1-1-1985

A preliminary framework for analysis of institutional research in practice.

William M. Craft
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Recommended Citation

Craft, William M., "A preliminary framework for analysis of institutional research in practice." (1985). *Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014*. 3999.
https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1/3999

A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS OF

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH IN PRACTICE

A Dissertation Presented

By

WILLIAM M. CRAFT

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May   1985

Education
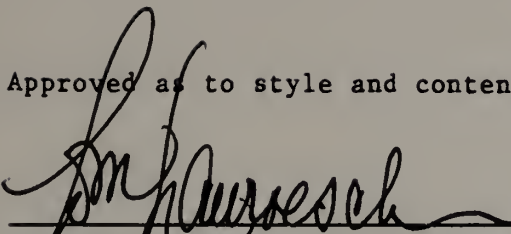
ii

A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS OF

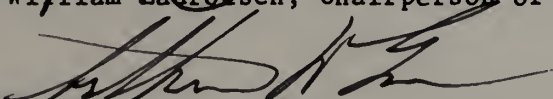INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH IN PRACTICE

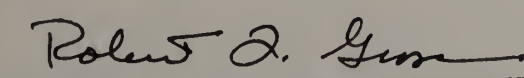A Dissertation Presented

By

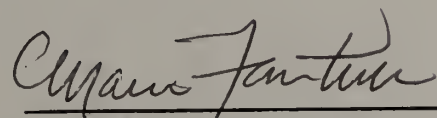WILLIAM M. CRAFT

Approved as to style and content by:

William Lauroesch, Chairperson of Committee

Arthur W. Eve, Member

Robert F. Grose, Member

Mario Fantini, Dean,
School of Education

DEDICATION

The study which follows is dedicated to my parents Hannah and Marvin Craft who have encouraged me to value education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

A Preliminary Framework for Analysis of

Institutional Research in Practice

(May, 1985)

William M. Craft, B.A., State University of New York, College at Oswego

Ed.D., University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Directed by: Dr. William Lauroesch

The purpose of this investigation has been to identify means for
helping a work group in a collegiate setting to define for itself
and to demonstrate to others its contributing role in accomplishing
the purposes of the institution. Specifically, this study explores
the issue of organizational practice as it relates to institutional
research, evaluation, and planning units (REPs). Insights and
observations were developed regarding a conceptual framework for the
analysis of REP practice useful both in future practice and in
further research.

Recent descriptive studies involving community colleges suggest
that REPs typically exist with an ambiguous status and often peripheral
to central management processes. These studies also suggest that
progress toward a more central role within the organization is due,
in part, to the way the concept of the REP is carried into practice
by REP members.

This study investigates the subject of REP practice in the
context of a non-comparative organizational field study involving an

urban community college. Aspects of the Checkland methodology for
analysis in human activity systems were incorporated to impart
coherence and ensure depth in the analysis. The interpretive
perspective adopted in the study suggests that the fundamental task
of management is to facilitate coordinated action by creating and
renewing a shared sense of organization among members. From this
perspective, organizational meaning is derived from the framing of
events placed in context.

Insights and observations drawn from the study suggest that
emphasizing the connection between REP events and fundamental
organizational purpose and structuring relationships which contribute
to achieving central organizational purpose assist REP members to
carry the functions of institutional research, evaluation, and
planning into more organizationally meaningful practice. It is also
suggested that tensions may exist between the functionalist view of
organizations normally reflected in REP activity and the interpretive
view which emphasizes tasks relating to a self-conscious creation
and maintenance of systems of meaning which incorporate particular
values and purposes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this investigation has been to identify means
for helping a work group in a collegiate setting to define for
itself and to demonstrate to others its contributing role in the
accomplishment of the purposes of the institution. Specifically, this
endeavor has employed selected methodologies in the context of a
preliminary field study to gain an interpretive perspective on the
meaning of research, evaluation, and planning activity in the overall
operations of a community college.

Context of the Problem

American higher education is experiencing what Keller (1983)
has called a "management revolution." According to Keller this
revolution is marked by increased emphasis on rational planning and
systematic data collection and analysis as central elements in the
decision-making process. The current investigation has focused on
those individuals responsible for the collection and analysis of
data needed by decision makers.

Activity carried out under the rubric of institutional research,
the generic name for research activity in the interest of institutional
improvement, can be traced back in American higher education to at
least the beginning of the twentieth century. Recognition of such

1

research as an important area of disciplined inquiry and professional
specialization has developed rapidly since the First National
Institutional Research Forum held in Chicago in 1961 and the formal
establishment of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) in
1966. AIR has reached the status of an influential forum in North
American higher education and is continuing to attract an even
broader-based international membership.

Similarly, activities in higher education related to the
development of information systems, the strengthening of institutional
planning, the encouragement of program evaluation, and the sponsorship
of planned change have also evolved. Sometimes these efforts appear
in organizational configurations encompassing one or more activities
involving data collection and analysis and/or responsibility for
routine data management. In varied forms, these agencies have emerged
in significant numbers in higher education during the last 25 years.
The comprehensive information and penetrating analysis they provide
are generally identified in the literature as essential contributors
to effective management.

At the same time, however, recent studies also suggest that the
expert staff specifically charged with gathering information and
carrying out the requisite analysis tend to function only on the
periphery of organizational decision making.[1] These agencies typically

---

[1]This situation is at the nexus of a major debate concerning
institutional research. The basic elements of this debate involve
whether institutional researchers should aspire to active engagement
in organizational affairs or whether by design they should remain
detached, neutral, and aloof. The position adopted in the current
study is that institutional research and planning functions should

exist as staff subunits with an ambiguous status. They have limited, and often only informal, access to the councils of power and control within their organizations. Typically they are restricted in their ability to influence decisions.

This situation leads Knapp (1982) to conclude that "the dynamics of organizing a viable research and planning capacity in college administration are, as yet, poorly understood" (p. 1). It may be that, while theoretically important, systematic data collection, analysis, and planning respond only to a rational/linear model of what we are coming to realize are complex, ambiguous organizations that can be seen to behave in many different ways simultaneously. Colleges and universities may be viewed at once as bureaucracies, businesses, political environments, centers for the transfer of knowledge, and the keepers of certain cultural symbols and myths.

Institutional research, evaluation, and planning
in complex organizations

Planning and institutional research contribute to what is accepted as an objective, rational, and functional view of the world. Units charged with these functions are expected to assist in structuring a rational/linear flow of events from the establishment of goals, through the selection of action strategies, which finally result in the achievement of agreed-upon outcomes.

Organizations, however, may be seen to function in other ways. Coalitions may form in support of emotional rather than rational perspectives of issues. Partisan activity may influence decisions and thus interrupt the rational/linear flow of prescribed events. Personal relationships and prevailing organizational myths may prove more influential than the results of systematic institutional analysis.

Little by little, organizational theory is beginning to account for the fact that organizations do not always behave the way we wish or expect them to. More than one theory or school of thought about organizational functioning is often required to analyze events satisfactorily. Indeed, some events which are remarkable, unexplainable, or anomalous from one point of view, may be seen as commonplace or more easily understood from another point of view. For example, see Baldridge (1971), Bolman and Deal (1982), Cohen and March (1974), March (1976), and Schmidtlein (1975).

In a complex organization such as a college or university, which may operate in many different ways simultaneously, the constraints on behavior imposed on those who practice the role of institutional researcher are significant. Discussions of the institutional research role often stress the need for detachment and clinical objectivity. Some writers, such as Dressel (1970), question the appropriateness of involving institutional research with planning. Dressel, Bolman, Cammack, Johnson, Kimsey, LeLong, Mason, Pratt, and Saupe (1971) caution practitioners that seeing institutional research through to policy and action coopt them into the action at the expense of further

research. Sheehan (1971) also argues the view of the neutral researcher.[2] On the other hand, Alfred and Ivens (1978) portray what appears to be an active role for institutional researchers in the decision-making process. Unfortunately, they also require the important precondition that the college adopt a strict rational/linear decision-making model based on systematic data.[3] Thus Alfred and Ivens view the struggles of groups within the college who attempt to force policy decision to reflect their special interests and the use of research data for anything but making key decisions and implementing change as organizational dysfunctions. Since "dysfunctions" such as reconciling differing points of view through negotiation and defending decisions with after-the-fact data may indeed be the reality in many organizations, what Alfred and Ivens describe as an active role in theory, becomes quite limited in practice.

In contrast to the limited world view (weltanschauung) permitted institutional researchers, some roles in higher education (a college presidency, for example) carry a broader world view. Such roles permit, even require, individuals filling them to juggle and blend skillfully-- formal analysis with gut instincts, systematic data with political acumen, good human relations skills with the reinforcement of organizational myths and symbols. Staff who perform institutional research and planning roles, however, are routinely dissuaded by

---

[2]Gross (1977) provides an excellent synopsis of the various points of view regarding normative behavior for institutional researchers.

[3]Peters and Waterman (1982, pp. 29-54) present a good discussion of the rational/linear model of management thinking.

prevailing theory and implicit organizational knowledge from adopting
any characteristics that do not reflect the rational/linear model in
practice.

Perhaps in recognition of the fact that staff engaged in
institutional research and planning seem to be at a disadvantage
organizationally, the debate regarding institutional research, both
in concept and in practice has broadened in recent years (see for
example Sheehan, 1977). In the literature, practitioners are encouraged
to develop their role in seemingly related areas such as data
processing/MIS (management information system) supervision and
even to move directly into the organizational fray by taking "an
active role in the political struggles that directly affect their
institutions" (Lasher & Firnberg, 1983, p. 98). Much of this evolution
in role from detached clinical observer to involved and even politically
active participant has come about as institutions have responded to
increasing external pressures to demonstrate accountability. Measures
of accountability tend to take the form of data regarding enrollment,
financial matters, and facilities which are required by state and
federal agencies (Fincher, 1983).

Institutional research, evaluation, and planning units in practice

Institutional research, evaluation, and planning units are
present in various organizational configurations throughout U. S. higher
education. In order to make the current investigation more manageable,
emphasis has been on those units affiliated with community colleges.

Typically, community colleges are publicly supported, postsecondary, educational institutions offering both occupational and liberal arts curricula and granting degrees at the associate´s level. For more information regarding the organization of community colleges in general see, for example, Cohen and Brawer (1982).

What community college institutional research, evaluation, and planning units actually consist of in practice remains an engaging question which has yet to be thoroughly studied. Existing descriptive research contained in the community college literature and which pertains directly or indirectly to these units includes: brief case accounts, usually delivered at professional conferences; large sample surveys focusing on the institutional research "function" or institutional research "program"; and a limited number of intensive studies of institutional research units. (See Knapp, 1979, for a detailed review in these areas.)

An early empirical study which provides some insight into the organizational role of these units was conducted by Chick (1974). The study focused on institutional research office development in eight community colleges and involved an extensive questionnaire together with site visits to each campus. Regarding the context for organizational practice, Chick found the institutional research offices to be organized as administrative units, usually created in reponse to data needs recognized at the level of the president or president´s cabinet.

By inference, it appears that the institutional research offices visited by Chick played what could be called a staff role, responding

to data needs deemed important to administrative offices. Further, "people responsible for research indicated that too much research office time was being diverted, by administrative decision, to non-research kinds of projects, such as, state, federal and private grant applications, institutional self-studies, various kinds of institutional facilities development projects, and special studies in response to state and federal agency requests" (Chick, 1974, p. 9).

A 1980 survey (Kohl, Lach, Howard, & Wellman, 1980) of the institutional research function in Illinois public community colleges found that 34 of 51 college campuses had an established office of institutional research. At that time most of these offices reported to a president or chancellor. The offices consisted of fewer than three professionals, and some consisted of only part-time personnel, both professional and clerical.

A majority of these offices reported spending some time on functions as various as the following:

- preparing descriptive reports on institutional status;
- identifying institutional strengths and weaknesses;
- coordinating intra- and inter-institutional research;
- master planning;
- developing or assisting in the development of proposals and grant requests;
- preparing federal, state, and other required reports (Kohl et al., 1980, p. 17).

These functions, in practice carried out under the organizational

rubric of institutional research, are often treated separately in the technical literature. (See, for example, Beasley, Dingerson, Hensley, Hess, & Rodman, 1982, and Dressel et al., 1971.) Although this has begun to change with regard to institutional research and planning (Jedamus et al., 1981; Uhl, 1983), the complex issue of developing grant proposals and managing sponsored programs remains unrelated to institutional research and planning in theory, although this combination is apparently common in practice. While some see this functional or task variety as promising, others protest. As Richardson (1980) points out:

> Community college researchers represent a professional group in search of definition. The lack of clarity in this role stems largely from the fact that community colleges are far more interested in obtaining additional funds than they are in evaluating how well they are using the funds they already have. Many institutional researchers in community colleges spend far more of their time in writing grant proposals than they do in conducting institutional research. (p. 50)

In Knapp's (1979) review of the empirical literature dealing with institutional research and planning units in community colleges, he struggles with the fact that in practice these units appear in and account for a variety of functions and organizational arrangements. He finds that since the late 1950's and early 1960's, community and junior colleges have "experimented widely with ways to incorporate institutional research and comprehensive planning into the administrative structure of the college. This has been done most visibly through the creation of small centrally located offices responsible for gathering and interpreting various kinds of institutional data" (p. 3).

As suggested by Chick (1974) and the Illinois survey mentioned above, Knapp finds inevitably that other functions such as grants development, institutional self-studies, and external reporting have been assigned to these offices along with the duties of institutional research and planning. Knapp sees these variously configured offices as representative of a common effort to develop a systematic basis for management decisions. This effort is built on "good information about the past, present, and potential functioning of the institution" (1979, p. 3).

A problem arises when we attempt to come up with a way of describing these various institutional arrangements so that they can be viewed as a collection of things similar enough to become a target of study (Sheehan, 1981, p. 511). While admitting that important differences may exist among offices responsible for "research," for "planning," or for "research and development," Knapp (1981a) accepts them all as aspects of the same rational approach to management, an approach whose assumed basis is the use of systematic data collection and analysis. In keeping with Knapp's (1982) resolution of this description problem, each of these variously configured institutional research and planning units will hereafter be referred to as an REP, for research, evaluation, and planning units.

Operational definition of REP

The operational definition for the REP which evolved in Knapp's successive papers dealing with institutional research and planning in college administration (1979, 1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1982) is used

throughout this study. Knapp is left with no choice but to adopt a broad generic definition of the REP unit. He has found that doing so "captures the diversity of actual IR [institutional research] offices as they occur in the field, as well as the differences (or lack) in conceptualization among existing descriptive studies" (1979, p. 4).

Thus during the course of the current study the term REP will be used to refer to any position or interrelated set of positions within higher education:

(a) with primary responsibility for gathering and reporting systematic data about any aspect of institutional functioning, to aid decision-makers;

(b) formally assigned this responsibility as indicated by title, job description, or other visible designating by top leadership. (Knapp, 1982, p. 2)

Although the principal interest here is the REP within community colleges, this study occasionally draws on material representing a more inclusive group of organizations.

Overview of REP

Even though it is useful to envision a family of organizational subunits labeled REPs and even though it is useful to ascribe certain common characteristics to them, a cautionary note is warranted. It is important to bear in mind that all REPs are not the same. They vary by institutional type, the length of service of those involved, and the functions assigned or permitted. Unlike some organizational roles or titles, institutional research, evaluation, and planning does not carry with it a particularly strong institutional role image

for daily practice in the minds of most academics. The REP is a locally defined term, and practitioners, after acquiring a bit of experience, report having a good deal of freedom in defining their situation (see for example Cosgriff, 1984).

Characteristics of the individuals who staff the REP help to define the role in practice. The degree of influence on campus depends on such issues as the topic being considered, organizational proximity to the chief administrator, and the experience of the practitioners involved. Although, as Cosgriff (1984) has found, practitioners view their discretion in most areas as relatively high, he notes that "the role patterns of practitioners in large part [are] more negotiable over technical issues than matters involving administrative or policy issues" (p. 16).

Because of the wide variation among the family of organizational subunits considered to be REPs, it is difficult to make sweeping generalizations regarding the REP in practice. However, there seems to be a clear tendency for the REP to play a peripheral or marginal role within the institution (Knapp, 1982; Saunders, 1983). Further, Knapp (1982) finds that as a subunit, REP progress toward a less marginal position within the institution is due to the actions of individuals within the REP, and that gains by the REP can be lost when REP staff move on to other roles.

No prevailing characteristics of enhanced institutional status or greater degree of influence seem to accrue automatically to those assigned the functions of institutional research and planning. Rather, it seems to work the other way around. Instead of imparting

stature and influence to those assigned to the REP, the REP derives
its stature and influence from those assigned to it. While this
situation is not unique to the REP in higher education, it is curious
that this relationship appears so pronounced, particularly given the
importance ascribed to systematic institutional data, analysis, and
planning in the literature of higher education. There appears to be
little direct carry-over from the theoretical importance ascribed to
systematic data collection and analysis to the work done by those
charged with performing these functions.

Cosgriff (1984) hints at two general kinds of skills that
practitioners have-- organizational and operational. He notes that
"since the practitioner is afforded a high degree of latitude in
role definition this individual should be self-motivated and have
sufficient organization skills to suggest areas of inquiry as well
as have the necessary operative skills to be instrumental in research
design and task management" (p. 16).

In brief summary, the emerging picture of the REP suggests an
administrative unit with a tendency towards marginality within the
organization, some degree of latitude in defining institutional
role, and two general kinds of skills to draw upon-- organizational
and operational (technical).

However, when we turn to the literature for guidance in
understanding/evaluating/categorizing skills necessary to REP success,
the overwhelming emphasis is on research and planning technique (what
Saunders, 1983, p. 30 calls the "how to do institutional research"
literature), and little attention is paid to exploring organizational

behavior which might bring those responsible for institutional research, analysis, and planning into a less marginal, more influential institutional role.

Indeed, the opposite may actually be true. The literature, as noted, contains many references to the need for REPs to remain the neutral analyst and numerous cautions about too much involvement in the action of the institution (Dressel et al., 1971). Practitioners are encouraged to support decision makers with systematic data and decision alternatives (Sheehan, 1981). They are not encouraged to seek out or attempt to earn a more central role for the REP in the decision-making process. From empirical evidence it seems that REP influence is typically acquired through the personal stature of the REP staff (Cosgriff, 1984; Knapp, 1982). This personal stature, which is then reflected on the REP, is acquired by staff through chronological age, experience, and professional achievement. It seems to be implicit that the personal stature of the well-known and respected researcher is the most desirable kind of influence for the REP to acquire. And indeed, practitioners with such stature may not have to be overly concerned with the problem of having their point of view taken seriously and acted upon. Their circumstance may make the problem of relative organizational stature for the REP subunit moot.

While not denying the importance of personal stature of REP staff as a basis for influence and participation in decision making, there may be other acceptable ways to involve the REP in the life of the institution so that its status as an organizational unit is less marginal, and at the same time, safeguard the integrity of its role

in providing sound, systematic data and unbiased analysis. Preliminary efforts to identify patterns of successful organizational behavior have been made. Sheehan's (1974) work in identifying the "three hats" that the researcher wears is useful in distinguishing the roles of technician, analyst, and decision maker. Haas (1981) suggests viewing the functions assigned to the REP as innovations. Thus he deduces a pattern of practice based on the body of knowledge about the adoption and diffusion of ideas and inventions. Saunders (1983) analyzes various institutional administrative styles and proposes role strategies for institutional researchers appropriate to these styles.

Knapp (1982) attacks the problem more directly by offering tactical/political suggestions designed to assist the REP in gaining a more secure niche within the organization. Specifically, from his empirical research, Knapp identifies three sources of security for the REP. These include: (a) "attachment to an established administrative service"; (b) "alliance with an established power base"; and (c) "possession of a critical and scarce resource" (p. 27).

The literature divides roughly into two categories: first, literature presenting philosophical arguments favoring a neutral and aloof REP, a stance leading perhaps to REP marginality; second, literature expressing a preference for REP centrality within the institution together with means for achieving it. Even though the present study argues the desirability of REP centrality, the conditions offered to date for attaining it are considered inadequate. This study is based on the belief that the condition supporting REP

centrality rests on more than political good fortune or individual
personality. On the contrary, REP centrality is inextricably coupled
in some fashion to the core purposes of the institution.

Purpose of the Study

The intended outcome of the current study is the identification
of a conceptual framework for the REP which will: (a) impart coherence
to the REP as an organizational unit; and (b) act as a preliminary guide
to organizational practice for the REP. At a deeper level, the study
is an investigation of the functions of institutional research and
planning in higher education approached indirectly through the people
and events publicly associated with them. Within an institution,
individuals responsible for institutional research and planning,
together with their organizational patterns of practice, make up a
human activity system. Such a system within a college is, in part,
a reflection of organizational understanding, commitment, attitude,
and values with regard to the functions of systematic data and
analysis.

Given what is known already about the REP, a single, obviously
most appropriate context in which to interpret empirical findings
about the REP is elusive. Information regarding marginality and
extraneous assignments for the REP for example could be dispensed
with by considering it in the context of a discussion of professional
roles in higher education. In such a context, it is possible to
conclude that those responsible for the functions of institutional

research and planning have chosen an ambiguous field of endeavor
which is likely to occupy a marginal role in higher education. It
is, after all, not the roles, but the functions of analysis and
planning that are important. Is it not enough for the REP to make
its contribution? Why is the status of the REP an issue? If the
status is an issue, recognizing that those choosing to work in a REP
have selected a role of support staff implies that all would be well
had they selected other jobs. However, the organization would still
have these positions available, and it is sufficient that the role
of REP be defined in such a way that people are willing to work in
these positions.

Another possibility might be to explain the apparent real-world
situation by pointing to the uncooperativeness of circumstances and
decision makers in allowing the true spirit of institutional research
and planning to be implemented. If, for example, the results of
institutional research are used to justify a decision already made,
rather than used before the fact to guide the decision, then there
may be organizational dysfunction (see Alfred & Ivens, 1978). Yet
another, more intriguing possibility is that in common practice, the
instinctive connections forged among people and events indicate an
oversight in abstract theory.

Perhaps the narrow framework from which the REP evolved can
be improved upon within the institutional context. Perhaps a conceptual
framework exists that can help to promote the centrality of the REP
in practice and still maintain its value structure. Such a conceptual
framework may even help integrate those activities common to the

class of REPs which are currently considered anomalies. The current
study seeks to identify such an improved framework.

Problems Faced by the Study

When we consider the fundamental organizational role of the REP,
in contrast to the technical activities associated with institutional
analysis and planning, it becomes clear that organizational studies
of the REP face difficult methodological problems. REPs are similar
to each other in their association with the theoretical precepts of
institutional research, analysis, and planning and their reliance on
systematic data. These elements are more a matter of what could be
called a world view or "weltanschauung" than of daily practice.
There is nothing inherent in this common perspective, however, that
requires a particular kind of organizational configuration for the REP.

In fact, it is known that REPs vary dramatically in the ways
that they are structured organizationally. Some combine a wide
range of functions. Others are limited to a particular aspect of
institutional research, analysis, or planning. Some are one-person
operations with their organizational role established by such titles
as staff assistant or assistant to a line position such as dean,
vice-president, or president. Others involve numerous staff members
and are engaged in institutional services beyond those usually ascribed
to institutional research and planning. Some emphasize their connection
with institutional research, others with planning, others with
development, and still others emphasize companion roles such as

registrar or assistant to the president.

Further, it often appears to be the case that in the matter of such organizationally intriguing issues as influence and status, we must look beyond the REP to the levels of institutional influence and status exhibited by individual members of REP staff. Clearly, this is a situation in which it is difficult to seek collective answers with regard to organizational behavior and to learn from and build on collective experience.

This poses a dilemma, since it is clear that as an effective organizational contributor more than the techniques of institutional research, analysis, and planning are needed if REPs are to carry out their mission in an organizationally effective way. A conceptual framework is needed that will account for and give meaning to diverse functions. A conceptual framework is needed within which to consider alternatives for appropriate organizational behavior. A framework is needed that will provide guidance for organizational behavior in much the same way that research methodology or planning strategies provide guidance in carrying out our technical responsibilities.

Importance of a Conceptual Framework for REP Practice

Learning from collective REP experience is difficult and as Sheehan (1981) notes, there is a "paucity of general information and overview of current practice around the world" (p. 532). Sheehan suggests that this is due in part to the difficulty in constructing a suitable instrument with which broad and general surveys can be

conducted. A principal reason offered by Sheehan for the difficulty in constructing such an instrument is "the apparent lack of an overall theoretical base for the existing structure" (p. 533). In other words, the events actually associated with the REP in daily practice are diffuse. They do not immediately suggest a context in which coherence and meaning can be determined. If the general class of REPs is to be studied successfully in the future, a context for studying common elements in practice must be formed.

While it is unlikely that the modest insights of the current study will do more than scratch the surface of the problem raised by Sheehan, it is nonetheless a step in a relatively uncharted direction. This study considers the REP as an organizational subunit which has emerged with a special institutional mission through role differentiation. The growing body of knowledge in the fields of organizational theory and management practice may provide useful insight into an effective pattern of practice for the REP. This body of knowledge is used to construct a framework for analysis of the REP in practice. Although the framework is tested in the context of the recently established REP at Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), further empirical investigations will be needed to confirm many of the results arrived at through conceptual analysis in this study. Nonetheless, the results of the current study point to ways in which the body of knowledge relating to organizational theory and management practice can be assessed to assist in charting the organizational role of the REP. At a tactical/strategic level, the results of the current investigation provide elaboration and

clarification of the demands and constraints placed on REP behavior
and the sources of these demands and constraints. Further, the
results will assist REP staff to anticipate better useful alternatives
in carrying out the mission of the REP.

Brief Description of Bunker Hill Community College

Bunker Hill Community College is a public institution of higher
education authorized to grant degrees at the associate's level.
Located in the Charlestown neighborhood of Boston, the College was
founded in 1973 and is the fifteenth and last of the Massachusetts
regional community colleges to be established. In the 11 1/2 years
since its founding, the College has grown to an enrollment of more
than 7300 students in day and evening programs.

Since 1978, when racial and ethnic minorities represented less
than 6% of the student body, the percentage of minority students
has grown more rapidly than the overall institutional enrollment.
Based on fall 1984 student data drawn from the College's day program,
BHCC is currently serving a combined total of more than 1,000 Black,
Hispanic, and Asian students, representing 27% of the regular day
student body. The students at BHCC are also older, although the
change is less dramatic. For the fall of 1984, approximately 30% of
the day student body were less than 20 years of age; 37% were 20 to
24 years of age; 15% were 25 to 29 years of age; and 18% were 30 or
more years of age (Bunker Hill Community College, 1985).

As with all Massachusetts public higher education, the College

receives its principal support from an annual appropriation authorized by the Massachusetts legislature and given to the Board of Regents of Higher Education. The Board of Regents, in turn, allocates a portion of the higher education appropriation to Bunker Hill Community College. This allocation maintains the College's five-building physical plant and supports most of the personnel and equipment necessary to offer the day-time academic program.

In addition to the publicly supported day program, BHCC is authorized by the legislature to maintain, at no expense to the Commonwealth, a Division of Continuing Education (DCE). Unlike day tuition revenues which are returned to the state's General Fund, tuition and fee revenues from DCE are retained by BHCC to cover personnel and other related expenses incurred by programs sponsored by DCE. DCE programs are effectively the same as day programs except that they are offered after 4 p.m. Full-time state supported faculty are permitted to teach on a limited basis in DCE. Part-time faculty in addition to regular BHCC professors are also permitted to teach in DCE based on their selection and approval by the College's Division of Academic Affairs.

With the exception of the Nursing Associate of Science Degree/RN program and certain allied health A. S. Degree programs which require selective admissions, BHCC maintains an "open door" admissions policy. This policy permits any applicant whose high school class has graduated to enroll at the College, provided that space is available. Students who have not graduated from secondary school are expected to complete the Graduate Equivalency Diploma program

prior to graduation from BHCC. As stated in the Bunker Hill Community
College Catalogue for 1984-1985, the College's goals are:

- to provide post-secondary education to Commonwealth students
  of all ages irrespective of race, sex, or economic background;

- to provide a variety of programs and educational methods to
  meet the needs of a student body with diverse educational
  backgrounds and career expectations;

- to create a learning environment in which students' potential
  may be developed;

- to provide a comprehensive student services program;

- to cooperate with community agencies in providing a broad
  range of educational services which meet community needs;

- to provide short term and credit programs through the Division
  of Continuing Education. (p. 6)

Since its founding, Bunker Hill Community College has emphasized
non-traditional programs and services for students. Assessment of
learning gained through experience in non-collegiate environments;
challenge examinations leading to advanced standing and the award of
academic credit; and a comprehensive learning center providing
developmental, supplemental, and enrichment education are firmly
established options which have become integral parts of the College's
instructional delivery system. In recent years, BHCC also has been
a leader among community colleges in developing opportunities for
international education for U. S. students and for international
scholar exchanges.

As noted in the College's Fifth-Year Report to the Commission

on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (Bunker Hill Community College, 1985), an understanding of BHCC requires "an appreciation of the economic and political climate" in Massachusetts. "Beginning in 1974, the College's second year of operation, Massachusetts faced a major recession which was reflected in `no growth' state appropriations for several years. As a developing institution, Bunker Hill Community College was hampered in its progress by this situation, and limited budgets continued to be an important factor in the College's development through the 1970's. . . . Another influence on the College's growth occurred in 1980 with the reorganization of the Massachusetts system of public higher education" (p. 34). In spite of these dynamic external forces, BHCC continues to work effectively to realize its plans and to plot future directions designed to serve students and the various communities in and around Boston better. Maintaining its diverse student body is a particularly important goal and the College is considering the possible establishment of a Center for Ethnic Studies to ensure continuation of the College's outstanding record in this area.

Bunker Hill Community College is recognized as an effective and responsive urban community college. By tradition the institution emphasizes experimentation with new curricula and instructional modes designed to serve students and the neighborhoods in the College's service area. The institution functions in a complex and changing economic and political environment. This environment is one in which higher education is often thought of in terms of the priorities and concerns of the internationally recognized private universities

located in the greater Boston area. Bunker Hill Community College
is a locally focused institution with a growing national reputation.
The College is a diffuse and complex institution which provides an
exciting location for research into the organizational role of
institutional research, evaluation, and planning.

Summary

The current study sought a context for analyzing REP practice.
While there is an extensive literature of institutional research,
analysis, and planning, investigations of day-to-day practice are
rarely attempted. More often than not, the related professional
literature emphasizes "what should be" about organizations rather
than "what is." While occasionally the desirability of more influence
for the REP surfaces as a distinct topic, as in Saunders' (1983)
provocative article "Politics within the Institution," the practical
details of developing such an influential role in practice are
elusive. As an experienced practitioner, Saunders notes that even
though the major strength of an institutional research office is
information and the analysis of information, "the weakness inherent
in the institutional research function comes from its marginal
status. It is in the middle ground, being neither academic nor
truly administrative" (p. 35). Dressel (1970) took pains to emphasize
that such a middle ground is critical at least for institutional
research. It is "a staff function serving all units of a university,
currying favor from none, and occasionally irritating all" (p. 9).

Few studies have attempted to analyze and synthesize the elements of the issues referred to in this study as "organizational practice" for the REP. Perhaps the paucity of such studies is the result of the apparent complexity of organizational practice as a topic of study. It is complex, not in the sense that the notion of practice is difficult to understand, but rather in the sense that institutional practice varies so greatly as to make the identification of useful patterns unlikely. The problem remains vague and ill-structured. Indeed to some it may appear to be so miscellaneous a field of inquiry that systematic investigation may be of limited benefit. However, there may exist useful insights that shed new light on the issue of organizational practice for the REP. In a small way, the current effort may be an example of what Peters and Waterman (1982) refer to as making soft material about organizations hard.

The questions addressed in this study are, in essence, those raised by Sheehan (1981), Haas (1981), Knapp (1982), and Saunders (1983). Presented by Saunders (1983) in their most direct form, they are: "How can the traditional office [of institutional research] become more involved and effective, and hence better support the institution? Are there ways of reviewing the function of institutional research offices that will lead to a plan for becoming more effective?" (p. 28).

Before extensive survey work on these questions can be carried out involving REPs, a more comprehensive perspective than, "How many staff positions are assigned to the REP? To whom does the REP report? What studies does the REP conduct?" is needed in order

to get at the dynamic and subtle elements of practice. Saunders
(1983) offers such a comprehensive perspective. She uses Cohen and
March's (1974) eight metaphors for characterizing administrative
styles as a context in which to suggest role strategies for REP
practice. While Saunders helps us to understand the "how" of REP
practice in relation to various administrative styles, the more
fundamental question regarding the basic nature of the REP remains
unanswered.

The current study attempted to formulate a preliminary notion
of organizational practice for the REP and a framework for its
analysis. While elements of prescriptive practice (i.e., "what
ought to be") appear implicitly or explicitly throughout the literature
of institutional research, we must be concerned with "what is." This
study attempts to place REP practice within the body of knowledge
about organizations and the literature of management practice. The
strictures imposed on REP behavior by the traditions (weltanschauung)
of applied research cannot be ignored and must also be accounted for
as we seek effectiveness of the REP within the organizational context.

C H A P T E R   I I

METHODOLOGY

Review of the Problem

As identified in Chapter I, the current study is a search for
a preliminary framework for analysis of the REP in organizational
practice. This framework is intended to aid the REP in better
defining its role in relation to central and influential purpose
within the institution, and at the same time, enable the REP to
retain its mission.

In a broad sense, this issue is a management problem derived
from a human activity system, in this case, the Division of Planning
and Development at Bunker Hill Community College. While the problem
emerged within a specific organizational context, it seems to be
relevant to the larger class of organizational units in higher education
called REPs. The Division of Planning and Development is considered
a member of this class of REPs.

As noted repeatedly in this study, REPs vary a good deal in
the events which pertain to actual practice. The context of each
institution in which they are found exhibits a different, perhaps
unique, mix of personalities and flow of events. Generalization
about the REP in practice is, therefore, difficult.

The empirical literature pertaining to the REP remains limited,
and at best, refers to only a few more or less common characteristics

and a few vaguely conceived patterns of organizational practice.
While prescriptions for practice abound in the literature, the
distinction between what REPs "should do" in practice and what
they "actually do" in practice is important to keep in mind. What
is known is that practitioners wear many hats, are assigned many
different titles, and bring widely varying personal and professional
characteristics to their work.

Since it is difficult to get at the dynamics of organizational
practice without accounting for contextual differences in the
organizational environment, the current study has sought to gain
helpful insight into the larger class of REPs by focusing on the
special case of the Division of Planning and Development at Bunker
Hill Community College. Helpful insight is seen as a necessary
first step in preparing the groundwork for any later empirical
investigations involving additional members of the class of REPs
located in community colleges.

Generalizing from this special case to the entire class of
REPs is, of course, a risky proposition. Considering a path toward
a preliminary framework for analysis for the REP, it is apparent
that progress is impeded by philosophical issues concerning what
is and is not an appropriate role for the REP. In addition, our
efforts to generalize are complicated by practical matters imposed
by differences in institutional emphasis, support, and regard for
institutional research, analysis, and planning. As noted earlier,
the idiosyncratic nature of organizational structures on specific
campuses and the apparent lack of an overall theoretical base for

the REP as an organizational unit are major stumbling blocks to learning from the collective REP experience. Given these difficulties, the topic of the REP in organizational practice has remained undeveloped, and hence, has been the subject of relatively few empirical studies. In order to study the REP in organizational practice more adequately, this topic must be better defined.

Problem Structuring as an Aspect of Methodology

While the current study suggests elements of a case study or preliminary field study, its organization is derived from the pioneering work of Checkland and his associates in the development of a systems-based methodology for real-world problem-solving. The elements of Checkland's methodology are displayed in Figure 1.

The Checkland methodology was chosen to provide the overall design for this study because it responds to the need for an explicit, ordered, non-random way of carrying out investigations of real-world problems involving human activity systems. Checkland consciously developed and refined this methodology so that problem structuring becomes an important aspect of the analytic process.

Starting with a "hard" system engineering methodology, this approach was modified "as it failed in situations in which the problems were `soft´ and ill-structured" (Checkland, 1981, p. 245). For Checkland, such problems are taken to be "any perceived mismatch between what is seen to exist, and a normative view of what might exist in the same situation" (1975, p. 279). In dealing with these

1.   ANALYSIS

   1.1   Examine the problem situation and collect
         candidates for the role "the problem."

   1.2   Analyse the problem situation. (Structure,
         Process, Relationship between them.)

2.   ROOT DEFINITION OF RELEVANT SYSTEMS

   2.1   Formulate root definitions of relevant systems.

3.   CONCEPTUALISATION

   3.1   Assemble the minimum necessary activities in
         the system(s) 2.1, hence build conceptual models.

   3.2   Use the `formal system´ concept and/or other
         systems thinking to finalize the
         conceptualisation(s).

4.   COMPARISON AND DEFINITION

   4.1   Make a formal comparison between the results
         of 1. and 3.

   4.2   From the results of 4.1 define a range of
         possible changes.

5.   SELECTION

   5.1   Select, with relevant actors in the problem
         situation, or get them to select, a relevant
         feasible change required to improve the
         situation in 1.2.

6.   DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

   6.1   Design whatever is necessary for the
         implementation of the change selected.

7.   APPRAISAL

Figure 1. A Summary of the Methodology.

Note. From "Towards a Systems-Based Methodology for Real-World
Problem Solving" by P. B. Checkland, 1972, Journal of Systems
Engineering, 3(2), p. 85. Copyright 1972 by Journal of Systems
Engineering.

problems, Checkland and his associates have found it necessary to avoid both content-free methodologies derived from general systems theory and overly precise goal-oriented formulations stemming from systems analysis. While the Checkland methodology lacks the precision of a technique which will always yield a standard result, the methodology has been tested repeatedly in real situations. In these problem situations encountered in human activity systems, it has been demonstrated by Checkland that the methodology can lead to effective improvement. An essential element in the approach is to maintain guidelines that are precise enough to structure the investigation, and at the same time, "vague enough to avoid distorting the problem into a particular structure just because we would know how to tackle it if it came to us in that form" (1972, p. 66).

To illustrate this point, consider institutional researchers. To perform their jobs competently, they must be conversant with the ways and means of carrying out the research role. Often this leads to an emphasis on technique and a concern for behavior dictated by the presumed role of researcher. From empirical evidence, we learn that it is not unusual for those designated institutional researchers to have other assignments as well. Because of these many duties, coherence and meaning in their roles may be lost or never established. As a result, they must often rely on other, better understood descriptions, such as staff or staff assistant, to provide coherence and guide their behavior. A "soft" or ill-structured problem begins to emerge as behavior and meaning diverge.

In one case, a general systems analysis might lose track of this problem altogether, subsuming it within a box labeled policy making or executive management, or information system. On the other hand, systems analysis of the kind which focuses on the art of making things happen, might move directly to an analysis of the decision maker's objectives for institutional research and the relevant criteria for deciding among role alternatives for achieving the decision maker's objectives. This approach is implied by the case of Saunders' (1983) analysis of REP practice based on administrative styles.

The ends-means analysis just noted, which is based on the decision maker's objectives for institutional research, tends to presuppose a kind of structure for the problem. Decision-maker needs or system objectives are defined. These in turn become the ends (objectives) toward which the systems are designed. In this kind of analysis the needs and objectives are not a part of the problem, but rather they act as givens. As such, they directly influence the way we view events in relation to the problem. The context in which events are examined influences, perhaps even controls, the meanings drawn from those events. (For a variation on this last observation, see Conceptual Frameworks: The Importance of the Way We Look at Things based on T. S. Kuhn's work in this chapter, as well as the section in Chapter IV devoted to interpretive management.)

From such an ends-means analysis it is possible to back into a clarification of role definition for institutional research. Quade and Boucher (1968) summarize one such approach as practiced

by RAND as follows:

> One strives to look at the entire problem, as a whole, in context, and to compare alternative choices in the light of their possible outcomes. Three sorts of enquiry are required, any of which can modify the others as the work proceeds. There is a need, first of all, for a systematic investigation of the decision makers' objectives and of the relevant criteria for deciding among the alternatives that promise to achieve these objectives. Next, the alternatives need to be identified, examined for feasibility, and then compared in terms of their effectiveness and cost, taking time and risk into account. Finally, an attempt must be made to design better alternatives and select other goals if those previously examined are found wanting. (Quoted by Checkland, 1972, p. 5)

Commenting on this approach, however, Checkland (1972) points out that even though there is emphasis on generating alternatives and testing their appropriateness against system objectives or the need the system is intending to fill, the "lacuna here is the absence of guidance on how to generate alternatives. Even if alternatives are obvious, logically there is a blatant possibility that some unthought-of alternative would have given a better solution than any of those considered, and no amount of `brainstorming´ or `lateral thinking´ during an actual study can remove this defect" (p. 65). The difficulty is the often encountered systems step labeled "generate or identify alternative systems." This step is largely dependent on problem structuring which is often ignored or accepted as given in most ends-means system analyses.

While not avoiding this difficulty entirely, the approach evolved by Checkland incorporates a powerful notion drawn from Vickers´ (1968, 1971) work. Vickers argues the role of relationships as opposed to objectives in our conscious thinking. He notes that

experience develops within us a readiness to notice particular aspects of our situation, to discriminate them in particular ways, and to measure them against particular standards of comparison. New experience itself modifies the way we view future experiences.

Checkland (1972) takes this concept of the readiness to view events in a particular way as "the most useful description of the context of `problems´ in the real-world" (p. 67) and attempts to use it in spite of the greater simplicity of the goal-seeking model. Doing so, however, reduces the level of specification regarding the problems under investigation. Indeed, the notion of problem may be replaced by the more general notion of candidates for the role of problem. This leads to the designation "soft" or unstructured problem.

For the human activity system represented by the Division of Planning and Development at Bunker Hill Community College there are numerous defined needs and objectives. Most are common to institutional research and planning units in higher education. Most divisional practices are derived from ends-means analyses of the Division´s environment. The "soft" or ill-structured problems of coherence and context for interpreting these events nevertheless remain. By incorporating a strategy for problem structuring, the Checkland methodology addresses these concerns which are the focus of the analysis of the BHCC/REP.

Checkland Methodology

A methodology in Checkland's view is "an explicit, ordered,
non-random way of carrying out an activity. As such it is independent
of the CONTENT of the activity and can be considered separately
from content . . . " (1972, p. 7). Checkland points out, however, that
when dealing with human activity systems problems, independence
from content is difficult to achieve for two reasons. First, it
is easy to slip into describing the content of the problem rather
than the methodology. Methodology, once adopted, "tends to become
invisible; it becomes, in both a logical and behavioural sense,
simply the way the activity is carried out, and is taken for granted"
(1972, p. 7).

Second, a common concern of systems analysis methodologies,
from which the Checkland approach is derived, is to provide an efficient
means of meeting a defined need. In situations where the WHAT which
is required has been defined, research efforts can be focused on
how it can be done. Ingenious alternatives can then be weighed
against some criteria such as cost, efficiency, or social
acceptability.

Such an approach assumes that human behavior is goal-seeking
and that it is possible to arrive at substantial agreement on needs,
objectives, and measures of performance. Much of the literature
pertaining to methodologies for planning in higher education, for
example, emphasizes the need to ensure agreement in these matters.
As an environment for human activity systems, however, institutions

of higher education tend to be decentralized, protective of divergent

points of view, and encouraging of the exercise of professional

and expert judgment in carrying out organizational roles. In this

context, it may not be appropriate always to assume agreement on

needs, objectives, and measures of performance. Applying a general

observation made by Checkland (1972) to this situation:

> lack of agreement may not be due simply to lack of understanding
> or lack of information - it may be fundamental, and for two
> different reasons. The lack may be due to incompatible ways
> of viewing the problem, incompatible weltanschauungen, or it
> may be that any goal-seeking model itself imposes false structure
> on the problem situation by seeing it as a matter of ENDS and
> MEANS rather than ongoing relationships through time. (p. 6)

With this background in mind, each section of the Checkland methodology

summarized in Figure 1 is briefly discussed.

Analysis

As this label implies, the first step involves the collection

and analysis of information regarding the problem situation. Unless

the problem is relatively structured, focusing on organizational

groupings such as functions or departments in the analysis may tend

to concentrate attention on HOW objectives are carried out rather

than on the more fundamental issue of WHAT is intended. In the

current study, for example, little attention is given to the internal

organizational structure of the REP or to the specific internal

assignment of REP tasks.

The analysis phase is used to identify "candidates" for the

role of problem. Lacking a strict ends-means criterion, several

equally worthy candidates may exist. Successive iterations of the

various stages of the methodology may contribute to useful refinement
of the problem and provide a guide to final problem selection.

The problem situation is assumed to exist within a number of
environments. Some elements of the problem situation will be static
and some relatively dynamic. This dichotomy may be seen as structure
and process. In the Checkland methodology, structure for the REP
includes elements such as position in the college's reporting hierarchy
and the unit's established formal and informal communications networks
within the institution. Process for the REP is analyzed in terms
of how it identifies worthwhile activities, develops plans to do
something, and monitors the consequences of its actions, both internally
and externally. The analysis is taken as complete, according to
Checkland, "when it is possible to postulate a root definition of
the basic nature of the system or systems thought to be relevant
to the problem" (1972, p. 14).

Root definition

The root definition is conceived of by Checkland as a condensed
representation of the system(s) in "its most fundamental form" (1972,
p. 14). Checkland emphasizes the need for a root definition in
his methodology, and it might be presumed that the formulation of
an acceptable root definition is a logical consequence of steps
taken in the analysis section. Experience with the methodology
suggests otherwise.

In preparation for the current study, the methodology was
practiced in several unrelated field situations drawn from the

graphic design and communication industry and from urban public secondary education. Experience with the methodology, including the current study, suggests that insight is as important as the details of the analysis in capturing the essence of a human activity system.

While Checkland's methodology is helpful in establishing the need for and the appropriate role of root definitions, the methodology does not provide a specific technique for creating root definitions. Indeed, Checkland takes care to note this and other limitations of the methodology. His contention remains that problems in human activity systems are often dependent upon problem structuring. The methodology provides "a conceptual framework within which many different aspects of problem situations can be accommodated" (1972, p. 29). The root definition plays a role in this accommodation.

Constructing a root definition involves selecting among viewpoints which seem potentially relevant to bringing about some improvement in the problem situation. While the methodology itself does not dictate a particular choice for root definition, research into the subject has identified six characteristics which typify the most useful root definitions (see Smyth & Checkland, 1976).

The characteristics (referred to as CATWOE for mnemonic purposes) are contained in Figure 2. Each CATWOE characteristic should be embodied explicitly in a root definition.

Conceptualization

This step in the methodology involves making conceptual models

CONSIDERATION	AMPLIFICATION
"Customer" (C)	Client (of the activity), beneficiary, or victim, whoever is affected by the main activity(ies). The indirect object of the main activity verb(s).
"Actor(s)" (A)	The agents who carry out, or cause to be carried out, the transformation process(es) or activities of the system.
"Transformation" (T)	The core of the RD. A transformation process carried out by the system. Assumed to include the direct object of the main activity verb(s).
"Weltanschauung" (W)	The (often-unquestioned) outlook or taken-for-granted framework which makes this particular RD a meaningful one.
"Ownership" (O)	Ownership of the system, control, concern or sponsorship; a wider system which may discourse about the system.
"Environmental and Wider System Constraints" (E)	Environmental impositions. Perhaps interactions with wider systems other than that included in (1) above, these wider systems being taken as given.

Figure 2.   CATWOE Elements.

Note. From "Techniques in `Soft´ Systems Practice Part 2: Building Conceptual Models" by P. B. Checkland, 1979, Journal of Applied Systems Analysis, 6, p. 42. Copyright 1979 by Journal of Applied Systems Analysis.

of systems which meet the requirements contained in the root
definition. Although many kinds of models are possible, the most
generally useful is one based on the minimum sequence of activities
necessary for the system to "be itself" as described in the definition.

True validation of the systems model constructed in response to
the root definition proposed for the REP is not possible in the current
study, nor is it attempted. The model, however, is a coherent,
logical outgrowth of the root definition. Further, it contains
those components and subsystems deemed necessary to carry out a
suitable comparison between the problem situation and the conceptual
model.

Comparison and definition

This stage involves a formal comparison between the real problem
situation as suggested by the BHCC/REP and the abstract systems
model derived from it. The purpose is to discover possible changes
and improvements which may be considered by the REP.

The steps labeled SELECTION, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION, and
APPRAISAL are self explanatory and are not explicitly addressed
in the current study.

Figure 3 presents the seven steps outlined in Figure 1 in such
a way that steps 3 and 4, the conceptual steps, are distinguished
from the steps involving real world considerations drawn directly
from the field study of the BHCC/REP.

The problem situation: unstructured
1

Action to solve the problem or improve the situation
7

Taking Action

Finding Out

Definition of feasible desirable changes
6

The problem situation: expressed
2

Comparison of 4 with 2
5

Real World
- -
Systems Thinking about the Real World

Root Definitions of relevant systems
3

Conceptual Models
4

Formal System concept
4a

Other Systems thinking
4b

Figure 3. The Systems Methodology for Ill-Structured Problems.
Note. From "Techniques in `Soft´ Systems Practice Part
2: Building Conceptual Models" by P. B. Checkland, 1979, Journal of
Applied Systems Analysis, 6, p. 41. Copyright 1979 by Journal of
Applied Systems Analysis.

Field Study Methodology

Within the overall pattern established by the Checkland methodology, elements of a case study or preliminary field study also emerge. One could, of course, argue that the current study is first, a field investigation or case study, and second, a field investigation that is organized in accordance with the principles developed by Checkland and his colleagues. In either case, a defense of the chosen methodology must consider the strengths and weaknesses associated with single environment case studies.

The central concern with the field study aspect of the current study is that one cannot be certain that findings have a wider application. The approach permits little or no opportunity for the comparison of variables, and the situation under investigation may have little in common with any other organizational environment. There is little assurance, for example, that Bunker Hill Community College is typical of community colleges in general, or even a subset, such as urban community colleges.

Baldridge (1971, p. 32) and Mouzelis (1967, pp. 67-70) note these problems as inherent features of the "one case" study approach to investigating organizations. Mouzelis identifies two categories of single-case studies: the "particularistic" and the "generalizing." In the particularistic study, the intent is a detailed description and analysis of a specific situation, and theory becomes simply a tool. Theoretical generalizations become useful only as a way of describing and explaining the case under observation. In the

generalizing case study, however, Mouzelis suggests that investigators have in their minds certain hypotheses, certain theoretical problems which guide the study. Viewing a study in this way assists one in determining whether some new theoretical formulation has a rudimentary level of merit and whether it warrants further, perhaps more methodologically sophisticated, investigation.

Katz (Festinger & Katz, 1953) provides a discussion of field studies which has directly and indirectly buttressed case study investigations in the social sciences for more than 30 years. He notes that a common purpose of these studies is to obtain a better knowledge of the significant variables rather than to provide the final test of a well-formulated theory. Of particular interest to the present study is Katz's distinction between the exploratory field study and the hypothesis-testing field study. While he notes that the field study can make a contribution to testing hypothesis, its great strength "is its inductive procedure, its potentiality for discovering significant variables and basic relations that would never be found if we were confined to research dictated by a hypothetical-deductive model" (Festinger & Katz, 1953, p. 75). Katz, Kahn, and Adams (1980, p. 542) conclude that even now, some 30 years after the original Katz article, we can still profit from qualitative description provided by the case study approach. Katz, Kahn, and Adams point to a number of worthwhile purposes including the need to sharpen the questions which data are accumulated to answer. For certain purposes, it can be argued that one legitimately may be more concerned with the account of the processes under

investigation than with their typicality in a larger universe. This permits the field study to provide both a more detailed and more natural picture of the focal elements than does the more general survey approach (Katz, 1953).

Baldridge (1971, p. 32) points to similar virtues in the case study approach which help to compensate for its obvious limitations resulting from the absence of contrasts and the question of whether the subject of the case is typical. In his view, the strengths of the case study as an approach to the study of organizations include:

- depth of study and the opportunity for a variety of techniques to be applied to the same situation;

- the opportunity to acquire the "feel" of the real situation through numerous intangible, and almost imperceptible, experiences in the field environment; and

- the opportunity to experience the processes of an organization.

These last two points are the attributes of the case study approach which more than justify its application to the REP. As noted by Baldridge (1971) "the sophisticated social observer knows, however, that official structure and official documents hide a wild, informal, and dynamic set of processes that can be understood only by participation, observation, and depth interviews. The case study, executed in the field in the midst of this on-going process, has distinct advantages to anyone who is concerned with dynamics and change" (pp. 32-33). These latter issues are central to the current study which involves a search for a guide to practice that will support institutional adaptation through more effective integration

of component parts.

The technique used to identify and select events relevant to the current study primarily involves participant observation. The investigator has been a senior administrator at Bunker Hill since shortly before the College opened in 1973. As such he has participated on a regular basis in staff meetings of the President's administrative council, standing governance committees, and has frequently attended meetings of the one-time Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges and its successor, the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education. During the hectic period of state-wide and Boston-area reorganization of Massachusetts public higher education he attended most meetings of the Regents and assisted as staff to the Boston Implementation Task Force.

During the internal reorganization at Bunker Hill during 1982 and early 1983 which created the Division of Planning and Development, he attended all of the senior staff meetings which addressed the topic, and in addition, analyzed various plans and presented recommendations to the President. In addition to participant observation, college documents and the minutes of various senior staff meetings, BHCC trustees meetings, and Regents' minutes have been consulted. Finally, informal discussions with colleagues have helped focus and sharpen the study.

Given this extensive involvement with the setting in which the field investigation was carried out and the mass of detailed data, a major challenge has been to set and hold to definite limits in structuring the study. Katz (1953) underscores this kind of problem

with field studies in general and emphasizes the importance of clearly delineating the area to be investigated. In the current study, the Checkland methodology is used to establish both the approach and the limits of the investigation.

An issue which must not be overlooked when considering the material which follows is the influence that personal point of view has had on the current study. All studies of social structure involve the sampling of places, times, people, events, and experiences. The observer is faced with the sampling problem of what to record and what to overlook. Regardless of the final choice, biases exist. (See Crozier, 1976 for further explication of this point and its relationship to the choice of a paradigm for studying organizations.)

Given the conceptual nature of this investigation, it is particularly difficult to ignore the fact that the vision of the REP which emerged is connected, in conscious and unconscious ways, to the investigator's strengths, weaknesses, insights, and failings as a participant observer. Collectively, these created bias which played a role in structuring questions, selecting data, and drawing inferences.

How critical is this bias to the current investigation? In responding to this question three general kinds of comments seem relevant. First, the existence of bias cannot be ignored. It is important to recognize its existence and to caution readers about the perspective of the investigator. The investigator was close to the material personally and professionally, and was faced on a daily basis with the problem of assisting BHCC/REP staff to derive meaning from the organizational events in their lives.

Second, although bias is a concern, this type of study seems to permit some latitude in this regard. The current study is a preliminary field investigation. It was not designed as a hypothesis testing study. Rather, its purpose was to consider a specific field situation, and using a variety of means, to ferret out new insights about the ways in which a complex organization behaves.

It is doubtful that the dynamics of the current study could ever be replicated completely in another organization or even at Bunker Hill at another time. The results, however, are available to be used as hypotheses in future, more empirically based, studies.

Third, while noticing and accepting the existence of bias on the part of the investigator it is also important to take steps to control the extent of bias permitted to influence the study. In looking at the case situation, the investigator tended to focus on events and interpretations that, taken separately, are unremarkable in the field of organizational theory. The literature from the field was used as a guide.

BHCC Division of Planning and Development as
Reference Environment for Study

The Division of Planning and Development at Bunker Hill Community College was chosen as the reference environment for the current study for the following reasons:

1. The BHCC/REP was the context in which the investigator became aware of the human system problem relating to coherence and

meaning for the REP in practice;

2. The responsibilities of the newly-formed Division of Planning and Development were reasonably comprehensive. As such, the Division was responsible for a range of functions that have been associated with REPs in the literature;

3. The BHCC/REP as an organizational unit was made up of a number of people. In addition to the personal strengths and areas of interest of individual staff members, the Division needed to present a collective organizational persona. This involves identifying and adopting certain common staff behaviors and attitudes regarding the Division.

The case elements and the discussions of practice which evolved within the BHCC context were not restricted to, nor limited by, the personality of a single individual. The fact that the REP at BHCC involved a number of professionals striving to coordinate their efforts and their contributions with those of others within the REP, brought the issue of coherence and a search for deeper meaning in daily practice into focus. The BHCC environment offered the possibility of a collective, more generic, less personal assessment of the REP in practice.

Investigative Approach

The current study made use of two different kinds of inquiry. One is conceptual-- evolving a preliminary framework for analysis from pre-existing theory. The other is empirical-- testing the

preliminary framework within the context of an actual field situation.

The first of these modes of inquiry involved reviewing three primary bodies of literature: the literature pertaining to the REP in theory and practice, the literature pertaining to the theory of organizations, and what could be considered the emerging literature of management in actual practice. This last body of work involves investigations which attempt to discover what effective managers actually do in practice. Each of these bodies of literature is so extensive that it is difficult to do justice to each individually, much less attempt to synthesize and then draw complementary perspectives from all three. Material was drawn from these literatures as needed throughout the current study, and an attempt has been made to present a balanced, although limited, picture of each.

The second kind of inquiry involved the identification and presentation of elements of a case study drawn from the experience of the newly-created Division of Planning and Development at Bunker Hill Community College. This Division satisfies the operational definition of REP. Material drawn from its case history is used as a reference environment for analysis, as well as a case context in which to test the applicability of the preliminary framework for the analysis of the REP in practice.

Following the Checkland methodology, what appears to be needed in order to pin down the notion of the REP in practice is a way of viewing the most fundamental aspects of the REP. Using Checkland's terminology, this is a search for the so-called "root definition" of the REP. This definition must be so basic that common elements

of practice emerge, even though the characteristics of the people

involved and the organizational settings among community college

REPs may be dramatically different.

If, for example, the REP is seen as a unit serving customers

who are employees of the college, a possible way to think about

the "root definition" of the REP, is to consider an example drawn

from Levitt's "Marketing Myopia" (1975):

> In order to produce-- customers, the entire corporation must
> be viewed as a customer-creating and customer-satisfying
> organism. Management must think of itself not as producing
> products but as providing customer-creating value satisfaction.
> It must push this idea (and everything it means and requires)
> into every nook and cranny of the organization. It has to do
> this continuously and with the kind of flair that excites and
> stimulates the people in it. Otherwise, the company will be
> merely a series of pigeonholed parts, with no consolidating
> sense of purpose or direction.
> In short, the organization must learn to think of itself
> not as producing goods or services but as buying customers,
> as doing the things that will make people want to do business
> with it. (p. 35)

These fundamental considerations which Levitt outlines suggest issues

that could be reflected in a root definition.

Knapp (1980, pp. 29-30) anticipates this search for the deeper

organizational meaning of REP development by hinting at several

other possibilities. The REP could be considered a reflection of

the organization's technical-functional requirements which arise

in response to the needs for coordination in a complex system.

It is also possible that the REP is essentially a symbol of rational

management to both internal and external audiences. It is also

possible to consider the REP and its survival as merely artifacts

of political forces within the institution.

The investigative approach used in the current study attempted first to identify a way of viewing the REP based on the literature of organizations and the empirical literature of effective management practice. Second, the conceptual framework for viewing REP practice is considered in the case of the particular REP. The juxtaposition of field study with a novel context within which to view the case elements is neither new to the study of organizations nor to the study of higher education. An outstanding example is the classic study of New York University by J. V. Baldridge (1971) in which a significant part of the research involved formulating a context within which to view institutional events at New York University.

Baldridge's conceptualization of the political model of the organization is significant in the course of his study for two reasons. First, it influences the method of observation (case study) and the choice of events studied. Second, the political context provides the theoretical contruct whose usefulness Baldridge is attempting to confirm in the field environment.

Conceptual Framework:
The Importance of the Way We Look at Things

At various times and in a number of ways, authors have pointed out that our behavior appears linked to what we permit ourselves

to perceive about our world.[4] Although much neural processing takes place between the receipt of a stimulus and the awareness of a sensation it is, nonetheless, as if our minds contain lenses which focus attention or filters which obscure certain stimuli to the benefit of other stimuli. While these metaphors may not seem remarkable, they provide an important point of departure for the analyses which follow. Considering the REP as an organizational phenomenon to be viewed from a number of different perspectives may produce clues helpful in identifying new patterns of practice within the institution.

A good example of an intentional effort to construct a new context in which to conduct an analysis of organizations in higher education is Baldridge's (1971) study "Power and Conflict in the University: Research in the Sociology of Complex Organizations," noted earlier. Although far less ambitious than the Baldridge study, what follows is also an effort to formulate a new context.

The REP begins as a unit of a larger organization, the college. While the REP's distinctive characteristics make it different from other units of the college, it is nonetheless part of the organization. In some contexts, the unit's characteristics may be seen to enhance its dealings with the remainder of the institution. In other contexts, these same characteristics may tend to restrict or limit the REP.

If the REP, with its root definition, can be fitted together with what is known about the way organizations tend to operate,

---

[4]See for example Bruner and Postman (1949), Brouwer (1964), Gardner (1960), Kuhn (1970), Levitt (1975), Morgan (1980), and Vickers (1968, 1971).

it may be possible to deduce new, more compatible and effective behaviors for both the REP and the college. Further, the emerging empirical literature dealing with the way successful managers and their organizations actually behave in practice provides additional insight.

This search for new ways to interpret the stimuli we encounter, while a seemingly obvious strategy in an effort to find new meaning in our world, turns out to be anything but trivial. Kuhn (1970), in a postscript to the second edition of his classic study, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, emphasizes that we must work at resisting the tendency to identify stimuli one-to-one with sensations. For indeed, we know with some assurance that, for people, "The route from stimulus to sensation is in part conditioned by education . . . [and two people] which have systematically different sensations on receipt of the same stimuli, do in some sense live in different worlds" (p. 193).

Kuhn argues that scientific enterprises occur within the bounds of certain conceptual frameworks or paradigms which when learned tend to give individuals a similar view of the world. A scientific paradigm helps to define a particular scientific community, and at the same time, such a paradigm is defined by what members of a particular scientific community collectively choose to believe.

The REP World View

As noted earlier, the prevailing world view affecting REPs

tends to emphasize professional practice derived from the study of research and planning technique, the rational/linear model of decision making, and a functionalist view of organizations. This world view does not emphasize professional practice as derived from the study of organizational behavior. While the message communicated by the literature of institutional research, evaluation, and planning may not warrant the status of prevailing paradigm, the consequences are much the same. This message serves as a collective guide to thought or world view for institutional research and it is seemingly well-established.

At the fall 1983 meeting of the Northeast Association of Institutional Research, for example, an institutional researcher began a presentation with the problem that her reports were rarely read. To study this problem, she began producing equivalent forms of her reports which varied only in presentation. This was done in order to permit follow-up research to help determine what characteristics of presentation are most likely to see the reports read. A broader conceptual framework might have suggested other reasons for ignoring the reports beside format. But in this case, issues of power, influence, or even reader interest in the topics covered were not targets for investigation because REP practice was not assumed to be open to influence by these variables. The subjects of the reports were derived from a technical framework of collecting and distributing systematic data about the institution. As with this example, the prevailing conceptual framework utilized by a scientific community, according to Kuhn, tends to:

- define the problems which are critical;

- provide rules and theories for addressing critical problems;

- select certain methodologies for studying the conceptual and theoretical problems; and

- help specify the type of experience and empirical phenomenon acceptable as evidence in studying the paradigm's significant problems.

While these consequences of the prevailing conceptual framework may appear to have the effect of an intellectual strait jacket, they are fundamental to what Kuhn refers to as "normal" science. According to Kuhn, normal science is the actualization of a paradigm's promise through demonstration of its use in new situations, further articulation of the paradigm, or through tests of the match between events and the paradigm's predictions.

The prevailing interest in the techniques of research, planning, and systematic data is and remains important. In keeping with a more general observation by Kuhn, allegiance to this conceptual framework has encouraged the profession to solve problems "that its members could scarcely have imagined and would never have undertaken without commitment to the paradigm" (1970, p. 25).

The literature of institutional research, evaluation, and planning is rich and variously directed at establishing standards, prescribing roles and relationships, defending theoretically coherent techniques, identifying potentially valuable studies, and sharing rules of thumb deduced from practice. These achievements are continuing and are important, permanent attributes of the field. Most discussions,

however, either avoid or touch only briefly on ways to integrate
those responsible for these activities with anything but formal
authority structures. Knapp (1982) concludes, for example, that
proximity to a chief administrator is one key to REP survival.

It is commonly recognized that more goes on in organizations
than can satisfactorily be explained by reference to the formal
elements of bureaucracy.[5] Being aware, for example, of the
formal-informal dichotomy[6] in organizations calls attention to
what Mouzelis (1967) calls "the inherent and continuous tension
between rational coordination of activities and the spontaneous
pattern formation of interpersonal relationships and unofficial
values and beliefs" (p. 70). Schmidtlein (1975) particularizes
this observation in the case of higher education when he notes,

> anyone dealing with a faculty knows the traditional, bureaucratic
> model of top-down decision making does not describe an institution
> of higher education . . . despite the belief in the efficiency
> of the (management systems) strategy and the use of planning
> rhetoric, a high proportion of decisions in higher education
> continue to be made on disjointed, incremental, remedial basis.
> (p. 116)

---

[5]Crozier (1976) for example, questions the validity of making
structure the only mediating link between the environment of an
organization and its output.

[6]While the formal-informal dichotomy is suggestive in this
context, difficulties arise when we try to use it in a more precise
way. The frames suggested by Bolman and Deal (1982) provide a guide
as we attempt to sort out that which lies beyond the formal structure
in an organization.

C H A P T E R   III

THE DIVISION OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Overview

Although REPs have emerged in a number of different organizational circumstances, we may assume that they are linked by a common world view (weltanschauung) which is influenced both by a substantial technical/professional literature and by the efforts of professional associations such as the Association for Institutional Research. We may also assume that REPs are linked by their commitment to the use of systematically collected data and analysis as the basis for management decisions in higher education. The operational definition of REP (pp. 10-11), provides a broad, generic description of those publicly charged by their colleges with institutional research, evaluation, and planning.

Since it is difficult to get at organizational dynamics without reference to some particular organizational environment, the discussion in this chapter focuses on the special case of the BHCC/REP.

The Division of Planning and Development at Bunker Hill Community College was formally established early in February, 1983. The new Division was one of the consequences of a reorganization of the management structure of the College undertaken by BHCC's President during the fall of 1982.

The External Environment

In attempting to answer the question: "What determines the shape of an organization's structure?" Bolman and Deal (1982) conclude that current research "points to technology and environment as the two factors that are most powerful in influencing how an organization is structured" (p. 57). In particular, it appears that the structure of an organization has a good deal to do with the amount of uncertainty engendered by these two factors. Of particular relevance to the establishment of the Division of Planning and Development is the suggestion by Galbraith (1977) and Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) that organizational structure depends on uncertainty and the way it affects the information needs of the organization. Bolman and Deal (1982) also note that "when information is unclear, knowledge is limited, and feedback is slow, an organization has to deal with very high levels of uncertainty" (p. 62).

Threats from the environment, increasing external demands for information, and uncertainty regarding institutional information are among the reasons identified by Knapp (1981, p. 4) for the creation of research, evaluation, and planning units in California community colleges. There seems to be an expectation that an REP will reduce institutional vulnerability by strengthening buffers between the college and a dynamic environment. If institutions are better prepared with information, plans, and action alternatives, they also may be able to cope better with uncertainty. In retrospect, concerns and assumptions such as these may have been implicit in the decision

to create the Division of Planning and Development at Bunker Hill
Community College.

Historical Perspective

The 3 years immediately preceding the establishment of the
Division of Planning and Development at BHCC were filled with a
series of dramatic events involving Massachusetts public higher
education. These events directly affected Bunker Hill and placed
a heavy burden on the College, requiring it to gather, interpret,
and act rapidly on information critical to the College's future.

In July, 1980, in an outside section or rider to the state's
annual appropriations bill, the Massachusetts legislature voted
to scrap the existing governing structure for Massachusetts public
higher education and replace it with a single 15-member state-wide
Board of Regents. As it created the new Board, the budget document
eliminated the Executive Office of Educational Affairs, the Board
of Higher Education, and the segmental boards for state colleges
and community colleges. Many of the functions performed by these
bodies were consolidated under the Regents. Other functions were
eliminated, and still other functions relating to the management
of individual institutions were vested in new local institutional
Boards of Trustees which were created at the same time as the Regents.

In addition to bypassing the legislature's education committees,
this action also ignored a special "blue ribbon commission" which
had been established to study such a reorganization. Despite some

efforts to lobby against the measure, when the final vote was taken, the outcome was no surprise to most observers. The previous structure was considered by most observers costly, cumbersome, and ineffective. Further, unlike the individual colleges which had support groups consisting of employees, students, alumni, and local community leaders, the state-wide boards had little or no constituency to call upon when the vote came. The speed and the scope of the action taken by the legislature, however, were unprecedented.

The measure directly affected Bunker Hill Community College. Prior to the legislature's action, BHCC had been a member of a state-wide system of community colleges with a common board of trustees called the Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges (MBRCC). With the elimination of the MBRCC, citizen advisory boards which had been required for each community college were also abolished. These advisory boards, appointed by the Governor, were largely ceremonial and had no direct statutory control over the colleges. To replace the local advisory boards, the legislation created a local board of trustees for each community college. These new 11-member boards, appointed by the Governor (with two exceptions: one student member elected annually by the current student body, and one alumni member elected for a 3-year term to represent college alumni) were given extensive powers involving the appointment of college personnel and the authority to transfer state funds between most college accounts.

Although the new Board of Regents was not yet officially empowered, members were appointed soon after the passage of the

Fiscal Year 1981 state budget in July, 1980. Even before its official

birthday in March, 1981, the Board of Regents surprised many by

making its presence felt through some of its newly-appointed members

who were empowered as a special legislative task force during the

transition period. Concurrent with the uncertainty caused by the

transfer of power to the Regents and the local boards of trustees,

the Regents, through the special legislative task force, fueled

speculation and anxiety by assenting to legislative urgings to

tackle the reconfiguration of public higher education in Boston as a

first priority. This task involved the consideration of various

plans to combine or in some manner reshape the University of

Massachusetts at Boston, Roxbury Community College, Bunker Hill

Community College, and Boston State College.

The legislature established a special six-member Boston Task

Force made up of individuals already appointed to become Regents,

in October, 1980. This Task Force developed the initial recommendations

for what was eventually to be a consolidation of public higher education

in Boston. John B. Duff, the Regents' first permanent chancellor,

submitted a report to the Board of Regents on June 26, 1981 entitled

"A Framework for the Reorganization of Public Higher Education in

Boston." This report was based on the work of the Task Force and

recommended that:

(1) Boston State College and the University of Massachusetts
at Boston be consolidated into one institution;
(2) Roxbury Community College be relocated to new facilities;
(3) Boston Community College [a combination of BHCC and Roxbury
Community College] be established as a multi-campus
institution with branches in Roxbury and Charlestown;
(4) The Massachusetts College of Art [another public state

college located in Boston and needing a new campus] be
relocated;

(5) A differentiated admission policy be adopted for the
institutions of public higher education in Boston. (Board
of Regents of Higher Education, p. 8)

The period from October, 1980 to January, 1982 involved the

Regents in frequent public hearings, student and faculty demonstrations,

and the gathering of testimony from community members, administrators,

faculty members, and students associated with the public higher

educational institutions located in Boston. For those professionals

directly involved, requests for institutional data, rapid analysis

of testimony, and the preparation of policy papers became commonplace.

Accuracy needed to be high because presentations were given close

public scrutiny.

The most dramatic consequence of the Boston consolidation process

to date has been the closing of Boston State College effective January

24, 1982, which resulted in 28 Boston State College faculty being

reassigned to BHCC. Originally the consolidation of unduplicated

Boston State College programs with the University of Massachusetts

at Boston was to have been effected over a 3-year period. The

legislature, however, intervened once again, this time through the

mechanism of the Fiscal Year 1982 state appropriation. In a front-page

article in The Chronicle of Higher Education entitled "Massachusetts

System Thrown into Turmoil by a Wrangle over Finances and Governance,"

R. L. Jacobson (1982) quoted an expert on state systems of higher

education who called the situation "the worst example of legislative

meddling" he had ever seen (p. 1). The legislature had forced the

closing of Boston State College by clustering the Boston institutions,

including BHCC, into one budget category and then underfunding the
total by an estimated 6 million dollars. Until the Regents made
the final decision regarding Boston State College, the budgets of
all institutions involved in the cluster were in doubt. The future
of Boston Community College was placed on hold pending the construction
of a new campus for Roxbury Community College.

One effect of the reorganization of the governance system for
public higher education and the painful process of reconfiguring
institutions in Boston was an extended period of stress for the
chief administrator at each institution involved. During this time
the President of Bunker Hill, lacking a formal planning unit, informally
directed many issues involving planning in this rapidly changing
environment to the Dean of the Open College, BHCC's special academic
unit for non-traditional education.

While still Dean of the Open College, for example, the
investigator helped prepare testimony for reorganization hearings
and coordinated the preparation and submission of the College's
first institutional long-range plan which had been required by yet
another outside section of the state appropriations bill passed in
July, 1980. The BHCC plan evolved over roughly a 12-month period,
passed through three major revisions, required the approval of the
College's Deans, President, and Trustees, and was submitted to the
Regents in May, 1982. Following this submission, events still
remained in a state of flux in Boston, and the Regents staff requested

that the plan be further updated and resubmitted in March, 1983.[7]

While at one level these changes in Boston came as no surprise, and in part could be anticipated, they created enough pressure on BHCC to make it apparent that when plans were needed, overall academic and institutional planning functions at the college were fragmented in such a way that no clear delegation of college-wide responsibility and control was possible. Lacking a better mechanism, the President carried these responsibilities directly as part of the workload of his office with assistance from Deans and other senior administrators.

Internal Management Reorganization at BHCC

With the creation of the new Division of Planning and Development, the general areas of institutional research, institutional long-range planning, academic program review, and development activities were then supervised by a Dean-level administrator reporting directly to the President. Many of the functions assigned to the Division previously had been supervised directly by the President. To create the new Division, personnel, space, and budget were reallocated from existing BHCC resources. These resources were derived primarily

---

[7]A review of institutional long-range plan development prior to the establishment of the Division of Planning and Development was provided to a meeting of the College's extended staff on February 22, 1983. Material is drawn from a memorandum to members of the extended staff (made up of all professional management personnel at the College exempt from the faculty/professional union) which was distributed on that date.

from the reassignment of personnel from the President's office and from the dissolution of the BHCC Open College.

A number of college staff were directly affected by the creation of the new Division. Three full-time professional staff, including the Dean, had come from BHCC's Open College, an academic unit which had been responsible for innovative programs and special efforts for non-traditional students. Two professional staff were initially reassigned from the President's office along with their responsibilities for the functions of planning, institutional research, institutional reporting, and development. In addition, several staff members supported by grants received by the Open College continued to be supervised by the new Division. No new professional staff were hired to support the new Division.

As one staff member commented at the first meeting of the new Division held in February, 1983, "This Division is certainly a good example of old wine in new bottles." In many ways this perception helped to bring into focus the issue of appropriate behavior for the Division. Operating out of new bottles, the staff needed to focus on the question of new or revised patterns of practice appropriate to the context of the new Division.

Since the new Division was entirely staffed by people from BHCC, the question of how to behave in a new role affected everyone to a greater or lesser degree. In the case of staff reassigned with their functions from the President's office who did the same work before and after the reassignment, they needed to consider the implications of carrying out their responsibilities under new

and less influential auspices. For those reassigned from the Open
College, they needed to broaden their perspective from that of a
single academic unit to one inclusive of the total institution.

A concern about appropriate behavior also resulted from some
uncertainty caused by the nature of the internal reorganization process
itself. While a thorough analysis of the reorganization and its
affects on BHCC are beyond the limited scope of this study, some
comment is necessary.

Much of the reorganization process had involved only the College's
senior staff meeting behind closed doors. This approach, while
permitting reorganization to move rather quickly, produced some
anxiety as well. Input into the process from the larger college
community had come primarily by way of interviews with a cross-section
of college personnel. These interviews had been conducted, analyzed,
and reported to the senior staff by the then Executive Assistant
to the President. The interview process had begun in July, 1982,
and the Executive Assistant to the President delivered his report
to the senior staff (consisting of the Assistant to the President,
Deans of Academic Affairs, Student Development, Open College, Continuing
Education, and Administration, and the Director of Development)
at an off-campus retreat held on September 28 and 29, 1982.

Following the retreat, discussions and the exchange of memoranda
between senior staff and the President took place. The President
reported his decisions regarding reorganization in early November,
1982. Key elements of the President's announcement were the creation
of a new division to provide leadership in the areas of institutional

research, planning, program evaluation, and development; and the
dissolution of the Open College to be accomplished by mainstreaming
non-traditional academic programs into BHCC's primary academic unit
supervised by the Dean of Academic Affairs. As announced by the
President, the time line was short, and the reassignment process
for staff was to begin immediately.

The events relating to the reorganization process and the
resulting decisions were subject to wide variations in interpretation.
Indeed, although the President clearly remained the locus of control,
assumptions established over the previous 9 years regarding influence,
power, and control at the highest levels of the institution were subject
to question throughout the College. There had been a general
understanding of relative influence among the divisions and among
the various Deans prior to reorganization. With reorganization
this was no longer clear.

This ambiguity regarding institutional influence and role affected
discussions among members of the new Division of Planning and
Development. While the functional areas which helped define the
new Division were generally accepted as important to the College's
future success, the Division's role within the institution was still
emerging.

Organization of the Division of Planning and Development

The description of the Division of Planning and Development
which was negotiated among senior administrators of the College

in January, 1983 set out the areas in which the new Division was
to assume responsibility and exercise leadership. An excerpt from
the description follows:

> Bunker Hill Community College's Division of Planning and
> Development provides leadership in the areas of institutional
> research, planning, and development. The Division consists
> of professional staff working with administrators, faculty,
> and students drawn from all areas of the College who are involved
> as consultants, principal investigators, and project directors.
>> Specific responsibilities of the Division include:
>> - design and maintenance of a program of institutional
>>   research;
>> - coordination of all institutional planning and
>>   development;
>> - refinement and updating of the College's required long
>>   range plan;
>> - research and participation in the planning for new
>>   academic programs and services, including certificate
>>   and associate degree programs;
>> - coordination, in cooperation with the appropriate Dean,
>>   of program reviews in keeping with guidelines established
>>   by the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher
>>   Education;
>> - coordination of all formal institutional reports to
>>   local, state, and federal agencies;
>> - expansion of Bunker Hill Community College's development
>>   relationships with local business and industry;
>> - development of programs and special services for
>>   disadvantaged students, women, elders, out-of-school
>>   youth, and joint program development with Roxbury
>>   Community College and the University of Massachusetts
>>   at Boston. (Excerpted from Division of Planning and
>>   Development file document, January 26, 1983.)

The major functions of the Division closely parallel those
of the archetype REP described by Knapp (1982) and consist of
institutional long-range planning, program review, institutional
research, and development. While the development function which
involves grant proposal writing is not specifically included by
Knapp as a central function of the REP, empirical descriptive research
indicates that it is commonly associated with REPs and the BHCC/REP

is no exception.

Within the BHCC/REP there is a specific staff person assigned to take a lead role in managing the activities which flow from each of the four functions. The Dean of the BHCC/REP is the College's chief planning officer and is responsible for activities which relate to the College's long-range plan and annual plan updates. The Assistant Dean of the BHCC/REP coordinates all activities relating to the academic program review process. The Coordinator of Institutional Research is responsible for institutional reporting and either generates or is authorized to request whatever data is needed from appropriate college offices. The Director of Development oversees all grant proposals submitted by the College and assists in the monitoring of all funded projects.

In addition to the functional areas associated with the REP, the Division also maintains the Community Educational Services Program. This program is managed by a full-time director who is responsible for establishing and maintaining affiliations with educational programs sponsored by non-collegiate organizations including businesses and community groups. The staff of the Division, immediately following its establishment, also included a full-time professional assigned as a planning assistant in the area of new academic program development and a part-time professional involved with programs on aging.

Organizational Control

The overall administration of Bunker Hill Community College

is based on a unit president management system. Within the context
of an overall planning process, each major division of the College
develops annual goals and objectives which are reviewed by the
Administrative Council. This Council consists of the President;
Deans of Administration, Academic Affairs, Continuing Education,
Student Development, and Planning and Development; Executive Vice-
President; and Assistant to the President. Based on input from
all segments of the institution and negotiations carried out in
the context of the Administrative Council, a final agreement is
reached regarding the College's overall goals for the academic year.
Resources and responsibilities are assigned based on the College's
overall goals and the unit presidents (Deans) are given substantial
authority within their Divisions to carry out unit plans.

The new Division has access to institutional decision makers
through the administrative structure of the College and through
the College's collegiate governance structure. As noted, the Division
is represented on the Administrative Council which consists of senior
administrators who report directly to the President. In the collegiate
governance structure, the Division has voting representation on
the College Curriculum Committee and the College Academic Affairs
Committee.

The orderly assignment of functional responsibility within
the Division, which is noted above, and the Division's access to
the administrative and collegiate governance structures of the College
masks what is in fact a much more complex set of roles for the
Division. A consideration of the role of the Division of Planning

and Development is linked to decision making, and thus control, within the College. Since the College's founding in 1973, BHCC has functioned with a strong President and a relatively centralized decision-making structure. In the normal course of events, however, this decision-making structure has become progressively more decentralized. In addition to the President and other senior administrators, numerous cluster points for decision making have evolved, including: the College's new Board of Trustees created in 1981; the faculty/professional union certified in 1977; the academic division chairpersons added as a new administrative level in 1978; the college governance structure revised in 1984; as well as numerous influential individuals who have emerged among the faculty and staff during the life of the College.

While the President remains a central figure, more issues, individuals, and points of view must be accounted for in the process of getting things accomplished within the institution. Throughout the College individuals are expected to exercise professional judgment in interpreting and applying institutional policy. As individuals, faculty and staff may affect decisions by virtue of their professional stature, years of experience, departmental affiliations, or ability to persuade colleagues.

Far from distinguishing BHCC from other mature, complex institutions of higher education, however, these characteristics tend to be typical. The College's functioning is directly influenced by the fact that professional and collegiate behavior in higher education encourages varying points of view as well as the exercise

of professional and expert judgment.

This situation, together with what Baldridge (1971) sees as naturally occurring political forces, contributes to a complex decision-making environment, one which has been well documented in the literature of organizational theory (see also Bolman & Deal, 1982). As Bunker Hill Community College matures as an organization, the strong linear connection between ends and means in institutional decision making, so desirable in theory, is often obscured by the exercise of discretionary judgment by individuals experiencing different organizational realities.

Negotiating a Niche

Although supported by the President and senior staff, the new Division's prerogatives and areas of legitimate authority are still being clarified and are subject to continuing negotiation within the College. As the Division endeavors to fulfill its mission, each new project or activity it undertakes introduces an element of novelty to be dealt with by the institution. Even seemingly routine tasks assigned to the new Division require great care in establishing lines of communication with offices throughout the College.

An illustrative example of an apparently routine task which occupies much more time than originally expected is institutional reporting. This activity involves establishing procedures for gathering data and then completing and filing various required institutional

reports with local, state, and federal agencies.

Historically within the College, requests for data had originated from the President's office and all official college reports were cleared with the President's office. With reorganization these activities were assigned to the new Division of Planning and Development. Some administrators saw this new arrangement as a justifiable reassignment of a time-consuming, but necessary bureaucratic function which had become so routine that presidential attention was no longer justified. Others, however, saw the new arrangement as empowering the Division to make demands for data. Further, by exercising its final authority over the submission of material, the Division could be seen as the source of information actually compiled or developed elsewhere in the institution.

Student data presented the most challenging technical problem. At the time of the reorganization, student records were maintained by a combination of posting by hand and records stored on tapes produced by an IBM System 3 computer. Direct access to an electronic student data base was still 1 1/2 years away. Requests made by the Division for student data involved the new Division in extensive negotiations with the Registrar's Office as well as a separate office of data processing. The Registrar lacked the necessary staff to pull the information together in the time available. Sometimes Planning and Development was able to supply additional staff to assist; often it could not. The recurring question was: How should priorities be established to determine whose work in the various offices took precedence?

Through negotiation it was eventually decided that the Registrar's Office would determine the actual student head count and total credits earned. Planning and Development, on the other hand, would work directly with data processing to acquire a student data tape which contained a snapshot of the student body taken 3 weeks into each semester. Analyses of the student body would be based on these data tapes and would be the sole responsibility of the Division of Planning and Development.

This specific agreement achieved several things. First, pressure was removed from the Registrar's Office to provide data and analysis that, because of limited staffing, the office was unequipped to produce. Second, the student data tapes provided the Division of Planning and Development with direct control over the production of aggregate student data, a raw material critical to the carrying out of the Division's mission.

As suggested by this example, negotiation and clarification of the BHCC/REP mission for others within the College was a continuing activity which involved all REP staff. Grants, special projects, program planning, and academic review all required establishing and clarifying relationships throughout the institution. This continuing effort required that REP staff understand the basic mission of the unit, its importance to the overall direction of the College, and the legitimacy of their personal connection with it. An environment was created in which the most fundamental meanings of the REP notion were being displayed by staff in their negotiations with the environment. In the process, a problem had begun to emerge.

CHAPTER   IV

ANALYSIS

Overview

The step labeled "analysis" in Checkland's methodology is used
to: (a) investigate the problem situation; (b) consider candidates
for the role of problem; and (c) explore possible deeper meanings
implied by the REP in practice. The ultimate purpose of Chapter IV
is to provide a basis for the framework for the analysis of the REP
which is discussed more fully in Chapter V. To be effective, this
framework should account for much of the diversity which currently
exists in REP practice, and it should be consistent with the REP
world view espoused in the literature. At the same time, using
Knapp's theory of REP development (1982, p. 27), the framework should
help guide the REP to a more integrated role within the institution.

Problem Situation

Following the Checkland methodology requires investigating the
research question in the context of a specific human activity system.
Analysis identified a relatively unstructured but persistent problem
in the context of the human activity system called the Division of
Planning and Development at Bunker Hill Community College.

The problem as it emerged within the field situation was not

clearly defined. It was expressed more as a nagging concern about
the work environment in general, than as a specific complaint.
When voicing concern, staff of the Division generally agreed that
something was lacking in the overall understanding of the Division's
role in the daily life of the College.

In part, this might have been accounted for by the fact that
the Division was still relatively new. It may also have been accounted
for by the fact that all members of the BHCC/REP have had a previous
history with the College. Because of this history, the lack of
understanding acceptable to Division staff might only have been a
relative lack of understanding when compared to the general
understanding of their previous roles. Empirical evidence (Knapp,
1982), however, suggests that there may also be certain difficulties
inherent in the REP role which help explain staff reaction.

The BHCC/REP presented a real world situation in which the mission
of the human activity system was reasonably well defined. Attempts
to analyze the BHCC/REP using the goal-seeking model of human behavior
identified those problems which were considered a problem "precisely
because there is no agreement on needs, objectives, measures of
performance, etc." (Checkland, 1972, p. 66). Such analyses were
not useful. In this instance, the goal-seeking model has failed
to capture the more fundamental issues which were apparently at stake.

On an operational level, clear goals and objectives for the
Division (see Appendixes A and B) had been identified, and in most
cases, an adequate means for achieving these goals and objectives
has been selected. During its first 2 years, the BHCC/REP produced

a number of tangible products and established a substantial record
of achievement.

Frequently, however, staff expressed the concern that even though
each task assigned the BHCC/REP was important in some context, there
seemed to be few connections between the Division's various
assignments. There was also the concern that the relationship between
divisional activities and the overall direction taken by the institution
was often obscure.

A situation existed, therefore, in which: (a) despite reasonably
well-defined and understood goals; (b) despite a connection with
a peer group of similar organizational subunits (REPs) nation-wide;
(c) despite a large and growing professional literature which provides
guidance in the areas of institutional research and planning technique;
and (d) despite a full and demanding work schedule, a nagging
uncertainty existed among staff of the BHCC/REP regarding how divisional
efforts and events fit together and how these in turn fit into the
larger context of Bunker Hill Community College.

Analysis of Problem Situation

In the analysis phase suggested by the Checkland methodology
the problem situation within the BHCC/REP is singled out for more
thorough investigation. In this analysis, organizations are thought
of as concepts which tie together and impart order to collections of
people and events. Some events associated with a particular
organization can be regulated by the organization while others cannot.

In either case, most events associated with an organization are seen as nonrandom. Events are assumed to be guided by various rules or theories explicitly or implicitly agreed upon by members of the organization.

From this perspective, the Division of Planning and Development of Bunker Hill Community College, for example, is a label given to a collection of people, physical locations (offices), functional responsibilities, reporting lines, assignments, and work relationships together with variously held expectations for the Division. Some of these expectations are explicit and have been expressed orally or in writing; some remain implicit and are suggested in behavior demonstrated by those associated with the Division.

As an organization, however, the Division is an abstract concept. The Division as an organization is reflected in, but remains distinct from, all of the elements of objective reality associated with the Division.

To make sense out of the events that are assumed to reflect the concept of the organization, various theories pertaining to the organization are adopted. Certain things are understood with regard to the Division by virtue of these theories of organization. Bolman and Deal (1982) go to some length to develop this view of organizations in arguing the case for "conceptual pluralism" in organization theory. They suggest that not only are there major schools of organizational thought in the social and administrative sciences, but that "every manager uses a personal image of organizations to gather information, make judgments, and get things done" (p. 5).

Discussions during BHCC/REP staff meetings as well as conversations with individual staff members tended to confirm the existence of at least three distinct ways of viewing the activities of the unit. A particular point of view was not exclusive to an individual staff member. Indeed, all staff expressed each of these three points of view at some time and in reference to some particular set of issues facing the Division.

Briefly, the three prevailing points of view that surfaced were:

1. The management point of view which deals with issues from the perspective of how BHCC/REP efforts relate to the overall management needs of BHCC;

2. The professional/technical point of view which deals with issues from the perspective of how BHCC/REP efforts relate to the technical aspects of institutional research, evaluation, planning, and proposal development and the professional expectations for these activities;

3. The social responsiveness point of view that deals with issues from the perspective of how BHCC/REP efforts relate to better services and opportunities for students and potential clients in the community.

Checkland (1972) emphasizes that moving too quickly to accept a specific interpretation of a problem in a human activity system may inadvertently cause a particular view of the organization to be imposed on the problem situation. Problem structuring, in a sense, dictates problem solution because improvement in the problem

situation will depend on which particular view of the human activity system is adopted. The Checkland methodology is an example of an open systems framework (discussed in more detail in the section in Chapter V on Conceptualization) for analyzing organizations. The methodology emphasizes the need to get at and understand the human activity system embedded within the problem situation. The primary goal of this methodology is not to predict, but rather to try to incorporate existing knowledge of organizations in order to achieve improvements in the human activity system.

To emphasize Checkland's case by slight overstatement, the point is that if organizational problems are attacked directly, the result may be improvement only in that particular instance of the problem. If instead, the problem situation together with other obvious reflections of the organization are treated collectively, it may be possible to identify and improve the underlying human activity system so that the circumstances causing the problem situation are reduced or disappear entirely. Problem situations in organizations are, like office spaces and assigned functions, merely reflections of an abstract concept of a particular organization. To improve the condition exhibited in the problem situation, we must look beyond both it and other relevant elements associated with the organization in order to see or deduce a useful model of the human activity system which supports the problem situation. Creating a useful picture of the underlying human activity system may permit not just the correction of a particular instance of the problem, but a modification of the system so that the circumstances producing the problem

disappear.

Adherence to the Checkland methodology encourages an analysis that first looks beyond the problem situation to the nature of the human activity system in which the problem situation is evidenced. Several definitions of the problem are possible and worth exploring as a vehicle for determining a frame of reference in which to view the human activity system embedded in the BHCC/REP.

Professionals involved with the BHCC/REP recognized that something was missing with regard to the general understanding of the Division as a comprehensive research and planning unit within the College. The problem could be a need for further clarity and detail in describing the Division's various functions and the details of specific projects. However, while there is always room for improvement, the Division's functional assignments and the goals and activities relating to these various functions were fairly clear. BHCC/REP staff participated in defining many of these details and the specific processes involved were understood and carefully explained to other BHCC staff who were involved.

The problem also could be a matter of staff development and training regarding the new Division and its activities. Informal surveys, however, suggested that the functions and goals of the BHCC/REP were generally understood and accepted by most professional staff of the College. Further confirmation of this understanding was demonstrated by the fact that professional staff of the College usually responded appropriately when they are asked to contribute to research, evaluation, and planning assignments.

When discussing the overall influence of the Division, however, the functions of institutional research, program review, planning, and development were limited in what they communicate about the Division. Even though action of some kind may have been implicit, the verbal imagery associated with the Division relative to these terms was limited in its ability to suggest either relationships or the dynamics of relationships involving the Division. What do these functions really represent in the context of a College which is a dynamic system actively establishing and revising relationships?

Based on certain general assumptions underlying the Checkland methodology, the concerns expressed by individuals in the problem situation may be "due to incompatible ways of viewing the problem, incompatible weltanschauungen, or it may be that any goal-seeking model itself imposes false structure on the problem situation by seeing it as a matter of ends and means rather than ongoing relationships through time" (Checkland, 1972, p. 66).

Analysis within the methodology is guided by the interaction between slowly changing or static elements in the problem situation and elements that are seen as dynamic and constantly changing.

Static or slowly changing elements which seem relevant to this situation include:

- the description of the BHCC/REP as agreed in January, 1983 (see p. 69 of current study);
- the hierarchy within the BHCC/REP which involves all professional personnel reporting directly to the Dean;
- the direct reporting line between the Dean and the President;
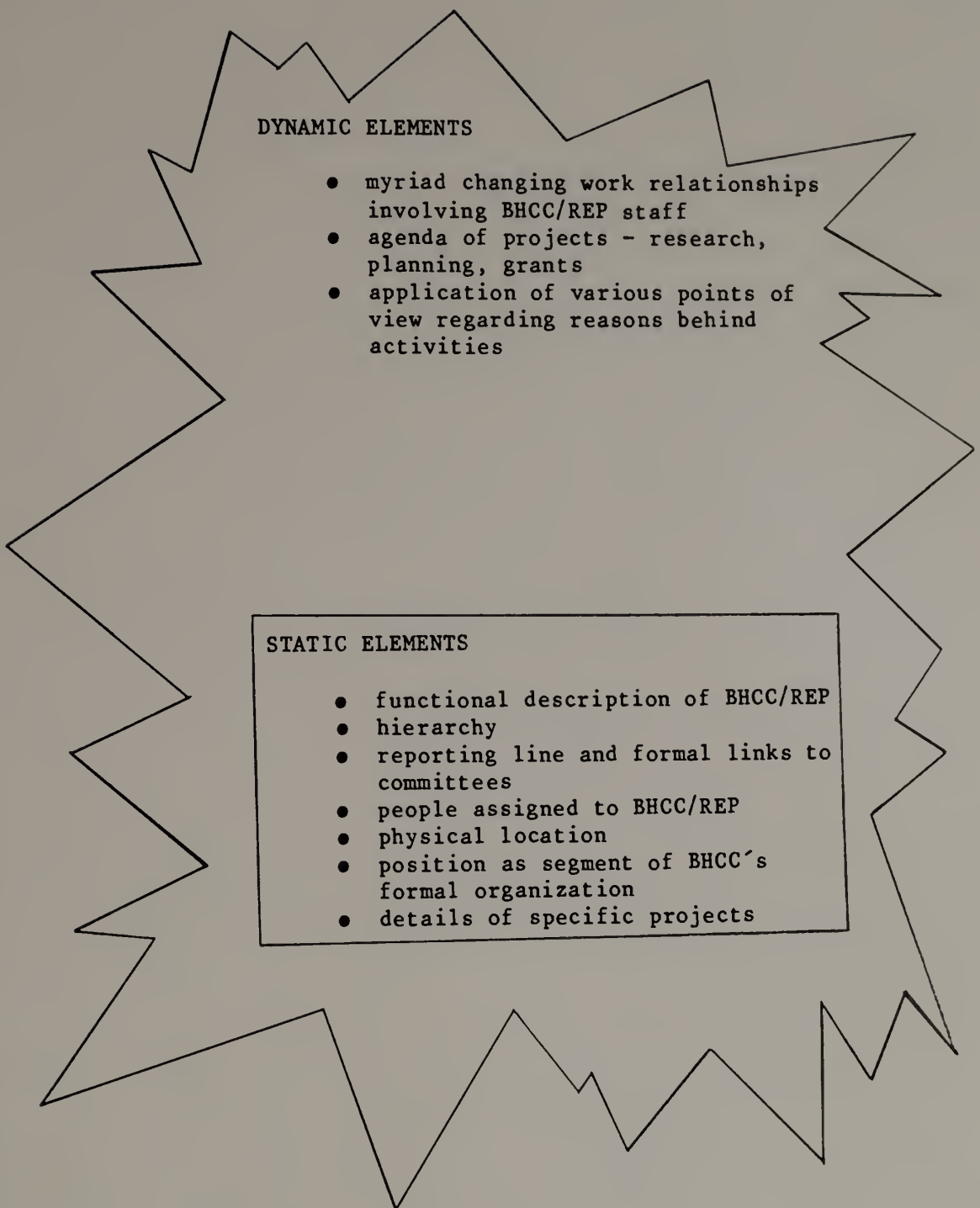
- the two formal links between the BHCC/REP and the collegiate
  governance structure;

- the actual professional personnel who make up the unit and
  their general functional areas of responsibility;

- the physical location of the unit at the College;

- the segmented nature of the unit within the formal
  organizational structure of the college.

Dynamic or more rapidly changing elements which may be relevant
to the problem situation include:

- myriad work relationships involving BHCC/REP staff which
  are regularly established, maintained, or redefined;

- the actual daily agenda of research, evaluation, planning,
  and grant proposal development projects undertaken by staff;

- the application of the three points of view mentioned above
  by BHCC/REP staff regarding various issues facing the unit.

Interpreting from the comments of BHCC/REP staff, the human
activity system consisting of these static and dynamic elements
breeds uncertainty regarding the coherence of the BHCC/REP unit
and is wanting in the ability to impart fundamental meaning regarding
the relationship between BHCC/REP efforts and the larger environment.
These elements are depicted in Figure 4.

The problem situation illustrated in Figure 4 suggests something
about the BHCC/REP. Those things about which both BHCC/REP staff
and outsiders seem most sure are the static elements. Functional
descriptions of divisional activities, the goals of specific projects,
the names of staff involved, where staff offices are located, to

DYNAMIC ELEMENTS

- myriad changing work relationships involving BHCC/REP staff
- agenda of projects - research, planning, grants
- application of various points of view regarding reasons behind activities

STATIC ELEMENTS

- functional description of BHCC/REP
- hierarchy
- reporting line and formal links to committees
- people assigned to BHCC/REP
- physical location
- position as segment of BHCC's formal organization
- details of specific projects

Figure 4. Static and Dynamic Elements.

whom both staff and the unit report are all clear, relatively constant, and generally understood.

In many ways the abstract concept of the BHCC/REP as an organization is reflected in these static elements; thus an examination of them makes it possible to gain insight into the organization. Indeed, the level of understanding reported by most professionals involved seems related to information contained in static elements.

What then are the origins of the concerns for lack of coherence and the inability to communicate the deeper meaning of the unit to others? Conversations with faculty members and other administrative personnel at the College often contain references to the fact that even though the details of the specific project at hand are known, "I don't really understand what it is that you people [staff of the BHCC/REP] do."

Interviews with BHCC/REP staff suggest that in their dealings with others at the College they generally rely on being themselves. One staff member noted that "I rarely resort to `positional power' to get my job done. Mostly, I present myself as who I am as a person. People respond to that. Most people think I'm a competent, nice person." In general, this is the same approach used by most of the BHCC/REP staff in carrying out their assignments. They are themselves and develop necessary work relationships accordingly.

Looking at Figure 4, it is clear that the elements reflective of the BHCC/REP contain more than the apparently understood static elements. Dynamic elements are also involved and they are also data sources for individuals learning about the BHCC/REP. Where

the static elements offer coherence and consistency, the dynamic elements represent widely varying tasks, relationships, and even varying points of view regarding specific projects as expressed by staff. The dynamic elements involve BHCC/REP staff and are influenced to a great extent by the personalities of the BHCC/REP staff "being themselves."

As a result, when discussing the Division, a faculty department head who had worked with all of the staff of BHCC/REP in the course of two institutional research efforts, one annual update of the College's master plan, an academic program review, and two successful grant proposals could say, "I really enjoy working with your staff. They are bright, interesting people, but you know, I still don't understand what your Division does." When questioned further, the department head actually had a rather complete and even detailed picture of the Division. Hence, while admitting to a formal knowledge of the Division, his uncertainty regarding exactly what the Division was remained.

This and other similar conversations tend to focus attention on what appears to be the dichotomy between an impersonal, often uncertain formal knowledge of the Division and what it stands for and the strong, personal, usually positive, and even warm impressions communicated by BHCC/REP staff through their behavior. Not surprisingly, the bond between BHCC/REP staff as individuals and the people they work with is stronger than the bond between the Division as an organizational unit and the people that staff work with. Most individuals directly experience the Division as it is interpreted in

the work relationships involving BHCC/REP staff. Although focusing on functionally related tasks in these work relationships, BHCC/REP staff tend to contribute to the work relationship as themselves, emphasizing their own personalities and individuality. The dynamic elements associated with the Division, the tasks and projects, the various points of view about particular tasks, and the personal nature of the work relationships create a kind of turbulent field swirling about the abstract concept called the Division of Planning and Development. While the static elements communicate a sense of the intended organization, the swirling field of dynamic elements seems not to reinforce this sense of the organization. The BHCC/REP in motion appears to lack coherence and is wanting in its ability to present a focused image of the underlying organization. To improve the situation, this image might be communicated more forcefully in the interplay of dynamic and static elements.

From this point onward, the technical/theoretical analysis of the problem situation could take many different and even conflicting directions. This is because, according to Bolman and Deal (1982), organizational theory must still be considered a young science which studies a very complex set of phenomena from a number of different perspectives:

> The problem in organization theory is not that the one true theory is being lost among a crowd of false pretenders. The problem is more difficult: there are several valid perspectives. . . . In fact, we can assert a set of propositions for each perspective that we believe are conceptually, empirically, and intuitively reasonable. . . . Each is interesting and significant, but each gets at only part of the truth. (p. 288)

A thoroughgoing discussion of the problem situation from a number of these perspectives, while perhaps theoretically desirable, is beyond the scope of the current study. Instead, a single perspective of the field situation is chosen, one referred to by Smircich (1982, p. 3) as the "interpretive perspective," which views organizations as socially constructed systems of shared meaning.

The dynamic elements which reflect the BHCC/REP do not seem to contribute to a coherent or forceful enough sense of the organization. These dynamic elements do, however, continue to represent potentially influential contributors to the abstract concept labeled the Division of Planning and Development. As such, the interpretive perspective of organization seems to offer a point of view of the problem situation which may help identify ways to establish more acceptable meaning with regard to the BHCC/REP. In Smircich's (1982) words,

> This view stresses that the possibility of organized action
> hinges on the emergence and continued existence of common modes
> of interpretation which allow day-to-day activities to become
> taken-for-granted. In the context of group interaction, it
> is this routinization that we refer to as being `organized`.
> When groups encounter novel situations, new interpretations
> must be constructed to sustain organized activity. The process
> of negotiating meanings for these events may alter current
> understandings, and thereby change the formerly taken-for-granted
> way of life. . . . From this view the fundamental task of
> management is creating, maintaining and renewing a sense of
> organization to facilitate coordinated action. (p. 3)

This perspective is also developed by Bolman and Deal (1982) in what they refer to as the "symbolic frame." This frame of reference according to Bolman and Deal, treats organizations as theater:

> Organizations are viewed as held together more by shared values
> and culture than by goals and policies. They are propelled
> more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heros and myths than
> by rules, policies and managerial authority. Organization

is drama-- the drama engages actors inside, and outside audiences form impressions based on what they see occurring on-stage. Problems arise when actors play their parts badly, when symbols lose their meaning, when ceremonies and rituals lose their potency. (p. 7)

Whether interpretive or symbolic, this point of view suggests that "all forms of human organization, though apparently concrete and real, are constantly being enacted and made meaningful by their membership" (Smircich, 1982, p. 8). As a perspective for management this view shifts from an emphasis on examination of events themselves to an interpretation of those events. Instead of prescribing specific behaviors, the emphasis is on providing a suitable context in which events can be seen to take on appropriate meaning. These events may thus better inform organizational members in their practice of the organization.

Thinking about organizations in this way departs from the traditional notions of rational problem-solving and decision making that are so much a part of the origin and popularization of units charged with institutional research, evaluation, and planning in higher education. To be sure, a rational/linear view in problem-solving can be useful, unless the problems are "so complex, ambiguous, or uncertain that, in fact, they cannot be understood or solved" (Bolman & Deal, 1982, p. 180).

In a complex organization such as a college, in which many centers of influence exist and in which the exercise of discretionary judgment on the part of members is encouraged, it is a tenuous presumption that the net effect of overall decision making can be explained or controlled on an incremental, rational basis. The

assumed order in this social world, "however real in surface appearance, rests in precarious, socially constructed webs of symbolic relationships that are continuously negotiated, re-negotiated, affirmed or changed" (Morgan, 1981, quoted by Smircich, 1982, p. 5).

Adopting a symbolic or interpretive perspective assumes that there are indeed questions for which no unequivocally right answers exist, and that at least as far as the REP is concerned, there exist events that cannot be understood or managed. In situations such as this, the REP is left to create and use symbols that will help provide meaning in the face of ambiguity and uncertainty.

From this point of view, meaning is not something that is fixed. Instead, meaning is an understanding that organizational members derive from events which are somehow selected or highlighted and placed in a context so that interpretation is possible. The organizational environment is not objective fact; it is created as organizational members enact it. In the process of living the organization, members are influenced by the various meanings that they draw from events. These meanings are dependent not only on the events, but also on the particular context in which the events are interpreted. Events and contexts encountered by organizational members cause them to interpret meanings which may be consistent, clear, and sustaining, or conflicting, ambiguous, and contradictory. Meanings can focus organizational action and generate energy. They also can serve to confuse action and dissipate energy.

Strategic management from this perspective becomes the creative process of socially constructing an organizational reality. This

is in marked contrast to establishing specific goals and then regulating events to achieve them. Instead, interpretive managers "provide a meaningful image or a symbolic reality that is fulfilled through the action of those directly involved. The overall task of strategic management then is the creation and maintenance of an organizational world view, a system of shared meanings or collective ways of thinking that actualize the continued sense of organization" (Smircich, 1982, pp. 20-21).

Viewing the problem situation from the interpretive perspective, staff of the BHCC/REP may not be sensing a lack of coherence in objective fact, but rather may be reacting to a failure in "meaning making" with regard to the organizational events in their lives. No acceptable or common notion of organization has yet been achieved among staff. The interpretive perspective suggests that even though events may not be controllable, it is possible to influence the context in which events take on meaning. Managers can define situations in a manner compatible with organizational purposes and values and in the process create or frame contexts in which events are interpreted.

The framing of suitable contexts in which to view the BHCC/REP experience cannot be accomplished without first identifying, at least in a general way, the shared interpretations or meanings that might improve the problem situation. Unfortunately, a limitation of the interpretive perspective is that there exists no foolproof scheme for generating alternative meanings which will ensure that staff share the desired organizational reality. Further, no matter how obvious the choices for context in which to interpret events

associated with the BHCC/REP, there is always the possibility that
some other, unthought-of possibility might be better suited. In
spite of these difficulties, it is possible to postulate an
interpretation that, if shared by staff at BHCC, would improve the
situation with regard to the BHCC/REP. This interpretation is:

1. The BHCC/REP is involved with a primary purpose of the
College;

2. The BHCC/REP maintains an important relationship to the
remainder of the institution with regard to this purpose;

3. The BHCC/REP is effective in this relationship;

4. The BHCC/REP is committed to and consistent with the values
and ethic espoused by the College and the unit's status as an REP.

While it may be true that meaning such as this might improve
the problem situation, it seems a tall order to create a context
in which events will be seen to take on this meaning. At this stage,
however, whether or not this meaning is obtainable is secondary.
Ultimately, it must fall to organizational members to manifest patterns
of behavior that realize these meanings and simultaneously create
a more acceptable organizational reality.

From the field investigation, it appeared that BHCC/REP projects
and activities generally have been considered successful. The
interpretive perspective of organizations suggests that BHCC/REP
staff can improve on the meaning derived from these and other events
associated with BHCC/REP by modifying the context in which these
events are interpreted.

Returning to the static and dynamic elements identified earlier

in this analysis, it seems apparent that all of these elements can contribute to the framing of a context for events involving the BHCC/REP. A critical aspect of the Division in this regard, however, is the dynamic elements involving staff behavior. The interpretive perspective suggests that BHCC/REP staff can improve on the context in which events are interpreted by collectively carrying a more consistent, better defined, more pronounced role image into the daily practice of the organization.

This line of thinking, however, immediately suggests troubling questions. Are BHCC/REP staff to assume new personalities or affect behaviors and attitudes calculated to mislead other organizational members or to somehow misrepresent their primary role? Given that this is not to be the case and presuming that a legitimately clarified BHCC/REP persona can be identified which staff can collectively assume in daily practice, are there ways to ensure that any required new behavior is not artificial or contrived? While answers to these questions are not immediately apparent, the questions need to be kept in mind as the analysis continues and procedures for establishing staff behavior are identified.

In considering a more influential and unifying persona for the BHCC/REP, attention must be given to the use of language and imagery in describing this persona. Powerful verbal images can contribute by stimulating the imagination and suggesting possibilities for the enactment of organization. Smircich (1982) demonstrates the importance of language, particularly imagery, in creating and managing the environment using the interpretive perspective. She

notes, for example, that "prospective managers, especially those interested in business policy, are usually encouraged to analyze environments through studying the forces of economics. Perhaps their course of study should include an appreciation of the dynamics of language to prepare them for analyzing how the environment is enacted linguistically" (p. 20).

The formal description of the BHCC/REP as agreed to in January, 1983, really does not capture the imagination nor does it trigger thoughts of inspired and heroic action. It seems to emphasize the way in which the BHCC/REP will accomplish its role rather than explicitly incorporating some deeper, more essential purpose, organizational or otherwise. It seems to lack an explicit purpose suggestive of a divisional persona, one which can fire the imagination and lead to organizational enactment.

Turning to the literature of institutional research and planning for guidance in this matter of deeper purpose which might suggest a persona for the REP, we find there exists a range of possibilities from which to choose. Dressel et al. (1971) offer what amounts to the vision of the classic academic researcher. Sheehan (1974) suggests a kind of well-informed and versatile helper supporting mostly administrative decision makers. Knapp (1982) suggests that the REP serve as a symbol of effective management. Hubbard (1964), Baskin (1964), and Lindquist (1981) suggest a role as change agent or improver of the teaching-learning environment.

A brief consideration of these possibilities for the deeper meaning of the BHCC/REP suggests that:

1. The notion of classic academic researcher suggests strong role imagery. Even though research is a central preoccupation in some institutions of higher education, it is not generally central to the community college so if the REP carried this image into practice it might not provide a suitable context for BHCC/REP events.

2. The notion of well-informed helper supporting decision makers, while useful in the context of a functional analysis of institutional management, is not sufficiently connected to the central purpose of the institution. Further, enacting the role of supportive helper is difficult since imagery is minimal.

3. The notion of providing a symbol of effective management seems to lose sight of the REP´s important contributions. Considering the REP as a symbol of effective management does, however, provide possibilities for role imagery which could be enacted, such as master of charts, tables, plans, reports, facts, etc. Despite the imagery, management per se is not the central role of the institution.

4. The notion of the BHCC/REP as change agent/improver of the teacher-learning environment suggests several important implications for role enactment. Certainly the teaching-learning environment is central to the purpose of the community college. Change agent status, however, seems to impart too controlling or regulative an image, given the segmentation of the BHCC/REP from the teaching-learning environment as well as the unit´s distant association with the symbols of direct regulative control over the teaching-learning environment. Even the notion of improver is tenuous from the interpretive perspective because improvers would most appropriately

be those who are enacting an improved teaching-learning environment.
Choosing events and context to yield the interpretation that the
BHCC/REP is somehow living the improved environment with other
participants poses a challenge.

While rejecting "improver," it remains a possibility that could
be explored in a future analysis. Lindquist (1981), who introduces
the idea, notes a number of reasons why improving the teaching-learning
environment seems to suggest an important connection with a primary
purpose of the College. Staff of the BHCC/REP define many of their
activities in reference to this environment including planning,
grant development, and academic program reviews. Further, the teaching-
learning environment is central to the community college and some
BHCC/REP connection should be maintained with it. With this in
mind, the notion of "enhancer" of the teaching-learning environment
is recommended as a possible deeper meaning to be identified with the
REP through role enactment.

The shift from "improver" to "enhancer" when referring to the
BHCC/REP relationship to the teaching-learning environment seems
essential. Although in their active form _improve_ and _enhance_ are
mentioned as synonyms by _The American Heritage Dictionary_ (1982,
p. 648), it is also noted that _improve_ may suggest an act of relieving
an undesirable situation whereas _enhance_ suggests adding to something
already attractive or worthy.

"Enhancer" then becomes the current choice to describe the
BHCC/REP connection with the teaching-learning environment. In
contrast to improver, "living the enhanced environment" is suggestive

of many events in which the BHCC/REP has been directly involved
with enhancements of the teaching-learning environment of the College.

By engaging in activities which are seen in the context of
enhancing the teaching-learning environment, the processes (dynamic
elements) of the BHCC/REP may be seen as having a deeper purpose
and at the same time the BHCC/REP may be seen as being involved
in what is considered a primary purpose of the College. The BHCC/REP,
for example, has been responsible for designing and finding funding
for special programs for displaced homemakers and out-of-school
youth and has contributed to new programs being designated as priorities
for institutional resource allocations.

As for the BHCC/REP maintaining an important relationship with
the College regarding enhancement, (as required by the hoped for
meanings listed on p. 93) this may be suggested at least in part
by a reporting line to the President and membership on the
Administrative Council, Curriculum Committee, and Academic Policies
Committee. Using the insights of interpretive management, however,
these relationships in and of themselves are not enough; they must be
seen as involving enhancement of the teaching-learning environment
in some way. Even if these structured relationships deal with
enhancement, they alone may not be sufficient to make clear the
BHCC/REP´s relationship to enhancement even if the label of enhancement
is given the broadest and most encompassing interpretations. This
is due to a prevailing expectation of segmentation within organizations
of higher education. Organizational members in higher education,
students, faculty, and administrators, are encouraged to play out

their various roles within well established and respected units segmented one from another within the organization.

In addition to the segmentation suggested by the labels students, faculty, and administrator, at BHCC students also are encouraged to see themselves, for example, as freshmen or sophomores, business administration students, liberal arts students, and nursing students. Faculty see themselves as members of one teaching department or another. Members of the organization also see themselves as union (one of several possible bargaining units) or management. Overall, most activities within the College also take place within larger segments labeled Divisions which include Student Development, Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, Administration, and Planning and Development. Several substantial areas within the College are even staff by non-members employed through contracted services which manage security, the bookstore, and the cafeteria.

Kanter (1983) finds that in segmented organizations the compartmentalizing of actions, events, and problems tends to result in problems being seen as narrowly as possible. Few exchanges take place between segments, and in the main each "slice is assumed to stand or fall rather independently. . . . Even innovation itself can become a specialty in segmentalist systems - something given to the R & D department to take care of so that no one else has to worry about it" (p. 28). While in Kanter's view segmentation may be interpreted as a negative commentary, segmentation in higher education in the form of academic freedom, conventional classroom teaching, and departmentalization by academic specialization is

defended. The output of the academic enterprise in many ways is

nothing more than the pooling of the outputs of the various segments.

In attempting to establish and maintain an important relationship

with the remainder of the institution regarding the enhancement

of the teaching-learning environment, the segmented BHCC/REP faces

a particular challenge.

Noted as a dynamic factor, the BHCC/REP staff maintain a myriad

of working relationships. Perhaps the important relationship to

the College to be stressed in meaning (see p. 93) can be suggested

by association of the REP with those individuals likely to be most

influential in directly enhancing the teaching-learning environment.

This group may include individuals not normally represented in

BHCC/REP activities because of their lack of position either in

being able to direct assignments to the REP or in being among those

on the organization chart with whom relationships seem appropriate

for the REP. Connection with enhancement of the T-L-E opens up

the possibility of new and heretofore unexpected relationships.

Finally, some objective measure of enhancement in the teaching-

learning environment seems required in order for the BHCC/REP

relationship with the remainder of the College to be seen as effective.

Given the fact that the BHCC/REP has few direct regulative controls

over any part of the institution besides itself, the REP must rely

on association with other organizational members who are working

in and directly enacting the teaching-learning environment if

enhancement is to result.

This group of individuals with whom relationships may (or should)

be established in order to enhance the teaching-learning environment might be those individuals considered "champions" with regard to certain enhancements. Kanter (1983), Quinn (1980), Maidique (1980), and Peters and Waterman (1982) all speak of the importance of "champions," those organizational members who push ideas into action. They push "in part by reputation, by mentioning the new idea or the new practice on every possible occasion, in every speech, at every meeting" (Kanter, 1983, pp. 296-297). They are individuals who remain steadfast in their vision and keep the momentum up even when effort with regard to the enhancement wanes.

These prime movers are often the ones to initiate or adopt catch-phrases that become slogans for the new efforts:

> What is important about such communications in certainly not that they rest on pat phrases but that they are part of unequivocal messages about the firm commitment of the prime movers to the changes. It is easy for the people in the company to make fun of the slogans if they are unrelated to other actions or not taken seriously by the leaders themselves. Prime movers pushing a new strategy have to make clear that they believe in it, that it is oriented toward getting something that they want, because it is good for the organization. (Kanter, 1983, p. 297)

In this discussion a fundamental notion of the human activity system embedded in the BHCC/REP has begun to emerge. A primary reason for being for the BHCC/REP may indeed be the enhancement of the teaching-learning environment of the College. In addition to associating with organizational members who are themselves "champions" for various ideas that may be seen as enhancements, the BHCC/REP itself must become a "champion." According to Kanter, people in organizations are constantly trying to figure out what leaders

really mean and what is really important. They need to know which
of the many signals they receive really do have command value.
"Leaders say too many things, suggest too many courses of action,
for people to act on all of them" (Kanter, 1983, p. 297).

The BHCC/REP, it is argued, has communicated a number of things
about itself through both static and dynamic elements. The unit
needs to improve upon the signals it is sending out, and the context
it is creating for interpreting events associated with REP. The
BHCC/REP needs to communicate through the actions of its members
the REP's essential purpose forcefully enough, often enough, to
make the unit's intentions know. It must put forth, as Kanter (1983)
call them, "signposts in the morass of organizational messages"
(p. 298). As prime mover, not only for itself as a unit, but also
for the cause of enhancement of the teaching-learning environment
within the College, the BHCC/REP not only must "talk up the new
strategy but also manipulate those symbols which indicate commitment
to it. The devices which can be used to signal that organizational
attention is redirected include such mundane tools as: the kinds
of reports required, what gets on the agenda at staff meetings,
and the places at which key events are held" (Kanter, 1983, p. 298).
Even more powerful according to the interpretive perspective of
organization is the mutual enactment of the organization by its
members. Staff of the REP must embody the importance of purpose
and carry this embodiment into the structure of work relationships
on a consistent and continuing basis.

Summary of the Analysis

A problem situation has been identified in a human activity system called the BHCC/REP. In its first unstructured form, the problem emerged as expressions of concern from BHCC/REP staff that something was lacking in their overall understanding of the unit's role in the daily life of the College.

The analysis of the problem situation avoided pinpointing a particular problem, choosing instead to focus on the problem situation itself. The problem situation was seen to have both static and dynamic elements and the relationship among these elements, the climate of the situation, was one of uncertainty regarding coherence of the BHCC/REP unit and a limited ability to impart satisfactory meaning regarding the relationship of the BHCC/REP to its environment.

The essential issue in the problem situation was accepted as one of understanding and meaning. With this view of the problem situation established, an appropriate field of knowledge (the interpretive perspective) was chosen in order to delve more deeply into the issues of meaning within the problem situation.

Throughout the analysis, there was no commitment to correcting a particular manifestation of the problem; instead the focus was overall system improvement. During the analysis, a decision was made to view the human activity system from the perspective of improved meaning. From the interpretive perspective, this is achieved through framing BHCC/REP events and providing an appropriate reference context within which more satisfactory meanings may be interpreted.

Possible improved meanings were identified and an image of the improved system as an enhancer of the teaching-learning environment was identified as a context for the interpretation of BHCC/REP events.

C H A P T E R   V

ROOT DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF RELEVANT SYSTEM

Overview

Chapter V continues the formal use of the Checkland methodology.
A conceptual framework for the analysis of the BHCC/REP in practice
is defined in the section labeled Root Definition and described in
the section labeled Conceptualization. With the completion of
this last step, the purpose for using the methodology in reference
to the specific field situation in this study is realized.

Although the emphasis in Chapter V is on the special case of
the BHCC/REP, the discussion moves to a more abstract level. Although
based on the real world of people and their perceptions, this chapter
actually represents systems thinking about the real world problem
situation.

Perceptions about the real world BHCC/REP involve a complex
and changing mixture of images and interpretations. In the "systems
thinking about the real world" steps of the methodology, however,
discussion focuses on only a select number of perceptions relevant
to possible improvements in the problem situation within the BHCC/REP.
The comparison of the conceptual framework to the BHCC/REP involves
a discussion of several illustrative examples drawn from the field
situation.

Root Definition

The "root definition" is the essential meaning implied by a
specific human activity system. Checkland (1972) provides what
at first appears a forbiddingly terse explication of the term as
a "penetrating definition, derived from the richness of the analysis,
which is revealing to those involved in the day-to-day workings
of the system concerned" (p. 75). What Checkland is suggesting
is that every human activity system carries with it a deducible
reason for doing whatever it is that the system does. While sometimes
explicit, these basic reasons more often are implicit. Further,
they may be obscure, hidden from view by the turbulent field of
relationships and events which make up the daily life of the human
activity system.

In complex organizations, in particular, the underlying reason
for doing things in specific human activity systems often is not
clearly expressed or even fully understood (Argyris & Schon, 1978).
As a result, the basic reason for "being" may become synonymous with
how the system goes about doing its work. By introducing the notion
of root definition, Checkland directs attention toward efforts to
identify the more fundamental and elusive meaning represented by
the system, as interpreted by those involved. In developing root
definitions, the trick is to avoid using descriptions of how the
system carries out its purpose and concentrate instead on capturing
just the essence of the purpose itself.

Hence, as the systems thinking about the real world BHCC/REP

begins, it is important to bear in mind the assumption that a human activity system is always BEING something at the same time it is DOING something. In the case of the BHCC/REP, it was clear that as a human activity system it was DOING many things. What was not as clear to BHCC/REP staff, and apparently to some outsiders as well, was what the BHCC/REP was BEING while all of this activity was going on. The fundamental purpose of the turbulent field called the BHCC/REP was not being communicated, either by reference to the January, 1983 serial listing of institutional research, evaluation, planning, and development functions or by the collective activity of the system members. From the perspective of interpretive management, an otherwise successful REP did not function in a context adequate to permit satisfactory meaning to be interpreted from events.

The analysis in Chapter IV suggests that the human activity system embodied in the BHCC/REP can be conceptualized in a number of ways including:

- as a basic or applied research system;
- as a management assistance system;
- as a system producing symbols of effective management;
- as a system which signals effective management to the environment;
- as a system which changes the teaching-learning environment;
- as a system which improves (makes more effective) the teaching-learning environment;
- as a system which enhances (adds value to) the teaching-learning environment;

- as a system which displays the philosophical commitments of the College;

- as a system which establishes and maintains relationships with individuals working to enhance the teaching-learning environment.

Each of the descriptive phrases above captures possible ways to think about what the human activity system embodied in the BHCC/REP is BEING while it is DOING. In the analysis, it is argued that making clearer connections between the BHCC/REP and the enhancement of the teaching-learning environment of the College seems to promise the most improvement of the problem situation. With this in mind, the root definition of the abstract human activity system which will be conceptualized in the next section is stated as follows:

ROOT DEFINITION: A professionally-staffed system which is concerned with enhancing the teaching-learning environment of a publicly supported community college so that by such enhancement the college makes the best possible contribution to students and the community.

Checkland (1979) recommends that a root definition embody six basic areas. These six basic areas are the CATWOE elements displayed in Figure 2. Particularizing the CATWOE chart for the special case of the root definition expressed above yields:

CUSTOMERS - Students and others benefiting from the enhanced teaching-learning environment together with those responsible for maintaining the T-L-E;

ACTORS - Professional staff of the enhancement system;

TRANSFORMATIONS - Enhancing of the teaching-learning environment;

WELTANSCHAUUNG - The values expressed by the College Philosophy
(explicit) and the ethic associated with the profession (institutional
research, evaluation, and planning - implicit);

OWNERSHIP - System owned by the College and indirectly by the public;

ENVIRONMENTAL AND WIDER SYSTEM CONSTRAINTS - (implicit) Those imposed
by the processes of the College.

It should be clear that the root definition presented above
represents only one possible view of the human activity system
embodied in the BHCC/REP. The reason for choosing it over other
possibilities identified is that this view appears to offer the
potential for the most improvement in the system. Given what appears
to be a well-formed root definition, the next step is
conceptualization.

Conceptualization

This step in the Checkland methodology involves translating
the root definition's special view of the human activity system
embodied in the BHCC/REP into a systems model using the interpretive
perspective of organizations as a guide. Before proceeding,
consideration must be given to the elements required of a systems
model.

Most systems models are conceived as a pattern involving input,
throughput, and output. Katz and Kahn (1966) have been particularly

influential in establishing the basic view of organizations as
essentially that of an "energic input-output system in which the
energic return from the output reactivates the system" (p. 16).
Social organizations in this view are "flagrantly open systems in
that the input of energies and the conversion of output into further
energic input consist of transactions between the organization and
its environment" (p. 17). Based on this view, systems become cycles
of events and are thus dynamic in character. Because of this dynamic
character, information processing about the system's own functioning
in relation to the environment is particularly important. Such
processing enables the system to correct for any deviations from
its course. The general systems model is presumed to consist of
(a) some kind of arrangement for the procurement of material and
personnel; (b) some kind of process to transform raw materials into
final products; (c) some kind of procedure to dispose of products
(i.e., export them back to the environment); and (d) some kind of
mechanism to monitor the success of the overall endeavor in order
to provide feedback and make corrective action. In addition to
Checkland (1972, 1975, 1979) and Katz and Kahn (1966, 1978), sources
regarding systems in organizational theory include, for example,
Katz, Kahn, and Adams (1980), Burns and Stalker (1961), Caplow (1964),
and Gerwin (1981).

With specific reference to human activity systems, Checkland
(1979) recommends identifying the minimum number of action words
(verbs) necessary to describe fully the system named in the root
definition. To be consistent with the body of knowledge employed

in the analysis of the problem situation, an interpretive perspective
is adopted to identify the action words involved in transforming
system inputs into outputs.

As suggested by this perspective, the system must help provide
"interpretations that can become widely shared by organization
members so that their actions are guided by common definitions and
explanations of situations. Individual organization members in the
performance of their roles, [therefore] can apply a common system of
meaning in their own enactment processes" (Smircich, 1982, p. 22).
For the REP, the human activity system envisioned in the root definition
must act out its fundamental meaning. The system through its processes
must embody enhancement of the College's teaching-learning environment
(T-L-E). As such, the system should be expected to:

- identify opportunities to enhance T-L-E;

- call attention to enhancements of T-L-E wherever and whenever
  they are seen to occur;

- identify and work with enhancers of T-L-E;

- structure work relationships so that these relationships
  are concerned with enhancement of T-L-E.

In short, the system becomes a context in which most events associated
with the human activity system may be seen to connect with the
enhancement of the College's teaching-learning environment.

The design task, therefore, involves conceiving a system that
will help to construct an organizational reality involving the
enhancement of the College's teaching-learning environment. If the
social context so constructed is strong enough, it may create a

reference point for members of the organization and over time, may naturally constrain the behavior of those inside and outside of the system in the direction of enhancement when dealing with the system. In order to do this, however, to paraphrase Levitt (1975, p. 35) quoted earlier, the human activity system must push this idea of enhancement and everything it means and requires into every nook and cranny of the organization. It has to do this continuously and with the kind of flair that excites and stimulates the people in it.

Returning to the real world situation of the BHCC/REP, most staff members tend to envision the "inputs" to the BHCC/REP as "assignments" to the Division from the outside environment. The established processes of the Division including institutional research, academic program review, institutional planning, and grant proposal development transform these assignments into completed products. A diagram of this view of the BHCC/REP becomes the first level of conceptualization of the systems model.

Figure 5. Conceptualization - First Level

INPUTS

Assignments

TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES

Tools of Institutional
Research, Academic Program
Review, Institutional
Planning, and Grant
Proposal Development

OUTPUTS

Completed
Assignments
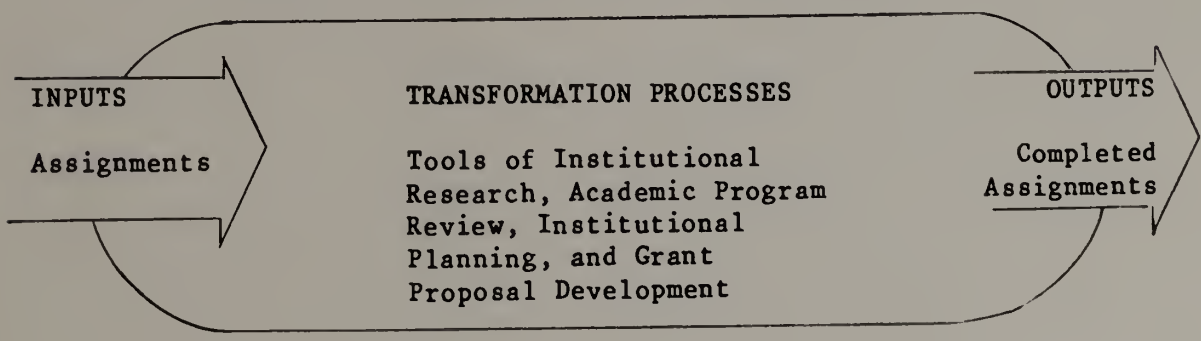
At the next, more detailed level of conceptualization, the system to enhance the teaching-learning environment (SETLE) includes characteristics suggested by the analysis. The description of SETLE presented above contains a number of verbs. According to Checkland, these verbs become a key to conceptualizing further detail in the systems mode. The phrases used to suggest action by the system together with the direct objects of the action may be displayed as follows:

- Identify - opportunities for enhancement;
- Call attention to - enhancements;
- Identify and work with - individuals considered to be enhancers;
- Structure in the context of enhancements - work relationships.

These action phrases suggest the following kinds of subsystems that might be added to the first level conceptualization of SETLE. "Seek out" could be conceived of as a subsystem that scouts the environment for enhancements, enhancement opportunities, and enhancers. "Call attention to" and "structure" could be conceived of as aspects of a subsystem that frames events and places them in the context of enhancement. "Encourage/support" could be conceived of as the total system. Further, from systems theory in general, it is clear that some sort of monitoring subsystem is also needed. Adding this new information to the systems diagram, produces the second level of detail.

INPUTS

DIVERSE ASSIGNMENTS

Coding system for assignments (**what**)
   Based on: "What can this assignment
   contribute to the enhancement of the
   teaching-learning environment (T-L-E)?"

Scouting system (**who**)
   Based on: 1. "Who else might be
   interested in this particular aspect of
   enhancement of the T-L-E?"
   2. "Can they benefit from results of
      assignment?"
   3. "Can they contribute to strengthening
      the connection of assignment to
      enhancement?"

Structuring system for work relationships
(**how**)
   Based on: "How can we work together
   on this to enhance T-L-E?"

Awareness
System –
Provide
contexts in
which events
are seen as
enhancements

Knowledge of
College's
T-L-E
(Resources,
strengths,
weaknesses,
aspirations
opportun-
ities)

Knowledge of
students/
faculty/
community
needs

Operational system – using REP tools to carry
   out assignments which are
   1. seen to relate to enhancement of T-L-E;
   2. seen to incorporate people concerned
      with similar kinds of enhancements to
      T-L-E;
   3. seen to involve a work relationship
      focusing on enhancing the T-L-E.

COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS

FLOW OF INFORMATION   ENHANCED T-L-E

Figure 6. Conceptualization – Second Level:
System to Enhance the Teaching-Learning Environment (SETLE).
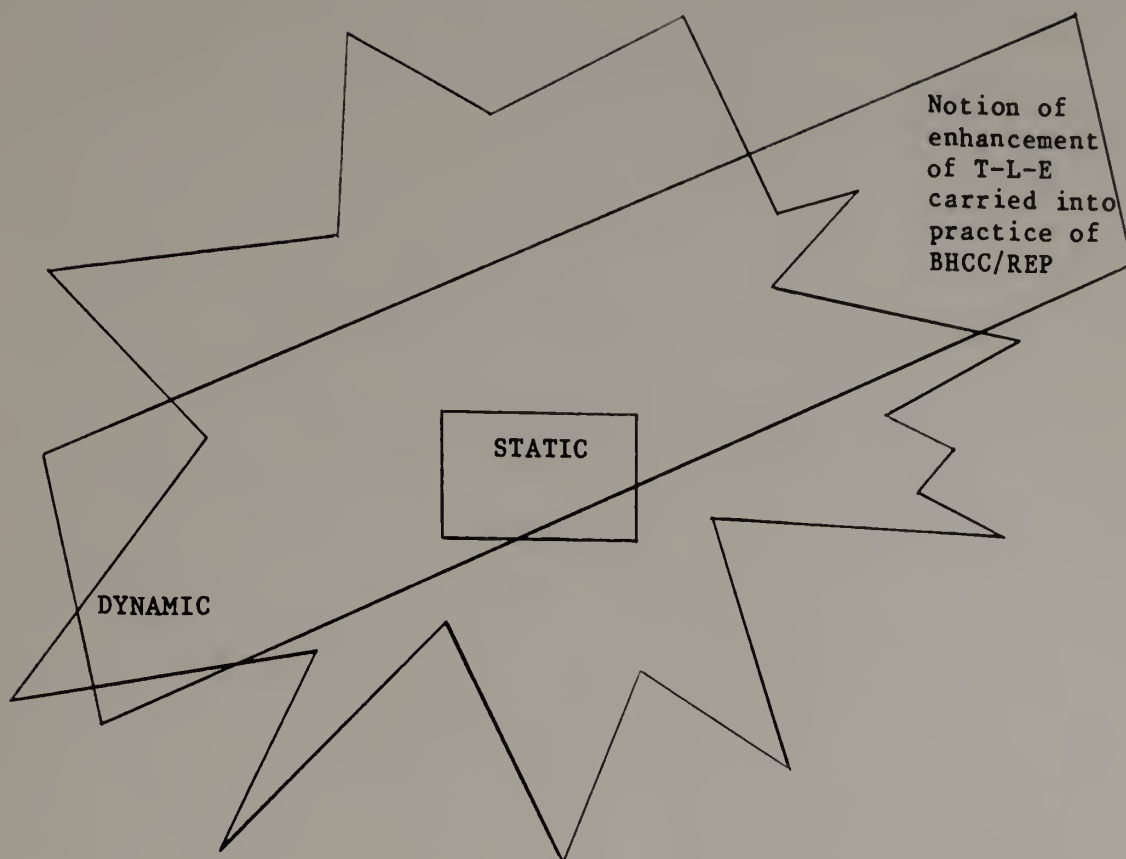
Figure 7. Strengthening the Context in which Events
Associated with the BHCC/REP are Interpreted.

Static elements provide minimal formal coherence. Dynamic
elements send confusing or ambiguous signals regarding the BHCC/REP
as an organizational unit.

To manage dynamic elements, strong imagery is needed to suggest
how the "abstract notion" of the BHCC/REP is to be practiced by staff
as they "live out" the organization in attitude, point of view, and
relationships.

Enhancement of teaching-learning environment is thought to be
a possible key to this new imagery for BHCC/REP staff. Using a
metaphor, it is as if a template were to be superimposed over Figure
6 which provides a clearer, more coherent context for the interpretation
of events surrounding the BHCC/REP.

C H A P T E R   VI

INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Overview

This final chapter reviews some of the more general implications
for REPs of the conceptual framework for REP practice. Attention is
given to the possible usefulness of the framework in guiding the REP
to a more central position within the organization. The study ends
with recommendations for future investigations which would complement
or extend the point of view developed in the current investigation.

The insights and observations which flow from the current
investigation are preliminary in scope. They are drawn from impressions
formulated as the result of a single organizational field study. As
such, their general applicability as guides to practice, both within
and outside the context under investigation, must be weighed against
the limitations inherent in the non-comparative case study approach
as outlined in Chapter II.

Theory of Organization and the REP

The investigation suggests that the events normally associated
with the REP can be seen to take on different meanings depending on
the context in which the events are interpreted. In doing so, it
seems to corroborate a major tenet of the interpretive perspective

of organizations applied to the special case of the REP, and it is directly related to the notion of REP practice.

Historically and in the technical literature, the REP and what it stands for involve a close, instinctive relationship to certain beliefs about organizations, specifically that there exists a pronounced coupling between the intentions and actions of organizational members (see for example Weick, 1976). The most common expression of such beliefs appears to be associated with what might be considered a rational management point of view of organizations. Referred to by many labels, "structural frame" (Bolman & Deal, 1982), "military metaphor" (Weick, 1979), "the rational model" (Peters & Waterman, 1982), and "functionalist paradigm" (Smircich, 1982), this point of view in its purest form seeks detached, analytical justification for all decisions. It insists on objective goals. Leaders lead by making decisions and regulating behavior. Directives are given and organizational members follow. Legitimate authority is established at the top. The exercise of authority is rational in seeking out data, forming opinions, arriving at decisions, and using and supporting the chain of command. Conflict at one level is resolvable by taking the case to the next higher level in the chain of command.

Colleges, however, are loosely coupled (Weick, 1976) organizations with weak regulative/control systems. Directives are rarely given and numerous levels of discretionary judgment can be counted on to interpret those directives or recommendations that are given. Everyone with an allegiance to, or whose thinking is dominated by, notions of staff, line, chain of command, strategy, tactics, tightening

controls, enforcing discipline, and clarifying responsibilities may be at a disadvantage in the collegiate environment. This is because, according to Weick (1979), in a complex organization "it [military metaphor] forces people to entertain a very limited set of solutions to solve any problem and a very limited set of ways to organize themselves" (p. 50).

Much has been made of REP's lack of organizational centrality in the descriptive literature. In the context of the military metaphor, the REP is mostly an administrative staff unit that exists primarily for the purpose of providing advice and service to line officers. The REP has access to line authority only indirectly through superiors occupying line positions. Thus, in the context of the military metaphor, the REP is connected to the regulative tools of organizational control in only a limited way. In most instances the REP is not connected at all.

Carrying the military metaphor or rational model into practice (i.e., using it as the basis for selecting appropriate behaviors and actions), it is no wonder that the REP is often seen as being on the periphery. This point of view constrains the REP to behave as if it were marginal. Indeed, using the rational model, military metaphor, or structural frame as a guide to organizational enactment for the REP subunit demands marginality. Once the REP acquires too much influence, too much power, too many tools for direct regulative control (i.e., is too successful in its escape from marginality), the condition is immediately recognized as inappropriate to an administrative staff subunit. Exceptions for individuals of

"recognized" status associated with the REP are, however, readily accommodated. The REP in general is expected nonetheless to support line management while line management is exercising legitimate authority in the chain of command. In this context Knapp's (1982) recommendation for an REP escape from marginality takes on real meaning. Simply put, Knapp suggests that the REP get close to the top of the chain of command, the chief administrator.

But what of a collegiate environment in which the usual assumptions inherent in the military metaphor break down? In such a situation, not only is the REP at a disadvantage, but everyone whose position is defined, all or in part, by the military metaphor may also be at a disadvantage, the president and other line officers included. Recognizing that the REP shares disadvantages with line administrators in perhaps in a more pronounced form, may be freeing. Instead of thinking of the REP as a staff unit, segmented, neutral, and aloof, the REP may be conceived of as one of many units striving to enhance the organization. The problems then faced by the REP staff become similar to those faced by other administrators. In essence they involve making sense in and of a loosely coupled organizational world. Perceptions of this world which assist the REP to be more effective, where these problems appear in more pronounced form, may assist in pointing toward improved understanding for other administrators in the organization as well.

In the specific case of the BHCC/REP, the organizational subunit is more extensive in scope than the general impression of REPs drawn from the descriptive literature. The unit reports to the President.

It has substantial claim on institutional resources. The BHCC/REP is a voting member of recognized collegiate governance committees within the institution. Yet, by following the accepted pattern of staff unit enactment and implicitly adhering to practice based almost exclusively on the rational model or military metaphor, the BHCC/REP is seen as lacking coherence. The REP is unable to establish meaning for organizational members regarding its presumed influence, influence as evidenced by the static elements associated with the BHCC/REP, such as reporting line, numbers of staff, etc. through its practice of the organization. The BHCC/REP, beginning with static elements suggestive of an influential position, may be in danger of becoming peripheral to the organization through its enactment of the dynamic elements of practice.

Recognizing, in spite of prior training which stresses belief and allegiance to one point of view regarding the organization, that other points of view are possible and even desirable can be a breakthrough. It is as if the act of riding a bicycle presents so compelling an image that, regardless of the mode of transportation, we insist on moving our feet and legs as if we were pedaling. Doing so while riding down a highway seated in the passenger seat of a car may present behavior which, although not totally offensive, contributes little to the act of arriving at a desired destination. As with the bicycle, the rational point of view regarding organizations, which spawns and supports initial development of REPs, is not necessarily the most useful image of the collegiate environment to adopt when seeking a theory to support REP organizational practice.

Fortunately, as research on the theory of complex organizations goes forward and knowledge accumulates, a number of equally coherent and, in some contexts, valid ways to view organizations are emerging. If, as in the case of the REP, a subunit is marginal or powerless when events associated with it are interpreted in one theoretical context describing the organization, it is useful to consider other, coherent, valid, defensible, and perhaps more compatible theoretical views of the organization. Such an analysis may turn up a context in which the normal events associated with the subunit, in this case the REP, may be seen to take on new, less marginal, more central and meaningful interpretations for the organization.

The caveat which must be included when interpreting events associated with the REP in different contexts is that care must be given to ensuring that the basic ethic, or world view, espoused by the unit remains and continues to be operative within the new context. A troubling example where this may not be the case is the pattern of practice for the REP implied or derived from organizational events interpreted in a political context. While offering a possible escape route from marginality for the REP, practice drawn from the political model emphasizes the influence of decision making by ways not directly related to the REP commitment to objective data and rational analysis. Instead, implications for practice drawn from the political model include coalition building, partisan behavior, and the exercise of non-legitimate influence (i.e., influence not explicitly sanctionable by legitimate authorities as identified by use of the military metaphor). All of these practices can be used

to influence decision making in ways not supported by the REP commitment to objective data and rational analysis. Regardless of context, this REP ethic or weltanschauung seems the fundamental characteristic required in order to keep the subunit distinguishable as an REP. Once this ethic disappears, it would seem that the REP has been transformed into something which is not an REP.

As in the case of the rational model, it is possible to assemble a coherent view of organizational events drawn from theories based on studies in political science. The perspective of organizations that Bolman and Deal (1982) refer to as the "Political Frame" and Baldridge (1971) refers to as the "Political Model" is most useful when applied to decision making in situations in which conflict is considered an unresolvable condition. Colleges offer what seems an ideal organizational environment in which to apply the political model (see Baldridge, 1971). Resources are chronically scarce in higher education. Those competing for the scarce resources may be assumed to be equally worthy[8] or they would not have been given membership in the organization and thus permitted to compete.

A condition of conflict is created which cannot be completely resolved. In the political model, conflict is not necessarily

---

[8]This assumes, for example, that no academic field of inquiry is inherently more worthy than any other. The investigator listened to deliberations, however, where this assumption appeared to be the focus of debate. Upon reflection, the real issue in these deliberations was the debate regarding the context in which the merits of various fields of inquiry were to be interpreted. Examples of contexts include the academic tradition and assumptions about the deeper meaning of higher education on the one hand and the importance of successful employment and the needs of the economy on the other.

considered a problem. It is considered natural and inevitable, a continuing condition that only can be managed. The context is one of competition and concession. Bargaining, negotiation, compromise, self-interest, and special interest are seen as dynamic characteristics of practice.

"Groups that win political battles are able to steer the organization in the directions that they choose" (Bolman & Deal, 1982, p. 174). In this context the military metaphor is seen as insufficient when applied to the College. The authority at the top does not have the exclusive ability or right to set goals and regulate behavior. Instead, individuals and groups with various resources and varying objectives each attempt to influence goals and decision making through bargaining. Authorities and partisans emerge, the first being the target of influence and the source of social control and the second being the source of influence and the target of social control. From this perspective, "it is costly for the [college] president to make any decision, however correct and necessary, that produces rebellion among any of the major constituencies" (Bolman & Deal, 1982, p. 135).

The REP is at a particular disadvantage when deducing practice from the political frame. In this context the rational search for data and decisions based on analysis are far from the main event. Instead, the emphasis is on the strategy and tactics of conflict. The political model's implications for practice, at least in logical extension, seem to sanction patterns of behavior on the part of the REP subunit which would violate the REP weltanschauung.

Some writers, however, see possibilities for the REP in the political model (see for example Firnberg & Lasher, 1983). The principal power base for the unit from a political standpoint is presumably the control of technical information about the organization and its tasks. From a long-range and very practical point of view, the revolution in computer-driven, decentralized management information systems is quickly reducing, both in theory and practice, REP control over technical information about the organization. Because of conflict with weltanschauung and the practical reality that access to data is a commonly shared characteristic of many organizational members beside those associated with the REP, an alternative to the military metaphor in addition to the one offered by the political model seems desirable.

Interpretive Perspective of the REP

The field investigation of the BHCC/REP suggests that the interpretive perspective of organizations offers attractive benefits when used as a context within which to establish a pattern of REP practice. First, the interpretive perspective offers a view of the organization in which members, through their own enactment of the organization, become important contributors in establishing what is considered real about the organization. From this perspective, the behavior of organizational members "as they practice the organization" is important. The theories, norms, and understandings about the organization which members share and rely upon in establishing their

practice of the organization are important. Collectively, organizational members create a context within which events associated with the REP are seen to take on meaning. Members, through their own behavior, have the power to help shape the interpretation given to these events. While some members may have more influence in this regard than others, everyone contributes.

Delving into the implications of the interpretive perspective as applied to the REP causes certain issues, such as the relationship between REP assignments and important institutional purposes, to come into a sharper focus than might be the case when considering the REP in the context of the military metaphor. The routine connection between specific assignments and the basic purpose of the institution is less important to the REP which functions in a helpful staff role than to the REP which endeavors through every assignment to enhance the way in which the institution carries out its fundamental purpose.

As the example of REP assignments illustrates, using the interpretive perspective does not require that new issues regarding the REP be identified, nor does it imply that important issues regarding the REP have been ignored by other perspectives. To the contrary, most issues relating to the REP seem to have been recognized in the literature and many have been the subject of investigation. What is different when using the interpretive perspective is the emphasis given to the context in which events are interpreted.

The REP is reflected in many elements of objective reality. Some of these elements, such as functional assignments, documents and other tangible products, and reporting lines, are relatively static.

As previously noted, these static elements by themselves contribute little to the understanding of the REP. Other elements, such as relationships involving members of the REP, are dynamic and appear to wield significant influence in establishing an understanding of the REP among members of the College. The context created by the way the REP is played out by REP members in relationships, in meetings, in daily behavior seems essential in establishing the relative importance or marginality of the REP.

The literature suggests that if experienced, respected, influential individuals are members of the REP, they bring these personal characteristics to the practice of the REP. These characteristics are not usually acquired by the REP as an organizational concept, however, because evidence indicates that gains made by the REP are lost when the individuals who exhibit these characteristics move on (Knapp, 1982).

In the case of the BHCC/REP, staff report that in their professional behavior in connection with the REP they are "mostly being themselves" as they play out the REP in practice. While this fact may not seem remarkable, it has consequences for the REP. If the REP is to have a less marginal, more influential organizational persona, it appears that this REP persona must be carried into practice by members. Members must reinforce this organizational persona by their own behavior. This can come about either by happenstance in the form of an influential person "being him or herself" in playing out the REP, or by REP staff consciously carrying into practice the concept of an organization which is importantly involved and

influential. Simply stated, through staff behavior the REP needs to be seen as a unit engaged in work fundamentally important to the College. Further, the REP needs to be seen as doing this work successfully and in the company of others who are also seen as important to the work being done.

Enactment without Artifice

The interpretive perspective suggests that members of the REP need to be more self-conscious about acting out the basic nature of the REP in practice. In considering this, members of the BHCC/REP voiced concern about what might be termed artifice in their practice of the organization. They protest that they do not want to be engaged in deliberate deception, or indeed, be associated with anything that gives the appearance of having been superficially contrived just to create an impression.

Thoughtfully and honestly applied, the implications of the interpretive perspective for the REP neither lead to deception and false impressions, nor do they result in professionals being distracted from their principal aim and basic responsibility. The current study suggests that it is possible to create and then to emphasize a fundamental and important role for the REP in organizational concept. Further, it is suggested that there are ways to assist members in the enactment of this role in the practice of the organization.

In the course of this study, however, it has become apparent that the route to most effective management of such an effort is

neither obvious nor should it be considered trivial. Using the
interpretive perspective in the special case of the BHCC/REP, there
is little specific research to turn to for guidance which relates
this perspective to the REP. Further, feedback regarding the enactment
process is difficult to capture, particularly when dealing in relatively
short time periods. In contrast to more direct applications of
regulative control, intervention through self-conscious organizational
enactment takes time to make its presence felt. Judgments derived
from the field situation, however, suggest that the enactment of the
concept of a consistent and importantly involved organization is
helpful to the REP.

In brief outline, the process first requires clarification of
the connections between the REP and its institution. This task requires
identifying contexts involving the REP in which connections with
fundamental and central purposes of the institution are possible.
This process may be easier in some organizations than in others. It
may be particularly difficult in large complex bureaucracies where
obvious connections with central purposes may be lost or obscured in
the jumble of roles, routines, processes, and procedures.

In the field situation, connecting the REP with central purpose
was found to be a creative process. It often requires what may
be thought of as inventing contexts. The term <u>inventing contexts</u>
is used advisedly because it highlights what seems to be a curious
aspect of the interpretive perspective when it is applied in practice.
A condition may exist in which events appear incoherent or trivial.
Once they are placed in a context in which they are seen to take on

important new meaning, however, it is as if the context always existed and it was just waiting there for someone to stumble over it. Further, having established the new meaning, the importance of the specific context in which this meaning was established in a sense disappears. While the issue of inventing contexts versus discovering pre-existing contexts can be discussed at length, in practice it is helpful to think of REP staff actively working at the process of invention. It implies something within our control and the results can be recognized as the product of staff effort.

Inventing useful contexts for interpretation of events encourages the REP to become the research unit in practice that is sometimes suggested in theory. The process noted in the Awareness System in Figure 6 requires thinking, research, and analysis. It often requires fresh new perspectives, new kinds of information, or at least more complete information than may be currently available. It also involves scouting the institution to know what is going on and to seek out people who are actively involved in the fundamental work of the organization.

In the case of the BHCC/REP the process of connecting it with the central purpose of the College is helped along by the use of the concept of enhancing the teaching-learning environment (T-L-E). This requires the REP to extend its regular practice to include developing and maintaining connections with the T-L-E, seeking out appropriate people to associate with, and creating new ways to view already established associations involving the REP. Further, the effort for the BHCC/REP requires that attention be given to structuring

adequately work relationships around the clear and central purpose of enhancing the T-L-E.

The bulk of the assignments coming to the BHCC/REP are not likely to change (at least in the short run) as the unit seeks to clarify its organizational persona. What may change is the way in which the unit looks at these assignments and the way the unit analyzes assignments. The REP needs to be atuned to possibilities for enhancement which are buried in assignments. The unit also needs to be able to recognize the people and relationships that must be developed to realize some of these possibilities for enhancement. While it may appear simplistic, an important step in finding something is to know what it is you are looking for and then to look for it actively. A chain of insightful interpretations which translated a BHCC/REP assignment to review the 1980 federal census data into a program of published topical papers written by faculty and staff is a good example.

Census data were considered an important source of insight regarding the College's future. Soon after the BHCC/REP was established in 1983, staff began sifting through reports from the 1980 census that were just then becoming available. An informal search identified a BHCC faculty member who was both skilled and interested in demographic analysis. By the late fall of 1983, he had become a regular contributor on the subject at REP staff meetings. His efforts soon began to take the form of a series of recommendations based on selected demographic patterns. Ultimately, these recommendations together with the related demographic analysis became the first published

BHCC/REP topical paper which provided not only recognition to the faculty author, but also provided a useful focal point for campus discussion regarding topics as varied as an on-campus day-care center and an ethnic studies center.

This effort brought members of the unit in contact with central institutional purpose in both a scholarly and practical way. It involved REP staff with a member of the faculty who was also importantly engaged in the effort, and it resulted in a useful confirmation of the REP's concern for and contribution to the College.

The system outlined in Chapter IV provides a scheme which assists members to develop patterns of behavior authentic to themselves, patterns which, when used in practice, realize or make known an important facet of the REP. Members make choices about personal identity and purpose as REP assignments pass through the SETLE system. As this process is played out, members create the enhancing organization for themselves and others. Members create and contribute to a better defined context within which events associated with the REP can be interpreted more coherently. Those interpreting events within the context of the REP are encouraged to see enhancement of the teaching-learning environment as truly the order of the day.

Framework for the Analysis of REP Practice

In suggesting the notion of a framework for the analysis of practice for the REP, the study attempted to demonstrate that such a framework is, in part, the application of a more comprehensive

perspective on organizations and the ways that they may be seen to behave. The interpretive perspective as identified by Smircich (1982), Smircich and Morgan (1982), or the symbolic frame as identified by Bolman and Deal (1982) focuses attention on members playing out the concept of organization. Myths, symbols, and the interpretation of events placed in an appropriately selected context are powerful elements in the practice of organizations. Calling attention to this fact in a way that encourages REP members to stand back and consider their own participation in and contribution to an effective organization is useful. The context and the formulation for incorporating this new perspective into daily practice, however, must be one in which objective data and thoughtful analysis play their defining role.

One possible system designed to encourage thinking about this is outlined in Chapter IV. Experience indicates that consciously applying the interpretive perspective to behavior in the organization is not something with which most REP staff are familiar. Indeed, for most members it represents an unfamiliar way of viewing the REP. The approach employed to assist REP staff to make the necessary shift in their perspective must be clear and apparent. The system must be something that, in effect, REP staff can carry comfortably with them into their daily practice of the organization. The old adage about keeping it simple applies here.

The SETLE system outlined in Chapter IV provides a context in which REP members can consciously make choices. The system does not automatically generate answers to the questions it poses. Rather, it

presents a patterned approach which helps to structure a continuing
dialogue regarding REP practice. This approach causes the REP
itself to become a topic of study for its members.

As revealed in the BHCC/REP field investigation, a matter that
requires particular attention is the connection between routine REP
assignments and the enhancement of the teaching-learning environment.
While REP assignments traditionally have been assumed to be important
in some context, establishing this importance on a routine basis is
typically secondary to the task of establishing a suitable technique
or process for carrying out the assignment ("staff support" perspective
versus the "important purpose" perspective). Once focus shifts to
include clarification of the connection between assignments and
important institutional purpose, it becomes apparent that the
connections are not always clear. The task of placing assignments
in this new context requires thought, analysis, and often invention.
The effort is important, however, because these connections themselves
become the context in which other members of the organization interpret
events associated with the REP.

Suggestions for Future Research

Most studies of the REP reported in the literature have focused
primarily on what Checkland would label static elements associated
with these units. These elements include the kinds of products
produced, reporting hierarchies, the number of personnel involved,
and selected staff characteristics. The dynamic elements associated

with REP practice which include relationships and substantive differences in points of view regarding organizations have received less attention.

The current study suggests that REP influence is principally tied to these dynamic elements, particularly those elements characteristic of the way REP members enact organizational meaning for the REP. In order to confirm the results of the current study, additional depth field studies are needed which focus on REPs and the prevailing modes of interpretation and understanding with regard to these units.

The interpretive perspective applied to organizations appears to provide a useful context within which to consider REP practice. While it clarifies some issues regarding the REP role, this perspective also seems to challenge aspects of established thinking with regard to REPs and their conventional approach to practice. Further efforts to apply and assess the implications of this perspective with regard to the REP in practice could be useful.

Even though organizational practice for the REP has been the central theme of the current study, something more fundamental seems to have threaded its way into the discussion. Those charged with institutional research, evaluation, and planning in higher education have a clear connection with efforts to assist organizational members to understand themselves and their institution better. The interpretive perspective emphasizes that meaning in organizations is a variable dependent on events and the context in which events are interpreted. Given the complexity of most institutions of higher education, it

may be assumed that many events associated with these organizations
are only vaguely coupled and beyond regulative control.

Placing organizational events in context and establishing a
range of supportive and shared meanings which portray the distinctive
character of the institution seems critical to what is generally
thought of as institutional research and planning. Perceiving of
the functions of institutional research and planning as aids in
establishing and maintaining institutions of higher education as if
they were cultures presents numerous possibilities for the REP role,
particularly as the unit relates to the institution's need to evoke
meaning from raw human experience.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alfred, R. L. (1974). Master plan for educational research and development, New York City Community College. Brooklyn, NY: City Community College. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 100 479)

Alfred, R. L., Fremer, J. A., & Lightfield, E. T. (1977). A growing role for institutional research. Community and Junior College Journal, 47(6), 32-34.

Alfred, R. L., & Ivens, S. H. (1978). A conceptual framework for institutional research in community colleges. New York: College Entrance Examination Board. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 154 865)

American Heritage Dictionary (2nd College ed.). (1982). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Anderson, J. E. (1979). Public policy-making (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Argyris, C., & Schon, D. A. (1978). Organizational learning. In Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective (pp. 8-29). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Baldridge, J. V. (1971). Power and conflict in the university: Research in the sociology of complex organizations. New York: Wiley.

Baskin, S. (1964). The educational researcher: Change agent or safety man? In C. H. Bagley (Ed.), Proceedings of 4th Annual

<u>National Institutional Research Forum: A Conceptual Framework</u>
<u>for Institutional Research</u>. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service
No. ED 057 070)

Beasley, K. L., Dingerson, M. R., Hensley, O. D., Hess, L. G., &
Rodman, J. A. (1982). <u>The administration of sponsored programs</u>.
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Berrien, F. K. (1968). <u>General and social systems</u>. New Brunswick,
NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Bettelheim, B. (1976). <u>On the uses of enchantment: The meaning</u>
<u>and importance of fairy tales</u>. New York: Knopf.

Blai, B., Jr. (1982). <u>Institutional research and long-range planning</u>
<u>in two-year colleges</u>. Bryn Mawr, PA: Author. (ERIC Document
Reproduction Service No. ED 220 117)

Board of Regents of Higher Education. (1983, January 3).
<u>Reorganization of public higher education in Boston: A report</u>
<u>to the Massachusetts General Court</u> (Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Senate Document No. 2165).

Bolman, F. deW. (1970). The deficiencies of institutional research.
In <u>Institutional Research: Proceedings of the Higher Education</u>
<u>Colloquium</u> (pp. 1-7). St. Louis, MO.

Bolman, L., & Deal, T. E. (1982). <u>Understanding organizations</u>.
Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University, Graduate School
of Education, Cambridge, MA.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1984). <u>Modern approaches to</u>
<u>understanding and managing organizations</u>. San Francisco:
Jossey-Bass.

Brouwer, P. J. (1964). The power to see ourselves. Harvard Business
    Review, 42, Nov/Dec, 156-165.

Bruner, J. S., & Postman, L. (1949). On the perception of incongruity:
    A paradigm. Journal of Personality, 18, 206-223.

Bunker Hill Community College. (1985). Fifth-Year report to Commission
    on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association
    of Schools and Colleges, Inc. Boston: Author.

Burns, T., & Stalker, G. M. (1961). The management of innovation.
    London: Tavistock Publications.

Caplow, T. (1964). Principles of organization. New York: Harcourt,
    Brace, & World.

Chase, J. S. (1984, May). Analysis and presentation: Demise or
    salvation? Paper presented at the Association for Institution
    Research 24th Annual Forum, Fort Worth, TX.

Checkland, P. B. (1972). Towards a systems-based methodology for
    real-world problem solving. Journal of Systems Engineering,
    3(2), 1-30.

Checkland, P. B. (1975). The development of systems thinking by
    systems practice-- a methodology from an action research program.
    In R. Trappel & F. de P. Hanika (Eds.), Progress in systems
    research: Vol. 2. (pp. 278-283). Washington, DC: Hemisphere
    Publishing.

Checkland, P. B. (1979). Techniques in `soft´ systems practice
    part 2: Building conceptual models. Journal of Applied Systems
    Analysis, 6, 41-49.

Checkland, P. B. (1981). Systems thinking, systems practices.

Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Cherdack, A. N. (1980). A changing ballgame for researchers: The budget is small but the expectations are big. Community and Junior College Journal, 51(3), 6-8.

Chick, R. J. (1974, July). Institutional research office development in eight community colleges. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of North-Central States AERA/SIG for Community-Junior College Research, Iowa City. (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED 095 959)

Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. B. (1982). The American community college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, M. D., & March, J. G. (1974). Leadership and ambiguity: The American college president. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Cosgriff, S. J. (1984, May). The institutional researcher within higher education environments. Paper presented at the Association for Institution Research 24th Annual Forum, Fort Worth, TX.

Crozier, M. (1976). Comparing structures and comparing games. In G. Hofstede & S. Kassem (Eds.), European contributions to organization theory (pp. 193-207). Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum.

Division of Planning and Development File Document #83-14. (1983, January 26). Re: Description Division of Planning and Development. Bunker Hill Community College.

Dressel, P. L. (1970). Some reasons for the deficiencies. In Institutional Research: Proceedings of the Higher Education Colloquium (pp. 8-21). St. Louis, MO.

Dressel, P. L., Bolman, F. deW., Cammack, E. F., Johnson, F. C., Kimsey, L. A., LeLong, D. C., Mason, T., Pratt, S. B., & Saupe, J. L. (1971). Institutional research in the university: A handbook. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dror, Y. (1971). Ventures in policy sciences. New York: American Elsevier Publishing Co.

Fenske, R. H. (1981). Setting institutional goals and objectives. In P. Jedamus, M. W. Peterson, & Associates, Improving academic management: A handbook of planning and institutional research (pp. 177-199). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Festinger, L., & Katz, D. (Eds.). (1953). Research methods in the behavioral sciences. New York: Dryden Press.

Fincher, C. L. (1983, June). The politics of information. In J. W. Firnberg & W. F. Lasher (Eds.), New directions for institutional research, No. 38: The politics and pragmatics of institutional research (pp. 11-24). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Firnberg, J. W., & Lasher, W. F. (Eds.). (1983, June). New directions for institutional research, No. 38: The politics and pragmatics of institutional research. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Frankenhuis, J. P. (1977). How to get a good consultant. Harvard Business Review, 55(6), 133-139.

Galbraith, J. (1977). Organization design. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Gardner, M. (1960). The annotated Alice. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.

Gerwin, D. (1981). Relationships between structure and technology. In P. C. Nystrom & W. H. Starbuck (Eds.), Handbook of organizational design: Vol. 2. Remodeling organizations and their environments (pp. 3-38). New York: Oxford University Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.

Gould, L. N. (1983). Institutional research: A distinct function or a subsumed function of higher education management? Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Governance Committee of Bunker Hill Community College. (1984). Governance document of the College forum of Bunker Hill Community College. Boston: Bunker Hill Community College.

Gross, A. G. (1977). Community college institutional research today. (Topical Paper No. 62 of ERIC Clearing House for Junior Colleges and American Educational Research Association/Special Interest Group for Community-Junior College Research.) Los Angeles: California University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 139 493)

Haas, R. M. (1981). Winning acceptance for institutional research and planning. In P. Jedamus, M. W. Peterson, & Associates, Improving academic management: A handbook of planning and institutional research (pp. 539-554). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Haase, A. M. B., & Gulko, W. W. (1978). Faculty perceptions of

the institutional research function: What's a nice person like you doing in a place like this? In _Special problems of institutional researchers_ (Monograph No. 3, pp. 15-25). Honolulu, HA: The Center for Educational Management Systems, The University of Hawaii.

Hickson, D. J., Hinings, C. R., Lee, C. A., Schneck, R. E., & Johannes, M. (1971). A strategic contingencies' theory of interorganizational power. _Administrative Science Quarterly_, _16_, 216-229.

Hipps, G. M. (Ed.). (1982, March). _New directions for institutional research, No. 33: Effective planned change strategies_. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hubbard, R. E. (1964). A conceptual framework for institutional research: Three points of view. In C. H. Bagley (Ed.), _Proceedings of the 4th Annual National Institutional Research Forum: A Conceptual Framework for Institutional Research_. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 057 070)

Jacobson, R. L. (1982). A case in point: Massachusetts system thrown into turmoil by a wrangle over finances and governance. _The Chronicle of Higher Education_, _23_(22), 1, 4-5.

Jedamus, P., Peterson, M. W., & Associates. (1981). _Improving academic management: A handbook of planning and institutional research_. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kanter, R. M. (1979). Power failure in management circuits. _Harvard Business Review_, _57_(4), 65-75.

Kanter, R. M. (1983). _The change masters_. New York: Simon and

Schuster.

Katz, D. (1953). Field studies. In L. Festinger & D. Katz (Eds.), Research methods in the behavioral sciences (pp. 56-97). New York: The Dryden Press.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1966). The social psychology of organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). The social psychology of organizations (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Katz, D., Kahn, R. L., & Adams, J. S. (Eds.). (1980). The study of organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Keller, G. (1983). Academic strategy: The management revolution in American higher education. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press.

Kelley, R. E. (1979). Should you have an internal consultant? Harvard Business Review, 57(6), 110-120.

Knapp, M. S. (1979, April). Factors contributing to the development of institutional research and planning units in community colleges: A review of the empirical evidence. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association/Special Interest Group-Community and Junior College Research, San Francisco. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 168 663)

Knapp, M. S. (1980). Process by which research-evaluation-planning units develop in educational organizations: Building a general model from the literature on formal organizations and exploratory case research. Unpublished manuscript, Stanford University,

School of Education, Sociology of Education Department, Palo Alto, CA.

Knapp, M. S. (1981a). <u>Summary of findings: Study of institutional research and planning unit development in California community colleges</u>. Menlo Park, CA: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 203 921)

Knapp, M. S. (1981b). The creation and maintenance of research-evaluation-planning units in California community colleges: An exploratory organizational study. <u>Dissertation Abstracts International</u>, <u>41</u>, 4848A. (743396 Order No. AAD81-08959)

Knapp, M. S. (1982, March). <u>Organized expertise: Building and sustaining an institutional research and planning capability in college administration</u>. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Kohl, P. L., Lach, I. J., Howard, J. M., & Wellman, F. L. (1980). <u>Survey of the institutional research function in Illinois public community colleges: 1980</u>. Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Board. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 191 520)

Kotler, P. (1975). <u>Marketing for nonprofit organizations</u>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kotter, J. P. (1982). What effective general managers really do. <u>Harvard Business Review</u>, <u>60</u>(6), 156-167.

Kuhn, T. S. (1970). <u>The structure of scientific revolutions</u> (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lasher, W. F., & Firnberg, J. W. (1983). The future of institutional

research. In J. W. Firnberg & W. F. Lasher (Eds.), <u>New directions</u>
<u>for institutional research, No. 38: The politics and pragmatics</u>
<u>of institutional research</u> (pp. 89-100). San Francisco:
Jossey-Bass.

Lawrence, P. R., & Lorsch, J. W. (1967). <u>Organization and environment:</u>
<u>Managing differentiation and integration</u>. Homewood, IL: Richard
D. Irwin.

Levitt, T. (1975). Marketing myopia. <u>Harvard Business Review</u>,
<u>53</u>, 26-173 <u>passim</u>.

Levitt, T. (1977). Marketing when things change. <u>Harvard Business</u>
<u>Review</u>, <u>55</u>(6), 107-113.

Levitt, T. (1980). Marketing success through differentiation-- of
anything. <u>Harvard Business Review</u>, <u>58</u>(1), 83-91.

Lewis, R. I. (1984, May). <u>Institution research and planning: Different</u>
<u>terms-- same activity?</u> Paper presented at the Association for
Institutional Research 24th Annual Forum, Fort Worth, TX.

Lindquist, J. (1981). Improving the teaching-learning environment.
In P. Jedamus, M. W. Peterson, & Associates, <u>Improving academic</u>
<u>management: A handbook of planning and institutional research</u>
(pp. 289-303). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Maidique, M. A. (1980). Entrepreneurs, champions, and technological
innovations. <u>Sloan Management Review</u>, <u>21</u>(2), 59-76.

Maister, D. H., & Lovelock, C. H. (1982). Managing facilitator
services. <u>Sloan Management Review</u>, <u>23</u>(4), 19-31.

March, J. G. (1976). The technology of foolishness. In J. G. March
& J. P. Olsen, <u>Ambiguity and choice in organizations</u> (pp. 69-81).

Bergen, Norway: Universitetsforlaget.

March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1976). Ambiguity and choice in organizations. Bergen, Norway: Universitetsforlaget.

March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). Organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

McCaskey, M. B. (1979). The hidden messages managers send. Harvard Business Review, 57(6), 135-148.

McGregor, D. (1960). The human side of enterprise. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Merton, R. K. (1968). Social theory and social structure (enlarged ed.). New York: The Free Press.

Middaugh, M. F. (1984). An empirical evaluation of boundary spanning as a conceptual framework for examining the organizational roles of offices of institutional research. Paper presented at the Association for Institutional Research 24th Annual Forum, Fort Worth, TX.

Morgan, G. (1980). Paradigms, metaphors and puzzle solving in organizational theory. Administrative Science Quarterly, 25(4), 605-622.

Morgan, G. (1981). Paradigm diversity: Threat or opportunity. Paper presented at the meeting of the National Academy of Management, San Diego, CA.

Mouzelis, N. P. (1967). Organisation and bureaucracy: An analysis of modern theories. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.

Nash, M. (1983). Managing organizational performance. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Peters, T. J. (1979). Leadership: Sad facts and silver linings. Harvard Business Review, 57(6), 164-172.

Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H., Jr. (1982). In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies. New York: Warner Books.

Quade, E. S., & Boucher, W. I. (Eds.). (1968). Systems analysis and policy planning: Applications in defence. London: Elsevier.

Quinn, J. B. (1977). Strategic goals: Process and politics. Sloan Management Review, 19(1), 21-37.

Quinn, J. B. (1980). Strategies for change: Logical incrementalism. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin.

Rice, G. (1979). Institutional researcher in the two-year college: Messiah or leper? In R. G. Cope (Ed.), New directions in institutional researcher, No. 23: Professional development for institutional research (pp. 73-79). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Richardson, R. C. (1981). Community college: Institutional researchers and the management issues of the eighties. New Directions for Community Colleges. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Saunders, L. E. (1983). Politics within the institution. In J. W. Firnberg & W. F. Lasher (Eds.), New directions for institutional research, No. 38: The politics and pragmatics of institutional research (pp. 25-37). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schmidtlein, F. A. (1975). An analysis of decision strategies employed in the governance of higher education. In R. G. Cope (Ed.), Information for decisions in postsecondary education.

Tallahassee, FL: Association for Institutional Research.

Sheehan, B. S. (1971). The role of institutional research in support of policy formulation. In C. T. Stewart (Ed.), Institutional research and institutional policy formulation. Proceedings of the Association for Institutional Research 11th Annual Forum. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 061 590)

Sheehan, B. S. (1974). The question of a synthesis in higher education management. In Innovative systems: Solution or illusion? Proceedings of College and University Systems Exchange 1974 CAUSE National Conference.

Sheehan, B. S. (1977). Reflections on the effectiveness of informational support for decision makers. In New directions for institutional research, No. 15 (pp 89-102). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sheehan, B. S. (1981). Developing effective information systems. In P. Jedamus, M. W. Peterson, & Associates, Improving academic management: A handbook of planning and institutional research (pp. 510-538). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Skinner, W., & Sasser, W. E. (1977). Managers with impact: Versatile and inconsistent. Harvard Business Review, 55(6), 140-157.

Smircich, L. (in press). Implications of the interpretive perspective for management study. In L. L. Putnam & M. Pacanowky (Eds.), Communicating and organizing: An interpretive approach. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Smircich, L. (1982). Implications of the interpretive perspective for management theory. Unpublished manuscript, University

of Massachusetts, School of Business Administration, Amherst.

Smircich, L., & Morgan, G. (1982). Leadership: The management

of meaning. The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 18(3),

257-263.

Smyth, D. S., & Checkland, P. B. (1976). Using a systems approach:

The structure of root definitions. Journal of Applied Systems

Analysis, 5(1), 75-83.

Stecklein, J. E. (1970). The role of institutional research director

in decision-making. In P. S. Wright (Ed.), Institutional research

and communication in higher education. Proceedings of the

Association for Institutional Research 10th Annual Forum on

Institutional Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service

No. ED 046 093, microfiche only)

Steele, F. (1982). The role of the internal consultant: Effective

role-shaping for staff positions. Boston: CBI Publishing.

Tetlow, W. L. (1983). The pragmatic imperative of institutional

research. In J. W. Firnberg & W. F. Lasher (Eds.), New directions

for institutional research, No. 38: The politics and pragmatics

of institutional research (pp. 3-10). San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass.

Trow, M. (1978). Dilemmas in institutional research. In Special

problems of institutional researchers (Monograph No. 3, pp. 1-7).

Honolulu, HA: The Center for Educational Management Systems,

The University of Hawaii.

Uhl, N. P. (Ed.). (1983). New directions for institutional research,

No. 37: Using research for strategic planning. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass.

Van Ausdle, S. L. (1980, April). *An approach to comprehensive institutional planning for the 1980's*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 184 634)

Vickers, G. (1968). *Value systems and social process*. New York: Basic Books.

Vickers, G. (1971). *Freedom in a rocking boat: Changing values in an unstable society*. New York: Basic Books.

Vickers, G. (1973). *Making institutions work*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Vickers, G. (1983). Human systems are different. *Journal of Applied Systems Analysis*, *10*, 3-14.

Vickers, G. (1984). The art of judgement. In D. S. Pugh (Ed.), *Organization theory: Selected readings* (2nd ed., pp. 183-201). Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books.

Weick, K. E. (1969). *The social psychology of organizing*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *21*(1), 1-19.

Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Division of Planning and Development Goals - FY 1984

The functional areas assigned to the Division are:

o institutional research (formal institutional planning);

o planning;

o academic program review;

o development.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

1. Develop improved system for analyzing BHCC student data tape using Regents' computing center at Causeway Street, Boston. (To be completed by October 31, 1984)

2. Detailed analysis of BHCC enrollment by program, age, ethnicity, and geographic area. (To be completed by November 15, 1983)

3. Demographic study of BHCC service area. (To be completed by January, 1984)

4. Further analysis of IP's and N's. (Ongoing)

5. Study of laboratory space and projection of future needs. (To be completed by January, 1984)

6. Conduct preliminary input and output analysis in conjunction with admissions and placement for the three programs under review during 83-84. These areas include culinary arts, business administration, and hotel/restaurant management. (To be completed by December 31, 1983)

7. Develop institutional fact sheet for Trustees and others

interested in "data" facts regarding BHCC. (To be completed by October 30, 1983)

PLANNING

1. Prepare annual update for BHCC Master Plan. (To be completed by April, 1984)

2. Prepare planning reports on the following program areas:

    o Radiation Therapy Technician (To be completed by January, 1984)

    o Chemical Technology (To be completed by January, 1984)

    o Production Engineering/Robotics (To be completed by Spring, 1984)

    o Computer Operations – A. S. Degree (Implementation plan to be completed during Spring, 1984)

3. Planning for and appointment of an advisory task force on the utilization of BHCC services and facilities by elders. (To be completed by November 15, 1983)

4. Coordinate BHCC, RCC, and U/Mass Boston planning efforts and provide leadership in areas of RCC/BHCC collaboration. (Ongoing)

5. Refine for resubmission the description of the Division of Planning and Development for inclusion in the 1984/85 catalogue.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

1. Draft procedural outline for conducting in-house program reviews in keeping with the Regents' timelines and requirements. (To be completed by November 15, 1983)

2.   Coordinate Program Reviews specified by the Regents.

     (Ongoing through August, 1984)

     o   Culinary Arts

     o   Hotel/Restaurant/Travel Management

     o   Business Administration

DEVELOPMENT

1.   Draft recommendation for the development function at BHCC
     which will include:

     o   Procedures for involving key individuals in the proposal
         development process;

     o   Equitable assignment of writing and other proposal
         development tasks;

     o   Incentives for involvement of faculty and other BHCC
         personnel in the grant process;

     o   Procedures for the implementation and administration
         of funded projects.

2.   Continued expansion of CESP in conjunction with other BHCC
     efforts with Business and Industry.

3.   Administer the Education/Training Program with the Welfare
     Department.

4.   Continued support in the implementation of the Electronic
     Technician Certificate.

5.   Support and administration of BHCC's Chapter 636
     responsibilities with Charlestown High School.

6.   Potential funding targets to be considered in FY 84 include:

     o   Title III Strengthening Institutions;

o   Occupational Education;

o   Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA);

o   FIPSE;

o   S and H Foundation.

Appendix B

Division of Planning and Development Goals - FY 1985

1. Create a more unified, better coordinated, and effective Development Program for the College.

2. Follow up on Data General proposal and initiate meetings with personnel from Prime Computer regarding discount and/or gift of computer hardware.

3. Develop Cooperative Education Proposal in conjunction with the International Center for Cooperative Education and BHCC Division of Academic Affairs.

4. Prepare the College's Master Plan Update for AY 1984-85 involving a detailed review of institutional goals and more substantial revision of institutional goals and more substantial revision of the BHCC Master Plan for submission to Regents during FY 85.

5. Complete required Institutional Program Reviews - Medical Radiography and Nuclear Medicine Technology.

6. Prepare in conjunction with the administrative staff, a Three Year Spending Plan for the use of Voc. Ed. funds.

7. Continue development of a routine research system to be used to supply manpower and student interest data for new program planning.

8. Continue to expand and refine data base for use in institutional research - (emphasis on retention, attrition, graduation).

9.   Continue to expand CESP effort.

10. Design three action programs for elders at BHCC:

     a. Elder volunteer and employment opportunities at BHCC

     b. Pre-retirement and retirement training

     c. College of the Third Age/"My Turn" kind of instructional
         program.

11. Continue to develop Educational Collaborative with area public
     schools.

     a. Law and Education Seminars in the schools - prepare grant
         proposal

     b. Design NSF grant proposal

     c. Manage the Computer Training program for public school
         administrators

     d. Initiate "Computers and Kids" program for elementary school
         students in the schools.

12. Design Graphic Arts Program for Charlestown High School funded
     by Governor's special public school initiative.

13. Continue to manage Phase II - Chapter 636 at CHS.

14. Provide staff for RCC/UMB/BHCC collaborative effort.

15. Continue research on C.A.E., International Business, and Dietary
     Assistance Program.

16. Staff research project sponsored by BHCC Educational Motivation
     Committee.

17. Continue with Three Year Research Project on Boston Public
     School Graduates/Minority Retention sponsored by the Cox
     Foundation.

18. Form senior level BHCC enrollment project task force as required
    by the Regents and submit reports to state-wide enrollment
    projection committee.

19. Coordinate Regents MEEP and MALP aid programs.

20. Continue to develop Learning Disabilities Grant Proposal in
    conjunction with Student Development.

21. Prepare displaced homemaker grant proposal under
    Voc. Ed. displaced homemaker program as well as follow up
    proposals for Governor's public school program.

22. Continue to expand communications with business and industry
    management personnel, providing information about the college
    and relevant services.

23. Assist the Division of Planning and Development in analyzing
    employment trends in business and industry and designing
    appropriate programmatic responses.

24. Provide liaison between business and industry and the Division
    of Continuing Education, distributing information about courses,
    programs, special on-site services including development of
    seminars and workshops as appropriate.

25. Continue to assist in the reorganization of the College Voc.
    Ed. Advisory Council.

26. Develop plans and structure for a "Business/Industry Round
    Table."

27. Assist in research for curriculum development of new certificate
    and degree programs reflecting changes and needs in fields
    such as medicine and "high-technology."

28. Develop a descriptive informational brochure covering services
    of the College of interest to business and industry.

29. Inform business and industry that their training programs
    may be considered for college accreditation through the College's
    Community Educational Services Program.