement and the Ministry's System Mission Statement. Emboldened by government support, OLI asserted it should be the prime, but not sole, creator of distance learning materials for BC, and virtually the exclusive distributor of such materials. This implied taking over KNOW's distribution responsibilities. Jeffels and Mugridge also cautiously proposed OLI could help colleges compensate for loss of courses and programs in the Restraint period by enrolling their students in OLI courses, and mixing distance learning and on campus teaching. They were wary of exacerbating the sensitivities of faculty whose posts were threatened, but there were signs students and colleges were beginning to use OLI in this fashion anyway (see above).

The Education Ministry's System Mission Statement was more emphatic. In redefining comprehensiveness to mean provincial rather than regional coverage, the Ministry demanded colleges genuinely collaborate with OLI to ensure access to programs they could not offer, reduce duplication, and improve the system's overall productivity. To achieve this, the two Education Ministries proposed an amended mandate for OLI. In addition to the coordinating role already canvassed, OLI would develop and manage a system of learning centres (that is, teaching as well as advising) in conjunction with KNOW and the colleges, and would create within OLI a British Columbia Open University for the purpose of awarding degrees. McGeer apparently rejected a full amalgamation of OLI and KNOW at this point, since it risked a loss
of KNOW's identity, independence and purpose within OLI's more established and different technological and academic orientation.\textsuperscript{80}

OLI accepted the new mandate, with the \textit{caveat} that much further clarification and negotiation was required before real understanding was reached among the parties.\textsuperscript{81} Again there were delays. Heinrich replaced Vander Zalm as Education Minister in June 1983, the coordinating councils were abolished, the newly re-elected government's Restraint policy was fully unveiled, Ministers were preoccupied with the fierce opposition that provoked, and Cabinet was highly unlikely to view sympathetically any new legislation expanding higher education or expenditure on it. Ministry officials were equally preoccupied with internal cuts and reorganization, and finalization of mission statements and formula funding mechanisms. The delay gave OLI further time to enhance its legitimacy by consolidating its popularity with students, expanding its programs and collaborative ventures, demonstrating its electronic publishing expertise, and start building an international reputation. At the same time, the delay also meant a sustained level of uncertainty within OLI which probably hindered longer-term planning and unsettled staff, and constrained OLI's authority in its dealings with other BC institutions.

The delay was also partly caused by reactions from the universities and colleges and gave them an opportunity to influence the course of events. One, noted above, came in March 1984 from the Farrell Committee, proposing OLI lose its degree granting status and eliminate its third and fourth year university courses, to concentrate on sub-degree academic and vocational work.\textsuperscript{82} That proposal ultimately resolved into the Open University Consortium. Another broadside came in April 1984 from the BC Association of Colleges, rejecting the Ministries' proposals and OLI's position, and arguing instead for centralized course development and decentralized delivery. OLI would be allowed to deliver and support distance education courses only when colleges themselves chose not to do so in their region - that is, almost entirely a service role. It was a familiar stance, consistent with 1978 objections to OLI's creation, and efforts in the late
1970s to impose a policy on conduct of institutional relationships (see Chapters 4 and 6). OLI angrily rejected the idea, pointing out the real costs of distance learning lay in development, so that those teaching could claim delivery at minimal costs while laying the burden elsewhere. The BCAC plan was an absurd extension of the comprehensive principle, since almost no BC college could hope to provide tutorial resources for such a wide range of courses and, indeed, many of the smaller colleges were by now struggling to maintain their core programs. The recommendations were not accepted, but college opposition to OLI clearly still existed even though there were now numerous examples of cordial individual relationships between OLI and colleges.83

As soon as the Open University Consortium and OLI’s degree powers were settled, McGeer returned to OLI’s service role and his desire to see the ‘electronic classroom’ concept used to its fullest extent. In August 1984 he requested OLI and KNOW to establish more formal relationships through joint Board and executive-level committees dealing with policy and program issues affecting both organizations. He stopped short of demanding amalgamation, but merger by now must have seemed inevitable to leaders on both sides. When forced to move past personal and philosophical differences into practicalities, the two institutions’ personnel found more common ground than they may have expected.84 Moreover, both OLI and KNOW were now in the deepest part of the fiscal trough of Restraint and, although closer cooperation carried no promise of improved funding, it certainly fitted state policy and improved the position of both to benefit when resources did eventually improve.

Agreement on a draft Letter of Understanding about areas of cooperation was nearly complete when, in March 1985, Hardwick announced his departure as President of KNOW (remaining as Chair of its Board). For OLI the agreement implied, inter alia, a willingness to make much more extensive use of telecommunications in teaching, and a more aggressive approach to marketing materials. Farrell’s appointment as KNOW’s new President was almost immediately
followed, in July, by Cabinet's decision to create completely common membership of the
Boards preparatory to amalgamation and creation of an open learning authority
to acquire, develop, produce and deliver high quality learning programs and systems
throughout the province and to encourage cooperation, coordination and collaboration
among and between all institutions or organisations involved in distance education.

The joint Board was asked to advise government on the authority's role, functions and
structure, and the legislation necessary to "enable open learning to be carried out in an efficient
manner throughout the province." These terms of reference opened the way to clarifying and
strengthening the role of OLI/KNOW, but still fell short of giving the new authority definitive
power over distance education in BC; institutional autonomy was not quite dead.

Common membership affected the eventual outcome in subtle ways. First, the Board was
denuded of members from universities or colleges. Second, the joint Board was dominated by
members with close personal or political ties to the Socreds, holding office at the Minister's
pleasure and potentially beholden to him. Third, only one member (Fred Weber) had more
than one year's experience of OLI as an organization; he had been an original OLI Board
member and was now on the KNOW Board. Fourth, the joint Board, or Steering Committee,
was co-chaired by Hardwick and Nigel Hannaford (appointed to the OLI Board in 1984). The
Steering Committee, then, had little collective stake in maintaining the vision of OLI as created
by Ellis and maintained by Jeffels. The underlying ideological commitments of its membership
made it unlikely the Committee would seriously oppose government wishes. Most importantly,
the Steering Committee's discussions, recommendations, and many of the detailed
implementation plans, bore the unmistakable stamp of Hardwick's forceful vision of an
electronic classroom mixing service and instruction and providing open learning throughout the
province. His influence 'at court' undoubtedly helped, also, government acceptance of the
Steering Committee's recommendations, even after McGeer's departure from politics.
It was, nevertheless, another two and a half years before the Open Learning Agency came into being on 1 April 1988. Again, the delays were mainly due to political events. Bill Vander Zalm replaced Bennett as Premier in August 1986 and parliamentary power bases shifted after an election in October 1986 at which McGeer lost his seat. This left the putative amalgamation in a vulnerable position without McGeer as long-time defender of the two organizations.

Vander Zalm rearranged the education portfolios, bringing all post-secondary education under Russell Fraser. The latter lasted only till January 1987, when Stan Hagen was appointed Minister. Hagen, a political newcomer and owner of a cement company, had little prior knowledge of education, and refused to decide the fate of the new authority without learning more of the background. Legislation for an Open Learning Authority had passed first reading in May 1986, but fell into abeyance when parliament was prorogued and the election called. The legislation was redrafted as the Open Learning Agency Act in 1987, and finally passed third reading on 11 December 1987, coming into effect on 1 April 1988.

The Steering Committee recommended, in 1985, an open learning authority to "plan, coordinate, direct and guide open learning" in BC, comprising not only OLI and KNOW, but also the Correspondence Branch and Provincial Educational Media Centre, and organised into an open university, open technical institute, and open school. This was a clear bid for sweeping powers, though there were reservations about including the Correspondence Branch and PEMC, and these were dropped fairly quickly. Jeffels stated the consequences:

If the authority is to become, as Dr. McGeer said when he briefed us, all-powerful and dominant, then the time has come to face the problem of *laissez-faire* (and frequently duplication of services) in the post-secondary system and in the university system. If government wants a single Authority to ensure innovative approaches to teaching and delivery, economies of scale and wide, eclectic offerings, then it follows that other institutions should cease developing and offering courses by distance education.

This conclusion was as obvious in 1986 as it had been for the preceding decade, whenever the issue of coordination was raised. However, government intrusion into institutional autonomy
stopped at this point. Neither McGeer nor his successors insisted on such over-arching powers for the new authority. Monopoly was not foreign to Socred policy, but the higher education system was essentially pluralistic. McGeer’s insistence on collaboration never eschewed the idea of competition as the best way of ensuring ‘the cream rose to the top’. It would have been difficult to foist a distance education monopoly on the universities because of their curriculum powers under the Universities Act. Removing such autonomy from the colleges would have been politically undesirable, especially in electorally vulnerable areas. Moreover, OLI/KNOW’s own proposals stepped back from such a monopoly. This was possibly due as much to Farrell’s philosophy of a collaborative open learning system as to the political difficulties of complete control.

The new Agency’s mission was thus to provide an educational credit bank, coordinate the development of open learning education, use open learning methods to provide educational programs and services, carry out research related to open learning, and operate broadcasting facilities devoted primarily to education.\textsuperscript{89} The limited research mandate suggested a new respectability for distance education (or open learning), and a status still somewhere between the universities and colleges. The development into an open university and an open college reiterated OLI’s hybrid nature, upgrading the status of each from that of a Program to a semi-institution. OLA’s power to award degrees no longer limited it to undergraduate or non-professional programs. In theory, at least, the BC Open University could emulate any other BC university’s range and depth of instruction. The service-instructional dichotomy was still there; Farrell’s interests and philosophy suggested the balance would swing towards the former. But that is another story.
CONCLUSIONS

OLI was not a university; nor was it a community college; nor was it like any other institute in BC, though it contained elements of all three. This does not seem to have mattered much to students with whom it was undoubtedly popular, partly for the credentials OLI itself provided and partly for the passage OLI offered to credentials elsewhere. The mechanisms for this included the familiar credit transfer system, eventually transmuted into a more comprehensive credit bank; the related open university consortium broadening students’ choice; academic structures cutting through traditional barriers between levels of knowledge to allow a student to move unimpeded from adult basic education to degree level; and mixed mode enrolments in collaborative programs. Students also benefited indirectly from access to OLI materials bought and used by other colleges or institutes.

OLI’s hybrid nature and multi-faceted program responsibilities did not constrain its relationships with other distance education organizations outside BC, either. The one notable exception, perhaps, was Athabasca University, some of whose staff viewed OLI as less prestigious than a ‘real’ university because it did not employ full-time faculty and did no research. Others admired, and some emulated, OLI’s structure, approaches to course design and delivery, and search for effective methods of collaboration, as well as the expertise of its staff. OLI became a mentor to, and partner with, new and potentially far larger universities in South East Asia.

Some of the laudatory views of extra-BC organizations also appeared in the attitudes of BC institutions and the state towards OLI during the 1980s, but its hybrid nature and the inherent conflicts caused by its instructional and service roles impeded ready recognition of OLI as a higher education institution of clear status and prestige. Ellis’ determination that OLI’s programs should be compatible with the system helped ensure the organization survived and
flourished, but also entrenched the perception OLI was competing with some colleges for students. It did not help, either, that OLI struggled towards operational maturity as the state launched a major onslaught on the higher education system as a whole and tried to use OLI, in some ways, as a pawn in its efforts to rationalise and reduce expenditure. McGeer understood and protected the Institute as long as he was in power; Hagen came to sympathise with its aims and styles of operation. Other ministers and bureaucrats had more difficulty understanding and accepting a non-conformist organization in a system which was already complex enough.

On the other hand, institutional willingness to grant credit to OLI courses and students, collaborate in program design or delivery, and buy OLI materials indicated OLI steadily gained in credibility and prestige through the 1980s. Notwithstanding the Farrell Committee's recommendations in March 1984, the universities cooperated effectively with OLI in setting up the Open University Consortium and seem readily to have accepted its lead in organising and running it. OLI continued to draw on the universities and other institutions for its course writers and consultants, strengthening its network of faculty coopted into its style and academic standards. Jeffels and his colleagues played active and accepted parts in numerous college, KNOW, and university forums. In ways both visible and invisible, OLI became part of the fabric of the BC higher education system during the 1980s.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 9
See Appendix 4 for abbreviations.

1. The Institute, as a matter of principle, limited the personal information requested of students to the minimum required for provincial statistical returns and OLI's basic data requirements. The open admissions policy expected students to determine their own level on entry, in conjunction with advisers, and did not require them to specify a program goal on admission. Family background (such as parents' occupation and educational levels) was considered irrelevant.

2. Ellis to Board, 15 Feb. 1979 [Bd: 1979].


4. The one exception being 1983-84 when OLI's enrolments almost paralleled college and university growth rates; the comparative drop in growth rate was probably due partly to the debilitating effects of the 1983 strike and recessionary influences on student choice.


11. Alberta Crowley and Barbara Guttman-Gee, the first student members of the University PAC (1981), were also the first to complete a degree entirely through OLI. Students joined the other PACs in 1982.


14. Formally entitled Open University Conference on the Education of Adults at a Distance (Birmingham, November 1979), and attended by heads and senior personnel of most major distance education institutions in western and developing nations, including Ellis and Bottomley.
The 1982 conference of the International Council for Correspondence Education was organized by Audrey Campbell of UBC, with OLI's assistance; it attracted over 400 delegates from 40 countries, many of whom visited OLI at the same time [Ac.Aff: ICCE]. Mugridge's 1984 study tour was to Fiji, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand and Hong Kong (Mugridge to Jeffels, 12 April 1984 [Bd: 27 April 1984]).


Sadly, that title was soon replaced by the more sober Western Canadian Committee on University Distance Education, representing all the western Canadian universities.


The US lost what lead it once had in correspondence studies when the single purpose open universities assumed hegemony in the 1970s. Such academic quality and rigour as the youthful American Journal of Distance Education contains is noticeably due to Canadian rather than to American-generated articles.


Corres. in-house OLI & between OLI & Selkirk staff, Sept.–Nov. 1983 [Ac.Aff: Selkirk Coll.].


BC College-University credit transfer guidelines, 1977 [PF: Tri-Univ. Ctee]; Guidelines, & Articulation terms of reference, Nov. 1984 [PF: MoE #7].

A. Campbell & D. Foth (UBC), "Summary of western Canadian universities' policies affecting transferring students", July 1984 [AUA 85.73/2 SE].


Uegama, "Report on credit banks, external degrees & credit for prior learning" & assoc. corres. [Bd: 25 May 1984].


In Dec. 1984 UBC withdrew the only courses without prerequisites it had in the consortium because of concerns about open admissions.

"High tech talk", *Vancouver Courier*, 12 Sept. 1984; also "Distance university, an idea whose time has come", *Vancouver Sun*, 12 July 1984; "Degree offered by long distance", *Vancouver Sun*, 8 Sept. 1984; Jeffels to Gary Bannerman (radio CKNW), 13 Sept. 1984 [PF: PR & Marketing]; "Distance learning now can lead to BA degree", *UBC Reports*, 19 Sept. 1984. McGeer conducted much of the publicity for the Consortium himself, and insisted on approving PR material, including the Calendar. He demanded it should display the BC emblem, a curious wish rousing the ire of many as a symbol of government interference in university affairs.


A tentative extrapolation from Meakin's enrolment reports to OLI Board meetings, 1985-87; compilations of non-metropolitan enrolments presented annually to the OUCBC Board and Ministry are misleading for this purpose as they included non-distance education enrolments, professional programs apart from the open BA degree, and the universities had different methods of calculation.

In addition to specific references noted below, sources for this section include the Network's *Annual Reports, 1981-87*, Michael Reddington, "The Knowledge Network", circa 1989, mimeo, OLA Archives, and Michael Reddington, "The development of Knowledge Network scheduling and programming", 8 April 1988, mimeo, OLA Archives.

Author's interviews with Hardwick & McGeer.


McGeer, interview.

Hardwick to Board, 5 April 1982 [PF: KN #2]; Hardwick, interview; McGeer, interview. A cheeky and illegal ploy was McGeer's installation of a satellite dish on the Legislative Assembly lawn to publicise provincial lack of power over telecommunications, and inability of individual citizens to own or operate dishes.
"Constitution of Knowledge Network", Form 3 (S.3), Societies Act, SBC, 1977, c80, 29 May 1980 [PF: KNOW #2]; Hardwick (1984). The Network had three elements: a closed-circuit, multi-channel, microwave system linking the universities, teaching hospitals, BCIT, law courts and OLI; a closed-circuit, low-power transmission and satellite connection to off campus, interior and northern locations, using the ANIK-B (and later C) satellite; and access to an educational channel on community cable systems. The second and third were different means of beaming the same programs into television sets throughout the province.


A telecourse offered a significant proportion of the course material in a series of TV programs broadcast weekly. The complete course typically included also a study guide, textbook and tutorial support. Institutions "supporting" a telecourse enrolled students, sent them the accompanying material, and provided tutorial support and assessment. A telecourse might be deemed a core part of an institution's program or simply be supported as a general interest service to the institution's clients.

For technical reasons, small blank spots in coverage remained in parts of the Lower Mainland as well as in more remote areas.

Ann. Reports; Reddington, op.cit.; Hardwick to KNOW Finance Ctee, 27 May 1985 [PF: KNOW #3].


"Briefing paper: relationships between OLI & KNOW", 3 March 1981 [Bd: 13 March 1981]. These sentiments were echoed repeatedly in external correspondence and in-house documents through the 1980s.

Jeffels, interview with author.


Author's interviews with Tayless & Mugridge.

Author's interviews with Bottomley (1990), Jeffels, Mugridge, Calvert. OLI staff also found disconcerting and distracting the habit of one KNOW manager to model in playdough her perceptions of the changing moods of a meeting.

Hardwick, interview.

Mugridge, interview.

Author's interviews with Hardwick & McGeer. The term 'open learning' was used increasingly from the early 1980s but its meaning was very unclear until Farrell wrote it into the OLA mandate in late 1986.


Several respondents commented to the author that Hagen, for all his initial ignorance of higher education, learned quickly and proved to be the most sensitive, supportive and, eventually, knowledgeable education minister of the Socreds since 1975, apart from McGeer.

"Open learning in British Columbia: report of a strategic planning committee", Sept. 1985 [Ac.Aff: OLA SC]. Ministry proposals in 1983 had included the two sections in an expanded OLI mandate; this seems to have been a contentious issue within the Ministry, caught up in its retrenchment and internal power plays, but ultimately dropped.


CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSIONS

OLI’S HISTORY - A RESUME

The Open Learning Institute joined a bi-furcated system of universities and colleges in British Columbia, in which the status hierarchies were well established though many of the institutions were, at most 15 years old. McGeer and Hardwick created the Institute in 1978 over the widespread opposition of senior administrators and faculty in the universities and colleges, and in the face of indifference and miscomprehension in the government and bureaucracy. OLI's leaders devoted the first two years (1978-1980) to creating the curricula, teaching strategies, internal structures and operating procedures that made OLI into a recognisable institution. They also set out to convince senior administrators and faculty in BC’s universities and colleges that OLI did not threaten jobs or institutional viability, would cater for a different clientele, and could meet normal standards of quality, albeit in a different way. OLI had variable success in this task, but by late 1980 had made important inroads into others’ scepticism, especially among senior university administrators at UBC and UVic. Institute leaders had, also, to educate state officials about OLI's nature and purpose. OLI did not receive the level of funding which would have allowed it to develop as McGeer and Hardwick wished, nor at the rate for which Ellis hoped. Television was an early casualty, though it is probable the Institute would have concentrated on print rather than audiovisual teaching techniques in the early years anyway, for technical as well as educational reasons.

Ellis set the strategies for achieving legitimacy within the BC system by insisting on independence from the government, OLI’s conformity with the curriculum quality, content and structures already prevailing, guaranteed continuity of programs and services for students, and genuine accessibility. This meant OLI would be judged by prevailing norms and expectations of more traditional BC higher education. McGeer and Hardwick had created an institution to
cater to a very wide range of educational and vocational needs, but described and justified it largely in terms of university education. Ellis, Mugridge and others in OLI followed suit. University status depended partly on the difficulty of students’ gaining entry. OLI’s first principles meant the Institute’s emphasis would be on ‘openness’ rather than exclusivity, on access for any adult seeking to learn rather than on admission only of those deemed by the institution capable of learning. In this regard, OLI immediately resembled BC’s colleges rather than the universities whose norms the Institute otherwise sought to emulate. ‘Openness’ also implied teaching strategies designed to increase learner autonomy and support students unfamiliar with the techniques and culture of educational environments. This led OLI into instructional design techniques enhancing the quality of learning materials, and thereby affecting OLI’s stature in the eyes of external course writers. OLI’s course preparation and delivery systems affected, too, its credibility and status in the broader distance education field.

The entire BC higher education system came under attack from an increasingly neo-conservative Socred government in the 1980s. Under the guise of Restraint, higher education funding was reduced and more tightly targetted to economic and social priorities of the state. OLI was particularly vulnerable because it had few reserves of money or institutional prestige with which to protect itself against the chill financial winds. However, the Institute was able to use some of its structures and operating techniques to advantage. Its curriculum took a more utilitarian turn, with an administrative studies degree and a range of CTV programs being developed during the 1980s. OLI increasingly explored collaborative prospects, as part of its service mandate and as a way to increase its range and reputation.

Inside the Institute, the 1980s saw consolidation and systematization of operating procedures, distance education policies, and styles of governance. Inter-personal conflicts and communications problems were tackled through changes in policies and procedures. Since the Institute’s structural morphology was very different from anything any of its staff had
previously encountered, it is perhaps surprising there was not more friction and changes in systems than actually eventuated. One of the most significant developments, in terms of OLI's position in the distance education field, was its experiments with electronic publishing techniques and networks, and the creation of sophisticated systems management software. Routinization of practice helped strengthen institutional self-confidence in OLI's strategies and effectiveness, and hence in its external dealings. At the same time, routinization entrenched institutional boundaries in terms of 'turf' OLI claimed and the standards it asserted, with an inevitable diminution in flexibility of response to new circumstances or technologies.

OLI's external relationships during the 1980s ranged far beyond the borders of BC, as the Institute became a leader in the international distance education arena and an exemplar of the industrialized model elaborated by Peters (1969; 1971; 1989). Within BC, OLI continued to fight against scepticism in the higher education system; antagonism diminished as faculty and others became more familiar with the Institute and its teaching strategies. Tensions grew about OLI's credential-granting powers, especially in university circles, and OLI required McGeer's protective intervention before an Open University Consortium was amicably established. Conflicts also appeared over OLI's service role, mainly in the context of government efforts to tighten coordination and control of college activities. Here, it was a matter of whether provincial coordination of distance education was required and, if so, whether OLI should control distance education in BC. That issue coincided with a debate over the relationship between OLI and the Knowledge Network. Their amalgamation was probably inevitable, given the intentions of the most powerful political figures involved, and the unwillingness of OLI leaders to fight it strenuously.

By the time the Open Learning Agency was formally established in April 1988, OLI had carved out a unique, if often uneasy, place for itself between the two regular sectors of BC higher education. Without a research, graduate or professional mandate, OLI could not hope to
become a university in the accepted sense, yet its normative criteria and many of its practices were drawn directly from university standards and experience. Moreover, unlike the colleges, OLI could offer degrees, the status of which would be assessed in conjunction with university programs in BC and elsewhere. OLI was legally created under the Colleges Act and was therefore subject to government controls much as were BC's colleges and other institutes. The ethos of 'openness' espoused by OLI was very similar to that developed in the colleges. Yet many of the colleges continued to see OLI as a 'cuckoo in the nest', which should be controlled by insisting on its service role rather than its credential-granting powers. Outside BC, OLI's approach fit into the mainstream of distance education practice of the 1980s. As a single-purpose distance education institution, relying on complex and sophisticated systems for its operations, OLI could assert itself as one of the more significant distance education institutions in a rapidly growing field.

My prime interest in this study has been in the way a new, publicly-funded distance education institution has gone about acquiring legitimacy, defined as the stature, credibility and prestige of the institution within its higher education system and in relation to the state. The key issue has raised several subsidiary questions in relation to OLI. How did OLI's leaders go about securing the Institute's survival and prosperity? How did OLI's definition and practice relate to traditional indicators of institutional legitimacy in BC, and to legitimacy in the field of distance education? OLI's history also casts light on the broader issue of distance education's impact on the three dimensions of institutional legitimacy I have identified. The struggle for institutional legitimacy, in all its permutations, is fundamental to the early life of any higher education institution, but is not the only explanation for events and motives in OLI's history. Personal and career aspirations, the intricacies of human relationships, individual social values, and the practical imperatives of getting a job done well, all played important parts in determining OLI's policies and practice and its external relationships.
The first task of OLI's leaders was to secure its survival and set it on the road to institutional prestige. McGeer and Hardwick had made a start in 1977-78, and continued to protect the Institute, as best they could, from the depredations of the higher education system and the indifference of Social Credit towards education. There are two broad routes open to those who seek social change: the *festina lente* or "hasten slowly" approach, and the revolutionary upheaval. McGeer and Hardwick apparently wanted the latter; that is, to shake complacency out of the higher education system and redirect it towards a more technological era, catering for new groups of students. OLI's leaders adopted the *festina lente* approach, recognizing the depth and varieties of opposition to OLI's existence, and the risks attendant on departing from traditional ways of conducting education. They could not hope to fight opponents and inquisitors on all fronts simultaneously; better to leave some innovations until the Institute was stronger and clearer about its purpose and methods.

As a teaching-only organization, OLI's legitimacy in the BC hierarchy rested squarely on perceptions of the quality of its curriculum, faculty and students. As a distance education organisation, this meant first and foremost convincing a generally sceptical higher education community that OLI's teaching strategies could attain similar standards as prevailed in conventional face-to-face education. In addition, therefore, to all the usual institution-building strategies for constructing a community, a curriculum and sets of shared values, OLI's leaders adopted two strategies for survival and prosperity. One was conformity to existing patterns of BC higher education; the other was co-optation of significant others into OLI's status.

OLI could have adopted college norms but its leaders instead chose to conform as far as possible with established university standards. 'Quality', as already noted, is a nebulous concept whose criteria for evaluation are notoriously difficult to measure. In emulating university
'quality', OLII's leaders used well-entrenched university standards and practices as benchmarks for how a course should be constructed; the qualities and credentials expected of authors and tutors; and how students should be paced and assessed. The concepts and modus operandi of the University program were applied to the CTV and ABE programs, at least until the entire curriculum had become too diverse and multi-layered for any one set of operating norms. The result bore many of the hallmarks of liberality in the 19th Century sense. That is, OLII's curriculum was broadly designed to inculcate in the learner an intellectual and moral independence, and a set of tastes, values and dispositions which reproduced upper middle class and professional values. Most of OLII's leaders apparently took these values for granted, though the curriculum itself became more utilitarian as the 1980s and Restraint wore on.

The accommodation of such liberal views to the state's economic rationalism produced in OLII a liberal vocationalism similar to that found by Silver and Brennan (1988) in Britain. This approach has become an increasingly evident response of OLII and other BC higher education institutions to state demands for economic and social utility. As the functions of higher education (and distance education with it) are changed, so too are the criteria for institutional legitimacy. It may be that younger institutions find it easier to accommodate to new criteria of accountability and relevance, but they are also more vulnerable to external influence and interference,

The overt goal of Ellis' system compatibility principle was to ensure OLII's programs would be genuinely accessible to adult citizens everywhere in BC, through credit transfer and, later, collaborative agreements and laddered studies. This strategy pervaded the curriculum content and sequencing of all OLII's programs and choice of teaching media, especially the early decision not to use television extensively. The system compatibility principle itself drew criticism from Hardwick, but paid dividends in recognition of OLII's credentials. Without the system compatibility principle, it is doubtful OLII could have taken a central position in the
Open University Consortium, or achieved the various collaborative agreements with other BC institutions and the Ministry of Education. Equally importantly, the system compatibility principle materially assisted OLI's accessibility, and its position as a way-station for students seeking credentials elsewhere. Given the depth of opposition to OLI's creation, fitting into the system was the only sensible policy for survival and credibility in OLI's early years. The Hardwick/McGeer vision of a BOU-in-BC was intriguing but impractical and impolitic. Later, when OLI's position was more secure, Mugridge experimented with some interdisciplinary courses, but the Institute was now too vulnerable to state demands for relevance and economic utility to allow major shifts in policy and challenge to traditional fields of knowledge.

The search for survival and prosperity through conformity to the existing system was a logical strategy for an educational leader as intensely pragmatic and practical as Ellis. He wanted an organization that 'worked', whose programs, student body and standards were too strong to be defeated by political changes or institutional animosities. His determination that the Institute be, and be seen to be independent of the state meant that OLI's first administrators chose the distance education methods they preferred, rather than following those McGeer and Hardwick desired. Ellis' perspectives set a tone that lasted throughout the decade, partly because Mugridge and Segal shared and implemented them, and partly because Jeffels introduced no strong alternatives. Survival may have been assured by the time Ellis returned to SFU in 1980, but the government's Restraint policy, and continuing ambiguities over OLI's relationships with KNOW and role in provincial coordination of distance education, meant prosperity and certainty were elusive. Not surprisingly, OLI's leaders responded pragmatically to immediate political circumstances.

Survival once assured, OLI began to experiment with curriculum content and structure. Poverty made OLI's leaders cautious; their search for institutional legitimacy underlined that conservatism. The impetus came particularly from financial and political necessity to improve
the efficiency and cost effectiveness of course design and production, and systems management. Resource constraints made use of less critical media (such as television) a luxury. Had there been more resources, OLI would probably have taken a more experimental approach, for example, to audio-teleconferencing and interactive television. External pressure would still have been required to impress on OLI the political or other advantages of extending its communications media. Ellis, Jeffels and Mugridge were, at best, lukewarm in their approval of television as a pedagogical tool. In this, they shared the attitudes of many others in the universities and colleges. In addition, the system compatibility principle implicitly discouraged any further tampering with normative standards than could be helped. The principle became so embedded in OLI's culture and mores it was not easily challenged. Indeed, there was no good reason to do so. It worked; OLI integrated into the BC system in a myriad ways, and its credibility came partly to rely on its flexibility to adjust to changes in the system.

If one very broad strategy to acquire legitimacy involved staying as close to recognized norms and standards as possible, another involved co-opting individuals and institutions into OLI's way of educating at a distance. The decision to use contract authors and consultants rather than employ full-time faculty was one example. If OLI's courses were prepared, scrutinised or otherwise certified by academics or specialists whose professional provenance could not be easily queried, other institutions found it difficult to reject OLI's standards and intellectual quality. Over the decade, this approach directly brought into OLI's arena individuals from many of the BC universities' arts departments, as well as faculty from commerce, sciences, and various career and vocational departments of colleges. In working for OLI they lent the Institute some part of their reputations, and informally spread word of their experiences. This was sometimes a two-edged sword, but adverse criticism levelled at OLI's curriculum rarely argued it did not measure up to the critic's standards of intellectual rigour.
A second order of co-optation to enhance legitimacy involved attaching the 'hearts and minds' of senior policy makers to OLI's purpose and practice. One way was to convince them that, however they regarded distance education, it was a worthwhile alternative for some people, and OLI was no real threat to their own institutional interests. Here, OLI's success was more variable, dependent on institutional interests (which shifted over time), and the personal and professional responses of individuals in BC's fairly small group of educational power brokers. Many of the same people had different roles at various stages of OLI's development and BC's educational elite were closely connected through numerous formal and informal networks, committees and projects. Personal friendships, dislikes, judgements and perceptions subtly affected institutional relationships and assessment of worth. The Ministry of Education, for example, included several influential officials whose attitudes were largely formed by their previous college experiences. They had difficulty in fitting OLI into the normal administrative and structural frameworks of colleges. Ellis and Mugridge came to OLI with well-established reputations and university networks which they utilised effectively to coopt former colleagues and gain credence for OLI's programs. Jeffels, too, had a university background, but it was his connections, as a college principal, which probably helped subtly to reduce some of the tensions between OLI and senior college administrators. These personal reputations and networks, and OLI leaders' participation in that elite group's activities were vital, if rarely articulated, elements in the credence and value accorded OLI. On the other hand, Jeffels' unwillingness actively to lobby government officials counteracted some of the positive aspects of being a member of the education 'club'. OLI's credibility within the Ministry and official college circles would probably have been stronger had Jeffels been more assertive in pressing OLI's case for funds, recognition, and territory.

Inter-institutional collaboration, in its various forms, was a third means of giving others a stake in OLI's prestige and prosperity. Willingness to link with OLI implied the latter had something valuable to offer. OLI put its initial experience in working with Athabasca University to good
use in developing relationships with other BC universities and colleges, the BOU, and others.

As an industrial rather than craft process, the inner workings of a distance education system are more visible than the more closely guarded classroom environment. Lowering institutional barriers gave those involved a closer look at each other than is commonly possible in territorially-conscious institutions. Distance education techniques lost their mystery but OLI could acquire prestige for the skill with which its staff drew on and combined those techniques. It was never an easy task, primarily because of the difficulty in achieving and sustaining the necessary level of mutual trust and conviction about the reciprocal benefits.

OLI AND TRADITIONAL INDICATORS OF INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

OLI's creation and maturation coincided with consolidation of BC's higher education institutions into an hierarchical system, much as provincial systems emerged elsewhere in Canada during the 1970s. The hierarchical order was by no means absolute, but remained remarkably static through the expansions of the 1970s, and fiscal contractions of the 1980s, confirming observations elsewhere about the stability of higher education hierarchies (for example, by Clark 1978; Trow 1984; Bok 1986). Within BC's university sector, prestige became increasingly associated with research, graduate studies, and professional programs, despite the growth in undergraduate teaching. Within the colleges, legitimacy required devotion to teaching, comprehensiveness, devotion to local needs, and openness (Dennison & Gallagher 1986). The colleges' legitimacy was as much bound to their fulfillment of a regional mandate as the universities' was to their place in national and international academe. OLI did not fit comfortably into either sector because of dichotomies in its hybrid nature and ambiguities of its service-credential role, as well as its unusual structures and systems.
Although popularity does not, of itself, guarantee institutional legitimacy, alumni loyalty and the long-term professional and social outcomes of study are traditionally important aspects of institutional prestige. The tradition of alumni loyalty takes time to develop. At a university like UBC it is measured in generations, and closely tied to membership of elite social groups and long-term graduate prosperity. College alumni attitudes may be caught up in broader community links to and ‘ownership’ of ‘their’ college. The isolation of the distance education student prohibits the kinds of social bonds developed by younger, full-time students, but can impart a fierce loyalty to the organization which has given the student a ‘second chance’. This gratitude was evident at OLI’s first convocation ceremony, in March 1990. At the same time, many people take courses at a distance to fulfill highly specific or short-term goals in which the offering institution is simply a vehicle. A large proportion (how large is uncertain) of OLI’s students fulfilled their learning goals through OLI without studying there long enough to build long-lasting ties to the Institute. Many used OLI as a way-station to build credits and transfer them for a credential elsewhere or, once the credit bank was in place, as a means of having studies recognised for a degree. OLI was both a vehicle on the journey and the destination, in a way no other BC institution could or would be. This openness and flexibility gave OLI a particular kind of credence, different from the familiar north American style of alumni relations, but carrying its own recognition and loyalties.

The ambiguity of OLI’s hybrid status obscured and complicated its search for legitimacy in all three dimensions. Its leaders themselves were ambiguous about the Institute’s location in one or other sector of higher education. The problem was born of the Institute’s origins. McGeer, without adequate resources and recognising the political indifference and educational opposition he faced, avoided new legislation by creating OLI through regulations. The Colleges Act under which OLI largely fell catered poorly for such an oddity; the over-regulated system of coordinating councils made matters worse; and formula funding never took account of OLI’s unique fiscal requirements. OLI looked to conventional and distance education universities for
its academic and curricular structures and study patterns. At the same time, OLI's leaders, other educational policy makers and government officials alike frequently treated the Institute as a peculiar type of college, belonging on that side of the binary divide. That assumption never satisfactorily countermanded another, that OLI was something other, or something more than a college. This, too, was reinforced in OLI's mission statements and activities.

The OLA Act (1987), distinguishing an Open University and Open College within the same organisation, formalised and legalised the two directions, yet the whole remained more than the sum of the parts. In OLI, common production and delivery systems mingled program priorities and standardized norms of academic quality and support services. Students were not differentiated by program status, but viewed as adult learners with similar needs regardless of program. OLI was a 'cooling out agent' for the universities much as were the colleges, but additionally by virtue of its mandate to teach adults who also lacked access to the colleges. At the same time, laddered access to programs, in itself something no college or other institute could quite achieve without degree-granting powers, countermanded restricted entry to upper levels of knowledge. Laddering did not challenge progressive difficulties of knowledge as such; rather it implied greater equality among the levels of difficulty and easier access to higher levels than commonly accorded by BC's universities.

It is surprising OLI's degree-granting power aroused so little antagonism from colleges or institutes. The answer lies partly in colleges' and institutes' deeply-imbued vocational ideology and local focus (Dennison & Gallagher 1986). Colleges' legitimacy did not depend on credentials representing more elite, restricted forms of education. BC's colleges apparently only began pressing for degree and university college status very late in the 1980s. The lowering of territorial barriers in order to achieve the system comprehensiveness demanded by government probably encouraged higher aspirations. Earlier, the colleges may have more readily accepted OLI's degree powers simply because it was an irregular organization to which some norms did
not apply. The degree power, as such, was possibly less threatening to a college or institute
than OLI's direct competition in subjects, regardless of level. It did, nevertheless, mark OLI as
somewhere between university and college in the provincial hierarchy, blurring boundaries
between both in the process.

If anything, OLI's degree power caused the universities more angst than the colleges, at least
until their senior administrators were convinced OLI had no intention of offering a 'mickey
mouse degree' and posed little real threat to university legitimacy and enrolment. The degree
power gave OLI an equal seat on Universities Council policy and curriculum approval bodies,
and the university presidents somewhat condescendingly accepted the participation of OLI
Principals in certain public educational forums. As we have seen, OLI also emulated the
universities in more than outward forms, though having no research mandate and no full-time
faculty gave the Institute little of the image or obvious culture of a university. Its relationships
beyond the BC borders, especially with overseas institutions, were more typical of a university
than a college. Without the right or the wherewithal to conduct a wide range of research, teach
at graduate level, and offer high prestige professional programs, OLI could never aspire to a
high position in the vertical hierarchy. Horizontal legitimacy within the BC system, and in
distance education, was ultimately more important to the Institute's overall legitimacy.

Ambiguity over its dual roles as a service agency and a provider of credentials persistently
bedevilled clear location of OLI in the BC higher education hierarchy. Some of the
responsibility for the confusion rests with McGeer and Hardwick who never clarified the
balance they expected or how the two roles might be reconciled. They compounded the
difficulty by their definition of 'distance education' which, though rarely explicit, meant
communicating primarily via television. They imparted that confusion to Ministry officials,
many of whom never clearly grasped OLI's purposes or the implications of teaching at a
distance. No one in the Ministries ever fully defined what provincial coordination of distance
education meant or the degree of power over other institutions it would confer, though academic and institutional credibility were a clear prerequisite. OLI's credential powers lent status to its service role, making the Institute more valuable to institutional clients. That did not easily solve the Ministerial dilemma of OLI's place in the higher education system.

OLI's dual role deeply affected colleges' and universities' perceptions of its stature and location in the BC hierarchy. The colleges continued, collectively, to prefer OLI as a service agency since that reduced its capacity to intrude into college territory and, in a sense, made OLI subservient to the colleges. The most effective collaborative ventures enhanced a college's status in its own community, and kept OLI at arm's length, in some way, from that community. OLI's credential role was, paradoxically, more useful to the universities as a means of 'cooling out' demand from adult learners with unorthodox entry qualifications. The service role was less relevant to the universities until creation of the Open University Consortium in 1984. The universities did not have to relinquish power or endanger their own prestige to make the Consortium and credit bank work. OLI, on the other hand, gained greatly from the universities' prestige, reflected into the Consortium and OLI's General Studies degree. If the Consortium worked, the universities could gain state approval for making their programs more accessible to adult learners, and OLI could further entrench its position as the major distance education provider in BC. If not, the blame would be on OLI.

The Institute's leaders never satisfactorily resolved for themselves the appropriate balance between OLI's service and credential roles. Beyond a broad consensus OLI should be, and be seen as, a credential-giver in its own right, there were internal conflicts over the degree to which OLI should be an educational broker, and source of distance education expertise and services. Ellis was clear in the early years about the initial need to establish a firm credential base, but Jeffels was content to live with the internal dilemma and ambiguity. Conflicts and uncertainties over OLI's role in coordinating provincial distance education inhibited firm,
assertive lobbying for expansion of OLI's powers. Most initiatives to assert a dominant role for OLI in provincial distance education came from the government. OLI itself seemed willing to accept a *primus inter pares* position without spelling out clearly how this would work.

**OLI AND THE STATE**

It has long been the case that institutions' legitimacy relies partly on the approbation of sponsoring agents, be it church, state or private body. This has depended on the obvious monetary connection, but also on the extent to which the sponsor sees the institution sharing and reproducing its own values and ideologies. Traditions of academic freedom and overt separation of university and state once mitigated external influences and allowed the universities to articulate, shape and criticise social values and behaviours. Personal and professional networks of university, state and corporate elites once ensured the state rarely intervened openly in university affairs because of a broad consensus regarding the latter's functions, and reliance on the universities to set intellectual and social standards guaranteeing continued exclusivity. The ground has shifted with the advent of mass higher education and greater state intervention to protect its enormous investment, especially with late 20th Century preoccupations with technology and the speed of change in the nature and skills of work. There is still a mutual dependency here, higher education relying on the state for resources and affirmation of its cultural and intellectual power, and the state relying on higher education to help serve its functions of capital accumulation and reproduction of the cultural status quo. However, the overt balance of power has changed, and higher education's capacity to determine and maintain the criteria for institutional legitimacy has been undermined by state incursions into institutional autonomy.

In BC, a distinction must be made between McGeer and Hardwick, as state functionaries, and the BC state as represented by the Socred government. Social Credit was a populist
conservative government, largely indifferent to the intellectual and cultural value of higher education. McGeer did not share his Socred colleagues’ anti-intellectualism, but did accept their view of education as part of the state’s contribution to capital accumulation by providing a skilled workforce. He also articulated, better than most Socreds, a commitment to improving access to education because of the socially desirable outcomes in the form of personal prosperity and social mobility. As Runte (1981) and Anisef et al (1985) have shown, policies encouraging investment in human capital and greater access to educational opportunities were widespread in postwar Canada. Institutional legitimacy, in BC government eyes, depended significantly on the nature and extent of institutional response to these policies.

McGeer had considerable difficulty in extracting funds from Cabinet to set OLI up and was never able to secure sufficient resources to ensure its comfortable growth. Nevertheless, he and Hardwick brought a missionary zeal to their support and protection of OLI which helped give the Institute a certain kind of legitimacy, especially in its early years. Their zeal also meant they were more actively involved in OLI’s affairs than might have been expected in a more conventional situation. Had their intimate involvement been more prolonged, it could well have become a liability for institutional autonomy and OLI’s status in BC. However, the protection and sympathetic interest McGeer and Hardwick continued to show in OLI contributed significantly to the Institute’s survival, and to incorporation into government policy of support for distance education in ways which enhanced OLI’s provincial role.

Distance education is often justified to, and by, funding bodies in terms of its reputed cost effectiveness. This argument was muted in OLI’s case, possibly because the chances of achieving really significant economies of scale in BC were small. McGeer and Hardwick instead justified OLI’s creation largely in terms of the social value of improving access for non-metropolitan and other educationally disenfranchised groups. OLI’s policy makers agreed and consistently used access as their key justification for OLI’s existence. Its policies,
structures and systems were comprehensively devoted to making it easier for adults to gain entry and achieve their learning goals. OLI leaders held widely different personal political and ideological values, but collectively the Institute publicly presented a liberal–democratic view of OLI’s purpose and the value of distance education to society. The liberal view accorded well with prevailing attitudes enshrined in Ministerial and institutional policies. Improving educational access was by now an integral value to a society accustomed to the welfare state and driven by social ideals emphasizing meritocratic selection and prosperity through professional and technical skills and credentials (Perkin 1989). The emphasis was on equality of opportunity, not of outcomes (Silver 1980), on utility of knowledge rather than the transforming power of education.

It is unclear whether OLI’s leaders consciously intended to go much further, deliberately to subvert the status quo by enhancing equality of outcomes, or whether the impetus of distance education ideologies and systems simply encouraged that tendency. For example, student services were designed to lead adult learners through the labyrinthine halls of academe in ways conventional institutions rarely offer. The overt justification was to prove distance education was no longer a second-rate form of education which few completed. OLI’s laddering policy in business studies was designed to make it easier for students not only to climb the next rung but to do so with the necessary cultural prerequisites. On the other hand, virtually no effort was made to provide affirmative action programs for women even though they dominated the student body and gender-based discrimination was a politically and socially sensitive issue of the day. These examples in OLI’s educational policies and organizational systems illustrate distance education’s potential to subvert and change the social status quo (see also D. Harris 1987 on the BOU). In broad terms, however, OLI’s leaders were concerned with system conformity and a relatively unthreatening expansion of educational opportunity rather than with using distance education techniques to effect profound social change. In other words,
institutional policy conformed with the general thrust of state policy even though certain aspects of OLI's practice had the potential to counteract the conservatism of state policy.

With the 1980s recession, state interest in OLI took a more instrumentalist turn. In scaling down higher education in general, the state treated OLI as part of the non-university sector it closely controlled, as a means of training and retraining the workforce as fast as possible. OLI was especially valuable because its teaching strategies did not remove people from the workplace. Moreover, it was capable of close interaction with the rest of the educational system and so a useful channel for coordinating and rationalising some of the system. OLI had little legal or financial choice but to accept overall government policy. Its leaders shared, too, a view common in BC's non-university sector that the state, representing taxpayers, had an intrinsic and fundamental right to set overall educational policy. Moreover, OLI's mission was significantly couched in terms of its economic utility; that is, the potential of distance education to enable individuals, corporate capital and the state to invest in human capital. Regardless of the early rhetoric about OLI and degree-completion programs, OLI's leaders always intended the CTV program to be the largest area of OLI operations and it was directly job-related in its intent and focus. Conflicts with the state were over the extent to which the state should intrude, not its right to intervene. Strategically that left OLI, like the other institutes and colleges, in a weak position.

OLI's policies on inter-institutional collaboration were intrinsic to its external legitimacy with the state. The proposals emanating from the Ministries that OLI play a central part in achieving system comprehensiveness and greater productivity supported, and were reinforced by, OLI's emerging self-characterization as a collaborative organization serving the educational system. It is interesting that, having taken a stand asserting distance education's capabilities, and OLI's approach to its mission, the Institute's leaders were then reluctant to pursue an assertively self-aggrandising position in relation to a provincial coordinating role. This was
partly due to a lack of aggressive leadership and vision of that role on Jeffels' part. Partly it was caution, and almost nervousness, born of persistent scepticism and resistance from others in the system. However, state determination to give OLI a more central role was welcome, even if it meant changing that role to accommodate KNOW and a more audiovisual approach.

OLI was the creature of the state in the sense it was created and nurtured by the state in an era when state intervention and efforts at control had become commonplace. OLI therefore was vulnerable to shifts in state policy and to misinterpretations and misunderstanding of what distance education was really able to do. If OLI's leaders had held ideologically very different views of the social and economic utility of distance education from those of McGeer, Hardwick and their officials, there could have been major conflicts with serious consequences for institutional security and prestige. However, the conflicts which did occur should not mask the extensive commonality in social and educational ideology of those involved in OLI and the state. This commonality helped ensure OLI did not fundamentally challenge the social status quo. Legitimation by the state gave OLI much needed protection in view of the widespread conflicts in BC's higher education system over the value and legitimacy of distance education. It also provided (albeit in contested fashion) an environment in which OLI could grow and flourish. OLI gave the state a means of reassuring voters it was indeed trying to meet the needs of disenfranchised groups for educational access, that the quality of its credentials found favour with the arbiters of status, and that BC led Canada in innovative forms of educational provision.

LEGITIMACY IN THE FIELD OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

As a single-purpose distance education organization, OLI's claim to prestige critically rested on its status in the international distance education field; that is, in a horizontal dimension of legitimacy. When OLI was created, the field was still developing normative criteria for
legitimacy. OLI’s history demonstrates well the emerging norms and standards which, by the late 1980s, fell into several categories. The first was the nature, variety and sophistication of the communications media used. Another was the type of industrial approach taken to organizational structure and systems management. A third was the balance achieved in the teaching and learning relationship between interaction and independence. Others included policies on inter-institutional collaboration; and reflective theorising and research on the phenomenon of distance education. Whereas OLI generally sought to meet existing normative standards in BC’s higher education system, it both reacted and contributed to the emerging norms of distance education on the international front. In so doing, OLI’s definition of distance education, and approach to each of the major indicators of legitimacy in the field, affected its prestige in both the BC system, and the distance education field.

By the late 1970s, a widespread indicator of legitimacy in distance education was espousal of a multi-media approach to communications between teacher and learner, on the grounds that people learn in different ways, and no one medium can cater for all kinds of knowledge. In practice, print dominates because of its familiarity, flexibility, effectiveness, and cost efficiency. OLI chose print as its primary medium of communication, supported by teletutorials, after observing practice elsewhere, and after judging pragmatically what would work best for the largest number of OLI students at home. OLI’s reliance on print located the Institute in the mainstream of international practice. The Institute’s creation of a sophisticated electronic publishing system attracted much favourable attention in Canada and abroad.

There were several domestic consequences of relying mainly on printed learning materials. OLI’s success in federally-funded projects transferring its communications technologies and expertise to South East Asian institutions earned it an enviable international reputation. Growth in sales of OLI course packages to BC institutions confirmed others saw OLI’s materials as important tools for their own teaching. The excellence of its integrated instructional design
and course production techniques reinforced OLI's potential status as BC's prime producer of materials and locus of expertise in distance education. OLI's cautious approach to the practical and educational implications of using television in any elaborate way resembled the policies and attitudes of most major distance education institutions in Canada, Europe and Australia, at least in the early 1980s. Most others in BC were also cautious about television. Lack of resources was, of course, a major factor, but few in BC were prepared to embrace television as a major teaching medium for credit courses. North Island College was one exception; Hardwick another, and highly influential. Yet OLI's leaders held fast throughout the decade to the hegemony of print and a willingness to use television if it suited the purpose and the resources were available. However, in the mid-late 1980s, with technical refinements and lower costs, television and interactive audiovisual technologies attracted new attention in the distance education field. Had OLI not been forced into a closer relationships with KNOW, it might have lost its competitive edge. Ironically, while OLI's approach to distance education was a relatively radical one in BC terms, it was relatively conventional in distance education terms.

For all Peters' concerns (1989) about the alienating aspects of the industrialized nature of distance education, the industrial model has come to dominate the structures and practices of most larger distance education operations. Greatest prestige in the distance education field goes to those institutions with sophisticated sub-systems integrated smoothly into a powerful machine able to cater for large numbers of students at relatively low cost. OLI's singular new contribution came from its decision to eschew a full-time faculty. OLI pioneered a new version of the industrial model which was a highly creative way of maximizing scarce resources, obtaining the breadth of knowledge needed by an organization with such a wide curricular span, and maintaining as much flexibility as possible. In an environment of shrinking public funding for higher education, cost efficiency was critical to OLI's survival and prestige. The more efficient the industrial model, the larger the likely economies of scale. OLI encountered the dilemma of other small-medium size distance education operations, where the
client base is too small to yield the cost efficiencies of a BOU, but its staffing flexibility was very attractive. The model not only attracted much interest in the field, but was copied (for example, by the Hong Kong OLI).

Within OLI, course authors and tutors generally reacted positively to the limitations on their separated roles of development and teaching, though some sense of isolation was inevitable. The no-faculty model remained open to challenge that, in having no academic community, OLI lost something ineffable but vital to scholarly interaction. On the other hand, a different kind of community flourished, one dominated by professional educators with a variety of specialist expertise in management of distance education systems. With no major interest groups in the Institute concerned with other aspects of academic life, such as research, the culture of a professional distance education community dominated all policy making. The advantages lay in the concentrated attention which could be given to distance education and to refinement of the industrial model. The disadvantages lay in the loss of a direct academic voice in OLI policy making, and in the absence of a community of discipline-based scholars who could maintain academic quality control and bring an immediacy of scholarly expertise into curriculum planning.

Another important indicator of status in the distance education field is how well an institution solves the dilemma of balancing a commitment to encouraging learner independence with institutional needs for interaction and control. An additional aspect here is meeting the needs of individual learners within the framework of mass educational provision. As Sewart (1978; 1980; 1981) has cogently pointed out, course production in the automated industrial model can become an inexorable machine which takes over the culture, professional preoccupations and resources of the distance education organization and drowns faculty and student voices. An intractable dilemma exists between the pressures for industrialized efficiency and individual independence. At OLI, the automated machine impinged on contract faculty only by
demanding authors keep to deadlines, and by exasperating tutors when materials were delivered late to students. Nevertheless, the very fact communication is mediated implies a standardization and impersonalization which can only be partially ameliorated by techniques of instructional design and regular telephone contacts between teacher and learner. OLI's course templates and production formats constricted the way the Institute classified and presented knowledge, though it is arguable whether they did so any more than other kinds of constraints placed by teachers in face-to-face settings. In any case, OLI's tutors, although employed specifically to follow a given curriculum, still found ways to personalise it for their interactions with students.

Conscious efforts, constantly reiterated, were made to counterbalance the impersonality of automation, and ensure policies and practice in teaching and support emphasized caring, openness, fast response and individual concern. Other motives here included efforts to achieve high completion rates (and thereby institutional credibility), and to help adults unaccustomed to, and sometimes nervous about returning to study. OLI's creative six-semester system rejected the anarchy of self-pacing in favour of institutionally-determined study rhythms. At the same time, it gave students a choice of pace, and increased the flexibility of entry so as to maintain the momentum of motivation. At first, program structures rarely contravened normative hierarchies of knowledge and degrees of difficulty, and the Institute set the sequences of study within a program. Later, the policies of laddering educational opportunities from certificate to degree level, and providing a credit bank, reinforced the validity of such sequences while softening institutional controls over them.

While conventional higher education remains somewhat suspicious of inter-institutional collaboration, and it is remarkably difficult to achieve, cooperation has become an increasingly important hallmark of credibility in distance education. Policies promoting collaboration imply institutional boundaries can inhibit institutional prosperity and achievement of students' aims,
while distance education techniques can transcend such boundaries and extend the range and quality of each partner. Financial and other benefits may derive from meeting state demands for greater rationalization and productivity by sharing costs, expertise and activities. Partners may bask in reflected glory of each other's prestige, including that gained in combinations of distance and conventional education. In other words, collaboration has become a goal whose potential value outweighs the enormous difficulties. The two key ingredients are a high, sustained level of inter-personal trust, and a willingness to shed traditions and structures geared towards competition.

Canadian distance educators have been more willing to pursue collaborative projects than those in most other industrialized and developing nations, for reasons which are not entirely clear. OLI was a pioneer and over the decade amassed great experience through many attempts, failures and some signal successes within BC and further afield. Mugridge once commented wryly he was the 'most collaborated person in distance education'. OLI staff may not have realised until the late 1980s how significant and extensive their expertise in inter-institutional collaboration actually was. The many projects which did not eventuate, and the manifest difficulties of those which did, probably diminished their sense of accomplishment. OLI's service mandate set up the formal conditions for OLI's collaborative ventures; and the structural and curricular consequences of the system compatibility principle pushed OLI towards genuine cooperation. Having no faculty with personal stakes in curriculum formation and presentation helped OLI deal with the 'Not Invented Here' factor bedevilling cooperative ventures elsewhere. Even though there were many failures, the Institute established behaviour patterns in inter-institutional interactions which in a general way contributed to its credibility and status. The personal credibility and operating styles of Mugridge and some of his colleagues undoubtedly contributed to OLI's burgeoning reputation as a genuinely collaborative institution.
The final criterion for legitimacy in the distance education field – reflection on practice, and research into the phenomenon of distance education – also emerged during the 1980s. The magnitude and speed of growth from about 1970 gave most distance educators little time for research and scholarly analysis of what they were doing, and why; few had resources to devote to institutional research and development. The quality of much research in the field was indifferent, and reflection was all too often a mere summary of practice. However, research was necessary to find out if the many assertions and articles of faith on which modern practice had been based really held true and would continue to work as distance education continued to grow. Proof of distance education’s effectiveness, and a better understanding of the phenomenon, were also a necessary accompaniment to distance education’s claims to legitimacy within education as a whole. The shift is symbolised in OLI’s original mandate, which did not refer to research, and in the OLA Act (1987) enjoining the new Agency to conduct research on open learning education.

Ellis, Mugridge and others with university backgrounds brought with them academic values linking research and teaching, and intended OLI should lead in distance education research as and when possible (Ellis 1980). There was never enough time or money to do so. The Educational Technology Division was short-lived, and most research projects were limited in scope. The 1982 Institutional Evaluators criticised OLI’s lack in this regard, implying OLI should take a lead because it was one of only three single-purpose distance education institutions in Canada and, with its many innovations, should aspire to leadership in the field. Mugridge and his colleagues agreed. Lack of resources and time does not entirely explain, however, OLI’s limited research output. OLI’s role was to transmit, rather than to discover, knowledge, and it had no full-time staff concerned with scholarship and teaching in a particular discipline. The Institute’s focus and ways of operating did not encourage the atmosphere of scholarly enquiry familiar in universities. Moreover, OLI’s full-time staff comprised professional educators and technical staff whose daily concerns were practical rather
than reflective. Managing an organization demands ways of thinking, rhythms, and behaviours which cannot easily be reconciled with those involved in doing research. Nevertheless, although research projects continued to be limited in number and tied closely to operational needs, there was a steady stream of scholarly publications and conference presentations from about 1982, culminating in Mugridge's 1987 blueprint for research and development in the new OLA. Publications and conference participation ensured OLI's name and activities were well publicised in international forums. They helped create and substantiate networks and favourable attitudes towards OLI, and helped confirm OLI's position as a major node in the international map of distance education.

DISTANCE EDUCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY

Three broad and interconnected dimensions of institutional legitimacy have interested me: vertical hierarchies of institutions, curricula and pedagogies; horizontal status within institutional sectors and fields of knowledge; and external legitimacy in relation to the state. The university has historically provided the normative criteria to fix legitimacy in higher education, but other types of higher education institution have also developed common ideologies and in-group indicators of status. Colleges are one such group; distance education institutions another. OLI's history reveals one institution's search for legitimacy in these three dimensions. It also illuminates the search for legitimacy of the modern form of distance education.

In separating objective and subjective elements of institutional legitimacy, Trow (1984) views the former largely as a function of formal law and state policy giving some institutions more formal rights and privileges than others. However, Trow does not consider the consequences for higher education stratification of ambiguities in an institution's rights and privileges. Nor do his objective elements adequately account for the increasing tendency of states to intervene
in formerly stable hierarchies by changing the objective conditions of institutional legitimacy. The conflicts arising from OLI's hybrid status suggest more attention should be devoted to the objective aspects of institutional legitimacy.

On the other hand, Trow (1984) correctly directs most attention to the subjective elements of institutional legitimacy, however difficult it may be to define and interpret relative prestige and reputation. A new institution in the traditional mould seeks to acquire, over time, the familiar symbols of prestige, including the reputation and productivity of faculty, size and sophistication of facilities, the level and sources of institutional income, and the 'quality' of the student body. A new institution eschewing convention must also eschew or reshape these traditional indicators of legitimacy. There are thus several intricately-woven patterns in OLI's search for institutional legitimacy, although many of the traditional indicators of vertical legitimacy were missing or embryonic in OLI's first decade. OLI sought to reconcile prevailing norms and standards of scholarship and teaching in BC with its markedly different set of pedagogical strategies and organizational structures, and with its ideological commitment to openness. In addition, because of its unusual mandate, OLI had the awkward task of establishing a place in the BC hierarchy and, simultaneously, satisfying the mores of the university tradition and the college ethos. OLI's reshaping of traditional indicators of legitimacy is powerfully evident in the challenge OLI presented to prevailing norms and 'quality' of teaching, and to established organizational patterns. That is, in the challenge offered to traditional institutional legitimacy by the practices of a sophisticated, integrated distance education system in which teacher and learner do not normally meet face-to-face.

Whether one believes distance education is a distinct field of education or (as I do) an integrated collection of sophisticated techniques, there is little doubt it is being taken seriously by many states as an important means of educating very large numbers at relatively low cost. Nevertheless, political support alone does not confer legitimacy on distance education, and there
are dangers in pandering to state policy in order to gain financial and other support. True parity of prestige with entrenched hierarchical forms of higher education is possible only if the status-givers accept distance education can meet normative standards and pose no significant threat to the status quo.

That, of course, begs the question whether one should be seeking parity of prestige at all, especially since traditional forms of higher education seem incapable of real democratisation. If one's prime motivations are the satisfaction of learners' goals and equality of educational outcomes, horizontal legitimacy is more socially and educationally important than position within a status hierarchy. Because distance education tools and systems work at all levels, from adult basic education to postgraduate studies, it is not the same horizontal legitimacy as Dennison and Gallagher (1986) claim for Canada's community colleges; that is, legitimacy at a particular level of the status hierarchies of knowledge and institutional type. Paradoxically, distance education's achievement depends significantly on convincing traditional gatekeepers that distance education can compensate for abandonment or amelioration of traditional norms of teaching. It also depends on maintaining independence in the face of state intrusion into institutional autonomy, even while demonstrating distance education's utility to social and economic purposes of the community (which is not necessarily the same thing as the state).

One of the most pervasive norms distance education challenges is that teaching and learning should occur face-to-face. That is, information and knowledge are best imparted from teacher to learner when both can see and converse with each other in the same place. The image of the teacher attended by a group of students in a classroom setting becomes part of our primary consciousness from our earliest formal educational experiences as an icon for 'here be education'. The icon implies passage of invisible but real commodities - information, understanding and skills - from teacher to learner. It confirms the power of the teacher, accruing from her or his superior knowledge and skill, over the acolyte. It also suggests
collegial ambiences among students, and among teachers. Its validity is questionable, but very rarely argued, because the norm of education as a face-to-face activity has been deeply embedded as a social construct for many centuries. The norm conditions conscious and unconscious attitudes towards the nature of teaching and learning and thence towards pedagogical, financial, spatial and social issues surrounding education. The norm lies at the heart of overt and indirect opposition to distance education which removes that physical contiguity and is thus considered somehow inferior or second-best. Distance educators are as imbued with that norm as anyone else; they may question the norm’s validity and subvert it in various ways, but few ever entirely discard it.

Distance educators have relied on a parallel but apparently contradictory norm of ‘real’ education to drive a wedge into the hegemony of the face-to-face concept. This is the norm of mediated communication whereby face-to-face teaching and learning are accompanied by other, more solitary forms of communication. Learning has become a more solitary occupation ever since books became widely obtainable and the work of past and contemporary great minds became directly accessible to the learner without the teacher’s mediation or physical presence. Small wonder a large library became a hallmark of institutional prestige this century, as computer-based networks will be in the next century. There are gradations of legitimacy in the media used in conventional and distance education alike. Print still retains hegemony because of its near-universal familiarity and communicability in almost any subject and language.

Modern distance education has been particularly successful in harnessing cutting-edge electronic publishing techniques to produce high quality printed materials of which any academic would gladly claim authorship. This helps compensate for the loss of face-to-face contact. Television is currently the most contested medium, as a glamorous 'high tech toy'. It has become a symbol of industrialized society's obsession with visual and electronic technologies which some argue solves the problem of loss of physical contiguity in education. In compensating for loss of face-to-face contact, then, the types of mediated communications chosen can affect the
legitimacy of the distance education institution. It remains the case, however, that many do not perceive mediated communications as an adequate compensation for the loss of face-to-face teaching and learning. There is no *prima facie* reason, in terms of the learning process itself, why this should be so, but there is much room still for comparative research. The onus here is on distance educators as challengers of normative standards and seekers after parallel legitimacy.

One of the thorns pricking against parity of prestige and horizontal legitimacy of distance education concerns the changes in power relations between teacher and learner demanded by the industrial model. The academic's power over the student is vested in the former's right to grade the latter's work and, in conventional settings, in the teacher's physical presence as the leader of classroom activity. Continued allegiance to the concept of face-to-face education is partly based on academics' need to reproduce, through successive generations of students, the personal power and respect accorded their esoteric knowledge. The teacher's knowledge and pedagogical effectiveness are closeted behind the classroom door. When the face-to-face structure is removed, it seems the trappings of master and acolyte have gone, and the teacher is more vulnerable to external judgement. The more elaborate industrial systems like OLI, which clearly divide course preparation from teaching, reinforce that sense of lost power and present a greater threat than other systems in which academics prepare and teach their own distance courses. As we have seen at OLI, there are advantages also in separating course preparation and teaching. In our information era, where the course package becomes the central source of information for a course, alternative teaching styles emphasizing dialogue and negotiation of meaning in a more equal partnership with the learner offer a way through the power relations dilemma. Simultaneously, they enhance prospects for enriching personal contacts between teacher and learner.
The enormous growth in distance education worldwide in the last 20 years confirms its validity and credibility among large numbers of learners, and its attraction to the state as the primary sponsoring body. There are, however, incompatibilities between a philosophical and social commitment that distance education should empower learners, and its potential manipulation to serve state economic and social ends directed more towards reproducing the unequal status quo. The former is evident in distance educators' justification of this form of education as a way of improving educational opportunity and, by implication, effecting genuine social change. How far that subversion of the status quo is taken depends on the social and political values of the educators involved, just as it does in any other form of education. Some distance education programs, especially at graduate level, are elitist in intent and outcome. But, in my experience, improvement in access and empowerment of learners are basic tenets of most distance educators, however differently interpreted politically. Instructional design and student support strategies, and a willingness to experiment with new technologies which might reach students better, are the practical outcomes of this ideology. The complex, sophisticated, integrated systems so forged strengthen distance education's attraction to the state.

To be legitimate, distance education needs not only to survive but to flourish under the protective and approving eye of financial and moral sponsors, primarily the state. Distance education policy in every jurisdiction with which I am familiar is commonly geared to maximizing sponsorship by using arguments such as: distance education can be cost effective, produce economies of scale, provide effective education and training of the workforce, reach hitherto disenfranchised people, and do so without massive social, economic or geographic dislocation. It is an attractive package for industrial states beset with falling rates of profit, struggles to keep up with international markets, and constant pressure to accede to demands of the workforce and disadvantaged groups for the wherewithal to realise the social ideals of a professional society. The risk is exposing the distance education institution almost too much to state control. Distance education has become both a beneficiary and a victim of contemporary
state economic rationalism demanding more ‘relevance’, accountability and productivity. The danger is that the individual, the small enrolment course, the subject with little relevance to state goals, will be swamped in neo-conservative economic rationalism.

The problem of loss of academic freedom through state incursions besets all areas of higher education in Canada as in most countries. It has added cogency for distance education as a youthful, evolving form of education which has not yet received the kind of imprimatur from the educational establishment which would guarantee its status and prestige. This brings us full circle to the problems of achieving institutional legitimacy within hierarchies and across sectors and fields. OLI’s history indicates how one organisation worked on multiple fronts to gain credence and status at different levels of the higher education system and with the state. In revealing the kind of conflicts and dilemmas involved in a highly complex environment, OLI’s experience suggests policies aimed at securing distance education’s tenure and prestige must continue to address all three loci of legitimacy simultaneously. The choices made at the interstices will greatly influence the unique corporate identity and philosophy of each organization.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The phenomenon of distance education is continuing to grow world-wide. At the same time, there are signs that distance education techniques and values are being incorporated into mainstream higher education practice. The boundaries between the two, erected with such care in the 1970s and 1980s in the search for institutional justification and prestige, are beginning to crumble. If the best of both distance education and conventional educational techniques are to be retained and improved, it is important to understand better the conditions under which teaching and learning at a distance have flourished or withered. As Silver (1990) says, the historian has much to add to the policy process.
British Columbians often comment that theirs is a unique and eccentric political environment in Canadian terms. Certainly, OLI's history contains numerous unique features, born of BC's particular social, political and educational environment. Nevertheless, I have been struck by the many similarities between OLI's institution-building experience, and those of my own university and other distance education institutions. Similar historical studies of other distance education or non-conventional higher education institutions would illuminate the commonalities and differences, and teach us much about the phenomenon of distance education. That knowledge will be useful as the increasing number of older, working students, and demands for recurrent professional education change the nature and practice of higher education into the next century.

In examining institutional legitimacy, I have concentrated on OLI's educational and institutional policies and its external relationships. A rounded picture of OLI's history will not be complete till companion studies are conducted of the Institute's students and its organizational culture. Such studies are rare to non-existent in the distance education field. Whether or not OLI is their subject, ethnographic and prosopographical analyses of these aspects of distance education would contribute valuably to our understanding of students' aspirations and experience, and the culture and social/professional mores of distance education communities. I expect the former to have policy implications for improving the prospects of equality in educational outcomes, and the latter to help in improving management techniques and organizational structures in distance education.
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APPENDIX 1: TABLES

1.1 Total BC Non-Vocational Enrolments 1976-1987
1.2 Part-Time BC Non-Vocational Enrolments 1976-1987
1.3 OLI Enrolment Statistics 1979-1987
1.4 OLI Student Profiles 1981-1988
1.5 Courses OLI Planned to Offer 1979-1988
1.6 OLI Revenue and Expenditure 1979-1988
1.7 OLI's Annual Growth Rates 1980-1988
### Table 1.1: TOTAL B.C. NON-VOCATIONAL ENROLMENTS 1976-1987

**Source:** Adapted from *B.C. Post-Secondary Enrolment Statistics 1986/87*, B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education & Job Training, Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>O.L.I.</th>
<th>Other Institutes</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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1 BCIT & Emily Carr College of Art & Design; Pacific Marine Training Institute & Pacific Vocational Institute enrolled vocational students only.
### Table 1.2: PART-TIME B.C. NON-VOCATIONAL ENROLMENTS 1976-87

Source: Adapted from B.C. Post-Secondary Enrolment Statistics 1986/87, B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education & Job Training, Table 3.

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### Table 1.3: OLI ENROLMENT STATISTICS 1979-1988


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<tr>
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<tr>
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1. 1979/80 - 2 semesters, fall & spring
2. 3 semesters p.a. - summer, fall & spring
3. 1982/83 - 5 semester intakes - May, September, November, January, March
4. 6 semesters p.a. - intake each 2 months applies thereafter
5. Annual total of courses represents the number of courses offered & includes multiple counts for courses offered more than once during the year
6. CTV & ABE combined into Open College
7. Net enrolments after semester has begun - as reported to the Ministry of Education
Table 1.4: STUDENT PROFILES 1981-1988


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Table 1.4: STUDENT PROFILES (cont.)

Source: OLI Annual Reports 1981/82 to 1987/88

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Region
1. Based on college and/or OLI advising region, definitions of which varied over time, so figures to be treated with some caution.
2. No OLI advising centre in Cariboo-Ft. George region in 1982/83, so 'other' is inflated. 'Other' also includes out of province enrolments; some of these may be included in 'Lower Mainland' for 1984/85.

Age
1. This figure almost entirely 18-20, as students not normally accepted under 18.

Academic Goal
1. In anticipation of a science degree which did not eventuate.
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Univ/CTV</th>
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<th>Under Devt.</th>
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<td>Fall '79</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1983/84</td>
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*Calendars notoriously inaccurate, representing plans at time of printing, not actual offering.

1 Fall 79 actual; 1980 total planned for offering by summer
2 Some of these not offered as devt/prod not complete
3 Courses applicable to either program
4 1982-87 - courses identified as telecourses within total; does not include others using occasional video/TV. 1987-88 indicates courses with supporting material broadcast on KN.
5 UBC — 54; SFU — 71; UVic — 26
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<td>38,107</td>
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<td>543,426</td>
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<td>6,444,100</td>
<td>6,441,791</td>
<td>6,952,124</td>
<td>6,515,824</td>
<td>7,033,085</td>
<td>7,882,129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alloc. to Capital</td>
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<td>(194,775)</td>
<td>(170,872)</td>
<td>(163,000)</td>
<td>(141,900)</td>
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<td>147,042</td>
<td>128,354</td>
<td>114,266</td>
<td>106,164</td>
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<td>24,448</td>
<td>78,567</td>
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<td>106,422</td>
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<td>148,650</td>
<td>1,486,580</td>
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<td>Sub total</td>
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<td>6,441,791</td>
<td>6,952,124</td>
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### Table 1.6: OLI Revenue and Expenditure 1979-1988 (contd.)

Source: Audited Accounts, OLI Annual Reports 1978/79 to 1987/88

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<tr>
<td>Satellite Network Fund</td>
<td>102,950</td>
<td>282,614</td>
<td>139,983</td>
<td>36,259</td>
<td>44,631</td>
<td>7,958</td>
<td>10,788</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating assets/Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>154,795</td>
<td>224,783</td>
<td>159,303</td>
<td>333,607</td>
<td>32,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancillary Ops.</td>
<td>5,337,872</td>
<td>6,175,420</td>
<td>7,502,621</td>
<td>7,317,020</td>
<td>7,958,945</td>
<td>8,363,037</td>
<td>8,689,863</td>
<td>9,228,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancillary Ops.</td>
<td>149,178</td>
<td>173,979</td>
<td>265,135</td>
<td>235,720</td>
<td>392,907</td>
<td>452,601</td>
<td>593,298</td>
<td>655,497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bookstore (Gross)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing (Gross)</td>
<td>91,342</td>
<td>75,592</td>
<td>128,516</td>
<td>118,893</td>
<td>173,519</td>
<td>96,048</td>
<td>670</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Equipment</td>
<td>32,240</td>
<td>21,377</td>
<td>62,078</td>
<td>17,120</td>
<td>21,377</td>
<td>223,958</td>
<td>68,895</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Contracts</td>
<td>559,029</td>
<td>276,399</td>
<td>579,309</td>
<td>594,616</td>
<td>125,377</td>
<td>223,958</td>
<td>68,895</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Credit Courses</td>
<td>108,302</td>
<td>125,377</td>
<td>108,302</td>
<td>125,377</td>
<td>223,958</td>
<td>68,895</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td>788,859</td>
<td>149,178</td>
<td>173,979</td>
<td>356,477</td>
<td>902,581</td>
<td>928,030</td>
<td>1,338,715</td>
<td>1,680,147</td>
<td>1,486,766</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>788,859</td>
<td>4,123,422</td>
<td>5,487,050</td>
<td>6,349,399</td>
<td>7,859,098</td>
<td>8,219,601</td>
<td>8,886,975</td>
<td>9,701,752</td>
<td>10,370,010</td>
<td>10,715,566</td>
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<tr>
<td>BALANCE OF OPERATING FUND³</td>
<td>560,649</td>
<td>613,981⁴</td>
<td>38,107</td>
<td>443,939</td>
<td>226,921</td>
<td>218,710</td>
<td>543,426</td>
<td>536,725</td>
<td>780,307¹⁰</td>
<td>533,673</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 1.6: OLI REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE 1979-1988 (contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 These figures should be read with caution. As some sections were reorganized, not all functions remained with successor sections. A new accounting system was introduced following amalgamation, which first appears in 1987's accounts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 June 1978 - 31 March 1979. All others are full fiscal years - April to March.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Carryover monies, mainly project commitments whose final accounts carry over to next fiscal year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Restated through subsequent adjustments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Transferred to special purpose fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 &quot;Program Development&quot; till 1980; &quot;Academic Affairs&quot; till 1986; then split into Open University and Open College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 &quot;Program Operations&quot; till 1980.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Apparent increase due to movement of information and advertising from Administration to Principal's budget. Increase in Administration due to salary increases in bargaining unit, higher rent, and equipment costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Reorganization late 1986: most of Program Support and Student Services to VP Administration. Academic Affairs split; some elements to VP Administration. President's office expands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Transfer to special purpose fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Changes in accounting policies following amalgamation make it difficult to present figures for 1987/88 consistent with earlier years. In trying to do so, end of year results appear higher than those in Annual Report 1987/88 because of new designations of funds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.7: Annual Growth Rates 1980-81 to 1987-88
(extrapolated from Appendices 1.3, 1.5 & 1.6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prov. Oper. Grants %</th>
<th>Course Enrolments %</th>
<th>No. Courses %</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes courses transferred from UBC as part of Open University Consortium.
APPENDIX 2: MEMBERS OF OLI BOARD OF GOVERNORS 1978-88

Source: OLI Calendars 1979-88 and Board Minutes


Copeland, Clare G.:  President and Chief Executive Officer, Copeland Communications, Victoria.  Member: 1981-82.

Donald, Walter J., L.Th. (Brit. Col.):  Executive Director, Columbia Centre for Integrated Health Services, Victoria.  Member: 1985-86.


Hannaford, Nigel, B.Sc. (Southampton):  Manager, Northern News Agencies, Port Alberni.  Member: 1984-88; Vice-Chair 1985-86; Joint Chair of OLA Steering C’tee 1986-88.

Hardwick, Walter G., B.A., M.A. (UBC), PhD. (Minnesota):  former Deputy Minister of Education; Chair of KNOW Board; Prof. of Urban Geography, UBC, Vancouver.  Joint Chair of OLA Steering C’tee: 1986-88.


Macey, Samuel L., B.A. (UBC), Ph.D. (Washington), F.M.S.:  Prof. of English; Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, University of Victoria.  Member: 1978-82; 1984-85; Vice-Chair 1984-85; Chair 1985.


McDonald, Betsy:  Owner human relations company, Vancouver School Board trustee, Vancouver.  Member: 1978-84; Vice-Chair 1979-83; Chair 1983-84.


Unruh, Abe H.: Grain farmer, Fort St. John; Chair, North Peace River School Board; President, BCAC. Member: 1983-85.


Ministry Liaison -

Dr. Bruce Fraser - 1978-79
Dr. Grant Fisher - Jan. 1980 - July 1980

Secretary to Board -

Jack Paterson - Sept. 1978-Nov. 1979
Sheila Woodward - 1979-1986
APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE AUTHOR

PRIMARY INTERVIEWS

Birch, Daniel R.: Dean of Education, later Assistant Vice President Academic, SFU (1970s); Dean of Education, later Vice President Academic, UBC (1981- ); member, IUPB, and UCBC’s Program Coordinating Committee. Interview: 22 November 1990.

Blaney, John P.: Director of Continuing Education, UBC (early 1970s); Dean, later Vice President, of Continuing Studies, SFU (1974- ); member, OLI Board (1984-85). Interview: 27 November 1990.

Bottomley, John: Director, Research Operations, UCBC (1975-78), during which time he was secretary to, or member of the Winegard Commission, DEPG, and assistant to Hardwick; Institutional Planning and Research Officer, OLI (1978-80); Director, Program Support, OLI (1980-87); Director, Science & Humanities Programs, BCOU, OLA (1987-89); Director, Administrative Studies & Social Science Programs, BCOU, OLA (1989- ). Interviews: 14 November 1990, and 28 February 1989.

Calvert, Jocelyn: University Program Coordinator, OLI (1980-87); Director, Administrative Studies & Social Science Programs, BCOU, OLA (1987-89); Professor of Distance Education, Deakin University (1989- ). Interview: 11 January 1991.

Ellis, John F.: Professor of Education, and variously Dean of Education and Director of Graduate Programs, Simon Fraser University (1965-78); Principal, OLI (1978-80). Interview: 19 October 1990.

Farrell, Glen: Assistant Director, then Director of Continuing Education, UVic (1974-85); Board Member, KNOW (1983?-85); President, KNOW 1985-86; Acting Principal, OLI, and President, OLA (1986- ). Interview: 21 November 1990.

Fisher, Grant: Principal, Camosun College (1970s); Acting Executive Director, Programs Services Division (1979-80), Acting Assistant Deputy Minister (1980), Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education (1981- late 1980s). Interview: 8 November 1990.

Fraser, Bruce: Former Principal, Selkirk College; Executive Director, Post-Secondary Programs, Ministry of Education (1979-early 1980s); Ministry Liaison Officer with OLI Board (1978-79); Principal, Malaspina College during the 1980s. Interview: 16 November 1990.

Gallagher, Paul: Principal, Capilano College (1970s & early 1980s); Principal, Vancouver Community College (mid-1980s - ); Chair, Council of College & Institute Principals (mid-1980s). Interview: 21 November 1990.

Hardwick, Walter G.: Professor of Urban Geography, UBC; Director of Continuing Education, UBC (1975); Deputy Minister of Education (1976-80); President and Chair, KNOW (1980-1985); Chair, KNOW (1985-88); Co-Chair, Steering Committee, OLA (1986-88). Interview: 13 November 1990.

Jeffels, Ronald R: Professor of French, UBC and UVic (1951-74); Assistant to President and co-worker on Macdonald Report (1962); Principal, Okanagan College (1974-80); Principal, OLI (1980-86). Interview: 9 November 1990.

Mugridge, Ian: History Professor, & Assistant to Vice President Academic, SFU (1960s-70s); Director of University Programs, OLI (1979-83); Dean of Academic Affairs, OLI (1979-87); Vice-President, OLA and Principal, BC Open University (1987-). Interview: 3 February 1991.

Pritchard, James: former Bursar, Selkirk College (1960s); Accountant, Prince George; Chair, Interior University Programs Board (1977-78); Member, OLI Board of Directors (1978-85) and Chair (1979-83; 1984-85). Interview: 23 November 1990.

Segal, Sid: Former Assistant to Vice President, Administration, SFU; Director of Administrative Services and Bursar, OLI (1978-87); Vice President, Administration, OLA (1987-). Interview: 15 November 1990.

Tayless, John: Director of Programs, North Island College (1975-91); Acting Principal (1989-90). Interview: 7 November 1990.

OTHER INTERVIEWS

Crawford, Gail: Senior Instructional Designer, Athabasca University. Interview: 2 May 1990.

Erdos, Renee: Australian correspondence educator with experience in creating and managing correspondence studies programs in Australia (from the 1940s), and Africa (from the 1960s); Vice President (1961-65), President (1965-69), International Council for Correspondence Education. Interview: 19 December 1989.


Selman, Gordon: former Director of Continuing Education, UBC (1960s); Professor, Department of Adult Education, UBC. Interview: 13 March 1989.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ABE</td>
<td>Adult basic education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ac.Aff.C'tee</td>
<td>Academic Affairs Committee, OLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AcAff.</td>
<td>Files of the Dean and Division of Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Athabasca University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>British Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCAC</td>
<td>British Columbia Association of Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCGEU</td>
<td>British Columbia Government Employees Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCIT</td>
<td>British Columbia Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bd.</td>
<td>Papers of the OLI Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOU</td>
<td>British Open University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C &amp; I Princs.</td>
<td>College and institute principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCE</td>
<td>Centre for Continuing Education, UBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counc. of Princs.</td>
<td>Council of College and Institute Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTVC</td>
<td>Career, technical, vocational (programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTVPAC</td>
<td>Career, Technical, Vocational Program Advisory Committee, OLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPG</td>
<td>Distance Education Planning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTUC</td>
<td>David Thompson University Centre, Nelson, BC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Franklin CF1</td>
<td>Derek Franklin's working papers, DEPG</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS Hist. File</td>
<td>Guided Independent Studies, Media Services, UBC, Historical File</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inst.Aff.C'tee</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUC</td>
<td>International University Consortium</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUPB</td>
<td>Interior University Programs Board</td>
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<td>Knowledge Network of the West</td>
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<td>Learning Systems Working Group</td>
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<td>Management Advisory Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>MUSC</td>
<td>Ministry of Universities, Science &amp; Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIC</td>
<td>North Island College</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLA</td>
<td>Open Learning Agency</td>
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