

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Devron Alexander Gaber for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education presented on November 14, 2002.

Title: Provincial Coordination and Inter-Institutional Collaboration in British Columbia's College, University College, and Institute System.

Abstract approved _____ (Redacted for Privacy)
George H. Copa

The purpose of this study was to better understand the historical development of the British Columbia (B.C.) community college, university college, and institute system with the focus on the changing nature of voluntary inter-institutional collaboration in relation to provincial coordination. The study also examined the related themes of centralization and decentralization within B.C.'s system and the development of a provincial system of autonomous institutions.

The methodology used was qualitative, and more specifically, interpretive in nature and based on the historical method and the underlying assumptions of hermeneutics. The researcher began by analyzing pertinent primary and secondary sources of literature in relation to the study's purpose. The findings from the literature analysis formed the basis for interview questions that were asked of 10 key informants to fill gaps in understanding and confirm findings.

The study found that the B.C. system began as a decentralized group of autonomous, community-oriented institutions but became more centrally coordinated by government in the late 1970s and early 1980s, largely because of increased costs and a worsening economy. The 1990s witnessed a high level of centralized decision making with stakeholder involvement, which has been replaced by a move towards decentralization and greater institutional autonomy in

the early 2000s based on the market ideology of the new government. Throughout the decades, the B.C. system has had a history of voluntary collaboration but that collaboration has been gradually blended over time with provincial coordination as government built a system of autonomous institutions.

The main conclusions of the study are that an appropriate balance may be achievable between centralization and decentralization in order to maintain a coherent system of accountable, autonomous institutions but would need systematic efforts by government and institutions and a policy framework for system governance. Such a balance may be achieved by learning from the lessons of B.C.'s rich history and from the experiences of other jurisdictions. To achieve system goals, the Ministry and institutions could build on the history of voluntary collaborative efforts, which seem particularly important among educators at the program level. The Ministry might reward such collaboration and hold institutions accountable for it.

©Copyright by Devron Alexander Gaber

November 14, 2002

All Rights Reserved

Provincial Coordination and Inter-Institutional Collaboration in
British Columbia's College, University College, and Institute System

by

Devron Alexander Gaber

A DISSERTATION

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Doctor of Education

Presented November 14, 2002

Commencement June 2003

Doctor of Education dissertation of Devron Alexander Gaber presented on
November 14, 2002.

APPROVED:

(Redacted for Privacy)

Major Professor, representing Education

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of the School of Education

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.



Redacted for Privacy

Devron Alexander Gaber, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank a number of individuals who assisted him in the preparation of this dissertation. First and foremost, he would like to thank Dr. George Copa who provided consistent, timely, and expert guidance from the inception of the nature and purpose of this study through all the various phases of research and throughout the writing and revision process. Dr. Copa has helped make the author's entire doctoral journey a deeper learning experience and a more enjoyable one.

The author would also like to express his gratitude to the other members of his Dissertation Committee who provided valuable feedback on the development of the dissertation. The members of the committee, other than Dr. Copa, include Dr. Sam Stern, Dr. Steven Rubert, Dr. Greg Lee, and Dr. John Dennison. The author is especially appreciative of the assistance from Dr. Dennison who helped the author find "fugitive literature," consisting of obscure documents from the past that added depth to the review of literature in Chapter 4.

The author would also like to thank Dr. Paul Gallagher, who worked with the researcher in the capacity of research advisor. In this role, Dr. Gallagher was able to use his years of experience in leadership roles in the B.C. college, university college, and institute system to assist the researcher by identifying important literature, suggesting appropriate interviewees, and providing feedback on the initial findings from literature. The researcher would also like to thank Al Atkinson, a senior administrator in the B.C. system, for serving as an excellent sounding board for ideas and findings as the research progressed.

The author is also very grateful to the 10 interviewees, listed in Appendix C, for giving so willingly of their time in order to help the researcher develop a deeper understanding of the historical development of the B.C. system in relation to the research purpose. As well, the researcher would like to thank Ms Lona McRae, who completed the transcribing for the research and spent many hours with the

researcher trying to work out the gremlins in the word processing program to arrive at a polished final product. Finally, the author would like to thank his employer, the Board of the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology, for supporting him to complete this doctoral program by allowing him to take time away from work to complete the coursework and dissertation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	1
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	2
DEFINITIONS	2
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	3
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
RELATED STUDIES	9
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS	12
ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH	14
SUMMARY	14
ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION.....	15
APPENDICES	16
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	17
COORDINATED SYSTEMS, MULTICAMPUS SYSTEMS, AND QUASI-SYSTEMS	17
FUNCTIONS AND BENEFITS OF COORDINATED AND MULTICAMPUS SYSTEMS.....	19
Accountability	22
Budgeting and coordination of programs.....	24
Strategic planning.....	25
Distance education	26
COLLABORATION VERSUS COORDINATION.....	28
CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS	31

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
THE TREND TOWARD COMPETITION IN HIGHER EDUCATION ..	33
SUMMARY	35
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	39
HERMENEUTICS	39
Hermeneutics defined.....	39
Modern hermeneutics.....	40
Gadamer's dialectical hermeneutics	42
HISTORICAL RESEARCH METHOD	45
The subjective nature of historical research.....	45
Methods of historical research	47
Oral history	48
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES	48
STUDY PARTICIPANTS	54
STRATEGIES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	54
Credibility	55
Dependability	57
Confirmability	58
Transferability	60
EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CRITICISM.....	61
RESEARCHER DISCLOSURE STATEMENT	62
STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS.....	66
SUMMARY	67
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE	68

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
A BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE	69
The beginnings of colleges as autonomous institutions.....	70
Increasing centralization and the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act	71
Growing cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions	73
The Access for All strategy.....	74
Constituency-based governance in the 1990s and the fragmentation of the system	75
 1962 TO 1969: THE BIRTH OF AUTONOMOUS COLLEGES AND THE BEGINNINGS OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION.....	 77
The impact of the Macdonald Report.....	78
The important role of school boards	84
Local responsiveness and institutional autonomy.....	86
The lack of direction from government	89
Early efforts at voluntary coordination: The role of the Academic Board in articulation and transfer.....	91
The formation of the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C.	96
Early calls for provincial coordination.....	98
Summary for 1960 to 1969	101
 1970 TO 1977: DEMANDS FOR GREATER PROVINCIAL COORDINATION AND THE BEGINNINGS OF A COLLEGE SYSTEM.....	 102
The continuing development of community-oriented and autonomous institutions	103
The melding of regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes	105
Government's increasing interest in developing a provincial system.....	107
The Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia	112
Various reports pointing towards greater provincial coordination	115
The Academic Board and articulation and transfer.....	121
The formation of the British Columbia Association of Colleges.....	124
Summary for 1970 to 1977	125

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
1977 TO 1983: CENTRALIZED COORDINATION BY GOVERNMENT OF A PROVINCIAL COLLEGE SYSTEM	126
The perceived lack of coordination among colleges in the mid- 1970s	127
The 1977 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act.....	129
Reaction to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act.....	132
The short life of the three intermediary councils	137
The reduction in school board involvement in college governance....	141
Government restraint and its impact on program rationalization.....	142
Integrated five-year planning for 1982 to 1987	144
System reaction to perceived over-centralization	148
Continuation of efforts at voluntary collaboration.....	150
The beginnings of cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions.....	154
Summary for 1977 to 1983	158
1984 TO 1991: INCREASING MINISTRY/INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION AND FURTHER INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION	159
The development of the funding formula.....	160
Provincial planning documents in 1986 and 1991	163
Mission, Goals, and Objectives 1986-1991	163
Partners for the Future: Ministry Plan, 1991.....	165
The Access for All report.....	166
The creation of university colleges	167
Transfer and the creation of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer	168
The creation of the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia.....	171
Further evidence of increasing Ministry/institutional cooperation	175
Summary for 1984 to 1991	178
1992 TO 2002: INCREASING ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN SYSTEM GOVERNANCE; INCREASING CENTRALIZATION; AND FRAGMENTATION OF THE COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE SYSTEM.....	180
The Human Resource Development Project report	181

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
The rise of constituency-based governance, the focus on internal governance, and the increasing role of faculty.....	183
The strategic planning document Charting a New Course.....	187
The impact of increasing institutional differentiation.....	192
The development of university colleges as a separate sector.....	194
The continuation of transfer and articulation	199
Recognition of the need for balance between provincial coordination and voluntary collaboration among autonomous institutions.....	200
Evidence of Ministry/institutional cooperation.....	203
Perceptions of increased centralization	205
The views of AECBC in 2000 and its dissolution in 2001	207
The new Liberal government and the return to decentralization	211
The Council of Presidents' position papers	212
The passage of Bill 28.....	213
The Ministry of Advanced Education's three-year Service Plan.....	214
Budget letter to institutions dated March 11, 2002.....	217
Summary for 1992 to 2002	218
 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE	 220
The relationship among decentralization/centralization, autonomy/system, and collaboration/coordination	220
Key findings from the literature.....	222
Table of key events	226
 CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEW DATA	 230
RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	232
Roots of institutional autonomy.....	232
Centralization and decentralization.....	234
Relationship between funding and centralization	238
Relationship between the economy and centralization.....	242
Voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration.....	246
The voluntary nature of transfer.....	251
System/Ministry cooperation	256
Blending of collaboration and coordination.....	263

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Impact of abolishing the intermediary councils on system/Ministry cooperation.....	269
Importance of the funding formula	271
Institutional differentiation.....	276
Importance of personal relationships	280
Impact of stakeholder involvement in provincial governance	284
The declining role of boards	291
Role of important individuals.....	295
 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW DATA.....	 297
 CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	 301
 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH IN RELATION TO CHAPTER 2	 301
 Synthesis of major findings from the literature review and interview data	 302
Relationship of research findings to the literature review in Chapter 2	 305
Centralization and decentralization.....	305
Coordination and collaboration.....	310
 DESIGNING A POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM THAT BALANCES CENTRALIST AND DECENTRALIST TENDENCIES	 314
 The Canadian literature	 314
The American literature	317
 CONCLUSIONS.....	 322
 Finding a balance between centralization and decentralization.....	 324
Developing a policy framework for institutional differentiation	325
Learning from the experiences of other jurisdictions	326
Maintaining a balance between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination	 327
Maintaining relationships among institutions at the program level ...	328
Valuing the importance of interpersonal relationships	329
Developing a funding mechanism that rewards productivity but maintains cooperation	 330

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	331
SUMMARY	334
REFERENCES	335
APPENDICES	349
APPENDIX A: LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	350
APPENDIX B: RULES USED TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN CITATIONS AND REFERENCES AND IN ABBREVIATIONS	351
APPENDIX C: NAMES OF AND BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEES	354
APPENDIX D: LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	357
APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT	359

PROVINCIAL COORDINATION AND INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, AND INSTITUTE SYSTEM

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

British Columbia's college, university college, and institute system has been widely regarded as one of the most collaborative post-secondary systems in Canada. The institutions collaborate on a wide range of initiatives at both the faculty and administrator level. Furthermore, British Columbia (B.C.) has a very well-developed transfer system that facilitates the transfer of students between institutions that offer first- and second-year academic courses and institutions that are degree granting. The high level of coordination and cooperation on system-wide initiatives occurs among autonomous institutions, and there has been an ongoing tension between the need to work as a system and the desire to maintain institutional autonomy. This tension between system coordination and institutional autonomy is a recurrent theme in the development of multicampus systems in the United States (Gaither, 1999).

Much has been written about the historical development of B.C.'s post-secondary system in terms of important legislation, policy development, and events that have led to the coordination evident in the system (Beinder, 1986; Dennison, 1997a, 1997b; Gallagher, 1999; Hollick-Kenyon, 1979; Mitchell, 1986; Schuetze & Day, 2001). As well, ample research exists on the nature and success of the transfer system (Dennison, 1997a, 1997b; Fisher, Rubenson, & Della Mattia, 2001; Soles, 2001). However, research has not been done to document the collaborative nature of the system, the historical roots of that collaboration, and the relationship between collaborative efforts and provincial coordination. Furthermore, research has not been done to study specifically the movements between decentralization and centralization in the college, university college, and institute system over the last 40 years and the related theme of autonomous institutions moving towards becoming a system over that same time period. Such research is becoming

increasingly important as the college, university college, and institute system in B.C. is presently becoming more and more fragmented. It is helpful to understand how the system has developed over the last four decades in order to better understand what is happening to the system today and where it might be headed.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to better understand the historical development of the British Columbia college, university college, and institute system with the focus on the changing nature of voluntary inter-institutional collaboration in relation to provincial coordination. The study also examines the related themes of centralization and decentralization within B.C.'s system and the development of a provincial system of autonomous institutions.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this study, *inter-institutional collaboration* is defined as voluntary cooperation among educators and institutions designed to achieve a common purpose whereas *provincial coordination* is defined as common actions at the system level among British Columbia's colleges, university colleges, and institutes brought about through intervention of the provincial government in the form of policy, legislation, and funding mechanisms.

Centralization is defined as an attempt by government to take a more active role in managing a college, university college, and institute system in order to meet provincial needs whereas *decentralization* is defined as a more laissez-faire approach by government to the development of a provincial system coupled with greater autonomy within individual institutions. The term *system* in the present study is used in a narrow sense to describe a post-secondary system or quasi-system of inter-related, publicly funded institutions within a state or province.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are a number of reasons for the significance of this study. In the United States, coordinated and multicampus systems are the dominant structure for public higher education, and these systems play an important role in coordinating campuses and institutions in terms of performance reporting, budgeting, strategic planning, and instructional productivity (Gaither, 1999; Novak, 1996). Similarly, in Canada a number of quasi-systems have developed in each province and territory to coordinate activities across post-secondary institutions (Dennison, 1995c). The literature in the United States also describes the shifts over time between centralist and decentralist approaches to managing higher education systems (McGuinness, 1996; Novak, 1996).

Thus the literature shows that across North America there is a history of coordination and cooperation rather than competition among higher education institutions and that several benefits accrue from such coordination and cooperation. Schuetze and Day (2001) state that B.C. has one of the most coordinated and integrated systems in Canada. Yet at the present time in B.C., the college, university college, and institute system is becoming more and more fragmented and balkanized, thus jeopardizing the high level of cooperation that has existed previously among institutions. Because of the perceived move towards increased centralization by government in recent years, a backlash to the concept of a college system has developed, complete with calls for greater autonomy for institutions and less government control (Advanced Education Council of British Columbia, 2000). In the midst of this debate over the future of B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system, it is important to fully understand the historical development of that system; the coordinated, collaborative nature of the system; and the movement between decentralization and centralization over time. Such an understanding can help to inform evolving government policy on the development of a differentiated but coordinated post-secondary system in B.C.

Much has been written about the evolution of community colleges in British Columbia and about the gradual development of a coordinated college, university college, and institute system (Beinder, 1986; Dennison, 1995a, 1997b; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). The post-secondary system in B.C. has evolved into a complex array of geographically dispersed institutions with differing mandates over the last four decades (Dennison, 1997b). The development of the system in more recent years has been described as moving towards central planning and decision making involving key stakeholder groups, central bargaining, and shared governance within the institution (Gallagher, 1999). Additional work has been conducted as an examination of major policy and funding developments and their impact on the access to, participation in, and outcomes of the B.C. college system between 1989 and 1998 (Schuetze & Day, 2001). Although much of the literature in the field has dealt with the changing nature of provincial coordination of the college, university college, and institute system, the literature has not focussed on the collaborative nature of inter-institutional relationships within the developing coordinated system.

Hollick-Kenyon (1979) conducted dissertation research that provided a thorough analysis of the coordination of the community college system in British Columbia up to 1979. His research was conducted two years after the passing of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977; thus one of his main purposes was to recommend an appropriate organizational structure for the coordination of community colleges in B.C. Based on his research, Hollick-Kenyon recommended provincial coordination by a formal centralized structure that would serve as an intermediary body between government and the college system. Hollick-Kenyon did recognize, though, the need to balance provincial coordinating efforts with local control because of the ongoing tensions between institutional autonomy and provincial coordination. No other research has been done with a specific focus on the coordination of the college system in B.C. since 1979, and research has not been conducted to explore the collaborative nature of the work of educators and institutions within the B.C. system over time.

A further reason for the significance of this study is that the present demographics of college faculty and administrators show clearly that a large retirement bulge is looming in the next three to five years (Advanced Education Council of British Columbia, 2001, Centre for Education Information, 2001). Many of the long-standing leaders within the B.C. system will be replaced, in many cases by post-secondary educators from outside the province as has been evidenced in recent years. The number of today's leaders retiring at once means a massive loss of corporate memory of the nature of provincial coordination and voluntary collaboration among institutions and the historical reasons for that coordination and collaboration.

Furthermore, many of the early leaders in the system have already retired although several of them still work on a part-time basis in the field of post-secondary education, either as consultants or as adjunct faculty at universities. Several of these early leaders are in their sixties and seventies. It is an opportune time to gather first-hand information from these witnesses of key events in the gradual development of the B.C. system out of a collection of autonomous institutions.

Finally, the researcher is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a system-wide agency called the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2). The central purpose of the agency is to promote collaborative endeavours among institutions so that learners in B.C. have access to high quality, relevant, and flexible learning opportunities. The research being conducted by the CEO is crucial to the work of C2T2 because building a collective understanding of the historical nature of collaboration among institutions and the impact of that collaboration is key to the long-term support of government and the post-secondary system for the work of C2T2.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community colleges are a relatively recent phenomenon in the United States although they have a much longer history than in Canada in that their roots are in the junior colleges that began at the turn of the century. The period following the Second World War saw significant expansion of community colleges as a result of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or GI Bill, and the 1947 President's Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy, or the Truman Commission (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Vaughan, 1985). The period following the Second World War also saw a large expansion in access to university education in America (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976).

This unprecedented expansion of higher education opportunities through the formation of ever-increasing numbers of institutions led state governments to form statewide multicampus systems to bring a coordinated approach to the development of what would otherwise have been fully autonomous institutions (Langenberg, 1999). Coordinating boards exist in a number of jurisdictions to provide statewide coordination, and governing boards exist to provide management and control of multicampus systems (Novak, 1996). Multicampus systems have become the dominant form of structure for higher education in the United States with approximately 80 percent of current students attending two- and four-year public institutions that are part of broader systems. These multicampus systems play a major role in coordinating a wide range of activities across campuses and institutions, including performance planning, budgeting, strategic planning, and instructional productivity (Gaither, 1999). Since the late 1980s, there has also been a contradictory trend toward increasing decentralization in several states, resulting in increased campus and institutional autonomy (McGuinness, 1996; Novak, 1996). This trend has coincided with decreasing funding from the state for higher education and an increasing market focus on competition among campuses and consumer choice (Burke, 1999).

Canada does not have formal provincial systems to coordinate activities across post-secondary institutions. However, each jurisdiction in Canada has adopted varying forms of quasi-systems that have the effect of providing coordination across universities, colleges, and provincial institutes (Dennison, 1995c). British Columbia is widely regarded as having one of the more integrated systems in Canada (Schuetze & Day, 2001), largely as a result of the university transfer function assigned to community colleges and the need to negotiate formal transfer arrangements between colleges and universities (Dennison, 1995c).

The history of the development of community colleges in British Columbia is a relatively short one with the first college being formed in 1965. Prior to that, the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver was the extent of post-secondary education in the province, along with a satellite campus of UBC in Victoria and two adult vocational schools in Nanaimo and Vancouver, created in 1937 and 1949 respectively (Dennison, 1997a). However, the growth of community colleges and the creation of new kinds of institutions in B.C. since 1965 have been quite remarkable and have resulted in a comprehensive, diverse set of institutions throughout the province. Today there are 22 colleges, university colleges, and provincial institutes throughout the province, along with 5 universities.

The impetus behind the original development of community colleges in B.C. was the Macdonald Report of 1962. The report was prepared by J. B. Macdonald, the relatively new president of UBC at that time. The report was not commissioned by government but was rather undertaken by Macdonald on his own initiative (Dennison, 1997a). Hence, from the outset the development of community colleges in B.C. was not driven by government but resulted from the independent efforts of a university president.

Macdonald (1962) recommended the formation of community colleges in which a key part of their mandate would be to offer the first two years of university credit, along with selected technical programs. The recommendation to provide university credit programs at colleges was the original impetus behind today's well-

developed university transfer system in B.C. Macdonald also recommended that the colleges should come under the jurisdiction of local school boards and receive part of their finances through local taxation. The provincial government acted upon many of the recommendations in the Macdonald Report because of public pressure to do so following publication of the report (Dennison, 1997b). The result was an experience unique in Canada in which the first colleges were originally formed through local plebiscites sponsored by local school districts, with a significant portion of the colleges' operating and capital funding coming from regional support (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). The first colleges thus "took on a role as residual or complementary institutions, accepting an obligation to meet a broad range of community needs not being met by schools or other institutions or agencies within their regions" (Gallagher, 1999, p. 1). Gallagher (1999) goes on to state that these original colleges were thus very community-based in nature and that management of the colleges was decentralized.

Between 1965 and 1975, 14 community colleges were established in B.C., with the first 10 being established through the mechanism of local plebiscites. "The realization then arose that the province did not have a comprehensive, rational, and ordered system of coordination for their operation" (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 134). This realization and the increasing complexity of the college system led to a number of reports being prepared, beginning in the early 1970s and culminating with the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977 (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Gallagher (1999) argues that the passage of the act was the beginning of a trend over the next few decades towards greater centralization of autonomous colleges. He states that "before long, the colleges were collectively referred to as parts of a provincial 'network' or 'system' with the clear implication that province-wide interests should take precedence over responsiveness to community needs" (Gallagher, 1999, p. 2).

RELATED STUDIES

A few studies have been conducted between 1979 and 2001 that are related to the topic of the present research. The only major study of the coordination of community colleges in British Columbia was conducted by Timothy Hollick-Kenyon in 1979. The purposes of Hollick-Kenyon's research were "to identify and analyze the basic concepts of statewide coordination in community colleges and to recommend an organizational structure for community college coordination in British Columbia" (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 41). Much of Hollick-Kenyon's literature review focussed on the historical development of B.C. community colleges to that date and the reports and legislature leading towards a more coordinated community college system. Hollick-Kenyon developed and distributed a questionnaire to ascertain the views on coordination of community college officials and educators and others involved with community college coordinating activities. He also conducted a series of field interviews with key experts in the field of community colleges in B.C.

Based on the literature review and the results of the questionnaire and interviews, Hollick-Kenyon (1979) developed a series of 10 recommendations on the type of formal structure he felt was required for the coordination of the developing B.C. community college system. His major recommendation was the formation of a single, formal coordinating agency called the British Columbia Council for Higher Education for coordinating all post-secondary education in the province. He also recommended that the three existing councils, created through the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act for coordinating the activities of community colleges, should be replaced by a Community College Council.

Hollick-Kenyon's 1979 research has a number of strengths, including the breadth and depth of his literature review and the rigour by which the questionnaire was developed and implemented. A further strength of Hollick-Kenyon's research is that he recognized the balance that must be struck between local college autonomy and provincial government domination, between coordination and

control. This balance was deemed by Hollick-Kenyon to be necessary because the questionnaire had revealed that a major concern of college personnel with the new Act was “the issue of over-centralization of power in the hands of the Minister of Education” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 231).

Yet despite Hollick-Kenyon’s acknowledgement of the need for an appropriate balance between autonomy and centralization, the implementation of his major recommendations for the creation of a Council for Higher Education and a Community College Council would have resulted in a significant level of central coordination at the expense of local autonomy. Duties assigned to the Community College Council, such as the development of a Community College Master Plan regarding new programs and facilities across the province and the preparation of a single budget for the whole system, represented a large amount of provincial-level control of what had previously been handled at the local level in consultation with the Ministry. Furthermore, although Hollick-Kenyon argues throughout his paper for the need for a formal, centralized coordinating agency, he does not concentrate on the development of other less centralized means of coordination or on more voluntary means of collaboration.

Mitchell (1986) conducted research with the purpose of ascertaining the perceptions of system administrators on the outcomes of implementing three separate policies concerning governance of the British Columbia college system. The three policies being analyzed, all of which were implemented in the early 1980s, included the development of system mission, goals, and objectives for 1982 to 1987, which were to be reflected in individual institution’s five-year plans; the abolishment of the three intermediary Councils, which had been established under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act as coordinating agencies for the system; and the decision of the provincial government to appoint all representatives to the colleges’ Boards of Governors as opposed to the election of members at the local level (Mitchell, 1986). All three of these policy directions are important to the present study and will be addressed in some depth in Chapter 4. A second purpose

of Mitchell's study was to determine if there were any discrepancies between the intent of the policies and the outcomes of their implementation.

To set the context for his research, Mitchell (1986) addressed the tensions that had developed in B.C. between the development of autonomous institutions and the move towards a centrally coordinated system. All three policies that he chose to study were emblematic of the centralizing trend. Indeed, it was the view of policy formulators interviewed by Mitchell that "authority had shifted during the implementation of these policies in the direction of the Ministry office" (pp. 168-169). However, the prime purpose of Mitchell's research was not to explore these tensions in depth or to examine the nature of coordination and centralization of the B.C. college system up to that point in time, which is a primary aim of the present study. Rather, his goal was to examine important issues related to and impacts resulting from policy implementation, with a focus on governance policies. Mitchell's work will be referenced on several occasions in Chapter 4.

Poole (1994) conducted research to examine the process that led to the government policy decision in 1989 to establish three university colleges in B.C. The establishment of university colleges is dealt with in depth in Chapter 4 because of the importance of their formation to the increasing differentiation of B.C.'s post-secondary system and the eventual impact on system coordination. The main purpose of Poole's study, though, was not to examine the educational or system implications of the creation of university colleges. Rather it was to determine the impact of political motivation on this policy decision.

A recent publication by Schuetze and Day (2001) analyzes B.C. provincial policies implemented between 1988 and 1998 and the financial and administrative mechanisms used by the government to implement them. The study includes a review of relevant government documents and interviews with experts and key players in the decade under study. A main purpose of the study was to review developments that have occurred in B.C. since the Access for All report was published by the B.C. Ministry of Education in 1989. The study found a large

increase in student numbers in B.C. over the decade in question as a result of government efforts to increase access. This access has been assured through the creation of a wide array of differentiated post-secondary institutions that are part of “the most integrated of all provincial systems in Canada” (Schuetze & Day, 2001, p. 58), despite continuing barriers to efficient coordination.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The methodology used in the present study was qualitative in nature based on the historical method and the underlying assumptions of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is defined as the study of understanding and interpretation, especially as it relates to text (Palmer, 1969). The word hermeneutics is based on the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, which means “to interpret,” a word which was derived from the messenger god Hermes whose task was to interpret the unintelligible messages from the gods so that man could understand them.

The modern hermeneutics philosopher whose influence is evident in the present study is Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer’s (1975) hermeneutic theory of text interpretation is called dialectical hermeneutics, which treats the interpretation of text as a dialogue or fusion of horizons between the interpreter and text. For Gadamer, each interpreter enters the interpretation process with her or his own expectations, ideas, and prejudices, which Gadamer refers to as one’s traditions. Furthermore, one can only interpret the past from one’s position in the present. Because all interpretation is related to the present and is based on each interpreter’s traditions, there can be no one right interpretation but rather multiple perspectives.

The work of Gadamer and the hermeneutic understanding of interpretation are important to the present study because it is based on this view of text interpretation that the researcher entered the research process. The researcher engaged in a dialogue with text and from that dialogue evidence related to his research purpose emerged. Because the researcher realized that his reading of text is but one possible interpretation that is based on his presuppositions and his place

in time, he involved others in the research process by conducting interviews to help him build a more in-depth interpretation of the past.

The primary method used by the researcher was historical method, which is a method used to search data systematically to answer questions about something that occurred in the past (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999). Historical research is viewed as qualitative because of the subjective nature of the interpretive framework. History involves the reconstruction of the past in a meaningful way based on the interpretation of available records and the inferences made by historians in the present (Gottschalk, 1950). From a hermeneutic stance, the interpretation by historians will vary because of the unique traditions of each historian and her or his attachment to the present.

The present study incorporated the traditional methods of historical research, including the review of relevant primary and secondary sources of literature and the collection of oral history, but does so from a hermeneutic stance. The researcher worked with a voluntary research advisor, a respected, long-standing leader in the B.C. college system who agreed to help him with his research and to help in identifying important literature as required. Based on the review of literature, the researcher identified key findings in relation to the research purpose. The findings were discussed with the research advisor before interviews began.

The key findings from literature were used to prepare a set of interview questions to collect oral history that would be used to confirm findings and fill in gaps in understanding from the review of the literature (Moss, 1974). Interviews were then conducted with 10 key informants who were chosen because they had a thorough knowledge of the B.C. post-secondary system and its development and because they represented as wide a variety of perspectives as possible. The interviewees were chosen with the assistance of the research advisor. Additional interviewees' names emerged from the interview process. The researcher took the necessary steps to ensure the protection of human subjects following Oregon State University (OSU) guidelines.

The interviews were conducted using a modified standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 1990), based on the aforementioned interview questions. The interview process was based on a constructivist methodology in which core questions were supplemented with probes to flesh out emerging themes and new questions were added as necessary as the interviews progressed. The process involved transcribing, analyzing data, and member checking after each pair of interviews. Based on the interpretation of the interview data and of the primary and secondary literature, the researcher drew conclusions from the study to address the research purpose.

ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

Because of the use of historical method based on a hermeneutic stance, the research is qualitative, subjective, and interpretive in nature. The researcher ensured trustworthiness of the qualitative research findings through the use of a variety of strategies first proposed by Guba (1981). The strategies are designed to address the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the research and its findings. The researcher also took steps to ensure the external criticism or authenticity of the primary sources of literature and the internal criticism or accuracy of those same sources.

SUMMARY

The literature shows that coordinated and multicampus systems are the dominant form of public higher education in the United States, despite a trend since the late 1980s toward decentralization (Gaither, 1999; Novak, 1996). In Canada, the provinces and territories have quasi-systems with varying levels of coordination through voluntary and formal arrangements (Dennison, 1995c). Within Canada, B.C. is regarded as having one of the most integrated post-secondary systems in the country (Schuetze & Day, 2001). Yet for a variety of reasons, the B.C. college, university college, and institute system is becoming more and more fragmented and

factions are forming within the system. At the same time, the aging of college faculty and administrators means that many of them have left or will be leaving their jobs shortly, resulting in a loss of corporate memory on the historical nature of collaboration and coordination in the B.C. system.

Although much of the literature has focussed on the evolution of the B.C. system and the changing nature of coordination in that system, research has not been conducted into the impact of voluntary collaboration among institutions. Hence, the present research attempts to understand the history of the development of both the collaborative and the coordinated nature of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system and the interplay between the two. The research also examines the movement over time between decentralization and centralization as a post-secondary system was created from autonomous institutions. The research uses as its methodology the historical method based on a hermeneutic approach to interpretation.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is organized according to six chapters, beginning with Chapter 1 that provides an overview of the study, including a description of the purpose and significance of the study. Chapter 2 consists of a review of pertinent literature regarding coordination and cooperation in higher education in general and focuses on the functions and benefits of coordinating systems as opposed to competition among independent institutions. Chapter 3 describes in detail the research design and methods. This includes a discussion of historical method and hermeneutics and a description of data collection and analysis procedures, study participants, strategies to enhance the trustworthiness of data collection and analysis, the researcher disclosure statement, and strategies for the protection of human subjects. Chapter 4 provides a thorough review of the primary and secondary literature sources relevant to the purpose of the study and thus focuses on the historical development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute

system. Chapter 4 concludes with key findings from the literature review. Chapter 5 describes the results from the interviews and relates those results to the findings from the literature on the development of the B.C. system. Chapter 6 begins by summarizing the findings from the literature and interviews, followed by a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 6 then presents conclusions from the study and provides recommendations for further research.

APPENDICES

Five appendices have been included in the dissertation to provide additional pertinent information to the reader. Appendix A contains a list of acronyms and abbreviations that have been used throughout the document. Appendix B contains a list of rules that have been used by the researcher to ensure consistency in references and citations throughout the document, as well as in abbreviations. Such a list was necessary because many of the historical documents studied for this research did not conform to the guidelines in the 2001 edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Appendices C, D, and E are described in the text of Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of the nature of historical research, much of the review of literature will be presented in Chapter 4. In historical method, the primary and secondary sources represent a key source of data from which research findings emerge. Thus, the review of literature in Chapter 4 is designed to help address the research purpose about the nature of collaboration and coordination in the B.C. college, university college, and institute system and about the movement between decentralization and centralization within that system.

Chapter 2 presents a review of pertinent literature about coordination and cooperation versus competition and decentralist versus centralist approaches in higher education in general in order to set the context for the present study on the B.C. system. The chapter begins with a description of what constitutes coordinated and multicampus systems in the U.S. and quasi-systems in Canada. The chapter then provides a review of the functions and benefits of coordinated and multicampus systems, with the focus on accountability, budgeting, coordination of programs, strategic planning, and distance education. Chapter 2 continues with a review of the literature on coordination versus collaboration as it relates to the research purpose of the present study, centralization versus decentralization in higher education systems, and the trend toward greater competition in higher education, which is closely associated with the movement toward decentralization. The chapter concludes with a short summary of the relevance of the literature to the purpose of the present research study.

COORDINATED SYSTEMS, MULTICAMPUS SYSTEMS, AND QUASI-SYSTEMS

In the U.S., there are two types of higher education governance structures at the state level, coordinating and governing structures (Novak, 1996). Coordinating boards have varying levels of authority for making decisions and setting regulations that affect colleges and universities throughout the state, with no more than one

coordinating board per state. Governing boards have responsibility for management and control of multicampus systems. Several multicampus systems can exist under one statewide coordinating structure, resulting in sometimes confusing lines of authority (Novak, 1996). Between the 1950s and early 1970s, “the bulk of governance restructuring that occurred ... moved toward a consolidation of authority into the hands of fewer boards and higher-level administrators” (Novak, 1996, p. 19). Coordinated and multicampus systems are still the dominant form of governance structure in the U.S. today, although there has been a trend in the 1990s toward decentralization as well. This trend will be discussed later in Chapter 2.

Gaither (1999) states that multicampus systems are the dominant form of public higher education in the United States and calculates that “approximately 80 percent of the students currently enrolled in two- and four-year public colleges and universities attend institutions that are part of a multicampus system” (pp. xix-xx). Likewise, McGuinness (1996) states that by 1994, 65 percent of students attended schools belonging to multicampus systems. Langenberg (1994) estimates that nearly half of all college and university students attend institutions that are part of such systems, a slightly lower but still significant percentage.

Langenberg (1999) states that the preponderance today of supra-university organizations and multi-campus systems is in large part due to the rapid increase in the number of institutions offering post-secondary education after the Second World War. Langenberg states that “from the standpoint of state political and educational authorities, the prospect of that many tax-supported institutions pursuing independent paths in the time-honored tradition of academic autonomy is an invitation to chaos” (1999, p. 217). Thus, multicampus and coordinated systems as opposed to loose collections of fully autonomous institutions have emerged as the dominant structure in American higher education. The reasons for developing and maintaining those systems and the coordination evident within them are germane to the present study.

Canada, on the other hand, has no true provincially coordinated or multicampus system as is evident in the United States. Education in Canada falls constitutionally under the jurisdiction of each province. Thus what has emerged over time is a variety of “quasi-systems” that have developed differently in each jurisdiction based on the unique historical, sociocultural, and economic characteristics of each province or territory (Dennison, 1995c). In Canada, community colleges tend to have a closer relationship with government than universities do, and universities have much higher levels of institutional autonomy. However, the system-like structures that have developed in each jurisdiction often include universities with community colleges and technical institutes, with the different types of institutions coordinating their activities to varying levels “either through voluntary agreements or through more formal arrangements (in which governmental authority usually plays a role)” (Dennison, 1995c, p. 121). The voluntary versus formal arrangements for coordination among institutions is a main focus of the present research.

Thus, although formal systems do not exist in Canada as they do in the United States, there are varying structures in place to bring coordination to higher education at the provincial/territorial level. Dennison (1995c) provides the following reasons for an increasing focus on coordination in Canada:

The escalating demand for access to further education at all levels; a recognition of the need for greater mobility by students seeking advanced credentials; concerns about lack of recognition of previous learning; artificial barriers to transfer from one institution to another; increasing costs of maintaining a large number of institutions; and the realization in political circles that higher education is not being used to its greatest effect have all contributed to a renewed emphasis upon the need for reform. (p. 123)

FUNCTIONS AND BENEFITS OF COORDINATED AND MULTICAMPUS SYSTEMS

The review of the American literature on the functions and benefits of coordinated and multicampus systems shows that the systems are designed to

address many of the same issues described by Dennison above. Boatright (1999) states that two main purposes of multicampus systems are to be better able to compete for public resources with public schools, health care, and prisons and to inform the state of the benefits that accrue to society as a whole when the state invests in its universities. Johnstone (1999) describes fostering cooperation among campuses in a multicampus system as one of the key functions of the system. Benefits of such cooperation include more articulation agreements and improved transfer.

Healy (1997), based on the results of a two-year study for the California Higher Education Policy Centre, states that central governance structures provide bridges between colleges and government and among colleges. Healy lists five areas where central governance has a positive system-wide impact, including performance measurement, budget development, encouragement of collaboration and transfer agreements, and long-term, statewide planning. Healy also writes that in states where multicampus subsystems or individual institutions are not part of strong state systems, competition rather than cooperation often results and more attention is paid to meeting institutional rather than state needs.

Novak (1996) gives the following reasons for increased consolidation and centralization of system governance in the 1960s:

They included the need to coordinate enrollment growth among institutions, to minimize institutional competition and conflict over resources and academic programs, to control a proliferation of graduate and professional programs, to improve overall coordination and cooperation among institutions, and to ensure adequate oversight of new and emerging institutions. (p. 20)

Of particular interest to the present study, Johnstone, Healy, and Novak all list the fostering of collaboration and cooperation among institutions as a central function of statewide and multicampus systems. Thus central coordinating structures are used to improve inter-institutional collaboration.

Langenberg (1994; 1999) sees the benefits of a system versus unconnected, autonomous institutions as falling into five categories: synergy, strategy, efficiency,

accountability, and integrity. Synergy involves the “enormous potential for enhancing, even transforming, the performance of individual institutions through coordinated effort” (Langenberg, 1994, p. 8). According to Langenberg, the synergistic efforts of a system provide great benefits for students, in terms of coordinated programming and support services, and for states, in terms of a collective resource to meet pressing social, environmental, and economic needs. Closely linked to synergy, strategy involves the ability of a system to plan strategically to assign coordinated and complementary roles across institutions. Strategies developed at the system level are particularly important in academic planning across institutions to eliminate redundancy and make the best use of limited resources.

Langenberg (1994) states that efficiency would seem to be the most evident of the benefits of a system. Yet it takes strong leadership to ensure efficiencies are gained because system efficiency is often seen as the antithesis of institutional autonomy, which is jealously guarded at the institutional level even within systems. System efficiency vis-à-vis institutional autonomy is an important concept in relation to the purpose of the present research about the interplay between inter-institutional collaboration and provincial coordination.

Langenberg (1994) acknowledges that system administrative structures may be seen as detracting from accountability, one of the most important trends in post-secondary education in the 1990s, because they add a layer between the clients and the actual deliverer of services. However, he argues that strong system leadership is required to make certain that accountability and authority are delegated to the appropriate level within the system and that institutions are accountable to the state as a whole. Finally, Langenberg describes the role of the system in maintaining the integrity of individual institutions by shielding them against unwarranted external intrusion into institutional affairs. Langenberg concludes his discussion of the value-added nature of systems by stating that “a system is only worth having if it is

greater than the sum of its parts and if it provides enhanced service to its clientele” (p. 9).

Langenberg’s focus on the need for strong leadership at the system level is supported by other authors in the field. Healy (1997) states that strong leadership in the central office of state coordinating agencies is necessary for ensuring the success of those agencies in finding an appropriate balance between meeting statewide needs and the needs of institutions. Novak (1996) lists strong leadership at the board and top administrative levels as the most important factor in bringing about successful restructuring of governance structures. Such leadership can improve access to and the quality of higher education while enhancing institutional autonomy.

The sections below flesh out some of the key benefits of coordination by centralized systems described in the literature with a focus on accountability, budgeting and coordination of programs, strategic planning, and distance education. Inherent in the arguments made by several of the authors is the importance of coordination and cooperation in light of an increasingly competitive environment among public institutions and between private and public institutions.

Accountability

Burke (1999) conducted a study of system actions undertaken in six states as a result of budget problems in the first half of the 1990s. He was trying to determine how well the states had responded to the five categories of benefits set forth by Langenberg (1994), which Burke described as objectives for multicampus systems. Burke’s conclusions were that the systems studied did not fare well in meeting many of Langenberg’s objectives.

One of Burke’s (1999) key findings with respect to coordination within systems and the impact on accountability in the early 1990s was the following:

Decentralization became the preferred direction in a period when the states’ share of the cost of public higher education declined. Several

systems groped toward a new paradigm that tried to link state accountability with campus autonomy through the market forces of campus competition and consumer choice. (p. 77)

Thus the move towards coordination was replaced by state support for the benefits of a competitive environment. The arguments for a market-based approach to education will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter. The move to a competitive paradigm has been influenced by both business practices and political conservatism. These two influences resulted in administrative downsizing and decentralized decision making because of a disdain for centralized authority and collective planning. Furthermore, the market philosophy of competition resulted in “leaving accountability to the market discipline of consumer choices” (Burke, 1999, p. 78).

Proponents of the market approach to accountability felt that the entrepreneurial nature of campuses and the level of responsiveness to students and other clients would be greatly enhanced. Critics, however, argued that the market-driven view resulted in an essential privatization of public higher education in which institutions competed for the business of the consumer, the student. Thus higher education became viewed as “a private good for graduates rather than a public good for states” and as a “Darwinian model of campuses struggling with each other for survival” (Burke, 1999, p. 78).

Burke argues that multi-campus systems are the best hope of maintaining the distinction between private and public institutions and for making certain that institutions are accountable for meeting the public good while dealing with their own individual concerns and the needs of the students. Langenberg agrees that systems can ensure that “accountability does not stop at the campus walls” (1994, p. 9). Burke also argues that campuses tend not to make decisions on their own accord that would result in the common good of the system. Stated differently by Langenberg, “it is about as likely that a group of autonomous institutions will spontaneously take concerted action as it is that a pile of lumber will spontaneously form a house” (1994, p. 9). Thus, both Langenberg and Burke see value in the role

that a system can play in bringing about coordinated activity and accountability to the state but are less hopeful about individual institution's motivations to collaborate with other institutions voluntarily.

Budgeting and coordination of programs

Layzell and Caruthers (1999) write about the important role played by multicampus systems in budgeting and establishing budget processes. The authors raise the possibility of state systems becoming irrelevant in the budget process because of the declining portion of institutions' overall budget coming from the state, the same reason given by Burke (1999) for the move towards greater decentralization in the early 1990s. However, Layzell and Caruthers disagree with this possible direction. Instead, they assert that systems will play an even greater role in the years ahead as intermediary bodies in developing performance-based funding initiatives. The authors argue that appropriately designed accountability mechanisms can result in individual institutions or campuses meeting their goals for more financial autonomy within clearly established accountability guidelines and the state achieving its goals for higher education.

Layzell and Caruthers (1999) also write about perennial and emerging budget-related policy issues faced by systems. Central to these is the role played by system-budgeting in ensuring a level of coordination among programming across institutions within the system. An advantage of system-wide program planning and review is that financial resources are allocated from a system-wide rather than an institutional perspective, resulting in each institution offering "a different set of programs, thereby maximizing the system-wide program array without unnecessary duplication among institutions" (Layzell & Caruthers, 1999, p. 117). System-wide program reviews can also result in resources saved from the elimination of duplicate or redundant programs being reallocated to new programs that meet emerging labour market needs.

Another key benefit of multicampus systems with respect to program planning is the ability to develop and deliver collaborative programming in which two or more institutions pool their resources to offer academic programs (Layzell & Caruthers, 1999). Often it is difficult for one institution to mount a high cost program, but this difficulty can be overcome by sharing instructional resources, including technology and facilities, to develop and deliver the program. Layzell and Caruthers give as an example of collaborative programming the collaborative nursing education program developed by the five institutions of the University of Wisconsin System. Interestingly, a similar Collaborative Nursing Program has been developed among nine colleges and university colleges and one university in B.C.'s quasi-system and has resulted in an unprecedented level of cooperation in curriculum development and program delivery. Thus, similar collaborative endeavours appear to be possible in both formal systems and quasi-systems of institutions. In the B.C. case, the development of the program represented a high level of voluntary collaboration among the institutions involved, but it also had approval from the Ministry along with strong financial support.

Strategic planning

Szutz (1999) writes of the importance of strategic planning and policy making within higher education systems, particularly in light of many of the challenges facing higher education today. He states that there are two powerful reasons why it makes sense to adopt a system approach rather than an isolated, institutional approach. The first is the role of a system in budget making where a group of unified institutions lobbying the state for funds is often far more successful than individual institutions battling each other for funds at the state level. A second related role is policy making at the system level. It is the system's ability to implement successfully system-wide policies at the institutional level that enables them to argue at the state level for adequate budgetary support for those institutions. Conversely, the success of the system in statewide budget deliberations

results in increased support from the various institutions that make up a system for the role of system administration in budget development and policy making (Szutz, 1999).

Szutz (1999) describes a review he conducted of strategic plans and planning processes in nine major higher education systems in the United States. One of Szutz's findings was that "collaboration among system institutions and between institutions and other government and private sector entities was explicitly included in five of the nine plans" (1999, p. 93). Thus collaboration, a major focus of the present research, is generally recognized to be strategically important within many higher education systems and is planned for accordingly.

Norris (1999) writes of a new approach to strategic planning that will be required by higher education systems in the Knowledge Age. It is predicted that higher education will be profoundly affected by this new age, which is emerging as a result of the fusion between telecommunications and computer and information technology (Langenberg, 1999; Norris, 1999). Norris argues that in this new more competitive environment, strategic planning must involve thinking in the future tense and "planning from the future backward" (1999, p. 102). This involves visioning the learning requirements of the future and returning to the present to identify barriers that would prevent a system from meeting those future needs. One of the key focal points proposed by Norris for system-wide planning in the Knowledge Age is the need for strong inter-institutional collaboration and the formation of strategic alliances among not only post-secondary institutions, but also technology companies and learning enterprises.

Distance education

An integral part of the move into the Knowledge Age is the increasing use of information technology to provide distance learning opportunities for all learners, regardless of place and time. The advent of distance learning and especially the explosion in the use of the Internet for instructional purposes is

having a major impact on the expansion of learning opportunities and is forcing a reaction from higher education institutions and systems (Langenberg, 1999). Furthermore, in times of fiscal retrenchment, state governments, as the principal providers of higher education, are looking for creative means of providing access to greater numbers of students. This desire for greater access within limited resources has led many states to consider the potential of distance education (Epper, 1997).

The increased emphasis on distance learning has introduced increased market competition for educational services among institutions, both among public institutions and between public and private institutions (Layzell & Caruthers, 1999). The demand for more job-focussed degrees delivered through the Internet has resulted in private providers stepping forward to meet those needs in flexible ways and has thus increased competition for students (MacTaggart, 1996). Layzell and Caruthers (1999) assert that a system can alleviate this competition by establishing financial incentives or disincentives and encouraging strategic alliances with respect to program offerings in a distance format.

Epper (1997) conducted a comparative case study in three states to “better understand forces for coordination and competition in state systems of higher education by examining state policies and structures for distance education” (p. 554). Epper’s main interests were to determine how the advent of technology and distance education has changed the competitive environment in higher education and how conflicts are being resolved between increased competitiveness and the traditional notion of statewide coordination.

Epper (1997) found that “state-level coordination of distance education can enhance service to students, leverage state and institutional resources, and reduce duplication” (p. 552). However, publicly funded institutions have been slow to respond to the increased demand for distance education for a number of reasons, including resistance to centralization, strong resistance from faculty, protection of campus turf, and unwillingness of institutional administrators to give up existing lucrative distance education efforts for the sake of collaborative efforts. Epper

concluded that distance education has increased the competitive environment in higher education and has resulted in a challenge to some of the traditional regulatory principles governing statewide coordination, including “prevention of unnecessary program duplication, maintenance of mission distinction, definition of geographic service areas, equitable distribution of resources, and systemwide planning” (p. 580). These traditional principles are being replaced in some states by marketing concepts that focus on determining customer needs, developing and marketing programs according to those needs, and driving enrolments through consumer choice.

Yet Epper (1997) feels that competition and coordination can coexist and that few institutions can make the necessary investments to provide quality distance education products in a highly competitive environment. Therefore, institutions must coordinate their efforts in order to be competitive. Similarly in B.C., post-secondary institutions have developed voluntarily a collaborative approach to online delivery through its BCcampus project. For budgetary reasons, B.C. institutions are realizing that they must cooperate to develop and deliver quality learning opportunities in an online environment rather than compete with each other. Likewise, the B.C. government has funded and fully supported this collaborative approach to online programming as a means of enhancing access and choice for students (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002).

COLLABORATION VERSUS COORDINATION

The focus on voluntary collaboration among institutions is relevant to the distinction being made in the present research study between coordination, which would be represented by the description of the roles of multicampus systems above, and collaboration, which would be represented by voluntary efforts of educators and institutions to cooperate in the delivery of online learning opportunities. The two are, of course, closely linked, but for the purposes of the remainder of this study it is also informative to differentiate between the two. A review of the

literature found few references to the concept of inter-institutional collaboration other than occasional references on the role of coordinating systems in fostering collaboration, such as those referenced previously in this chapter (Healy, 1997; Johnstone, 1999; Novak, 1996; Szutz, 1999). This dearth of literature specifically related to the topic of collaboration adds to the significance of the present study.

Tollefson wrote a chapter about voluntary collaboration in 1981 in an edited text on competition and cooperation in American higher education. Tollefson called such collaborative efforts “consortial relationships,” which he said differ from higher education systems in that participation is voluntary and is based on genuine inter-reliance among institutions.

Tollefson (1981) listed a number of benefits he felt accrued from cooperation within academic consortia. Consortial cooperation avoids unnecessary duplication and thus saves money. It also has the potential to increase the quality of instructional offerings and services through joint endeavours. Related to the previous point is an increase in the diversity and breadth of the educational experience that can be provided to students. Consortial relationships can also result in cooperative efforts to achieve federal and other grants that could not be achieved by individual institutions. Because of the above benefits, consortial relationships result in financial efficiency through the sharing of resources and services. Finally, cooperative arrangements among educators and institutions prevent competitiveness for resources and students.

Interestingly, the benefits described by Tollefson (1981) that result from voluntary collaboration are very similar to the benefits from and roles of coordinating systems. Thus the results of collaboration and coordination appear similar although the means of achieving those results differ.

Glenny (1959) writes of the advantages of voluntary coordination versus formal coordination by state agencies. Among the benefits he found, based on studying a few states that had adopted this method of coordination, were that institutional autonomy was maintained and institutions could opt in or out of a

coordinated activity, as long as the expectations of the legislature were met. According to Glenny, two of the characteristics of a successful voluntary coordinating system are mutual respect and trust among participants and the honest presentation of all facts related to an institution's participation in a coordinated activity. Thus trusting relationships are seen as a key to voluntary coordination. Elsewhere, Glenny refers to the success of voluntary coordinating systems in Ohio and Indiana as resting "on the good will and mutual respect of the several presidents" (p. 30).

Glenny (1959) also describes four weaknesses of purely voluntary systems of coordination. Voluntary systems "(1) have a tendency to preserve the status quo, (2) lead to domination by the largest or oldest institutions, (3) inadequately represent the public interest in policy making, and (4) ineffectively coordinate large systems of institutions" (pp. 248-249). In terms of preserving the status quo, Glenny states that existing institutions are reluctant to reevaluate their programs or to consider future areas of necessary development from a system perspective.

Glenny (1959) states that:

Each participant in voluntary systems may act from the highest motives and in ways he believes best, but his actions are inevitably colored by the fact that his prime loyalty and responsibility lie with one institution, not with the state-wide educational effort. (p. 254)

Elsewhere, Glenny states that "the primary motive of participants in voluntary systems is the welfare of individual institutions, not the system as a whole" (p. 262).

Glenny (1959) also states that "the success of voluntary coordination requires unanimity" (p. 255). This unanimity becomes more and more difficult to achieve as systems grow and become more complex and differentiated, as has been the case in B.C. over the last several decades. Glenny states that large, complex organizations cause blocs and sectors of institutions to form and make strong interpersonal relationships more difficult. The work of Glenny, despite the fact it was completed in 1959, is still very relevant to the purpose of the present study.

CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Although much of the evidence above describes the continuing importance of coordinated and multicampus systems in American higher education, other literature suggests a gradual move towards more decentralization of higher education systems. Often the reasons for this decentralization are the declining level of state funding and the increasing focus on market-driven competition as a means of funding public institutions (Burke, 1999). Garrett (1993) studied the characteristics of state community college systems and their relationship to levels of centralization. Garrett found that there was a significant positive correlation between the percentage of state funding and the degree of centralization and a significant negative correlation between the percentage of local funding and the degree of centralization.

Novak (1996) gives several negative consequences of increased consolidation and centralization of governance structures, which have led to an increasing focus on decentralization. These consequences include a lessening of the authority of the campus president because of the important role of the central offices and the system head; an expansion of system governing boards' responsibilities, resulting in the boards being far removed from the students and institutions that their decisions impact; and unclear lines of authority between statewide coordinating and multicampus or campus governing bodies, resulting in confusion over final fiscal and academic decision-making authority. Fisher (1995) argues that statewide boards and multicampus systems stifle campus creativity and innovation, result in unnecessary layers of bureaucracy, slow down the decision-making and program approval process, cost a lot to operate, and add costs to institutions that must hire additional staff for negotiating with and reporting to central boards.

Fisher (1995) argues that coordinating functions could be carried out through voluntary cooperation among university presidents. Fisher gives as an example of such a move the elimination in the mid-1990s of the New Jersey Board

of Higher Education and its replacement with a “council of public-college and university presidents, whose job it is to foster voluntary cooperation” (p. A48). He states that an advantage of such an approach is that no funds are required. However, Fisher does not provide any evidence of the success of such an approach or the means by which presidents would deal with inter-institutional rivalry. MacTaggart (1996) also refers to the New Jersey elimination of its Board as an example of what he calls “liberation management” (p. 10). However, he states that there is no evidence yet that this brand of management leads to improved performance of institutions. The New Jersey example is germane to the questions in the present study in that it involves a replacement of central coordination with voluntary collaboration.

McGuinness (1996), while providing evidence of the growth of systems until 1994, also states that between 1985 and 1995, the trend towards greater centralization seems to have been reversed somewhat with more evidence of decentralization. However, McGuinness (1996) writes that “systems are likely to be more, rather than less, a feature of American higher education a decade from now” (p. 204) and states his view that the focus should be on how to improve on the balance between centralized systems and autonomous institutions rather than on whether systems should exist at all. McGuinness (1996) describes as “intractable centralizing forces” (p. 207) the use of systems by states to ensure economic and political balance among regions, the use of systems to address legal issues and collective bargaining in a cost effective manner, the worldwide pressure to continue merging university and non-university sectors, and the desire of governments to achieve economies of scale and control expenditures.

Likewise, Novak (1996) describes the “opposite and contradictory trends” (p. 30) of centralization and decentralization in American higher education. Novak states that out of 16 governance changes, either proposed or enacted, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, 9 involved a significant move toward decentralization with increased campus autonomy and local power. Yet Novak argues that governance

changes towards centralized or decentralized models are becoming increasingly complex with elements of centralized control and institutional autonomy present in both models as governments struggle to find the appropriate balance of power. Novak states that after a decade of restructuring attempts in various states, the “consensus is emerging that current [centralized] structures offer the best mechanisms to address fiscal and other challenges” (p. 40). He concludes that “the vast majority of states will continue to rely on various forms of central authority (p. 39).

MacTaggart (1996) and Hooker (1997) have written about the need for transformation in higher education in light of the incredible changes occurring in other aspects of society and the economy in the Knowledge Age. Yet these same authors are critical of the inability of higher education to reform itself and are fearful about the potential for greater central control as a result of this failure. MacTaggart states that an inability of higher education to improve on its own will result in further governance change with increased regulations being forced upon institutions by legislators. Similarly, Hooker states that if higher education does not respond to the numerous forces for change, legislators will become more involved in managing university affairs, resulting in a loss of institutional autonomy. However, MacTaggart concludes that the grim scenario of more authoritarian intrusion may be avoided ... if higher education demonstrates the capacity to reform itself” (p. 10).

THE TREND TOWARD COMPETITION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Throughout Chapter 2, references have been made to the need for coordination and cooperation in higher education as opposed to competition. Many of the factors impacting a move toward greater decentralization are also driving an increasing emphasis on competition in funding higher education. As previously stated, the increasing prevalence of distance education and the declining level of

state funding for higher education have resulted in greater competition among public institutions.

Another major factor in increasing competition is the move toward reinventing government in which market-based incentives are applied to public governance of institutions (MacTaggart, 1996). Novak (1996) describes the concept of reinventing government as one that “views competition, rewards, financial incentives, and contracting out to the private sector as desirable and feasible for government agencies” (p. 29). The result is often less government with a move toward decentralization and the removal of central governance structures. The concept of reinventing government and its resulting decentralization is closely aligned with the market philosophy of competition in which consumer choice drives institutional responsiveness and accountability (Burke, 1999).

Finn (2001) writes about the advent of market-based reforms in the public K to 12 system. Finn believes that the public education system has failed to improve student achievement primarily because it has a monopoly on education. Without competition, monopolies tend not to change or improve their performance. Thus Finn believes a solution to the problems of public education is not to throw more money at the public system as it now exists. Rather, Finn suggests a market approach, based on the concepts of consumer choice and competition among education providers and involving decentralization of authority and grassroots support in bringing about reform. Examples of market approaches include charter schools, vouchers, outsourcing, home schooling, and the use of educational technology.

Finn (2001) concentrates on the concept of charter schools as a way of reinventing, not eliminating, public education. Novak (1996) mentions the increasing interest in concepts like charter schools in higher education as well because of the growing disinvestment of the state in colleges and universities. Charter schools, which have grown substantially in number over the last decade, are independent public schools developed through strong local support, funded by

the state or province, but free from the confines of state or provincial regulations. Charter schools must deliver within a specified time period, usually five years, on results agreed upon through a charter with government. Otherwise, the school is shut down (Finn, 2001). The success of charter schools is based on their ability to meet their stated objectives and to attract students in an environment where parents are given full choice as to where they will send their children. Finn states that such choice is good for all public schools because it forces all schools to improve their performance or risk losing their student base. In Finn's own words, "Competition works. It changes systems that were once monopolies. They hate it but they do begin to respond" (2001, p. 47). Vouchers and the growing use of educational technology are two other market approaches to education described by Finn that have particular applicability to a post-secondary setting.

The focus on consumer choice as the driving market force behind funding and accountability in higher education was described previously in this chapter in the work of Burke (1999) on accountability. Burke states that this competitive paradigm, influenced by business practices and political conservatism, has become increasingly influential in the 1990s in impacting the allocation of state resources and in driving the move toward greater decentralization. However, Burke argues that centralized systems are necessary for maintaining publicly funded education as a public good rather than simply as private institutions competing for students. Epper (1997), on the other hand, concludes that public institutions could remain competitive in the distance education marketplace by adopting marketing concepts to determine and deliver to client needs.

SUMMARY

The review of literature in Chapter 2 about coordination, collaboration, and competition in higher education provides solid support for the purpose of the present study and develops a good context in which to explore these concepts in the

B.C. college, university college, and institute system. The literature review also provides support for the proposed methodology of the present study.

The literature points towards the increasing and continuing importance of system-wide approaches to higher education over time, despite a trend in the late 1980s and 1990s towards greater decentralization and a more competitive funding environment. The exploration of various functions and benefits of post-secondary systems, with a focus on accountability, budgeting, coordination of programs, strategic planning, and distance education, provides good background information for studying the elements of a coordinated and collaborative college, university college, and institute system in B.C. Furthermore, the review of the underlying reasons for the development of system-wide approaches to higher education in North America provides a sound backdrop for dealing with the historical development of a system approach in B.C. The continuing importance of the concepts of coordinated and multicampus systems and quasi-systems in jurisdictions across North America provides support for studying this topic in depth in the B.C. context.

The review of the literature also shows that the benefits and goals of voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration appear almost identical to the benefits and goals of system-wide coordination (Tollefson, 1981), which is of particular interest to the exploration of the relationship between collaboration and coordination in the present study. It appears that the ends of both approaches to creating and maintaining a system are similar but the means of doing so differ. The work of Glenny (1959) on the strengths and weaknesses of voluntary coordinating systems is also instructive to the present research. Even more important to the significance of the present study is the apparent lack of literature dealing specifically with the topic of inter-institutional collaboration. The literature does make several references, though, to the role of centralized systems in ensuring collaboration among institutions.

Of importance to understanding the historical development of B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system are the recent contradictory trends of centralization and decentralization in American higher education (Novak, 1996) and the increasing emphasis on competition. It is important to trace these recent trends through the historical development of the B.C. system.

Also of great interest to the present study is the focus of some authors on the need for a greater balance between the power of systems and the autonomy of institutions so as to counter some of the perceived negative effects of centralization, which have led some jurisdictions towards decentralization (McGuinness, 1996). Layzell and Caruthers (1999) argue for the future role of systems as intermediary bodies that will balance the state's needs for accountability for funding with the need for adequate institutional autonomy to be able to meet those accountability requirements. Similarly, Novak (1996) notes that in order for centralized structures to continue being effective, "states must create structures that grant as much autonomy and fiscal flexibility as possible, conferring sufficient authority on leaders while clearly expecting accountability" (p. 41).

McGuinness (1996) concludes that centralized systems will continue their prominence in American higher education but proposes a more balanced approach to sharing power and responsibility between the state and the institution. He proposes a hypothetical system in which a strong central presence would be guaranteed through a legislated statewide higher education policy and service corporation. This structure would have among its responsibilities allocation of resources to meet state needs; the development of appropriate accountability systems, including the approval and review of institutional charters; and the provision of special-purpose funding to promote innovation. The corporation would also provide a host of services to institutions, such as legal services and facilities planning, but would do so competitively based on the quality of its service.

Institutions within McGuinness's (1996) hypothetical system would have far more autonomy than at present and would be held fully accountable according

to agreed upon performance indicators, with success in meeting performance objectives driving a portion of their future funding. Institutions would also have their own governing boards, would own their property, and would have autonomy in collective bargaining and setting tuition fees. Institutions would also be encouraged through incentives from the state to be more market- and consumer-driven while continuing to meet the needs of the state.

The hypothetical system described by McGuinness (1996) incorporates a balance of attributes of both the centralized and decentralized systems described earlier in this chapter and also moves towards a more market-driven philosophy of higher education while maintaining a public system that is responsive to meet the changing needs of the state. Keeping in mind the appropriate balance between centralized control and institutional autonomy as described by McGuinness will be very instructive in the research into the ongoing evolution of the B.C. system.

Finally, the review of the literature provides evidence that the historical method chosen for the present study is an appropriate one. The development of centralized systems and the move towards decentralization have occurred over the last 50 years and have been influenced by a number of external factors, including the level of state funding and the increasing importance of market-driven philosophies. It seems appropriate to study the evolution of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system from an historical perspective to look for similar trends in its development. Furthermore, the use of interviews allows the researcher to ask pertinent questions of primary witnesses of historical events based on the review of the literature in Chapter 4. Adopting a hermeneutic stance to the research means that the researcher can remain open to the collective interpretation that unfolds based on the review of literature and the interviews.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a description of the research design and methodology that was used in the completion of this study. The methodology used is the historical method based upon the underlying assumptions of hermeneutics. The chapter begins with a description of hermeneutics and the dialectical hermeneutic approach to understanding text as presented by Hans-Georg Gadamer. The chapter continues with a description of historical method and the important elements of doing historical research, including the collection of oral history. The relationship between the hermeneutic approach and historical method will be described. The chapter goes on to describe the data collection and analysis procedures that were used, study participants, and strategies to enhance the trustworthiness of data collection and analysis. Following the section on trustworthiness, the researcher disclosure statement is presented. The chapter concludes with a description of strategies that were used to protect human subjects.

HERMENEUTICS

It is important for the reader to be familiar with a hermeneutic approach to understanding and interpretation in order to develop a full appreciation for the application of historical method in this study. An understanding of hermeneutics sheds light on the role of researcher as interpreter of text and on the dialectical nature of the relationship between the researcher and text. Such an understanding also explains the nature of the researcher's role as interpreter of the past from his position in the present and provides justification for the use of interviewees to gain multiple perspectives in relation to the research purpose.

Hermeneutics defined

Hermeneutics is defined as “the study of understanding, especially the task of understanding texts” (Palmer, 1969, p. 8). Hermeneutics involves both the actual

event of understanding a text and the broader question of what understanding and interpretation are. From a hermeneutic stance, understanding is seen as “an historical encounter which calls forth personal experience of being here in the world” and as “both an epistemological and an ontological phenomenon” (Palmer, 1969, p. 10).

The word hermeneutics comes from the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, which means “to interpret,” and the noun *hermeneia*, which means “interpretation” (Palmer, 1969). The words are derived from Hermes, the messenger god with winged feet whose task was to bring forward to humans the unintelligible messages from the gods and to interpret these messages so as to make them understandable to humans. Thus, from the origins of hermeneutics in antiquity, understanding has been seen as interpretation, and language has been the primary medium by which interpretation is made, either orally or in writing (Palmer, 1969).

Hermeneutic approaches were also used in biblical times to provide a system for interpreting the hidden meanings of the Old and New Testaments. The term “hermeneutics,” however, dates back to the seventeenth century. With the development of rationalism in the eighteenth century, biblical hermeneutics was applied to the interpretation of other forms of text by using natural reason to discover moral truths (Palmer, 1969).

Modern hermeneutics

Modern hermeneutics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been led by a number of German thinkers, including Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Modern hermeneutics is rooted in an interpretivist approach to human inquiry that emerged in response to scientism and positivism. A main assertion of interpretivist philosophers is that the natural sciences, with their goal of objective scientific explanation, were different from the human or mental sciences, with their goal of understanding the meaning of social phenomena, called *verstehen* (Schwandt, 1998). Yet interpretivists have struggled with their role as researchers

and the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity. Schwandt (1998) states the following about interpretivists:

They celebrate the permanence and priority of the real world of first-person, subjective experience. Yet, in true Cartesian fashion, they seek to disengage from that experience and objectify it. They struggle with drawing a line between the object of investigation and the investigator. The paradox of how to develop an objective interpretive science of subjective human experience thus arises. (pp. 223-224)

Schwandt (1998) goes on to state that this struggle to synthesize phenomenological subjectivity with scientific objectivity is evident in Wilhelm Dilthey's work as he attempted to find a scientific approach to the investigation of meaning. Indeed, Wilson (1990) describes Dilthey's difficulty in reconciling the concepts of *verstehen* and objective validity in one hermeneutic theory as "Dilthey's dilemma" (p. 27).

Schwandt (1998) describes two kinds of hermeneutics in the interpretivist tradition, the second of which overcomes the objective/subjective paradox. The first, earlier form he calls objective, validation hermeneutics, of which Dilthey was a key proponent. This form of hermeneutics "assumes that meaning is a determinate, objectlike entity waiting to be discovered in a text, a culture, or the mind of a social actor" (Schwandt, 1998, p. 227) and that the hermeneutical circle is a methodological device used to identify and explicate this meaning. Schwandt refers to the second, more recent form of hermeneutics as philosophical hermeneutics, with Heidegger and Gadamer being principal proponents. This form of hermeneutics is ontological rather than methodological and is concerned with an understanding of the condition of being-in-the-world or existence. Philosophical hermeneutics overcomes the dilemma posed by objectivity and subjectivity because "the activity of interpretation is not simply a methodological option open to the social scientist, but rather the very condition of human inquiry itself" (Schwandt, 1998, p. 224). The form of interpretation described by Gadamer underpins the way in which the researcher has approached the use of historical method in the present

study. The relationship between philosophical hermeneutics and the methodology used in this study will be described more fully below.

Wilson (1990) sheds further light on the objective/subjective dichotomy in relation to the interpretation of text by contrasting pure objectivism with pure subjectivism. In extreme objectivism, the meaning is contained entirely within the text and the reader does nothing more than observe the text as an object. Thus there can be only one interpretation of text that will not vary across interpreters, which Wilson refers to as the single sense approach. In extreme subjectivism, on the other hand, every reader is deemed different and will therefore find her or his own personal meaning in text. This approach, called a multiple sense approach, “does not acknowledge the legitimacy of the text as a coequal if not predominant partner in interpretation” and “ignores the communality of meaning” (Wilson, 1990, p. 9).

Wilson presents the aforementioned extreme views of the nature of text interpretation to lead to his assertion that reading a text is actually a combination of both objectivity and subjectivity in which both the interpreter and the text play important roles in the resulting interpretation. He refers to text interpretation as a “dialectical tension” in which “interpretation occurs within a movement back and forth between text, interpreter, text, interpreter, and so on, as the interpreter struggles to become clear about its meaning” (Wilson, 1990, p. 10). Wilson refers to this dialectical form of interpretation as a “downward interpretive spiral vortex” (p. 10) in which the reader is drawn into greater and greater depths of understanding. In Wilson’s hermeneutic approach to dialectical interpretation, the text and interpreter are coequal partners in an interactionist relationship.

Gadamer’s dialectical hermeneutics

Wilson describes the work of Gadamer as supporting this dialectical form of interpretation, which transcends the paradox between objective interpretation and subjective human experience. Palmer (1969) describes Gadamer’s approach as dialectical hermeneutics, a process in which “truth is not reached methodically but

dialectically” (p. 165). Interpretation of text for Gadamer involves three main elements: prejudice or tradition, application, and a fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1975; Wilson, 1990).

Prejudice entails “the interpreter’s own positioning of himself before the text in such a way that the self is not eradicated” (Wilson, 1990, p. 17). Each interpreter has her or his own beliefs, ideas, expectations, and presuppositions that form one’s tradition or sense of being. These traditions are the basis of all understanding, including the understanding of text (Kneller, 1984). Gadamer states that “to stand within a tradition does not limit the freedom of knowledge but makes it possible” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 324). Because all interpreters exist within tradition, it is not possible to objectify knowledge as if the interpreter stands outside of history and can look down upon it. “Finite, historical man always sees and understands from his standpoint in time and place” (Palmer, 1969, p. 178).

Gadamer’s concept of the interpretation of the past from one’s place in the present is important to the present study and deserves further explication. For Gadamer, understanding always functions within the past, present, and future and “history is seen and understood only and always through a consciousness standing in the present” (Palmer, 1969, p. 176). Because of this, one cannot objectify the past as it can never be truly separated from the present and future. Furthermore, understanding an historical text always involves an application of that text to the present, application being the second important element of Gadamer’s hermeneutic theory of text interpretation (Palmer, 1969; Wilson, 1990). Finally, because all interpretation is related to the present and each interpreter enters the act of interpretation with her or his own presuppositions, there can be no one right interpretation (Palmer, 1969).

The third element of text interpretation for Gadamer deals with the fusion of horizons. The tradition from which one enters an interpretive event forms the horizon from which the interpreter sees the world, and the meaning within text forms another horizon. The self as interpreter opens itself to the meaning of text

through the fusion of horizons which “points to a mutual resilience of both text and interpreter” (Wilson, 1990, p. 18). Palmer (1969) describes this melding of horizons as follows:

The horizon of meaning within which a text or historical act stands is questioningly approached from within one’s own horizon; and one does not leave his own horizon behind when he interprets, but broadens it so as to fuse it with that of the act or text.... The dialectic of question and answer works out a fusion of horizons. What makes this possible? The fact that both are, in a sense, universal and grounded in being. So the encounter with the horizon of the transmitted text in reality lights up one’s own horizon and leads to self-disclosure and self-understanding; the encounter becomes a moment of ontological disclosure. It is an event in which something emerges from negativity—the negativity of realizing that there is something one did not know, that things were not as one had assumed. (p. 201)

Neither text nor interpreter is dominant in Gadamer’s sense of fusion, and the meaning of text can go beyond that originally intended by the author. Once again, the idea of a single, correct interpretation of text is not supportable if one accepts the nature of this relationship between interpreter and text. Kneller (1984) describes this relationship as follows:

The meaning of a text or event is not limited to its original significance. The text or event has a structure that each generation and each individual interprets afresh in the light of new personal insights and a new historical situation. Therefore, there is no limit to the process of interpretation, and each successful interpretation is different. (p. 77)

The concept of fusion of horizons for Gadamer extends to the realm of teaching, which Gadamer (1975) describes as a form of dialogue within a tradition, not unlike the interpreter’s dialogue with text. Through dialogue, teacher and students come together with different points of view based on different historical situations and work towards insight and discovery. “What we discover (uncover), however, is not necessarily a preexistent proposition, but one of countless possible interpretations of a text or subject” (Kneller, 1984, p. 78). Through this dialogue, both the teacher and the student are changed through a process of fusion.

The work of Gadamer and his conception of dialectical hermeneutics in relation to understanding text or engaging in dialogue with others are important to the historical research being conducted in the present study. The researcher entered the research process with the understanding that his interpretation is but one possible interpretation of the text, influenced by his own experiences and presuppositions, and that there could be other interpretations based on the tradition and history of other interpreters. The researcher also entered the research process without predetermined assumptions about what the literature would unveil, and the exploration of literature was not viewed as the creation of objectively valid knowledge. The researcher undertook the research of the past with an understanding that the past can only be understood when it is applied to the present. Because of the temporal nature of understanding and the assertion that there is no one right interpretation of text, the researcher involved others in the conversation as interviewees to help him develop a richer, more insightful interpretation of history and more in-depth understanding in relation to the purpose of this research project.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of the present study is to examine the coordinated and collaborative nature of B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system and the movement between decentralization and centralization of that system from an historical perspective. Therefore the historical method is being used in the study. The sections below describe the subjective nature of historical research, the resulting relationship to interpretive hermeneutics, and the methods used in historical research, including the collection of oral history.

The subjective nature of historical research

Historical research is “the process of systematically searching for data to answer questions about a past phenomenon, in order to better understand the phenomenon and its likely causes and consequences” (Gall et al., 1999, p. 391).

History has been recorded since antiquity whereas the discipline of history is a more recent invention. Narrative history dates back to Herodotus and involves the art of telling the story of what had previously occurred. In the twentieth century, the scholarly monograph became the preferred means of writing history by professional historians, with its meticulous review of source materials, detailed treatment of a narrow subject, and attention to accuracy versus art (Shafer, 1969). The overarching influence of positivism in the early twentieth century led to the treatment of historical research as the collection of facts and the search for causal relationships between facts. However, more recent historians view historical research as qualitative in nature because of the interpretive framework that is used in data collection and analysis (Gall et al., 1999). The present researcher adheres to the view that historical research is qualitative and interpretive in nature.

The discussion of historical method as being interpretive rather than scientific in nature is important in light of the previous discussion on hermeneutics and the work of Gadamer to describe the situational and dialectical nature of text interpretation. Gall et al. (1999) state that “the historical researchers’ task is to combine one or more witnesses’ accounts, admittedly subjective, and to interpret them (also a subjective process) in an attempt to discover what actually happened” (pp. 399-400). Because of the subjective nature of the process, “historians will write different histories about the past depending upon the evidence that they have chosen to collect and how they have interpreted it” (Gall et al., 1999, p. 400). From a hermeneutic stance, these histories will also vary based on the prejudices and tradition that the researcher brings to the task and the inextricably bound nature of the past and the present. Gall et al. (1999) state this another way by saying that the interpretive nature of historical research results in a continual reconstruction of the past based on historians’ changing interests and knowledge.

Gottschalk (1950) describes history as the subjective process of recreation. “The historian’s aim is *verisimilitude* with regard to a perished past - a subjective process - rather than experimental certainty with regard to an objective reality”

(Gottschalk, 1950, p. 47). History involves reconstructing the past in a meaningful way based on available records and the inferences of the historian who is situated in time. It is important to note that the role of the historian is to discover or recreate the past through data relevant to the research problem but not to create the past, which would be a form of fiction or imagination (Gall et al., 1999; Gottschalk, 1950). The collection of oral history through interviews, though, does constitute a form of data creation (Gall et al., 1999).

Methods of historical research

The methods of historical research and analysis include selecting the subject for investigation, collecting sources of information related to that subject, examining those sources for genuineness, and extracting credible particulars from those sources (Gottschalk, 1950). The two types of sources used by historians are primary and secondary sources. A primary source “must have been produced by a contemporary of the events it narrates” (Gottschalk, 1950, p. 53). Primary sources include hand-written or printed text materials; oral history, collected in the present from those who witnessed a past event; relics, which include any object that provides information about the past; and quantitative materials, such as census records, budgets, and other compilations of numerical data (Gall et al., 1999). A secondary source is “a document (or other type of recorded information, such as a videotape) in which the author describes an event or situation at which the author was not present” (Gall et al., 1999, p. 395). However, secondary sources must be based on information generated by others who were primary witnesses of the event or situation. Interestingly, according to Gottschalk (1950) “the further away secondary sources are in time from events of which they tell, the more reliable they are likely to be” (p. 116), which is the opposite of the rule applied to primary sources.

Oral history

As stated previously, an important primary source is oral history. Oral history, in its most orthodox form and for the purposes of the present study, consists of the researcher conducting interviews with different individuals to ascertain their recollections and opinions. The researcher should not become involved in interviews until she or he has done a thorough review of both primary and secondary sources and thus has developed a high level of competence in the subject matter. The research into primary and secondary sources should uncover the issues or concepts that lead to the interview questions, and the purpose of conducting the interview is to use personal sources to fill gaps in the information provided by written documents (Moss, 1974).

Interviews provide a more dynamic source of information than documents because they tap into the memories of interviewees. This dynamic nature of an interview is described eloquently by Moss (1974):

Memory... is engaged and integrated with the present-with continuously changing attitudes, perspectives and understandings-working and reworking the data of experience into new formulations, opinions and perhaps even new creations. What is captured in oral history is seldom an exhaustive study of all the relevant data, but rather a segment of human experience-the interaction of interviewer and interviewee-in the context of a remembered past, a dynamic present and an unknown, open-ended future. (p. 9)

This discussion of interpreting the past in light of the present and future through oral history is very similar to Gadamer's assertion that whether in dialogue with others or with text about the past, a fusion of horizons takes place that cannot be separated from the present or from the traditions of the players in the dialogue.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The researcher began by synthesizing information gleaned from historical documents, both primary and secondary in nature, as well as recent relevant documents. The researcher first reviewed important secondary documents, with the

initial focus being on key dissertations closely related to the topic of the research, which is the collaborative and coordinated nature of B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system. The initial focus was also on key secondary documents that provided an overview of the last 40 years of development in the B.C. post-secondary system. Based on the initial secondary sources, the researcher located the important primary sources that required further study beyond what was described by the secondary sources. The researcher also determined which other secondary sources were important to the research topic and located those sources. In light of the dialectical nature of the research process, the researcher added to his review of the literature throughout the study as new information emerged from the interpretation of text.

The researcher received assistance throughout the research process from a voluntary research advisor, Paul Gallagher, who is a respected, long-standing leader in the B.C. college system and thus has extensive knowledge of important players, events, and literature in the history of that system. The research advisor served as a form of investigator triangulation and provided assistance to the researcher in identifying and locating some of the important literature that was relevant to the research purpose. Many of the important documents were unpublished and thus difficult to locate, such as minutes of meetings, important letters and memos, reports by post-secondary associations, and government documents. The researcher also received assistance from John Dennison, a member of his doctoral committee, in identifying and locating what Dr. Dennison termed as "fugitive literature."

As the researcher read through the relevant literature, he prepared notes on index cards for the important direct and indirect quotes from each literature source. He also developed a coding system for the cards to denote the category to which the direct or indirect quote belonged and then rated each card according to level of importance to the research purpose. Once the bulk of the reading was completed, the researcher reviewed the cards and sorted them into five time periods that

emerged as a natural division of the 40-year history. These time periods became the chronological structure for Chapter 4. A chronological structure is deemed an appropriate means of presenting information in an historical study (Gall et al., 1999). The researcher then resorted the cards in each time period by the categories and importance levels of the cards. Following the resulting structure in each time period, the researcher wrote Chapter 4 as a literature review in relation to the research purpose about the coordinated and collaborative nature of B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system. The literature review differs from Chapter 2 of the dissertation, which presents a review of literature dealing with the broader theme of coordination and collaboration versus competition in higher education in general in order to set the context for the present study of the B.C. system.

The researcher concluded the literature review by identifying key findings that had emerged from the literature. These findings were used to prepare a set of interview questions for the collection of interview data to confirm findings and to fill any gaps in understanding that might exist from the review of documents. The findings were first discussed with the research advisor to determine if they made sense to him in light of his historical knowledge of the development of the B.C. system. Interviews were then conducted with 10 key informants who have a thorough knowledge of the B.C. post-secondary system and its development. A description of the interviewees is presented below in the section on study participants, and brief biographical information about the interviewees is presented in Appendix C.

The purpose of the interviews was to serve as a form of data and methods triangulation to establish credibility of the findings from the literature, as described below. The interview questions were used to add depth to the findings that emerged from the literature review and hence to address the purpose of the study. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of all 17 interview questions. The interviews were used to collect oral history from those who had actually experienced first-hand

many of the key events that have led to the development of a coordinated, collaborative post-secondary system over time. Thus the interviews were used to tap the memories of the key informants with the knowledge that those memories are inextricably bound to the present.

The interviews were conducted between April 10 and June 28, 2002. The researcher interviewed key informants individually but did so in pairs so that two interviews were conducted one after the other before transcription and analysis occurred for those interviews. Two of the interviews were not conducted as a pair because of the location and availability of interviewees. The researcher interviewed the first two key informants in a modified standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 1990), based on the aforementioned interview questions. The interview process was constructivist in nature and involved working through a core set of questions but allowing probes and additional questions based on the way in which each interview unfolded. Each of the prepared questions was asked of enough interviewees to provide a form of triangulation for the responses. Some questions were asked more often than others because of the importance of those questions to the central purpose of the research. After half the interviews had been conducted, the researcher reviewed the initial results and added and revised questions as required to ensure that adequate information was being gained from interviewees in relation to the findings from literature.

The interviews were taped on audiotape. Immediately following the first two interviews, the researcher had the audiotapes transcribed by a professional transcriber, who was asked to prepare the transcripts verbatim from the tapes. The researcher then reviewed the transcripts and prepared an analysis of each interviewee's response to each question. The researcher then conducted a member check individually with the first two interviewees by sending them the transcript and analysis of their respective interviews to determine the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation of interview data and to ask if they wished to add anything further to the original responses. The researcher then followed the same

process as above to interview the remaining key informants and transcribed, analyzed the data, and member checked after each interview.

The method of analysis used for the interviews in the research study is in keeping with the hermeneutic approach of the study. The researcher approached the transcript as another form of text and his reading and analysis of that text was his own interpretation. Therefore, it was necessary to member check with each interviewee to ensure that she or he agreed with that interpretation. In analyzing the interview transcript, the researcher used two techniques described by Kvale (1996). The first is called “meaning condensation,” which “entails an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations. Long statements are compressed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what is said is rephrased in a few words” (Kvale, 1996, p. 192). These statements were written in the margins of the transcript.

The second form of analysis is called “meaning interpretation,” which “goes beyond a structuring of the manifest meanings of a text to deeper and more or less speculative interpretations of the text” (Kvale, 1996, p. 193). Kvale continues that “in contrast to the decontextualization of statements by categorization, interpretation recontextualizes the statements within broader frames of reference” (p. 193). Based on this approach, the researcher summarized in his own words the responses to each question. Such a summarization often involved combining statements by the interviewee from different parts of the interview, thus relating the parts of the interview to the whole rather than breaking the interview transcript down into minute categories of meaning. This summarization was then shared with the interviewees through the member check.

Based on the findings from the interview data and melding it with the findings from the primary and secondary literature, the researcher made observations and drew conclusions from the study. The discussion of findings from the interviews is presented in Chapter 5 and the conclusions in Chapter 6. Chapter 6 also relates the findings from the literature and interviews regarding the B.C.

context to the broader context of coordination in higher education as presented in Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes with recommendations for further research.

In concluding this section on data collection and analysis procedures, it should be noted that the researcher entered the research process with a research purpose formulated but without any a priori assumptions of what he would find in the literature or in the interviews to address that purpose. The researcher employed a phenomenological approach called bracketing in order to acknowledge his influence in the research process. Bracketing, a term first used by Husserl, involves understanding and making explicit one's "beliefs, biases, assumptions, presuppositions, and theories" (van Manen, 1990, p. 47) in order to open oneself up to the phenomenon being studied. These biases or traditions have been divulged in the researcher disclosure statement later in this chapter. Being conscious of one's tradition and one's place in the present as an interpreter of the past is viewed as a necessary component of a hermeneutic approach to historical interpretation. Thus, rather than controlling for bias, the researcher brought his view of being in the world knowingly into the interpretation of data. He also entered the study with an openness to the information that would flow from text and interviewees.

The researcher understood that his is but one interpretation among multiple interpretations of what has actually occurred in B.C. over the last 40 years. Because of this understanding and because the researcher had only lived in British Columbia since 1994, he realized that he could get richer data on the historical development of the B.C. system and test his own reflections on the past against multiple perspectives by conducting interviews with primary witnesses of key historical events. He realized that making use of the interpretive skills of other, long-standing members of the post-secondary system in B.C. would help him construct a more in-depth interpretation of the past.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Study participants included 10 interviewees who were witnesses of many of the key events leading to the development of the present system, had a thorough knowledge of the B.C. post-secondary system and its development, and represented a wide variety of perspectives on that development. The perspectives included those of institutional presidents, board members, Ministry staff, and faculty association leaders. The researcher deemed this number of interviewees to be adequate for providing a reasonable amount of data in this qualitative research study. Trends usually begin to emerge in qualitative research after a small number of interviews (Ambert, Adler, Adler, & Detzner, 1999). The initial list of interviewees was compiled with the assistance of the research advisor, but further names of appropriate interviewees emerged from discussion with the interviewees. Brief biographical information about each interviewee is contained in Appendix C. All interviewees were informed of procedures to be used to ensure protection of human subjects.

STRATEGIES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As described above, the research is qualitative, subjective, and interpretive in nature because of the use of historical method based on the underlying assumptions of hermeneutics. This implies that there are multiple realities, that each individual brings her or his own presuppositions into the act of interpreting text or events, and that one cannot enter the research process as an objective observer. Therefore, a rationalistic, positivistic approach to determining the internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity of the research and its findings is inappropriate for this research study. Instead the researcher used a variety of strategies to establish the trustworthiness of the methodology used in collecting and interpreting data and of the findings themselves.

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is established in order to answer a number of questions relating to truth value, consistency, neutrality, and

applicability. The terms used to describe these four aspects from a qualitative stance are credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, respectively. These four criteria, developed by Egon Guba as a model of trustworthiness, and the mechanisms used in each to establish the rigour of qualitative research are described in detail by Guba (1981), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Krefting (1999). The four criteria are used below as a framework for describing the strategies and mechanisms that have been used in the present study to ensure the trustworthiness and rigour of the research and its findings. The use of the four criteria does not, however, indicate an attempt on the part of the researcher to show objectivity in the research because of the dialectical hermeneutic approach taken in the research.

Credibility

Credibility involves describing adequately and accurately the researcher's interpretation of text and of the multiple realities of the research participants so that the interpretations are credible to the participants. The researcher used a number of techniques in the present study to build credibility of the research and its findings. These techniques applied to both the review of literature and the interviews that were conducted and are based on the work of Guba (1981), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Johnson (1999), and Krefting (1999).

- *Triangulation* refers to the “convergence of multiple perspectives for mutual confirmation of data to ensure that all aspects of a phenomenon have been investigated” (Krefting, 1999, p. 177). It involves cross-checking of information and conclusions to ensure corroboration (Johnson, 1999). The researcher used a number of types of triangulation to ensure credibility of the research and its findings:
 - *Methods triangulation* involves the use of multiple research methods in a research study. The researcher used the historical method to conduct a thorough literature review and also used the interview

method to collect additional information upon which to base his findings and conclusions.

- *Data triangulation* involves the use of multiple data sources within a single method. The researcher included in his literature review a wide variety of primary and secondary sources. He also interviewed 10 individuals with varying backgrounds and perspectives to achieve greater breadth and depth in the data collected through interviews in order to fill in gaps in understanding and confirm findings from the literature.
- *Investigator triangulation* involves “the use of multiple investigators (i.e., multiple researchers) in collecting and interpreting the data” (Johnson, 1999, p 161). The researcher worked throughout the study with a research advisor, who is a respected, long-standing leader in the B.C. college system and who has experienced much of the historical development of the B.C. system firsthand. The research advisor assisted in identifying and locating important literature, creating the list of interviewees, and reviewing the findings from literature.
- *Member checking* involves the researcher sharing with participants his interpretation of what they said. Member checking is used to enhance “the ability of informants to recognize their experiences in the research findings” (Krefting, 1999, p. 178). The researcher used member checking as a technique with each interviewee after the interview data had been transcribed and analyzed. Each participant was given the opportunity to approve the final version of the transcript and analysis of her or his interview.
- *Peer examination* involves discussion of the researcher’s interpretations and conclusions with others as the research study unfolds in order to help build theory from the findings. The researcher engaged in a form of peer

examination through his ongoing relationship with the research advisor and through occasional discussions with others who worked in the B.C. post-secondary system and had an interest in the research topic.

- *Establishing the authority of the researcher* is another means of ensuring credibility. Authority is established through such aspects as the degree of familiarity of the researcher with the phenomenon being studied and the investigative skills of the researcher (Krefting, 1999). The authority of the researcher is important because, as Patton (1990) states, “in qualitative inquiry *the researcher is the instrument*. Validity in qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork” (p. 14). The authority of the researcher in relation to the present study is described in the researcher disclosure statement, which is the next section in this chapter.
- *Structural coherence* involves maintaining credibility by explaining apparent contradictions or inconsistencies in the data and their interpretations (Krefting, 1999). The researcher paid close attention to potential inconsistencies emerging from the review of literature and/or the interviews and explained them in Chapters 4 and 5 in order to maintain structural coherence.

Dependability

Dependability relates to the consistency of research findings and the stability of the data. Guba (1981) states that qualitative researchers “must make allowance for apparent instabilities arising either because different realities are being tapped or because of instrumental shifts stemming from developing insights on the part of the investigator-as-instrument” (p. 86). Although the researcher acknowledged the constructivist nature of the methodology being used, which allows research questions and the number and identity of interviewees to vary as data emerges, he used a number of techniques to meet the dependability criterion

and, once again, relied on the work of Guba (1981), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Krefting (1999) for his choice of appropriate techniques.

- *Establish an audit trail* involves making it possible “for an external auditor to examine the processes whereby data were collected and analyzed, and interpretations were made” (Guba, 1981, p. 87). The researcher in the present study provided an audit trail through documentation from the literature review and interviews, including the index cards derived from the reading of important documents, the interview transcripts, and the analysis of the interviews. He also prepared a field journal, which describes explicitly the logistics and methods of the study along with the changing thoughts and feelings of the researcher as he engaged in dialogue with the text and interviewees.
- *Dense description of research methods* involves providing explicit information on the “exact methods of data gathering, analysis, and interpretation” used in the research and is related to the auditable nature of the research so that “another researcher can clearly follow the decision trail used by the investigator in the study” (Krefting, 1999, p. 179). The researcher provided such dense description, both in the field journal and in this chapter, to increase the dependability of the study.
- *Methods triangulation*, described above, is another means of enhancing dependability as potential weaknesses inherent in one method of collecting data are compensated for by the use of alternative methods (Krefting, 1999). As stated previously, the researcher used the interview method along with an in-depth literature review that was conducted as part of the historical method.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the third criterion of trustworthiness in qualitative research. Confirmability relates to the concept of objectivity. However, the term

“objectivity” does not apply to qualitative research in general because the researchers do not believe they can be removed from the research situation as objective observers. In terms of epistemology, qualitative or naturalistic research is transactional and subjective in nature, meaning knowledge is created as a result of the interaction between the researcher and the respondents (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Likewise, historical method, as described earlier in this chapter, is seen as a subjective process that will involve different interpretations of the past based on the evidence chosen for analysis and the backgrounds of the researchers (Gall et al., 1999). From a hermeneutic stance, the dichotomy between objective interpretation and subjective human experience is transcended by viewing the interpretation of text as a dialectical tension in which text and interpreter are coequal partners in an interactionist relationship (Wilson, 1990).

Because of the transactional, subjective, and interactionist nature of qualitative research, strategies must be used to account for investigator predilections and the potential impact on the research of those predilections. These strategies include establishing the credibility of the researcher, acknowledging potential researcher effects, and establishing the confirmability of the data and methods. The following techniques have been proposed by Guba (1981) and Krefting (1999) to enhance confirmability and have been used in the present study.

- *Practising reflexivity* involves assessing and revealing the researcher’s background, perspectives, and epistemological assumptions (Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1999). Such a revelation informs both the reader and the researcher of the researcher’s prejudices and presuppositions and allows the researcher to consider how her or his perspective may influence the data. Reflexivity involves not only an initial disclosure by the researcher but also a continuous assessment of one’s thoughts and feelings throughout the research process to assess changes that might be occurring as a result of the research. Reflexivity is similar to the concept of bracketing. The researcher in the present study practised reflexivity by providing an initial disclosure

statement and by keeping a detailed field journal that allowed ongoing reflection throughout the research process.

- *Triangulation*, including data, methods and investigator triangulation, has been described above as a means of enhancing credibility. These processes are also used to enhance confirmability. Data and methods triangulation were used by the researcher to enhance the confirmability of the data and methods. Investigator triangulation with the assistance of the research advisor was an effective means of helping the researcher to develop a more in-depth understanding of the past.

In conclusion, a number of strategies and mechanisms, as described above, were used by the researcher to enhance the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the study.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the applicability of research findings to other settings. Transferability, or generalizability, is not a major purpose of hermeneutic research, which acknowledges the uniqueness of the individual researcher's interpretation of text, nor does it apply to historical research, which is subjective and interpretive in nature. However, the researcher employed the concepts of bracketing and reflexivity to acknowledge his biases and traditions upfront. He also used the methods described herein to promote the trustworthiness and rigour of his research, including using multiple perspectives to develop commonalities in the interpretation of the past.

Eichelberger (1989) acknowledges the particularity of both hermeneutic and phenomenological research as opposed to the generalizability of positivist research. However, Eichelberger asserts that phenomenological and hermeneutic research, "done in a rigorous way using methods that are accepted by others who do the same type of research, or scholarship" (1989, p. 7), can be viewed by other researchers for commonalities. Likewise, although the present researcher is interested in

describing the findings from the literature review and interviews with regards to the historical development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system, he realizes that others in similar situations will read his insights and may choose to apply them to their own context. The researcher also hopes that the findings and conclusions will help develop a fuller understanding of the historical context of coordination and collaboration in the B.C. system. This understanding may have an impact on those making policy decisions about the future development of the system, both within government and in the system itself.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CRITICISM

Besides the various means of ensuring trustworthiness of qualitative research, historical research also involves other procedures for validating historical evidence. These include external and internal criticism as applied to evaluating primary sources.

- *External criticism* refers to the determination of authenticity of primary sources (Gall et al., 1999; Gottschalk, 1950). External criticism addresses “the issue of whether the apparent or claimed origin of the source corresponds to its actual origin” (Gall et al., 1999, p. 398). One can determine a primary source’s origin by reviewing the source’s author, place, and date of publication as well as the circumstances surrounding its publication. The researcher took the necessary steps to ensure the authenticity of all primary sources.
- *Internal criticism* refers to the accuracy (Gall et al., 1999) or credibility (Gottschalk, 1950) of primary sources. Credibility for Gottschalk (1950) relates to a high level of verisimilitude, which means what is reported in the primary source is not what actually happened but is as close as possible to what actually happened. Internal criticism involves judging “both the reasonableness of the statements in a historical source and the trustworthiness of the person who made the statements” (Gall et al., 1999,

p. 399). The researcher judged the accuracy of primary sources by determining whether the author was present at the event being described, whether the author participated in the event or was merely an observer, the author's qualifications to describe the event, the level of the author's emotional involvement in the event, and whether or not the author had a vested interest in the outcomes of the event (Gall et al., 1999).

RESEARCHER DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In order to establish the credibility and authority of the researcher and the confirmability of the data, it is incumbent upon the researcher to present a disclosure statement that describes his background, perceptions, and epistemology and discusses the impact that they might have on the research. The following represents such a disclosure statement and serves as a form of bracketing in this hermeneutic study.

The researcher has worked the last eight years in B.C. at the system level with responsibility for programs and activities that occur across colleges, university colleges, and institutes. For the first four of those years, he worked as a director in the provincial government and for the last four years he has been the CEO of an agency whose role is to promote collaboration and innovation among post-secondary institutions. Thus, the researcher has developed a solid understanding of the nature of coordination and collaboration within the B.C. system and a strong appreciation for the value of that collaboration. His two positions in B.C. have given him a unique opportunity to become acquainted with important players at the administrator and faculty levels across all institutions and to work on several projects that have system-wide applicability. The fact that his present position as CEO of a system-serving agency is largely dependent upon the willingness of institutions to cooperate with each other on various educational initiatives provides for a strong source of prejudice that the researcher must remain aware of throughout the research process. Furthermore, the researcher must always keep in

62-
65

mind the positive value he places on a coordinated versus fragmented post-secondary system.

The researcher has chosen a subjective, qualitative methodology based on an interpretive, hermeneutic stance and rooted in his ontological and epistemological assumptions. He does not believe in the positivist assumption that the researcher can remove himself from the research setting and take a purely objective view to discover a single, unalterable reality. Instead he believes in a relativist ontology and a transactional, subjectivist epistemology. The researcher enters the research setting with her or his full being and thus the findings of the research emerge from the interaction of the researcher and that being researched. Furthermore, each individual enters the research process with her or his own presuppositions and remains inextricably bound to the present. Therefore, every researcher will interpret the research data differently from her or his unique perspective on life, and research is necessarily subjective in nature. Yet the present researcher rejects the notion of pure subjectivism described by Wilson (1990) because he believes that there are common elements to meaning and that the role of the researcher is to uncover those elements through an ongoing dialogue or dialectical exchange with text and others.

The researcher's belief in the subjective, interactionist view of understanding is based on his personal and professional background. He spent 10 years as an adult basic education instructor, using group and individualized techniques with students of different educational levels, ages, and cultural backgrounds. This experience taught him that individuals learn in different ways and that an approach that works with one student may not work with another. Similarly, approaches that work in one cultural setting may not be effective in another, as his years of experience working with First Nations students taught him. The researcher also spent five years as the Provincial Literacy Director with responsibility for expanding the range of community-based, learner-centred adult literacy programs in the province of Manitoba. Literacy programming was

developed to suit each individual learner's level and goals rather than using a standardized curriculum for all students. As well, each community approached the development of its literacy program differently because of different needs, economic situations, cultures, languages, and so on. Only through working with each community at this individual level could successful literacy programs be launched and sustained. It was through his experience in teaching adult basic education and setting up learner-centred, community-based adult literacy programs that the researcher developed his strong view that post-secondary education should be learner- and learning-centred. This view includes support for collaborative efforts among institutions to create flexible learning opportunities and to ease student transition.

In his research for his Master of Arts, the researcher did an interventionist case study using metacognitive techniques to improve the reading comprehension of adult learners. This qualitative Master's research, described in Gaber (1988), helped the researcher to develop his skills in collecting, transcribing, and analyzing volumes of data from his interaction with students. The researcher found that the results of his study were largely dependent on his skills as a researcher and on the participants who were chosen for the research. A more seasoned researcher with more experience in the teaching technique used and a different set of participants than the First Nations students with whom he had worked could have resulted in very different results. Similarly, a different researcher pouring over the 500 pages of transcripts from the teaching intervention may have come up with a different interpretation of the trends in each individual student's gradually improving reading comprehension.

In his Master's research, the researcher discovered the work of Lev Vygotsky, who has had a lasting impact on the researcher's view of education and learning. Vygotsky (1978) proposed a theory of social learning in which an expert other engages the learner within her or his individual zone of proximal development and provides modelling and guidance until the learner can internalize

the strategy being taught and use it independently. This theory of social learning involves the teacher and learner in an ongoing dialectical process in which the learner is being constantly challenged by the teacher who must be finely attuned to the learner's changing level of understanding. For Vygotsky, the learner is an active player in the learning process. Such a dialectical process of learning is not unlike the dialectical tension referred to by Wilson (1990) in his description of the interactionist relationship between interpreter and text that defines a hermeneutic approach to interpretation.

From a personal perspective, the researcher views his life as evolving through a combination of planned activities and happenstance. He believes in a systemic rather than mechanistic view of the world. From a systems way of thinking, the researcher views himself as being connected to a living system in which the sum is greater than its parts, all parts are interrelated in a complex web of relationships, and movement in one part has an impact on other parts (Capra, 1996). Similarly, while the researcher has tried to plan as much as possible his path through life, much of the journey has been guided more by chance as unforeseen events in the broader scheme of things have had an unanticipated impact on planned directions. Thus the researcher is constructing his own reality but is doing so within the broader context of the complex world in which he lives. The researcher also realizes that how he views himself, his strengths and weaknesses, is not necessarily how others view him. His evolving self is a constant interplay between his own and others' views of that self, not unlike Gadamer's concept of fusion of horizons within dialectical hermeneutics.

Thus both professionally and personally, the researcher gravitates towards a relativist and interpretivist view of the world, which fits well with the qualitative research methodology chosen for this study.

STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

Strategies were undertaken to ensure the adequate protection of participants in the research project, which included 10 interviewees. The researcher followed the guidelines as laid forth in the *Oregon State University Human Subjects Handbook* (Oregon State University, 2000). The principal investigator, Dr. George Copa, and the researcher sought approval from the Institutional Review Board at OSU in order to incorporate human subjects into the research. Informed consent was received from all participants using a written consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board and signed and dated by the individual participant.

Because of the nature of historical research, greater credence can be added to the findings if important statements made by an interviewee are attributed to that interviewee. The trustworthiness of qualitative historical data from interviews can be enhanced by naming the interviewees and the qualifications they bring to the subject under study. Therefore, the researcher did not maintain confidentiality of the interviewees and described in the Informed Consent Document (see Appendix E) the procedures to be used with respect to confidentiality. Each interviewee was given the opportunity to review and approve the transcript of what she or he had said in the taped interview and the researcher's analysis of that transcript. If an interviewee requested that confidentiality be maintained throughout the study or in relation to specific statements, then the researcher honoured that request. The audiotapes will be erased and destroyed once the study has been completed. Likewise, paper and digital copies of the transcripts will be destroyed/deleted once the study has been completed.

The use of participants in the research study is justified because, from a hermeneutic stance and with the use of subjective, historical method, it is advisable to interview knowledgeable individuals to gain a more in-depth understanding of past events and to fill in gaps from the literature. Selection of subjects was made equitably to represent a wide range of perspectives among witnesses of key events in the historical development of the B.C. system.

SUMMARY

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in the present research study as the historical method based upon the underlying assumptions of hermeneutics, in particular the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer on dialectical hermeneutics. Gadamer describes the interpretation of text as a fusion of horizons in which each reader approaches text from her or his own traditions and place in the present and engages in a dialogue with the text, which forms the other horizon. The interpretation that results is unique to the individual reader but also acknowledges the meaning inherent in text. Similarly, historical method is a subjective process that depends on the interpretive framework used by different historians to collect and analyze data.

Chapter 3 describes the methods that have been used to collect data for this historical research. These methods included reading primary and secondary sources of literature to arrive at findings in relation to the purpose of the study and then conducting interviews with 10 interviewees to confirm those findings and fill in gaps in understanding from the literature review. The findings from the literature are presented in Chapter 4 and the findings from the interviews are presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 3 also discusses a variety of strategies that have been used to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data collection and analysis procedures. These strategies are designed to improve the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the research findings. The researcher has also used strategies to ensure the external criticism, or authenticity, and internal criticism, or accuracy, of primary sources. The chapter concludes with a researcher disclosure statement and a description of strategies for the protection of human subjects in the research, as approved by OSU.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

Chapter 4 presents the findings from an extensive review of historical literature, which provided the main source of data related to the purpose of the study. Interviews that were conducted based on the findings from the literature in Chapter 4 represent a further source of data, and the findings from the interviews as they relate to the findings from the literature are presented in Chapter 5. For Chapter 4, the author reviewed pertinent literature, both primary and secondary sources, to develop a better understanding of the historical development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system of autonomous institutions through the lens of voluntary inter-institutional collaboration in relation to provincial coordination. The author also read the literature looking for evidence of the nature of centralization versus decentralization in the system and explored the related theme of system development versus institutional autonomy.

The data presented in Chapter 4 represent findings from the author's reading and interpretation of the literature and thus makes extensive use of direct and indirect quotes from that literature. Occasionally, the author also presents his own perspective on some of the historical developments that have occurred based on his own knowledge as well as on the literature. When this occurs, the author notifies the reader that it is his own perspective.

Chapter 4 begins with a brief summary of findings from the author's reading and interpretation of the literature with very few references to the specific literature. The summary is being provided at the beginning of the chapter to serve as a framework for the reader to understand the literature review in the remainder of this chapter. The chapter then provides a detailed analysis of findings from the literature broken into five time periods, which have been chosen because of the natural segmentation of historical events relating to the focus of the study. Thus, a chronological framework has been chosen, which the author deems to be fitting in an historical study. Despite the chronological approach to data presentation, there

are recurring themes that occur across time periods, and these themes are identified as such. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the author's key findings from the literature.

Finally, the reader should understand at the outset that what is presented in this chapter is not in any way meant to represent a complete history of the development of the college, university college, and institute system in B.C. Rather, the chapter focuses on the evidence most pertinent to the research purpose dealing with inter-institutional collaboration and provincial coordination.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

Below is a brief summary of the major findings from the literature as they relate to the purpose of the study. The themes of coordination, collaboration, centralization, and institutional autonomy are woven throughout. Citations of specific literature to support these findings are contained in the more detailed analysis of literature across five time periods that follows.

The main finding from the literature is that B.C. has developed what is considered to be one of the most coordinated post-secondary systems in Canada. This coordination has occurred because of a set of circumstances and through a set of actions unique to B.C. In the early days, college development and coordination across institutions were driven by individual institutions and their communities, but the government became more and more involved in coordinating that development, beginning in the early 1970s and continuing for the next three decades. Maintaining a sense of partnership between the Ministry and institutions has been very important to maintaining a coordinated system that respects institutional autonomy and the value of voluntary collaboration among institutions. Trends in the 1990s towards greater centralized decision making with multiple stakeholder involvement, coupled with the fragmentation of the system brought about mostly because of the rise of university colleges as a separate sector, have resulted in the breakdown of inter-institutional collaboration and calls for higher levels of

institutional autonomy. The early 2000s have witnessed a move to decentralization based on the new government's market ideology.

The beginnings of colleges as autonomous institutions

The early beginnings of colleges in B.C. were very much based on local initiative, which differs from most other jurisdictions in Canada. The key event that began the development of colleges was the Macdonald Report, an independent report produced by the President of the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 1962 to address the rapidly expanding need for post-secondary education in a province with only one university. Three key recommendations by Macdonald resulted in the formation of a differentiated system of autonomous institutions that is in many ways intact today: that a number of two-year colleges be developed to provide, among other programs, academic programming at the first- and second-year level for transfer into universities; that colleges be autonomous, self-governing institutions rather than parts of a provincial system; and that colleges be designed to meet local needs with school boards providing governance as well as local taxation for a portion of the costs of running institutions.

The Macdonald Report and many of its recommendations were quickly acted upon by the provincial government through an amendment to the Public Schools Act in 1963. However, the impetus for establishing colleges was left entirely in the hands of local school boards and communities through local plebiscites and referenda. The 1960s became a period of rapid growth in community colleges with 10 being formed by the early 1970s, but this growth occurred in a decentralized way without government direction or without any form of provincial policy or plan for that development. The strong role of the local community in establishing colleges resulted in a high level of commitment to local responsiveness and institutional autonomy and a resistance to efforts at centralization by government.

In the absence of any form of government coordination, the B.C. School Trustees Association (BCSTA) formed the Regional and District College Association of B.C. (RDCABC), which later became the B.C. Association of Colleges (BCAC), representing board chairs of each institution. The Associations were formed voluntarily to begin collaborating on programming and funding issues across institutions. At the same time, the Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia was formed by government as a result of one of Macdonald's recommendations. The role of the Board, which was made up mostly of university representatives, was to oversee development of the new colleges and to ensure academic standards were being met, particularly in relation to academic transfer programs. Because of perceptions by the public that the new transfer arrangements were not working properly, the Academic Board created transfer committees in specific subject areas in 1968 as a means for colleges and universities to work cooperatively to solve transfer problems as they arose. The development of such committees was seen as a means of solving issues voluntarily to resist the intervention of government and was the beginning of B.C.'s well-developed articulation and transfer system that has served as a major coordinating effort among institutions to this day.

Increasing centralization and the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act

Even as early as the late 1960s, college boards and administrators were beginning to call for some form of provincial plan for the burgeoning system and for greater involvement of the provincial government in funding colleges. One of the first major centralizing actions of government was the melding of provincial vocational institutes with local colleges in 1971. This brought together institutes, which had previously operated as branches of government, with colleges, which had operated under full local autonomy and was the beginning of greater government control of college development. The next several years saw a plethora of reports being prepared for government, some commissioned by government and

others not, which called for the development of a separate act for colleges and for increased funding from and planning by government. The system, with its locally driven growth over the last 10 years, was deemed by both institutions and the government as being in need of more provincial coordination. In 1975, four new colleges were created by the province as a result of a recommendation of the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia. Thus, for the first time, college development was being driven by the province rather than by the local community. Another result of the Task Force's recommendations was that government began funding 100 percent of capital for colleges.

By the mid-1970s, a growing provincial Ministry had become increasingly interested in taking more of a centralist approach to college development for a number of reasons, including the increasing cost to government of operating and building colleges, the rapid growth of the number of institutions, the weakening economy, and the view that some form of program rationalization was necessary among the numerous new institutions. The result of these centralist tendencies, coupled with the calls from institutions for greater provincial coordination, was the introduction of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977. Among the most important aspects of the Act were the assumption by government of 100 percent funding for college operations and capital; the provision of corporate status for colleges, which removed colleges from school board control; and the creation of three intermediary councils with legislated power over program and financing decisions at the colleges. Among the powers assigned to the Academic Council was authority over transfer and articulation, something that had been managed more voluntarily by the Academic Board until it was dissolved in 1974. The Act also created five provincial institutes with different provincial roles, resulting in a further differentiation among elements of the post-secondary system.

The Act was welcomed by some in that it recognized the colleges as being distinct from public schools and as having their own unique role to play in the broader educational system. However, most college representatives, including

board members, administrators, and faculty, were highly critical of the Act as being far too centralizing in nature and as taking away the cherished autonomy of institutions. It was felt that the Act represented the beginnings of a provincially coordinated system as opposed to a collection of autonomous institutions. The passage of the Act had the effect of creating greater collaboration among college officials in their opposition to the government's encroachment on their autonomy and their ability to serve local needs. The Act also resulted in an expansion of the Council of Principals (COP) to include institute presidents, which meant continuing collaboration among a larger number of more varied institutions. A further result of the centralizing trend of the period following the Act was the creation of the College-Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) in 1980 to provide a more unified voice for faculty associations at the provincial level.

In 1983, the Ministry amended the Act to abolish the three intermediary councils and to remove all elected officials from the college Boards, replacing them with government appointees. This amendment was seen as a further centralizing move with more power being placed directly in the hands of the Minister of the day, although no one decried the abolishment of the three councils, which had been deemed to be overly centralist and bureaucratic in their operations. The early 1980s also saw the introduction of a severe government restraint program that involved the Ministry seeking greater control over regional and provincial program rationalization to ensure college and institute programs were meeting B.C.'s economic needs. Despite this move to further provincial control of the development of a more rationalized provincial system, institutional representatives at the board, president, and faculty level continued to meet apart from government to determine collectively how to best operate as a system of autonomous institutions.

Growing cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions

The massive centralization that could have occurred, given the powers assigned to the Minister in the 1977 Act and in its 1983 Amendment, did not occur

because of the development of a close working relationship among Ministry officials, college presidents, and board chairs on system-wide initiatives. There seemed to be a mutual understanding developing that the Ministry and system had to work closely together to move forward on system issues that required inter-institutional cooperation. Thus institutional representatives and Ministry officials worked together on the development of an institutional accountability framework, five-year planning documents in 1982 and 1986, and the funding formula in 1984. Despite the deep government restraint program from 1982 to 1987, good working relationships were maintained between government and the system and among institutions. Thus provincial coordination and inter-institutional collaboration became closely intertwined.

The Ministry continued to support the need for transfer arrangements among institutions and the coordination work of the various articulation committees. As well, the development of the funding formula in 1984 created a more predictable and equitable means of funding institutions of different size and mandate. The formula, still in place in March 2002, resulted in a more cooperative rather than competitive approach to funding institutions, and thus allowed institutions to work more cooperatively on a number of initiatives that had system-wide implications.

The Access for All strategy

The late 1980s saw the end of the restraint period and the rapid expansion of post-secondary access through the Access for All strategy and based on the recommendations of the 1988 report entitled *Access to Advanced Education and Job Training in British Columbia*. An important recommendation of the report was the development of three university colleges designed to deliver third and fourth year degree-level programs along with the comprehensive range of program offerings common to B.C. colleges. This resulted in an even greater differentiation of the B.C. post-secondary system and planted the seeds of what would become an

increasingly fragmented system in the decade ahead. Another result of the *Access* report was the creation of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) to take on the role of facilitating voluntary coordination among an increasing array of institutions to promote articulation and transfer. Thus the voluntary nature of transfer that had been established by the Academic Board in 1969 was maintained, although the government now funded this coordination to a greater level by the creation of BCCAT.

Constituency-based governance in the 1990s and the fragmentation of the system

In 1990, the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC) was formed as an amalgamation of the BCAC and the Council of Principals (COP). For the first time, institutional boards and presidents were represented by the same organization, which was created to have a stronger, more coordinated voice for advocacy with the government. The 1990s were dominated by the New Democratic Party (NDP), who came to power in 1991. The result was a move towards more stakeholder participation in governance at the institutional level and in provincial planning. The faculty unions became important players on most decision-making bodies that had previously been the purview of administrators, board members, and Ministry officials.

Two important events in the 1990s were the passage of Bill 22 in 1996, which created Education Councils and allowed elected internal representatives on institutional boards, and the release of a new provincial strategic plan called *Charting a New Course* in 1996. The Strategic Plan represented a greater move towards centralized coordination of a provincial system, designed to meet the social and economic needs of B.C. learners, but the plan made little mention of the role of autonomous institutions. The plan also created the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS) and the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2) as system agencies tasked with coordinating a number of system-wide initiatives across institutions. The result of the move to

greater levels of system-wide activity and the role of multi-stakeholder committees in advising or directing a host of system initiatives was a perceived lessening of the autonomous actions of institutions and the authority of their administrators. The move toward province-wide bargaining with faculty and support staff in 1995 further reduced the role of institutional boards and administrators and increased the influence of provincial unions and associations.

Frustration with the predominance of a system approach to all decision making and stakeholder involvement in decision-making structures led the AECBC in 2000 to call for a restoration of autonomy to institutions and the removal of centralizing bodies and stakeholder input. At the same time, the release of the Petch Report in 1998 solidified the formation of the five university colleges as a separate sector with different needs and aspirations from those held by other elements of the system. Over the next few years, lack of clear policy and legislative direction from government and increasing competition among sectors for limited resources led to the eventual dissolution of AECBC in October 2001. The presidents formed into two separate groups for the purpose of further collaboration, one representing 17 colleges, institutes, and the Open Learning Agency (OLA) and the other representing 5 university colleges, but for the first time since the inception of colleges in the mid-1960s, board chairs were without a mechanism for inter-institutional communication and cooperation. The main issue that could not be resolved by AECBC was how one organization could serve a single advocacy role for different groups of institutions with differing needs. Thus the progressive differentiation of the system that began in the mid-1970s had resulted in a fragmentation of the former system into a loosely connected network of sectors and sub-sectors. As had been the case throughout the four decades under study, universities remained a separate sector.

The gradual dissolution of AECBC happened around the same time that a new Liberal government was elected in June 2001 with a massive majority. The new government began by making deep reductions in public expenditures, which

created even greater competition for resources among sectors and individual institutions of the post-secondary system. This competition for resources in the absence of any attempts by government to maintain a coordinated system resulted in a further erosion of the level of cooperation that had existed previously across all 22 institutions. The new government also made significant changes based on a market-driven ideology, changes that moved the post-secondary system toward greater institutional autonomy, less government intervention in institutional affairs, greater accountability, and an increasing role for the private sector. At the same time, the Ministry included in its first three-year *Service Plan* in February 2002 a commitment to build a more coherent and integrated public post-secondary system.

The information below is presented as evidence from the literature to support the above findings. The information is divided into five sections according to five important time periods in the development of coordination and collaboration in the college, university college, and institute system: 1962 to 1969, 1970 to 1977, 1977 to 1983, 1984 to 1991, and 1992 to 2002. Each section is further divided into a number of subsections that have been chosen to represent the major topics of interest in that time period as they relate to the overall purpose of this study.

1962 TO 1969: THE BIRTH OF AUTONOMOUS COLLEGES AND THE BEGINNINGS OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

The following section is broken into seven subsections related to the early development of colleges: the impact of the Macdonald Report; the important role of school boards; the importance of local responsiveness and institutional autonomy; the lack of government involvement in coordinating college development; early efforts at voluntary coordination and the role of the Academic Board in articulation and transfer; the formation of the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC); and early calls for provincial coordination.

The impact of the Macdonald Report

The Macdonald Report of 1962, spearheaded by J. B. Macdonald, the new President of UBC at that time, formed the basis for early college development in B.C. and has been very important in terms of the kind of college system that has developed in B.C. since that time. The fact that a university president was so influential in creating the college system is emblematic of the important role universities played from the outset in the development of colleges. Macdonald began the development of a long-term plan for higher education in B.C. on his own accord, and his offer to develop such a plan was accepted by government (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Therefore, the original impetus for the development of what eventually became a complex array of institutions with differing mandates came from a university president, was not requested by government, and was unrelated to any form of government policy (Dennison, 1997a; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). This original lack of government involvement in the development of colleges is important to the manner in which colleges developed over the next decade and will be explored in greater depth below.

Although the Macdonald Report of 1962 heralded the beginnings of the college system, an amendment had been made to the Public Schools Act in 1958 to allow school districts to operate colleges in affiliation with UBC. The legislative amendment did result in some activity in the Kelowna region to explore the development of a college, but this activity did not result in a college being established (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). It was not until the release of the Macdonald Report that the development of the college system began in earnest.

Macdonald had a variety of reasons for undertaking his study, most of them to do with protecting the viability of UBC. First of all, he understood the impact of demographic changes that would soon cause a huge influx of baby boomers demanding access to a post-secondary education, yet UBC was the only post-secondary institution in B.C. offering degree-level education in the early 1960s. Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states that “Macdonald feared that UBC would be unable to

accommodate all the qualified students seeking admission if additional facilities were not made available almost immediately” (p. 103). Second, according to Beinder (1983), the emphasis in the Macdonald Report “was decidedly upon relieving the increasingly heavy enrollments in first and second years at the universities” (p. 2). This motivation explains why Macdonald recommended the creation of a college system that delivered the first two years of degree level programming, based on the California model, with transfer to degree-granting institutions for the remaining two years. This recommendation resulted in the birth of B.C.’s well-developed transfer system and had an important impact on the collaborative relationship that would develop among colleges and universities over the next 40 years. Third, Fisher, House, and Rubenson (2000) state that Macdonald viewed the development of a differentiated system of institutions across the province as a means of maintaining UBC’s role as a research-intensive institution because much of the undergraduate level programming would now be delivered in colleges or four-year universities, which he also proposed. Thus, many of Macdonald’s reasons for preparing his report were based on self-interest, yet the kinds of institutions he proposed and their comprehensive roles went well beyond meeting the needs of UBC.

Macdonald (1962) made a series of sweeping recommendations for the development of a B.C. post-secondary system in his report entitled *Higher Education in British Columbia and a Plan for the Future*. These recommendations were made in two main areas: one dealing with the creation of a number of new institutions of different types and the other dealing with the development of a model for province-wide coordination of these new institutions.

Based on his travels around the province, Macdonald (1962) argued that the education system in B.C. in 1962 was outdated in terms of its ability to meet the changing needs of ever increasing numbers of youth and adults for training to work in an increasingly technological world. He suggested that new kinds of institutions were required for students beyond high school completion, institutions that were

different from the traditional research university. Therefore, he proposed the creation of four-year degree-granting institutions and “two-year colleges offering a variety of programmes of one or two years of education beyond Grade XII” (Macdonald, 1962, p. 50). The kind of college proposed by Macdonald is most important to this study in that his recommendation “was quickly adopted by government, and was one in which local communities were to play the central role, rather than the provincial government” (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986, p. 27).

One of the key factors in the way the college system evolved was the acceptance by government of the recommendation in the Macdonald Report (Macdonald, 1962) to create colleges through school boards, resulting in enabling amendments to the Public Schools Act in 1963. Macdonald stated that much of his contact at the local level in his travels around the province was directly with the local school boards, who displayed great interest in establishing colleges. This contact led to his recommendation that colleges be developed under the auspices of school boards.

A second recommendation that was accepted by government was that school boards could only create colleges after a local plebiscite had been held to assess public support for such a move. Assuming such support was there, the local community would then be asked to pay a proportion of the operating and capital costs of establishing a college. Macdonald (1962) based his funding recommendations on what he considered to be the pattern followed by successful two-year colleges in the United States. He felt having the community share in the cost of building and operating colleges would ensure that the new institutions would serve local needs.

Thus, the creation of the first 10 colleges between 1965 and 1975 came about through local initiative, not through government planning or edict. The fact that local taxpayers had to pay a significant portion of the developing colleges’ operating and capital costs meant that the Province had only partial say in how those colleges were run. Because of the extent of local control and the lack of

government coordination of the development process, “in the early days the colleges were not viewed in the context of a formal system in a unified sense” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 111). Furthermore, the grassroots beginnings of colleges and the desire for local community control resulted in “the resistance that is evident in British Columbia to centralize the control of the community colleges on a province-wide basis” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 112). These grassroots beginnings and resistance to centralization had a major impact on the future developments in B.C. towards a coordinated college system and have resulted in the high value that has been placed on institutional autonomy within a coordinated system over the last four decades.

Macdonald’s views on the importance of self-governance within a differentiated system were also very instrumental in shaping the kinds of colleges that have developed in B.C. Macdonald (1962) stated that there were two requirements for promoting excellence in higher education in B.C.:

These are first, diversification of opportunity, both in respect to the *kinds* of educational experience available and the *places* where it can be obtained. The second requirement is self-government of individual institutions in respect to setting objectives, standards, admissions, selection of staff, curricula, personnel policies, administrative structure, and all the other things that go to make up the operation of a college. (p. 19)

Similarly, Fisher et al. (2000) state that Macdonald felt that the achievement of excellence was “achievable only through autonomous self-governing institutions having diverse mandates to serve the needs of different groups” (p. 4). Likewise, Hollick-Kenyon writes that Macdonald “opposed a unified or federated system of higher education for British Columbia” (1979, p. 104). Thus, out of Macdonald’s original vision grew the highly diversified system of autonomous institutions prevalent in B.C. to this day.

Macdonald argued against a unified system in which standards would be identical across institutions. Macdonald (1962) stated that “standards cannot be legislated” (p. 22) and that a unified system “places a ceiling on standards” (p. 23),

resulting in mediocrity rather than excellence across institutions. Macdonald also stated that the academic strength of an institution and the freedom to try new approaches in pursuit of excellence “depend on autonomy in the essential decisions which together determine the character of an institution” (1962, p. 105). Thus Macdonald recommended that two-year colleges would differ from one another in order to meet local needs, and the programs developed at each institution would also differ.

Macdonald (1962) also made two recommendations for the creation of bodies that would be responsible for system-wide governance and coordination. One was the creation of an Academic Board, which would “ensure that the community colleges maintained adequate academic standards; foster academic education throughout the province; and guide the growth and development of the community colleges” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 106). The Academic Board would serve the function of an accrediting agency that would approve academic standards of a college and make recommendations on continued funding based on those standards.

Government responded by creating the Academic Board for Higher Education of B.C. in 1963 through amendments to the Universities Act. The level of early control by universities of the development of the fledgling colleges was very evident from the makeup of the Academic Board and the terms of reference of the Board. Out of the nine members on the Board, six were appointed by university Senates and three by government (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Thus colleges had no role in appointing members to the Board, despite the fact that among its main terms of reference, the Board was to advise upon the development of colleges and ensure that the colleges were adhering to consistent academic standards.

However, despite the potential power of the Academic Board over colleges, Macdonald (1962) stated that the Board would not impinge upon the ability of local governing bodies to pursue local goals or to manage their own internal affairs. Macdonald was true to his belief in the importance of self-government of

individual institutions. Nevertheless, Macdonald felt that the school board governed institutions were not likely to have expertise in higher education and would hence “seek the advice and guidance of the Academic Board” (p. 79). This statement suggests institutions voluntarily cooperating with the Board to meet their needs. Elsewhere, Macdonald stated that “it is not suggested that this Board would dictate to the institution; rather, it would offer wise and sympathetic advice to guide that institution in the course of its development” (1962, p. 78). Thus, Macdonald was not suggesting a central governing agency that would control the programs and functions of each institution. Rather he saw the creation of a body that would facilitate the development of the fledgling colleges. The role of the Academic Board in coordination across institutions will be discussed in more detail below in reference to its role in promoting articulation and transfer.

The second coordinating body recommended by Macdonald was a Grants Commission whose role would be to study budget requests from institutions, make a combined submission to government for capital and operating funds, and distribute the funds from government (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Macdonald (1962) gave a number of reasons why such a commission would be preferred to individual institutions making budget requests of government. These included the potential of inequitable treatment across institutions and an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty regarding annual budget allocations. Furthermore, Macdonald felt that “excessive competition for funds might impair the unity of the whole structure of the educational system” (p. 81). This is an important statement by Macdonald in that it shows he was concerned that the institutions develop as part of a cooperative rather than competitive system. However, government did not create a Grants Commission. Instead, it set up a financial advisory committee that, interestingly, included university representatives but not community college representatives (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Once again, the extent of the influence of universities in the early development of colleges is obvious.

In conclusion, the Macdonald Report of 1962 was very instrumental in the creation of the early colleges in B.C. and in the balance between centralization and institutional autonomy that has developed over the last four decades. Of particular importance were his recommendations that the colleges be developed under the auspices of local school boards; that local taxes be used to pay for a portion of operating and capital costs; that colleges deliver the first two years of academic programming for transfer to universities; and that colleges be set up as self-governed, autonomous institutions rather than as units in a federated system.

The important role of school boards

This section will provide further evidence from the literature about why school boards were chosen to develop early colleges and about the important role they played in that development. *The Report of the Royal Commission on Education* was released in 1960. The Commission concerned itself with all aspects of the public school system for children and with the Public Schools Act. The Commission did make brief reference, though, at the end of its report to the growing need for education for adults. The Commission stated that it “strongly supports an expansion of adult education programmes in the public schools” (Royal Commission on Education, 1960, p. 440). Hence, the stage was set for Macdonald’s 1962 recommendation that community colleges be developed under the auspices of local school boards.

Furthermore, the B.C. School Trustees Association (BCSTA) made a convincing brief to Macdonald in 1962 about the role school districts could play in developing colleges. The Association (British Columbia School Trustees Association, 1962) stated:

Community colleges are a logical extension of the existing public school system.... The Association strongly believes that the role of the provincial government should be to place responsibility for continuing education at the local level and have its department of education provide leadership. School trustees, elected by the people

at the local level, are closely in touch with local needs and wishes and are therefore in the best possible position to interpret these needs and act on them. (p. 6)

The brief also pointed out that half of the school districts in B.C. in 1961 were already operating some form of evening adult education or continuing education programs. The Association thus felt that “community colleges should be established as a logical continuation of the public school system” (p. 11) and also accepted the premise that “if there is to be local control, there must be some local financial responsibility” (p. 8).

Macdonald (1962) stated that he had been impressed by the “wisdom and the sophistication” of the school boards he had encountered in his travels around B.C. and thus felt the boards “should have a large measure of responsibility for higher education in two-year regional colleges” (p. 87). He further recommended that the governing bodies of the new institutions should include representatives from each of the participating school boards in the region. Government acted fully on these recommendations with its 1963 enabling amendments to the Public Schools Act. Dennison (1977) described the 1963 changes to the Public Schools Act as “permissive in nature” and stated that the Act “left the initiative to the school boards in college development and clearly implied that the colleges were to reflect local community needs and interest” (p. 14). Likewise, Beinder (1986) states that:

In the original legislation the school boards were given almost total autonomy in the establishment, maintenance and operation of colleges under the provisions of the Public Schools Act... It is perhaps no wonder that, in those circumstances, the local attitude was proprietorial. (p. 86)

Beinder also states that government’s intent was to “ensure the local orientation of the new colleges” (p. 6) and this was made clear in the legislated structure of the new college councils, which had a clear majority of school trustees and school board appointments as members.

Thus government agreed that colleges' focus should be local rather than provincial in nature. Because school boards were given the monumental task of providing educational opportunity to adults in their local regions, Beinder (1986) states that "the broader spectrum of provincial and national priorities commanded little of the attention of local planners" (p. 48). Thus both the colleges, under school board control, and the government undertook the development of colleges as local, autonomous entities designed to meet local need with financial support from local taxpayers. Dennison (1997a) states that developing colleges under the auspices of local school boards did provide a community focus for the developing institutions; however, "the parochial nature of the boards, their political orientation as elected bodies, and the popular but naïve view they presented of colleges as extensions of the K-12 school system" (pp. 5-6) all played a role in the gradual reduction of school board influence in college governance in the next 15 years.

At the beginning of the development of colleges, though, school boards were very influential in how colleges developed as independent institutions designed to meet local need. The section below provides further evidence from the literature about the strong focus in B.C. on the development of autonomous, locally controlled, and locally responsive colleges in the 1960s.

Local responsiveness and institutional autonomy

The strong support for building autonomous institutions with the primary goal of meeting expressed local and regional needs is very important to the findings of this study. These grassroots beginnings of college development in B.C. occurred in an era when the provincial government was not yet interested in building a centralized system of colleges to meet provincial needs. Because of the importance of this community orientation to the eventual development of collaboration and coordination across a system, the author searched the literature for evidence of the strength of this orientation. Some of the key direct and indirect quotes from the literature are presented below.

Beinder (1986) states that the growth of community-oriented colleges succeeded in B.C. despite early budgetary impediments, spurred on by the recommendations of the Macdonald Report and by the growing belief in the democratization of educational opportunity. Beinder asserts:

Our colleges were not thrust upon the province by government. Credit is due to the politicians who responded but it was citizens in hundreds of communities, housewives, doctors, accountants, businessmen, clerks, tradesmen, lawyers and educators who delivered the message. The vision they saw was of institutions which would be catalysts for their communities.... Above all they would be locally controlled by and for the citizens. (pp. 42-43)

Beinder also states that the original legislated requirements for forming colleges were relatively straightforward and represented “merely an orderly framework under which the region could develop a comprehensive college responsive to its own community” (p. 15).

Fisher et al. (2000) state that “in BC community colleges were part of a grass roots [*sic*] social movement showing widespread public support for post-secondary education” (p. 8). Beinder (1986) explains this widespread support by saying “we were developing student-oriented institutions dedicated to expanding the life chances of people through open access and responsiveness to community need” (p. 23). Gallagher (1984) writes that “zealously guarded autonomy, regional responsiveness, and curriculum comprehensiveness were the bedrock for British Columbia colleges” (p. 7).

In relation to the support of local taxpayers in their early years for building and operating their locally responsive college, Dennison and Harris (1984) state that “it was regional interest groups, rather than the provincial government, who carried the responsibility for establishing and developing the colleges. Even the financing formula required a local tax contribution to the operating base” (p. 15). Likewise, Beinder (1986) states that there was considerable debate in the 1960s over whether it was possible to maintain local control if all financing for colleges came from government. Beinder states that most college council members, who

were school trustees, felt that “innovation and diversity of program offerings required the direct involvement of local taxpayers” (p. 32).

Even the Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia, which was created by government as a coordinating body that was to ensure academic standards were being met, stated that colleges must be formed in a close relationship with the communities they served and must not gravitate to becoming universities. The Academic Board (1965) saw colleges as unique, community-based institutions with a broad educational mandate. This emphasis on the development of unique institutions as a direct result of the responsiveness to community need “has ensured that a healthy diversity had developed among community colleges, their common objectives notwithstanding. To their credit, it can be said that there’s no such thing as a typical community college” (Beinder, 1983, p. 13).

Finally, there is evidence of government support for the development of autonomous and independent institutions in the 1960s because government continued to fund its share for the development of colleges based on local plebiscites. The government’s share had been determined in the amendments to the Public Schools Act in 1963. By 1966, 11 colleges were already being considered at some level by local school districts working in collaboration with each other within regions. Beinder (1986) describes this early development as “autonomous regional effort” (p. 15). In an October 1969 address to the BCSTA, Minister Brothers from the Ministry of Education confirmed government’s continuing commitment to the concept of local autonomy and financing (Crawford, 1983). Thus both government and the communities remained strongly committed to the development of autonomous institutions that were primarily responsive to meeting local and regional needs throughout the 1960s.

The lack of direction from government

Coupled with the strong support from local communities for the development of regionally responsive colleges was a concomitant lack of direction from the provincial government for that development or for the development of any form of a system for the newly formed colleges in the 1960s. Except for the creation of the Academic Board and a financial advisory committee, both dominated by the universities, government showed surprisingly little interest in controlling or coordinating the grassroots development that was occurring in communities across the province. The lack of provincial coordination during this key period of college development was instrumental in the development of the efforts at voluntary coordination to be discussed in the next subsection. The literature is full of evidence of this lack of government direction in the 1960s, and some of the more pertinent statements are cited below.

The B.C. government showed little interest in expanding opportunities to post-secondary education because of the wealth generated from its natural resources. It was public pressure that drove the government to act in the 1960s and begin establishing more institutions in a variety of formats (Dennison, 1997b). Similarly, Fisher, Rubenson, and Della Mattia (2001) assert that prior to 1960, “the BC Government’s attitude towards post-secondary education may best be described as benign neglect.... Government’s primary investment was in building an economic infrastructure, not an educational infrastructure” (p. 7).

Fisher, House, and Rubenson (2000) state that even in the early 1960s the provincial government showed little interest in post-secondary education, except for a brief flurry of activity following the Macdonald Report when two new universities were formed. However, following this, “the government’s interest again subsided, and the colleges emerged slowly, largely by the efforts of community activists, education reformers and concerned citizens” (p. 2). Fisher et al. (2000) describe government as assuming a “passive role in the development of colleges” (p. 8), leaving the responsibility with local school trustees who had to

mount plebiscites and referenda to gain local support. Nevertheless, the government did act following the Macdonald Report because of the enthusiastic public and media response to its recommendations, “a reality which the provincial government could hardly ignore” (Dennison, 1997b, p. 37). Dennison goes on to state that the complicated approach to plebiscites and referenda at the local level emanating from the permissive nature of the amendment to the Public Schools Act resulted in the slow development of colleges.

Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states that “the evolution of the British Columbia community colleges was a gradual one, with piecemeal action taken by successive governments, each with a different philosophical attitude towards community colleges” (p. 159). This statement suggests that there was no real provincial plan in place for college development over time. Likewise, Gallagher (1984) states that in the early days of college development in B.C., the Ministry of Education did not provide full funding, nor did it impose restrictions or provide direction for the development.

Beinder (1986) decried the lack of any form of plan from government during the early years of college development. He states:

There was no provincial development plan. Individual school boards were free to join a group of adjoining school districts to establish and operate a college or they could opt out. There was not even a provision to prevent a school board from withdrawing from participation at any stage of the development. (pp. 38-39)

Beinder also states that the capital freeze in the mid-1960s, coupled with the reluctance of school boards to approve necessary funding and the lack of any sort of plan from government, was hampering the development of regional colleges.

Dennison and Gallagher (1986) provide a good summary statement for this subsection on the lack of government direction in B.C. and the resulting high level of community involvement. They state that:

Neither the products of provincial government initiatives nor of massive injection of government funding, British Columbia’s colleges were conceived, born, and nurtured through the expression

of local and regional support for an idea which represented a new concept for educational opportunity. (p. 31)

Beinder (1986) also sums it up nicely when he plainly states that “there was little evidence of any kind of Department of Education plan for a provincial college system” (p. 25).

Beinder (1986) goes on to say that because of this early history, with minimal government involvement coupled with strong community support for regionally responsive colleges, “a climate was created which resulted later in massive resistance to the introduction of any kind of system planning at the provincial level” (p. 25). Thus, as B.C. colleges moved from almost full autonomy in their early days to a high level of centralization beginning in the mid-1970s, that centralization was resisted by those who continued to value the regionally responsive nature of their institutions. The author would also argue that the lack of any provincial plan or attempts at provincial coordination resulted in the growth of voluntary attempts to coordinate activities across institutions. The next subsection deals with the nature of that voluntary activity.

Early efforts at voluntary coordination: The role of the Academic Board in articulation and transfer

The history of the development of colleges in the 1960s was primarily the history of the development of individual, autonomous institutions. The concept of a college system had not yet emerged. Indeed, Soles (1968), who describes the community college as “the child of the community” (p. 29) in his in-depth 1968 Master’s thesis entitled *The Development of the Two-Year College in British Columbia*, barely makes reference to the concept of a college system except for his references to articulation and transfer in the final chapter. Part of the reason for his lack of emphasis on system likely had to do with the lack of a government plan or any form of central coordination at that time. However, the Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia, created in 1963 by government, was functioning as a coordinating body between colleges and universities on issues such

as academic standards and transfer, and the need for transfer arrangements between colleges and universities was a major impetus for early cooperative endeavours.

The author has found several important quotes in the literature that show the high level of voluntary collaboration developing in the 1960s, both with and without the assistance of the Academic Board and in the absence of government direction and coordination. These quotes point towards an understanding of the value of voluntary collaboration as a means of solving system issues as opposed to having them solved by government edict. The author will present several of these quotes verbatim below because they are of such importance to addressing the purpose of this study.

Beinder (1986) states that, among college council members, “from the beginning there was emphasis on the need for collective action on various aspects of financing and the development of college legislation separate from the Public Schools Act” (pp. 65-66). Such collaborative action would allow for the exchange of information as required and for the development of positions that were provincial rather than institutional in scope. Beinder also describes the growing cooperative efforts among institutions because of the need to transfer first and second year programs between college and university.

A major reason for the developing sense of voluntary collaboration was the approach taken by the Academic Board to its role under the leadership of its Chairman, Dean Chant (Beinder, 1986). The Board appears to have taken Macdonald’s recommendations to heart by creating a facilitative, collaborative relationship with colleges rather than a directive one. For instance, the Academic Board (1965) stated that it viewed its role as “assisting regional and school district college authorities to maintain good academic standards in their own interests. The Board does not consider its role to be one of interdiction or constraint” (p. 28). Similarly, the Academic Board in its publication called *College Standards* (1966) stated that it “does not presume to set forth directives for structuring college

programs in any restrictive, undeviating or irrevocable way. No intention is implied to impose uniformity on the colleges” (foreword, no page number).

This non-directive approach taken by the Board and the treatment of colleges as autonomous institutions with courses considered parallel to those offered by universities but not identical with them (Soles, 1968) are very important to the developing relationship between colleges and universities around transfer issues. Indeed, the Academic Board in its document entitled *College-University Articulation* recognized that “in any articulated system, the senior or upper components invariably set the terms of cooperation” (1969a, p. 3). Similarly, Beinder (1986) says that college councils felt “relegated to second-rate status” (p. 52) because they had no representation on the Academic Board. Colleges and universities also had different approaches to the role of transfer. Dennison (1997a) stated that “colleges ... interpreted transfer of credit for students as a ‘right.’ The universities did, and still do, regard the policy as a ‘privilege’” (p. 5). Dennison and Gallagher (1986) describe the role of the Academic Board as converting “some initial skepticism from the universities into mutually satisfactory arrangements for the transfer of credits from colleges to university” (p. 30).

Despite the potential power imbalance and the differing views on the transfer function, the Board saw its function as an intermediary body that encouraged voluntary cooperation among all institutions and treated the colleges more as partners in the discussions rather than as subservient participants. The Academic Board (1966) made the following statement:

The Board prefers to adopt consultative and persuasive means for carrying out its responsibilities and to abstain from issuing directives, ... other than those required for the procurement of information regarding educational standards.... The Board will advise and encourage the institutions to engage in co-operative planning and to enter into agreements that will benefit the students and that will enable the educational resources of the Province to be utilized to the fullest advantage. (pp. 1-2)

In another statement, the Academic Board (1969b) gave a strong endorsement of voluntary collaboration and information sharing as a means of developing a system approach without sacrificing institutional individuality:

Within the course of the past year, the colleges have developed closer relationships with one another and have exchanged detailed information regarding the problems involved in establishing and developing a college. This has been facilitated by the formation of the committee of College Principals. The Academic Board has always encouraged such direct communications as being the most effective means for procuring practical advice on day-to-day college matters ... and on university-college relations. Such developments will contribute greatly to the development of an integrated system of higher education for the Province, without in any way interfering with the distinctive development of each participating institution. (pp. 4-5)

Another quote from the Academic Board publication *College-University Articulation* (1969a) speaks to the understanding by the Board that voluntary cooperation among autonomous institutions on transfer issues was preferable to a mandated approach. The Board states:

While the autonomy of institutions is not in question, the closest cooperation is necessary for the universities and colleges to work out mutually acceptable arrangements whereby a comprehensive system of higher education may function to the best advantage of the students. However, such relationships are more matters of constant communication, understanding and mutual regard than of formal agreements. (p. 2)

Finally, the same document (Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia, 1969a) included a summary of proceedings from a December 18, 1968, conference on articulation and transfer. Professor C. B. Bourne from UBC, in summarizing the discussions at the conference, stated that colleges and universities “are part of a system of higher education; they are *interdependent*” (p. 47). Thus he states that there is an ongoing necessity for consultation and cooperation among institutions. Bourne also stated that it is incumbent upon universities and colleges to work together to solve transfer problems. Otherwise, the public will be increasingly upset and “political pressure for governmental intervention will

increase greatly and a solution may be forced” (p. 46) on the institutions, thus endangering institutional autonomy. This statement, summarizing the discussions at a provincial conference, provides solid evidence of the understanding of the need to cooperate voluntarily to prevent externally imposed coordination. Bourne continues “if they cannot solve their own problems, then someone will surely attempt to do it for them” (p. 47).

At this same December 18, 1968, meeting, Dr. P. L. Grant, Principal of Okanagan College, suggested that some of the perceptions about transfer problems could be resolved by standing committees that would be subject specific and would meet regularly to exchange information and solve problems. Grant stated that “I am convinced that most of our problems can be solved without recourse to government organization or interference. The education system can itself solve most of its problems for the benefit of all” (Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia, 1969a, p. 30). This statement provides strong evidence for the prevailing view that voluntary collaboration was superior to government intervention. Grant’s suggestion for standing committees in discipline areas was accepted that afternoon with several of such committees forming and agreeing to meet regularly. These committees served as the beginnings of B.C.’s long-standing articulation and transfer committees. Because of the importance of the history of articulation and transfer to the purpose of the present study, its development will be traced through each of the time periods in this chapter.

Thus, evidence from the literature shows that college officials and board members in the 1960s were aware of the need to cooperate voluntarily to address issues that were inter-institutional in nature. This voluntary collaboration was exemplified in the approach taken by the Academic Board, which worked with colleges and universities to solve articulation and transfer problems collaboratively and independent of government intervention.

The formation of the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C.

The above citations provide strong evidence of the growing atmosphere of voluntary cooperation between colleges and universities and of the value of that form of cooperation as opposed to imposed coordination. However, other early attempts at voluntary coordination were occurring within the developing college sector apart from the universities. The activity involved ongoing discussions among college council members on the necessity of forming a provincial association to deal with inter-institutional concerns. This activity was entirely voluntary in that there was no participation of or direction from government in the forming of the association.

The BCSTA played a lead role in advising its members on the formation of community colleges following the amendments to the Public Schools Act in 1963, based on Macdonald's recommendations. The BCSTA was from the outset "committed to the idea of community control and local autonomy for the developing colleges" (Beinder, 1986, p. 8). In May 1966, the BCSTA established a study committee to determine if a separate organization for colleges should be formed. According to Beinder:

The Committee decided that there was a very special need for a formally constituted Regional/District College organization to foster and promote its collective views regarding legislation. The Committee saw a need to determine and promote its views on such matters as finance, curriculum planning, and administration and organization. It also saw a need for the development of common policies in such areas as public relations, representation and liaison. (pp. 17-18)

The recommendations of this committee represented the first attempt to coordinate collective views and policies provincially by the developing colleges. Of importance to the present study is the fact that this decision was not in any way driven by the provincial government but was rather embarked upon voluntarily by the BCSTA. Following the recommendations of the committee, the two existing and nine fledgling colleges met on November 19, 1966, and all indicated interest in

joining a new association representing colleges (Beinder, 1986). Thus, the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC) was born.

Despite the agreement to form an association, there was “widespread uncertainty about the function and usefulness of a provincial association” (Beinder, 1986, p. 24) brought about in part by the strong desire of some to maintain local autonomy. Some council members felt “that any move to establish provincial positions was an intrusion on their territory” (Beinder, 1986, p. 24). The decision on whether to staff and expand the role of the RDCABC was debated by those “who were obsessed with the matter of local autonomy” (Beinder, 1986, p. 24) and others who felt the Association should have a stronger provincial voice in dealing with government. It was argued by some “that a central organization would diminish the individuality of colleges” (Beinder, 1986, p. 67). The nature of this debate makes obvious the impact of the strong orientation towards community responsiveness and independence of B.C.’s colleges on the desire to become more of a system. Once again, though, the debate about greater system-wide coordination was among the colleges only and did not involve the government. They were not arguing centralized coordination versus voluntary cooperation; rather they were arguing increased levels of voluntary cooperation versus maintaining isolation as autonomous institutions.

At the October 4, 1969, semi-annual general meeting of the RDCABC, the issue of whether or not to employ a full-time secretary was debated, as it had been at previous Association meetings. Among those arguing against such a move was Dr. Opgaard, Principal of Malaspina College, who stated “a central organization would diminish the individuality of Colleges and tend to set up guide lines [*sic*] for Colleges which would be contrary to the mandate given to Colleges by their School Districts” (Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia, 1969b, p. 5). Despite the continuing debate on the dangers of over-centralization through a provincial association, the colleges had made significant progress in the 1960s to

develop a mechanism for ongoing cooperation on inter-institutional issues among council members.

Early calls for provincial coordination

The main thrust of the literature in this section of the chapter chronicling key activities between 1960 and 1969 has dealt with local control of the development of autonomous colleges in the absence of a provincial plan for that development. However, in the late 1960s, there was an increasing call from groups representative of the system, including the Academic Board and the RDCABC, for more involvement from the Ministry in planning the burgeoning growth of colleges. The subsection below presents evidence from the literature for this call and serves as a transition to the next major section of Chapter 4, which deals with the period of 1970 to 1977 and the increasing calls for provincial coordination.

Part of the difficulty of developing colleges in the 1960s, based on an enabling amendment to the Public Schools Act in 1963, was that the total impetus for whether a college was to be formed or not came from a local school district or region. Furthermore, as stated previously, a significant portion of both the operating and capital costs were to be paid for by local taxpayers. Beinder (1986) states that colleges had been slow to start because few regions had built core campuses, which were considered essential by many college councils in order to attract faculty and maintain recognition by universities.

Because of the uneven and unplanned nature of early college development, there were increasing calls for government involvement in central planning. One of the first signs of an interest in system planning by the government found in the literature came from a June 1967 meeting at which the Honourable L. R. Peterson, Minister of Education, spoke to college representatives of the need for a super college administrative structure and board in the Lower Mainland (Beinder, 1986). This statement shows that government was beginning to think of some form of system rationalization even before most of the colleges had opened their doors. It

also shows an early recognition by the Ministry that uncontrolled growth of colleges could cause an undue pressure on government's finances.

However, at a further meeting with the Minister, it was agreed that rather than a super college, a Lower Mainland Coordinating Council would be formed to engage in "comprehensive planning of the area without prejudice to the maintenance of community control of colleges" (Beinder, 1986, p. 30). Although the Council was to have one representative from the Ministry on it, this decision appears to be an early example of voluntary coordination being chosen over consolidation by government. Beinder (1986) questions whether this move was "a triumph for the philosophy of community emphasis" or "a golden opportunity lost" (p. 31). The reference to opportunity lost points towards the growing recognition of the need for greater coordination.

Beinder (1986) states that "the interrelationship between finance and coordination has been recognized as basic to the functioning and development of a provincial system of colleges" (p. 50) since the 1966 inauguration of RDCABC. The RDCABC prepared a brief to the Minister on October 16, 1968, in which it stated that there was an urgent need for a plan for college development. They asked government to merge regional schools within the district college structure and stressed the importance of coordination of regionally directed operations. The RDCABC also recommended that the Province's share of college operating costs be increased from 50 percent to 80 percent, which it deemed necessary because the government was funding 100 percent of the operating costs of universities and provincial vocational schools. The latter had been created by the Province with the assistance of federal funding throughout the 1960s and were closely managed by government. The RDCABC stated that "the present financial formula is the major cause of the failure to get on with the development of colleges in British Columbia" (1968, p. 5). The Association also accepted the need for some costs to be shared locally so that the local community could maintain a say in the kinds of services to be provided. In the same October 16, 1968, brief, RDCABC suggested that

government develop a funding formula that would clearly define how colleges are funded and provide a realistic basis for budget approval. They also suggested an 80/20 split for capital expenditures with the government paying the majority of the costs. Hence, RDCABC was asking for greater government involvement, balanced with the maintenance of local involvement, as early as 1968 because of perceived problems with the present funding arrangement.

At its third annual meeting on June 7, 1969, members of RDCABC passed a motion asking for provisions pertaining to colleges throughout the Public Schools Act to be consolidated into a single section or, preferably, that a new act be created for regional and district colleges. At the same meeting, a motion was passed that the Association should prepare a brief outlining what might be contained in a new act (Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia, 1969a). Thus, the pressure for a separate act was already coming from college council officials in 1969.

The Academic Board joined the RDCABC in calling for a greater role of government in planning the development of an overall system of higher education. The Academic Board (1969a) stated the following:

New institutions of higher education are being established without the benefit of a comprehensive model for a system of higher education. The tenuous co-ordination of institutions of higher education that has existed in the past can no longer serve the purpose. (p. 1)

In another document by the Academic Board (1969b), reference is made to the difficulty in planning for the development of colleges because of the inconsistency in data provided by institutions. The Board thus approved of the establishment of a new Division of University and College Affairs in the Department of Education, which it hoped would collect and supply more accurate data. This is one of the earliest references in the literature to the demand from institutions for the creation of a separate division in government to deal with higher education apart from the public schools division.

Finally, there is evidence that faculty associations as well were calling for greater coordination at the provincial level. The Selkirk College Faculty Association College Act Committee (1969) prepared a report that called for greater coordination among regional colleges and among levels of education but not at the expense of institutional autonomy. The Faculty Association recommended the formation of a Regional College Board for B.C., which would be made up of institutional and government representatives and which would be responsible for province-wide planning and budget approval. In the same report, the Faculty Association proposed the formation of a Regional College Senate that would have responsibility for educational and program decisions. Such a senate, had it been formed, would have been similar to Education Councils, which were created in 1996 by an amendment to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act.

Thus ample evidence exists in the literature that the rapid and uncontrolled growth of colleges in the 1960s was viewed by many in the institutions and by the Academic Board as cause for a greater coordinating role by government and for greater levels of funding by government. This desire of institutional representatives for greater government involvement in coordinating and funding the development of colleges intensified in the early to mid-1970s, as shall be shown in the next section of Chapter 4.

Summary for 1960 to 1969

The literature on college development between 1960 and 1969 provides important insights into the foundations of B.C.'s collaborative approach on inter-institutional issues. The development of colleges was the result of the acceptance by government of many of the recommendations of the Macdonald Report. Colleges developed under the auspices of local school boards, were partially funded through the local tax base, and were designed to respond to local need. Furthermore, colleges developed as fully autonomous institutions rather than as parts of a preconceived system. The government remained remarkably unconcerned

about college development throughout the 1960s, leaving the decision on where colleges should be formed entirely in the hands of the communities.

With so little direction from government, the early attempts at coordination were voluntary in nature and resulted from an understanding among college officials that there was mutual benefit to be gained from collaboration among institutions as long as that collaboration did not in any way impinge upon local autonomy and community responsiveness. Government did form the Academic Board as a coordinating structure, but the Board was primarily driven by representatives of universities and was not seen as a vehicle of government. The understanding by the Board of its role as being facilitative rather than directive was very important to the early development of collaborative relationships among colleges and between colleges and universities. These relationships were also the result of the need for resolution of transfer issues and the recognition that unless the institutions could solve the perceived problems with transfer on their own, government would step in and do it for them. However, towards the end of the 1960s, there were increasing demands for a greater coordinating role for government and for increased government funding of colleges. In summary, the roots of the B.C. college system are based on a decentralized model of development among autonomous institutions. In the absence of provincial coordination, voluntary collaboration emerged.

1970 TO 1977: DEMANDS FOR GREATER PROVINCIAL COORDINATION AND THE BEGINNINGS OF A COLLEGE SYSTEM

The following section is divided into seven subsections dealing with the growing sense of a need for a system of autonomous institutions and the demand for greater provincial coordination of the developing system, leading to the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, which will be discussed in the next section. The seven subsections include the continuing development of community-oriented, autonomous institutions; the melding of the regional colleges and the provincial vocational institutes; increasing interest on the part of government in

developing a provincial system; the report of the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia; the various reports pointing towards greater provincial coordination; continuing work of the Academic Board and further development of articulation and transfer arrangements; and the formation of the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC), replacing the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC).

The continuing development of community-oriented and autonomous institutions

By the early 1970s after 10 years of rapid development, 10 institutions had been established in British Columbia with the tenth one opening in the Fraser Valley in 1974 (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states that “the realization then arose that the province did not have a comprehensive, rational and ordered system of coordination for their operation” (p. 134). The development up to that time had continued in an unplanned fashion as in the 1960s with local initiative driving the location and timing of the development of autonomous institutions.

In their review of community college development in B.C., Dennison, Tunner, Jones, and Forrester (1975) stated:

Of all the provincial systems, British Columbia has developed a model which is the most community oriented. In almost every respect, including finance, governance, curriculum and administrative policy, the B.C. colleges are directly responsive to their supporting communities. (p. 1)

Dennison and Gallagher (1986) assert that by 1975 colleges in B.C. had developed quite successfully as autonomous institutions. Dennison and Gallagher state that “the colleges were loosely associated with one another, but they were characterized more by their differences than by their similarities, reflecting the diverse economies and social circumstances of the difference [*sic*] regions of the province” (p. 91). Thus, the colleges were all unique entities and were not considered parts of a highly coordinated system.

Despite the lack of a provincially coordinated system, a spirit of voluntary collaboration continued in the early 1970s. Jeffels (1972), writing about B.C.'s higher education system as a whole, states that because of a lack of a formally coordinated and federated system, "an easy and friendly relationship has been developed between opposite numbers at colleges and universities: such liaison is often based on the camaraderie of shared adversity and on a mutual sense of urgency just to get things done" (p. 7). This sort of voluntary cooperation among colleges was also favoured by Beinder. Speaking at the First Assembly of the College Councils of the Public Colleges of B.C. in May 1971, Beinder states "it would seem to me to be more desirable to allow appropriate relationships to develop in the college system than for college organization to be legislated into any traditional post-secondary pattern" (Beinder, 1971, pp. 28-29). Hence, voluntary coordination was still preferred by colleges to a government-controlled system.

Thus, colleges continued to develop in the early 1970s as locally responsive and autonomous institutions engaged in efforts to collaborate voluntarily. Despite the continuing emphasis on autonomous development, there was a growing understanding of the need to balance institutional autonomy with provincial needs. Beinder (1986) describes this tension by stating "the need for co-ordinated planning and development versus a strong commitment to local autonomy have at times threatened to create havoc" (p. 49). Calder (1984) states that "from the time of their creation until the tabling of the 1977 *College and Institutes Act*, there had been constant discussion on how they might better be made to serve provincial as well as community interests" (p. 84). Jeffels (1972) stated his opinion that policies were required from the Province "to ensure the rational growth of its institutions" (p. 7). These statements point towards a growing understanding of the need to begin formalizing the concept of a college system, and important actions leading to the creation of such a system will be described in the subsections below.

The melding of regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes

In 1971, the provincial government melded the regional colleges and the provincial vocational institutes, which had been created and managed by the Province throughout the 1960s with the assistance of federal funding. The meld represented an important early move on the part of government to create a comprehensive college system. The decision to meld was taken quite unilaterally by government although the Minister of the day, Donald Brothers, had consulted with an ad hoc advisory committee that included institutional representatives (Beinder, 1986). Beinder states that he felt the meld would not have taken place had the college councils strongly opposed it. Indeed, Beinder (1986) states that “some three years prior to the Government’s intention being announced, the operators of colleges had described the continuation of the provincial vocational schools in isolation as a deterrent to the development of the colleges” (p. 52).

Soles (1971), in a document he prepared for government regarding the meld, gave a number of reasons for the meld between regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes. These included: 1) the increasing status of technical and trades training in an increasingly technological society, 2) the need to provide greater flexibility and transfer opportunities for students in a single institution, 3) the opportunity to expose students to a more integrated set of program offerings in both general education and technical/trades training, 4) the ability to better coordinate technical, trades, and career programs across all institutions in the province, and 5) the efficiency and economy that could be gained by combining existing facilities. Thus a stated reason for the meld was the ability to coordinate a variety of program offerings and to avoid unnecessary duplication of programs and facilities (Beinder, 1986). A further reason for the meld provided by Dennison (1997b) was to solve the problem of local voters being unwilling to provide taxes to support capital expenditures for colleges. This resulted in federally funded buildings being transferred to colleges.

Some observers felt that the enforced meld would be detrimental to vocational technical education because academic programming would have higher status and therefore garner more resources within a single institution. Others felt that there were benefits to the meld, including bringing practical and academic education together under a similar status, providing greater opportunities for students within a single institution, and making vocation/technical education more responsive to the community rather than to the provincial government (Dennison, 1997a). The meld also caused strong reactions among the instructional staff at both kinds of institutions. Vocational instructors felt that as a result of the meld academic education would have higher status and take more precedence. On the other hand, academic faculty felt “it was almost an affront to academic faculty to be classed in the same bracket as vocational instructors who tended to be members of unions rather than professional associations” (Beinder, 1986, p. 64). Beinder (1986) goes on to say that “it was rather interesting to note how rapidly academic faculties seized upon what were apparently perceived to be the advantages of industrial type union relationships after melding had begun to take place” (p. 64). Thus, the meld had long-term implications for the eventual unionization of faculty across provincial colleges.

In the opinion of this author, the meld of regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes in 1971 was a major step towards more program coordination across institutions and increasing government involvement in college operations. The vocational institutes had been under the direct control of the Ministry, and a measure of that control over the new combined institutions continued after the meld took place. A Technical-Vocational Consultative and Other Career Programmes Committee was established “to advise the Minister on all matters relating to technical and vocational training and other career programmes offered in the colleges” (Soles, 1971, p. 6). The Committee was composed primarily of Ministry and institutional representatives. Such a committee provides an early example of

Ministry and college officials working closely together on committee structures with system mandates.

Among the functions of the Committee were coordinating technical and vocational programs across the province, recommending for approval new programs if government funding was involved, and making recommendations about articulation of these programs across institutions (Soles, 1971). Thus, the Committee represented a significant government incursion into the programming decisions within and across colleges, an incursion that had hitherto been unseen in the regional colleges. It is worth noting, though, that the Minister's Task Force on the Melding of Community Colleges and British Columbia Adult Vocational Schools stated in its November 1, 1973, report that "it is essential that in every way the local autonomy of the college should be recognized and protected" (1973, p. 8). Thus the need for balance between government control and local autonomy was recognized by government. Nevertheless, the meld of regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes in 1971 was a harbinger of ever increasing interest on the part of the provincial government in developing a comprehensive system of community colleges, as will be shown in the next subsection.

Government's increasing interest in developing a provincial system

The following subsection presents a review of literature that provides evidence of a growing interest on the part of government for developing a provincial system of colleges. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that by 1975 the success of colleges and their unparalleled growth led to the provincial government having to pay ever increasing amounts for capital and operating costs. Dennison and Gallagher go on to state:

Not unexpectedly, provincial governments wished to protect their investments; first, they appointed members to the governing councils, then they imposed restrictions on college expenses, and finally they established a post-secondary division of the Ministry of Education to control institutional development. (p. 91)

Hence, government was exercising increasing control in the development of the college system prior to the passage of the 1977 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act.

The early 1970s saw a change in government in B.C. with the New Democratic Party (NDP) being in power between 1972 and 1974 and the Social Credit Party (Socreds) being in power before and after that. Although there was support from both governments for the expansion of colleges, the different political ideology of either party meant different views on the primary purposes of colleges. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that the NDP viewed colleges as resources to provide education to the wider community and thus focussed on community education, remedial education, and social service programs. The Socreds, on the other hand, believed that job training was the primary function of colleges and should take priority over university transfer and community education. Despite the different philosophies, though, both political ends of the spectrum in the early to mid-1970s still viewed colleges as an important provincial resource.

The literature contains considerable evidence of this growing interest on the part of government in the development of a provincial system of colleges. The literature is presented below in terms of the chronological order of events between 1970 and 1975. Hollick-Kenyon (1979) writes of an amendment to the Public Schools Act in 1970 in which the B.C. government dealt with the coordination of college programs for the first time. The amendment gave the Lieutenant-Governor in Council authority to order that courses be coordinated and integrated across regions of the entire province to avoid unnecessary duplication. This is the first legislated reference to a role for the Province in program rationalization. Also in the 1970 amendments to the Act, “the college principal was removed from the Council and the number of government appointees increased, with a majority of School Board appointees guaranteed” (Mitchell, 1986, p. 14). This subtle change in the number of government appointees was the beginning of a trend that culminated in the elimination of all school board appointees by 1983 and their replacement with

100 percent government appointees. Also in 1970 “all legislation pertaining to the colleges scattered throughout the Public Schools Act was consolidated and placed in Part XI of the Act” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 161).

Statements and actions by the Sacred Minister of Education, Donald Brothers, in the early 1970s also pointed towards a greater interest by government in a coordinated system. Minister Brothers (1971) made the following statement in his welcoming address at the First Assembly of the College Councils in May 1971:

There comes a point in the establishment of a college system on such a broad range as we now have, when consideration must be given to co-ordination and co-operation, to ensure that we are in face all proceeding in the same direction.... This is not to say that we are looking for conformity or uniformity-but only for the strength of a common purpose. (p. 3)

Minister Brothers also established an ad hoc committee on education in 1972 “to study and recommend various alternatives for the coordination of higher education in British Columbia” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 137). Among the committee’s conclusions was that the existing agencies, such as the Academic Board, could not provide the level of coordination needed, which indicated a stronger level of coordination was required from government.

In 1973, the Province began funding 100 percent of the capital expenditures at colleges although the local communities maintained responsibility for a portion of college operating costs for another four years until the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (Beinder, 1986). Gallagher (1984) states that by the mid-1970s, the provincial government was thus providing a greater share of funding for colleges and had built up a small bureaucracy to monitor college development and the use of provincial funds. Gallagher goes on to state that “the tension between provincial interests ... and the historical independence of the individual regional colleges gradually but inexorably surfaced” (p. 7).

A major report by the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia was submitted to government in 1974 but, because of the importance of the report, it will be described more fully in the next subsection of the 1970 to 1977

time period. The remainder of this section will describe a government report called *A Working Paper on College Governance in British Columbia* by Kava (1975), which contains important clues on government thinking of the day regarding the development of a college system and the relation to college autonomy.

Kava (1975) writes that the paper was developed as:

a consolidation of numerous facts, points of view and recommendations presented by many persons and groups as a result of careful and extensive deliberations regarding the development of the community college system in this province. (p. 1)

Despite this statement and the fact that several of the recommendations in the document had received previous support from institutions, it is the view of this author that the *Working Paper* represented a strong message from government about its desire for increasing government control of the developing system. In keeping with the growing cooperative relationship between the Ministry and the institutions, however, the paper was sent to the colleges to allow them to respond to the recommendations in the proposal.

Kava (1975) writes of the evolution of the community colleges of B.C. to the point where a separate Colleges Act was now required “in order to facilitate a purposeful, rational, and responsible development of a college system which will provide optimum educational opportunities and services to all interested persons throughout the province” (p. 9). An act would also present a plan for accountability of public funds. Kava’s report speaks very clearly about the need for colleges to be more involved in meeting provincial manpower training needs (reflecting the prevailing view of the Socred government), more coordinated in their delivery of services to prevent unnecessary duplication, and more accountable for the use of public funds. Thus the increasing number and cost of institutions had led to the government becoming more interested in what had formerly been the unrestricted development of colleges.

The *Working Paper* also presented a different view by government of college autonomy. Kava (1975) states that “autonomy at any level can no longer be protected in the absence of an adequate planning process, involving long-term consultation and coordination among colleges, their communities and the provincial government” (p. 19). Elsewhere, Kava states that “in the final analysis, autonomy ultimately involves shared responsibility, including cooperation and coordination on the part of colleges, communities and the provincial government” (p. 15). These are important statements for the purpose of the present research because they show a definite interest on the part of government in becoming increasingly involved in planning and coordinating a college system.

Kava acknowledges that colleges had developed in B.C. with local and regional autonomy in order to serve local and regional needs. However, Kava (1975) goes on to state the following:

Local autonomy may be preserved only if colleges understand and accept a responsibility toward the public who bears a constantly increasing part of the total cost of operating a college. The effective utilization of public funds and the ability to establish provincial priorities are of major concern and interest to the government which represents and is accountable to the public. (p. 17)

This statement shows clearly the effect that greater funding from the Province had on the demands by government for accountability for those funds and a greater role in system planning. Conversely, in the view of this author, the statement shows that Macdonald (1962) was correct in his assumption that maintaining local funding for a portion of college operating and capital costs would be necessary to maintain local responsiveness and institutional autonomy.

The Kava report also showed a marked increase in the level of external governance being recommended in addition to local governance. External governance recommendations included a regional structure of three Regional Councils and a provincial structure of a Provincial Council and Provincial Program Advisory Committees. The Regional Councils would establish program priorities and financial needs of colleges and institutes across the region whereas the

Provincial Council would be an intermediary body that would allocate grants for capital and operating requirements and “coordinate the development of colleges” (Kava, 1975, p. 24). The Provincial Council would consist of the three Regional Councils working together. The four Provincial Program Advisory Committees would coordinate policy and program decisions in the major program areas offered in institutions. Thus the 1975 *Working Paper* represented a major shift towards centralized coordination of formerly independent institutions and, as shall be seen, was very influential in the creation of the 1977 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act.

Another recommendation of the Kava (1975) report was that the Province should begin paying 100 percent of both the capital and operating costs of colleges, in keeping with the recommendations of the 1974 Task Force Report, which will be discussed in the next subsection. This recommendation was acted upon in the 1977 Act. In summary, the 1975 report by Kava provided strong evidence of the provincial government’s increasing interest in coordinating policy and program decisions across colleges and in providing all funding for colleges.

The Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia

The Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia was created in November 1973 by Eileen Dailly, the NDP Minister of Education at that time (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). The Task Force represented a shift to a more consultative approach to the development of government policy, both in terms of the Task Force membership and the extent of consultation. This approach resulted from the philosophy of the NDP government of the day. The membership included, among others, administrators, board members, faculty, and students from a variety of colleges and was chaired by Frank Beinder, the Chair of the Selkirk College Council at that time. Only one Ministry representative, Ron Faris, served on the Task Force. The Task Force held 75 meetings and 100 hearings throughout the province (Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia, 1974).

The creation of the Task Force represented a significant step towards a more centrally coordinated college system, despite its membership and the consultative way in which it carried out its tasks. Indeed, three of its terms of reference were to recommend legislative changes for a Community College Act, changes in relationships between colleges and government, and a governance structure that balanced the concerns of regions and the Province (Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia, 1974). Referring to the exploration of legislated changes, Beinder (1986) states “that was the first indication by Government of a recognition that the scope and complexities of college function and operation had outgrown its dependence upon the public school organization” (p. 82). Dennison and Gallagher (1986) describe the 1974 Task Force Report as laying “the ground for a more systematic, ministry-directed group of institutions in the province” (p. 92).

The remainder of this subsection will focus on the recommendations of the Task Force that had centralizing implications. The Report of the Task Force, called *Towards the Learning Community*, was released in August 1974. The Task Force recommended that four new colleges should be established in the Northeastern, Northwestern, East Kootenay, and Northern Vancouver Island regions of the province. This recommendation was accepted by government and resulted in four new colleges being formed in 1975 in these areas, which had not yet been served by a college, bringing the total number of colleges to 14. Beinder (1986) states that because of the great need for post-secondary education deemed to exist in those areas, government removed the stipulation that plebiscites and referenda must be held in those communities, thus moving away from locally driven formation of colleges. The government was now determining the location of institutions.

Several other recommendations of the Task Force (1974) would have a centralizing result if implemented. These included the recommendation that the Province should begin paying for 100 percent of operating costs of colleges, thus removing any funding from the local tax base; the elimination of local school board

dominance on the college board; and the establishment of a general admissions policy for all colleges. The Task Force also recommended that government should play a greater role in coordination of vocational and trades training provided through the recently melded colleges.

Other centralizing recommendations were the creation of a Provincial Advisory Committee to “advise the Minister about the future developments and needs of the Provincial college system” (Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia, 1974, p. 20) and of a Liaison Committee to facilitate communication between the Department and the various types of institutions. The latter committee would perform functions assigned by the Minister, including arranging transfer credit. Thus, government would now play a more direct role in promoting coordination and cooperation across institutions, although the report acknowledges the value of ongoing liaison between university and college personnel without government intervention.

Despite the various provincial committees proposed by the Task Force, it did not recommend the development of an intermediary body between colleges and the Department of Education to allocate provincial resources because it found significant opposition in the field to such a recommendation. Instead, the Task Force (1974) recommended an expanded Department of Education. Finally, the Task Force recommended that one third of Board members should be elected to represent internal stakeholder groups within the college, a recommendation that did not come to pass until 1996 when another NDP government was in power.

The B.C. School Trustees Association (BCSTA) released its response to the Task Force Report in December 1974 and was highly critical of many of the report’s recommendations. The BCSTA (1974) stated that “there are great dangers to colleges in increased centralization and bureaucratic controls” (pp. 1-2) and that colleges must be governed by elected local officials. The BCSTA was also opposed to 100 percent of college operating costs being paid by the provincial government and stated that the role of the Department of Education “should be supportive rather

than controlling” (p. 4). Furthermore, the BCSTA believed that internal governance should be determined by each college individually, not by government directive. Thus the group that was so instrumental in the development at the local level of the first 10 colleges in B.C. was opposed to government incursion into local autonomy.

The Task Force Report was commissioned by the NDP and released just before a provincial election in which the Socreds regained power. Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states that “many of the recommendations of the Task Force reflected a priority which did not receive the support of the Social Credit government” (p. 149). Nevertheless, the Task Force and its recommendations represented a shift by government towards the development of a more centrally controlled and funded provincial college system and spelled the end of institutions being formed based solely on local initiative.

Various reports pointing towards greater provincial coordination

Thus far in the section of Chapter 4 dealing with developments between 1970 and 1977, most of the attention has been on government interest in the development of a more centralized and provincially coordinated system. The literature also has considerable evidence of calls from the colleges for a more coordinated provincial system and for a greater role for government. Thus, the movement towards the introduction of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977 was being propelled by the institutions as well as by government. The subsection below presents this evidence.

To begin with, several important quotes summarize the building support among the institutions for some form of provincial plan and for legislative changes to recognize the important role of colleges in providing post-secondary education. Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states the following:

Without definitive legislation in British Columbia to establish a comprehensive system to coordinate higher education, a variety of groups have both arisen and have been created in an effort to fill the

vacuum. The group activity and the accumulation of reports led to serious consideration by the Ministry of Education ... to enact new legislation dealing with the external governance of the various types of post-secondary institutions in the province. (pp. 136-137)

The above quote points strongly toward spontaneous efforts at voluntary collaboration in the absence of provincial coordination.

Likewise, the BCAC in their *Board Members Handbook* (1980) stated that during the 1970s, "there was increasing pressure from the existing colleges for legislative changes and several task forces and commissions were formed to study various aspects of the post-secondary system" (p. 5). Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that "public and college pressure upon government to place colleges under their own legislation was building" (p. 92). Finally, Jeffels (1972) stated the following:

The Province lacks a formal, functional and trusted agency to coordinate the affairs of higher education, and many persons within the system now argue that British Columbia should establish a separate and distinct ministry of post-secondary education to assist in the rational, methodical and economical development of the system. (pp. 7-8)

This important quote shows that now, after a decade of voluntary coordination, institutions themselves appeared to be favouring a more central approach to coordination of a system.

Hollick-Kenyon (1979) provides a very thorough description of the "flurry and variety of reports emanating from ad hoc groups, committees, consultants, voluntary associations and individuals" during the early to mid-1970s. Hollick-Kenyon continues by stating that "many of these reports called for a clearly developed system of coordination of higher education in British Columbia, and usually recommended their own particular solutions to this problem" (p. 135). The remainder of this subsection deals with some of the important papers and reports between 1970 and 1977 in chronological order. Most of these reports were submitted voluntarily to government while a few were commissioned by government, as will be noted in the description of those reports.

Beinder (1986) asserts that “jealous defense of their individual autonomy by school districts and colleges was typical of the times. There were, nevertheless, signs of growing recognition of the need for orderly development” (p. 39). As an example of this growing need, Beinder describes a request emanating from an October 1970 meeting of the RDCABC that the Minister “establish an overall plan for the orderly development of colleges in British Columbia” (p. 39). Beinder (1986) also made the following statement about his views on the need for coordination:

My own view was expressed in a 1971 paper.... “I submit that colleges are too expensive and too important to be subject to haphazard development. It is essential that an independent body be set up in the province to examine the needs and establish priorities which should not be dependent upon the vagaries of a public plebiscite.” (Beinder, Frank, College Areas, unpublished paper, November 1971). (p. 40)

Hollick-Kenyon (1979) writes of an August 1973 report by the Council of College Principals of British Columbia in which they recommended a single division be formed in the Department of Education to oversee the development of an integrated post-secondary system, which would include a network of regional colleges. In this report, principals also agreed to the need for standards and guidelines for areas involving inter-institutional work and recommended “a provincial consultative committee composed of lay representatives ... to provide an overview of the total college system” (p. 138). Thus, the principals favoured a collaborative mechanism among institutions as a means of resolving system issues. The principals also “tended to advocate a status quo position with respect to college coordination” (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 139), which included opposition to any form of legislated college-university articulation and to the creation of intermediary bodies.

Hollick-Kenyon (1979) also writes of a 1973 report by Dennison on provincial coordination entitled *A Proposed Structure for Higher Education in British Columbia*. The report referred to a lack of adequate coordination and

planning at the system level and recommended a structure that would provide adequate provincial coordination while maintaining institutional autonomy. In March of 1974, the Academic Board prepared a comprehensive report about the need for coordination across the entire higher education system. The Board recommended the formation of a Council of Higher Education to ensure a coordinated response to meeting the social needs of the province and University and College Commissions to ensure fiscal responsibility in both sectors. The proposed membership of both the Council and the Commissions included Department of Education representatives, administrators, and faculty. Many of the institutional representatives would be appointed by or elected within the institutions. Thus educators, rather than government, would maintain a majority position in any of the coordinating bodies (Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia, 1974).

The Report of the Survey Committee on Community Colleges in the Lower Mainland (Marsh, 1975), commissioned by government, recommended the formation of a Regional Council that would coordinate program planning and budget review across the Lower Mainland. The Council was to be made up largely of elected members from each participating institution along with a representative from the Department of Education. The report was careful, though, not to describe the Council's role as directive or standardizing but rather as ensuring "diversity within a federal-type unity" (p. 54). The Marsh Report, as it came to be known, also made the following statement about the importance of voluntary collaboration: "Cooperation ... requires a mechanism as well as goodwill. The will to cooperate has been manifested by individual colleges in dozens of instances in the formative years of the last decade" (1975).

The Council of Community College Principals released a further report in May 1976, which makes several very important statements that relate to the purpose of the present study. The Council of Community College Principals' purpose in writing this document was to ask government for a provincial policy

statement on colleges. Among the reasons given for the need for such a statement was to “ensure coordination of effort among colleges” and “the orderly development of colleges in B.C.” (Council of Community College Principals, 1976, p. 2). Thus college principals were asking for a statement from government to ensure coordination. In their 1976 report, the principals proposed the development of a provincial statement on the roles of colleges within the broader education system, separate legislation for colleges rather than being “an appendage of the Public Schools Act” (p. 8), and “the establishment of clearly defined lines of communication between the Department and the colleges to ensure close liaison between the college regions and the Province in the development of colleges” (p. 8). This statement shows a clear recognition by principals of the need for ongoing collaboration between the institutions and the Department to ensure the development of a coherent system.

However, the Council of Community College Principals was not asking for central control of the system by the Ministry. The Council (1976) stated that, other than for provincial government involvement in the meld in 1971 and in creating the 1974 Provincial Task Force, “to date practically all the college development in B.C. has resulted from active community interest and leadership and from the support and efforts of an imaginative and dedicated administrative and teaching staff” (pp. 1-2). Elsewhere, the Council states that it was opposed to the development of any kind of uniform college system because it would destroy the community and regional nature of college service for which B.C. had become known. The Council further states:

Principals are convinced that a decentralized system of colleges can be more sensitive to regional and community educational needs and can respond more easily than a centralized system if there is effective organization and communication between the Province and the colleges. (p. 8)

In the same report, the Council states that principals recognize:

the importance of a planned, coordinated and integrated development of services in the post-secondary field and the

necessity for cooperation among colleges and with the Provincial institutions. They believe that publicly established guidelines would be useful for these purposes. (p. 4)

This and other statements in the 1976 report are important for the present research because they show the recognition among principals of the necessary interplay between improved provincial coordination in the developing college and institute system and continuing inter-institutional cooperation.

The BCAC (1976) prepared a list of proposals for consideration regarding the development of a Colleges Act. These proposals included an individual governing body for each institution, internal governance issues to be determined by each institution, two-thirds of council members to be elected from the local area but not appointed by school boards, full corporate status for each college, 100 percent funding of capital and operating costs by the provincial government, and a direct relationship between colleges and the Department of Education rather than through intermediary bodies. The BCAC also recommended the formation of a Post-Secondary Articulation Committee “to advise and recommend on all matters related to transfer from colleges to other institutions” and conceded that “there should be provision for co-ordination and integration to provide the maximum of course offerings with minimum of duplication in high-cost specialized programs” (p. 6).

The College Faculties Federation (CFF) of B.C. also prepared a paper in January 1977 about the proposed college legislation. The two major concerns expressed in the paper were that the Department of Education maintain a broad role of policy development and not one of administrative control over institutions and that the government not move to a system of province-wide bargaining (College Faculties Federation of British Columbia, 1977a). Thus the CFF was in favour of maintaining local autonomy in much the same way as board chairs and principals were. In another undated position paper by the CFF regarding the need for a College Act, the CFF recommended the development of college regions, 100 percent funding from the Province for capital and operating costs, elected faculty

and student representatives on the college board, and the creation of a provincial Advisory Board of Post-Secondary Education to deal with coordination among institutions (College Faculties Federation of British Columbia, n.d.).

Finally, a report was released in January 1977 by the Commission of Vocational, Technical, and Trades Training in British Columbia, otherwise known as the Goard Report named after Dean Goard, the Chair of the Commission. The Commission, which had been appointed by government, expressed a concern about “the need for a single agency capable of decision-making as it relates to the broad spectrum of vocational training in British Columbia. This concern was shared by educators, industry, and government” (1977, p. 4). Hence, the Commission recommended the establishment of an Occupational Training Council as its most critical recommendation. Government was to act on this recommendation by creating such a council with the introduction of the new act in August 1977.

Thus all of the above reports and position papers appear to be recommending a move to a more coordinated provincial system of colleges and institutes. However, the support for such a move is cautious with several reports asking for continued decentralized decision making and institutional autonomy. Another common theme in the above documents is a desire for institutions to have a direct relationship with the Department of Education rather than through any form of intermediary body. In the author’s opinion, these early calls for such a direct relationship may reflect a growing feeling of trust between institutional and government officials.

The Academic Board and articulation and transfer

While these various reports were being written calling for the development of a more coordinated provincial system, the solving of articulation and transfer issues between colleges and universities without the intervention of government continued in the 1970s under the leadership of the Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. Jeffels (1972) writes that transfer between colleges

and universities in 1972 was working reasonably well, despite occasional conflict. The formation of curriculum committees by the Academic Board had been quite effective, according to Jeffels, in sharing information regularly and resolving transfer problems within specific disciplines. Dennison, speaking at the First Assembly of the College Councils in May 1971, stated that by 1971, a number of studies had already been conducted on college transfer students to determine their success. Dennison (1971) states that the results generally showed that “transfer students [*sic*] performance was comparable to the regular university students” (p. 16). However, the transfer system still involved a continuing imbalance of power between colleges and universities in the transfer arrangement. Jeffels states that college faculty “must be rather resentful of the fact that the universities, in the final analysis, have the right to accept or reject” (p. 8).

The success of the transfer system appears to have been largely due to the continuing facilitative approach taken by the Academic Board. Chant, speaking at the First Assembly of the College Councils of B.C. in May 1971, stated the following about the newly formed articulation committees:

In spite of a few rough spots, the committees have done a lot to build up the indispensable trust and confidence that must prevail between the universities and the colleges if our system of higher education is to function to the advantage of the students. The committees have no executive powers. They do not make decisions that are binding upon institutions. But they have certainly helped to iron out some wrinkles in the arrangements for the transfer of students. (p. 8)

The above quote provides evidence for the understanding that voluntary collaboration without formal authority had been effective in promoting transfer.

Chant (1971) made further statements at the First Assembly that referred to the approach of the Academic Board to its role. He stated:

Although the Board has interpreted its powers broadly in order to be as much help as possible, it has kept to its advisory role.... The Academic Board has never attempted to exercise any direct control over the colleges or the universities. (p. 6)

Chant also stated that the Board prefers to arrange direct negotiations between colleges and universities without Board involvement and that “the Board prefers to work co-operatively rather than formally” (p. 8). Thus considerable evidence exists of the important role of the Academic Board in the development of the collaborative approach to transfer in B.C. in the early days.

However, Jeffels (1972) stated that the Academic Board had not been as effective as it could have been because government did not fund the kind of secretariat suggested by Macdonald to carry out much of the coordination required across colleges and universities. The Academic Board was dissolved in 1974 before the long-standing issue of college representation on the Board had been resolved (Beinder, 1986). However, it appears that the work of the articulation committees continued without the Academic Board. Beinder (1986) states the following:

Sound leadership from the Principals of the nine colleges operating at the time of the phasing out of the Academic Board enabled the establishment of a system of subject articulation committees which resulted in a co-operative [*sic*] and productive relationship between the colleges and universities of our Province. (p. 53)

Thus, once again, the continuation of the transfer function did not involve the government but was, according to Beinder, a result of leadership from college principals. However, government interest in becoming more involved in coordinating transfer was evident in a position paper by the Department of Education on February 20, 1976, in which a number of committee structures were recommended, including a Transfer Committee, whose function would be “to serve an arbitrator, ombudsman type role in connection with specific inter college, college/university and college/B.C. I.T. transfer problems” (1976, p. 2). Then in 1977, the Academic Council was formed under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act and was given the role of establishing articulation committees (Beinder, 1986). The Academic Council will be discussed in more detail in the period 1977 to 1983.

In summary, the Academic Board continued to play an important role in maintaining transfer between colleges and universities until its demise in 1974. The

Board did so by employing a facilitative approach to encouraging voluntary collaboration across institutions, and this approach was continued by articulation committees after 1974.

The formation of the British Columbia Association of Colleges

While continuing work on transfer was occurring voluntarily between colleges and universities, the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC) continued its work in coordinating activities across college councils. At its 1970 annual meeting, the name of the Regional and District Colleges Association was changed to the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC) (Beinder, 1986), a name it was to keep until 1990. In the author's opinion, even the name change from "Regional and District" to "British Columbia" seems to indicate an increasing understanding of the provincial nature of the growing college system. However, further work by the BCAC over the next few years was limited, largely because the members of BCAC were "so busy with their own affairs that little more thought had been given to enhancement of Association activity" (Beinder, 1986, pp. 68-69). This quote by Beinder seems to suggest that the initial years of establishing regional colleges was such an all consuming activity that little time was left to focus on system issues.

Whether to increase the role of a provincial association remained a point of debate throughout the early 1970s as it had been in the 1960s because of the jealous guarding of institutional autonomy and the fear of the potential centralizing role of a provincial organization (Beinder, 1986). Beinder states that it took eight years from the establishment of the RDCABC in 1966 before the BCAC finally decided in 1974 to hire its first Executive Director. It should be noted that the first Executive Director was Frank Beinder. Beinder states that during the early years of the BCAC there had been much debate about the role of the BCAC and about whether to expand the organization to take on more of a system role. In this author's opinion, the fact that it took eight years to make the decision to formalize

the role of the Association is further evidence of the strong community orientation of college councils and the distrust of a central coordinating body, even one that represented the interests of association members and not the government.

In June, 1976, the BCAC was incorporated under the British Columbia Association of Colleges Incorporation Act, which was introduced as a private member's bill (Beinder, 1986). One of the objectives of the Association according to the BCAC Incorporation Act (British Columbia Association of Colleges Incorporation Act, Chapter 57, 1976) was "to secure united action among members in dealing with all matters of common interest" (4.[i]). Thus the voluntary cooperation that had been the hallmark of the BCAC and its predecessor organization, the RDCABC, was now formalized in an act of the legislature.

Summary for 1970 to 1977

In summary, the period of 1970 to 1977 began with continuing development of autonomous institutions dedicated to meeting community needs, and these institutions continued to work at voluntary coordination of their activities, particularly in the realm of admissions and transfer. However there was growing recognition of the need for a more coordinated provincial system. Government was becoming interested in taking a more important role in the development of colleges because of the increasing number of institutions, the concomitant increasing cost to government for operating and capital expenditures, and the need for accountability for the use of government funds. A number of government reports in the 1970s made recommendations for a separate act for colleges and for a more coordinated college system designed to meet provincial as well as local needs, with the most important report being that of the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia in 1974. Furthermore, the meld of regional colleges and provincial vocational institutes in 1971 gave reason for the government to become more involved in program decisions in colleges than it had in the past.

The demands for separate legislation to deal with the growing college system and for more provincial coordination of the developing system also came from the BCAC, the Council of Community College Principals, and the CFF. Thus, there was a broad recognition that the Ministry needed to get more involved in setting the general direction for the burgeoning college system, but there was not support for government becoming more involved in institutional decision making. There remained strong feelings about the need to protect institutional autonomy and local responsiveness and to avoid over-centralization of the system. This centralization was about to begin in earnest, though, with the introduction of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in August of 1977, as described in the next section of Chapter 4.

1977 TO 1983: CENTRALIZED COORDINATION BY GOVERNMENT OF A PROVINCIAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

August 1977 to the end of 1983 was a very important period in the development of the college and institute system in B.C., especially as it relates to the purpose of the present study. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) describe the period as follows:

The period from 1977 to 1983 witnessed a consistent pattern of increasing provincial responsibility for colleges. Both the spirit and the reality of community involvement which had characterized the early years of the colleges slowly faded; [*sic*] and provincial government priorities for the colleges took precedence over the local and regional interests. (p. 93)

Mitchell (1986) explains the reason for increasing government control by stating that “as the financial commitment of the provincial Government to community colleges grew, so the demand for stronger links between all segments of the system gave rise to the need for central coordination, planning and accountability” (p. 9). Mitchell also states that “this centralizing pressure was strongly resisted at the college level, because it was perceived as a departure from the historic nature of colleges in B.C.” (p. 166).

The following section will provide ample evidence from the literature about this increasing involvement by government and the reaction of institutions to this centralizing trend. The section is divided into 10 subsections: the perceived lack of coordination among colleges in the mid-1970s, the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act of 1977, reaction to the Act, the short lifespan of the three intermediary councils, the reduction in school board involvement in college governance, the impact of government restraint in the early 1980s on calls for program rationalization, the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document for 1982 to 1987, the system's reaction to perceived over-centralization, continuation of efforts at voluntary collaboration, and the beginnings of cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions.

The perceived lack of coordination among colleges in the mid-1970s

The 1977 to 1983 time period is very important to the present study because it involved a significant move from a collection of autonomous institutions, collaborating voluntarily and with little government intervention, to a provincially coordinated system with heavy involvement by government in setting directions for colleges. Also important to this research is an understanding of the reasons that government decided to move so far in this centralizing direction. In the view of this author, part of the reason had to do with a perception by government officials that the existing methods of coordination among institutions were inadequate. Below are quotes from the literature that support this interpretation.

There is evidence that government was no longer content in the mid-1970s with the level of coordination occurring among relatively autonomous institutions. Calder (1984) states that “although government statements emphasized the positive contributions of the colleges and institutes, there is no doubt that it believed their efforts were uncoordinated” (p. 85). Elsewhere, Soles, in an address given to the Vancouver Board of Trade on September 7, 1977, shortly after the introduction of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, stated that colleges had been able to

carry out their mandate despite inadequate legislation. “However, because of ambiguities in existing legislation, their efforts have often been unco-ordinated or spasmodic in meeting provincial needs” (Soles, 1977, p. 4). Soles goes on to describe the new Act by stating “in a major sense, this is corrective legislation which eliminates or clarifies many of the ambiguities, or inconsistencies, or anomalies which have existed in the past” (p. 5). Hollick-Kenyon (1979) quotes from the debates held in the Legislature in September 1977 following the introduction of the Act. He quotes Minister McGeer as saying that the efforts of colleges ““have been less-coordinated [*sic*] than they should or could have been”” (p. 170). The above statements suggest that the government felt that the attempts at voluntary coordination prior to the 1977 Act were inadequate for the growing college system.

At a meeting held by British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC) officers and the Principal of Camosun College on September 2, 1977, with the Minister, Deputy, and Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the Ministry of Education, Minister McGeer spoke of the two main reasons behind the establishment of the Management Advisory Council, one of the three intermediary councils created by the Act. The reasons were first that “there was a need for a mechanism to compensate for the mistakes which had gone unchecked as the college system developed” and secondly “a college system demands collective entrepreneurship and individual entrepreneurship. We have reached a point when collective needs must be emphasized” (Beinder, 1977, p. 3). The first point shows clearly the opinion of government officials that the development of the college system had not been well managed in the past. The second point shows the centralizing goal of government to have a college system that was better able to meet the needs of the province.

Thus there is evidence that the government and Minister of the day in 1977 felt that the former uncoordinated state of the developing colleges had to be addressed in order to meet provincial needs. Government chose to address the need

for stronger provincial coordination through the introduction in August 1977 of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

The 1977 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act

The most important piece of legislation in the history of the development of B.C.'s colleges, university colleges, and institutes is the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act of 1977. Indeed, the Act, with a number of amendments that will be discussed later in this chapter, remained in March of 2002 as the legislation governing this set of institutions. Hollick-Kenyon (1979) states that "while British Columbia was one of the first Canadian provinces to allow for the establishment of community colleges in Canada, it was among the last to enact legislation for the coordination of community colleges" (p. 158). In the opinion of this author, the slowness of government to introduce a separate act for colleges is further evidence of its hands-off approach to college development in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977 was a clear indication of a move by the provincial government towards a more centralized approach to and provincial perspective on college development (Mitchell, 1986) and was viewed as a threat to institutional autonomy (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). The Act was seen as a "benchmark policy of the B.C. Government in establishing a system based on provincial rather than local goals" (Mitchell, 1986, p. 86) and "established the machinery to coordinate the community colleges of British Columbia" (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979, p. 171).

The comprehensive Act (Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, Chapter 67, 1977) included a number of sections that are of most interest to the present study. These included the creation of two types of institutions, colleges and provincial institutes, with the creation of five provincial institutes besides the British Columbia Institute of Technology, which had existed previously; the creation of three intermediary councils, the Academic Council, the Occupational Training

Council, and the Management Advisory Council; the provision of 100 percent provincial funding for both capital and operating costs of colleges, thus eliminating the local tax base as a source of funding; and the provision of corporate status for colleges, which removed colleges from direct school board control and created college boards as opposed to college councils. The remainder of this subsection will deal with those sections of the Act that gave greater control to government of colleges and institutes.

Part II of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act (1977) detailed the powers and duties of the Minister as well as the discretionary powers of the Minister. Part II gave the Minister clear authority in the areas of policy, programming, and finance of institutions. Part VI of the Act established the powers of the three new intermediary councils. Included in the powers of both the Occupational Training and Academic Councils was the statement that they could “require institutions to consult with each other to avoid unnecessary duplication in the courses offered” (48.[2][c], 50.[2][g]). The Academic Council could also “require an institution or university to participate in the work of an articulation committee” (50.[2][b]), and the Management Advisory Council could “require institutions to consult with each other to avoid unnecessary duplication” (52.[2][b]). Thus the Act gave the three intermediary bodies significant powers to “require” consultation and coordination across institutions, something that had occurred on a much more voluntary basis up to that time. This included possible intervention by the Academic Council into the area of transfer and articulation, which until this point in time had been accomplished without any form of edict from government or an intermediary body.

A good example of the control of colleges invested in government by the Act can be found in Part VIII, Section 68, the so-called “sunset clause” that stated that each institution “shall by March 31, 1982, and by the end of each subsequent 5 year period, report to the minister setting out the reasons, if any, why the corporation should continue to exist.” Based on these reports, the Minister would

determine the steps required to improve the situation, which might include closing down the institution. Such power in the hands of government was markedly different from the previous situation in which college development was fully controlled at the local level.

One result of the Act is that it gave the Ministry more control over program development at institutions. In the government news release announcing the Act (Province of British Columbia, 1977), Minister McGeer stated that the three councils would provide “a new degree of co-ordination and integration of programs and facilities for the first time since community colleges were established in 1964, and will lessen direct government control” (p. 3). Speaking on behalf of government, Soles (1977) stated “the Bill ... makes it possible for us to achieve a new rationalization and co-ordination of the programmes offered ... the Ministry has the authority to establish provincial certificates and to bring some standardization to the programmes being offered” (p. 7). Yet in the Vancouver Province article on August 3, 1977, McGeer is quoted as saying that the “educational bill of the decade” gives the institutions greater autonomy and less government control, largely because of the three councils, which McGeer described as “buffers between the institutions and the provincial government” (“Education bill,” 1977, p. 25). The question of whether or not the Act was centralizing or decentralizing in nature was hotly debated among politicians of the day.

Beinder (1977) summarized the notes from Hansard, the official record of government debates, by saying that “the Minister said the Bill is designed to be the opposite of centralizing power and does, in fact, ensure decentralization” (p. 1). Crawford (1983) quotes directly from the debate in September 1977 on the second reading of the bill. Crawford stated that Minister McGeer argued that the Act provided colleges with “a full measure of autonomy and self determination” while Eileen Dailly, speaking on behalf of the NDP opposition, “claimed that ‘in this bill the minister seems determined to destroy the original concept of the community college. The new bill doesn’t even have the word community in it anymore. It is

centralization” (p. 24). Elsewhere, Beinder (1986) paraphrases Dailly as saying the following:

The new Act would lead toward a highly centralized and increasingly bureaucratic system of college administration ... the three new “super-boards” would consolidate the powers formerly exercised by the college boards and ... the community college system had been effectively neutralized as the opportunities for communities to decide their local college needs would no longer exist. (p. 130)

Thus the centralizing or decentralizing nature of the 1977 Act was debated by politicians, but there was little doubt in the minds of many institutional representatives that the Act would have a centralizing effect. The views of these representatives as well as the views of later authors on the impact of the Act are presented in the next subsection.

Reaction to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act

Aside from the debate among politicians about the impact of the 1977 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, there was considerable and mixed response from post-secondary institutions and educators in the period immediately following the introduction of the Act. Beinder (1986) states that “public response ranged from cautious to condemnatory. Nowhere was there unbridled rejoicing” (p. 127). A wide sampling of evidence from the literature is presented below.

The BCAC, in its untitled August 12, 1977, analysis of the Act (British Columbia Association of Colleges, 1977), was generally quite positive and noted that many aspects of the Act conformed to what the BCAC had proposed. The section of the Act that was most heavily questioned was Part VI dealing with the three councils. One objection was the inability of the BCAC to relate directly to the Minister because of the new powers given to the three intermediary bodies. Another objection was the subordinate role of the Academic Council to the Universities Council, which was given the authority to review financial requests for programs from institutions. A third major objection was the appointment of college

principals to the Management Advisory Council. In a joint brief to the Minister, submitted by BCAC on August 31, 1977, on behalf of BCAC and the Council of College Principals, BCAC once again applauded many aspects of the Act but described the three councils as “divisive and unworkable” (1977, p. 4), criticized the role given to the Universities Council in controlling college affairs, and questioned the placement of principals on the Management Advisory Council.

Larry J. Blake, Principal of Fraser Valley College, wrote to the Deputy, Dr. Walter Hardwick, on August 4, 1977, on behalf of college principals to strongly object to the “interjection of the Universities Council into the governance of colleges in British Columbia” (1977, p. 1). Similarly, L. M. Strivastava, Chairman of the Capilano College Council, wrote to Minister McGeer on August 18, 1977, with his Council’s views on Bill 82. On the whole, the Council was complimentary of many aspects of the bill. Strivastava (1977) stated that “we interpret this bill as an effort to establish a balance: to provide colleges with the autonomy to meet the needs of their regions, and to achieve co-ordination of the work of the colleges to meet the needs of the entire province” (p. 1). However, the Capilano Council was critical of a number of aspects of the bill, including the unworkable nature of the three intermediary councils, the subordination of the Academic Council to the Universities Council, and the appointment of principals to the Management Advisory Council.

Cliff Adkins, President of the B.C. School Trustees Association (BCSTA), expressed his association’s concerns about Bill 82 in an article in the Vancouver Sun on August 16, 1977. Adkins said that the three council system proposed in the Act “could reduce college boards to an advisory capacity, will limit the ability of local representatives to communicate with McGeer on college matters, and will increase bureaucratic control” (“Threat to college boards,” 1977, p. 10). Adkins was concerned about the loss of board powers in part because the Management Advisory Council would include college principals, but not board chairs.

Because of all the negative reaction to the proposal in the Act to have college principals sit on the Management Advisory Council, the government decided to replace the principals with board chairs or their designates (Dennison, 1977). Beinder prepared a note on behalf of BCAC on November 6, 1978, expressing concerns about some of the provisions of Bill 82. Beinder (1978) wrote of “the danger that some people will see the Management Advisory Council as an appropriate successor to BCAC” (p. 1) when it was important that the BCAC remain independent in its ability to question decisions of the Minister and the Management Advisory Council. Thus the BCAC understood the value of maintaining its independence from government in light of the new governance structures being created by the Act.

Beinder (1978) was also critical of the inclusion of provincial institutes on the Management Advisory Council and the Council of Principals (COP) because he felt the institutes had little in common with community colleges. Elsewhere, Beinder (1986) stated that colleges were skeptical of the designation of new provincial institutes, made possible by the 1977 Act, because colleges felt that they could offer the same programs themselves. Indeed, the designation of institutes was viewed by some as “a major step in the direction of centralization of educational training services” (Beinder, 1986, pp. 156-157).

The College Faculties Federation (CFF) of B.C. was highly critical of almost all aspects of Bill 82. In the CFF analysis of the bill (1977b), they described the Act as “unacceptable” and the governance structures, including the three councils, as “awkward” and “unworkable” (p. 2). The CFF was critical of the sections of the bill on labour relations and of the exclusion of educators from participating on boards and councils. The CFF stated that the Act tended to turn community-based institutions into provincial institutions and “does not confirm traditional commitments of colleges to regional and community services” (p. 7). The CFF was also opposed to the role of the Universities Council in approving new programs and the budgets for them. The CFF made the strong statement that

“Bill 82 represents such a fundamental reorientation in governance and labour relations that we must conclude that those who drafted it feel the system needed a complete overhaul” (p. 6). The CFF goes on to state that “the proposed organization of relationships between constituencies reflects the centralization of educational control where decentralized control in the past has worked well” (p. 7).

A number of other citations from secondary literature sources provide evidence that the Act was seen by many in retrospect to be a major centralizing force in the development of colleges and institutes in B.C. Beinder (1986) states “it is difficult now to avoid the conclusion that Bill 82 ... heralded in an era of increasing centralization of the system” (p. 122). Beinder goes on to state that “the wide discretionary powers of the Minister, defined in detail, did nothing to allay fears of creeping centralization” (p. 123). Because the Act provided colleges with corporate status and eliminated local taxation as a source of college funding, Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that “a trend from colleges with a local or regional orientation to a system of provincial colleges was underway” (p. 93). Dennison (1997a) states that “to some observers the 1977 Act spelt the end of the ‘community’ college concept and the beginning of a ‘provincial’ college sector” (p. 8). Beinder (1986) questions why the term “community college” was not used anywhere in the Act. The present author surmises that the lack of reference to community colleges may indicate a desire on the part of government to de-emphasize the historical ties of the colleges to their communities.

Dennison (1997a) states that “the Act was conceived with a minimum of consultation” and “was much influenced by the strong personal views of the Minister responsible” (p. 8), referring to Pat McGeer. Dennison goes on to state that, because of the elimination of local taxes from the college budgets and the reduction of school board participation on the boards, “government policy was clearly to gain more centralized control over college operations through the application of fiscal levers and more direct managerial forces” (p. 8). Elsewhere, Dennison (1997b) writes of the centralizing nature of the Act, particularly because

of the reduced role of the local boards, and states “as a result of the legislation, ‘community’ colleges might now be viewed more accurately as ‘provincial’ colleges” (p. 42).

Gallagher (1984) states that the passage of the Act in 1977 was the beginning of a greater role for government and that “the term ‘system’ shortly crept into the college lexicon; steady erosion of institutional responsibility and authority can be timed from that Act” (p. 7). Gallagher described the main centralizing aspects of the Act as the provision for 100 percent funding by the Province for both capital and operating costs, the creation of five provincial institutes with programs that often conflicted with those at local colleges, the establishment of the three provincial councils, and the beginning of centralized coordination of curriculum development and financial decision making for colleges.

Gallagher (1999) wrote an article entitled “A Vanishing Vision,” referring to the loss of autonomous and locally responsive community colleges brought about by increased centralization by government. A major break from decentralized community control was the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, which eliminated funding from local taxation. Gallagher states that “before long, the colleges were collectively referred to as parts of a provincial ‘network’ or ‘system’ with the clear implication that province-wide interests should take precedence over responsiveness to local community needs” (p. 2). Gallagher goes on to state that in the early 1980s, system-wide planning and the introduction of formula funding were further examples of a move towards a system approach to managing colleges.

Finally, Beinder (1983) is highly critical of the 1977 Act. He states that there was a general feeling that the new Social Credit government developing the Act was not nearly as committed as previous Socred and NDP governments to maintaining local autonomy and the comprehensive nature of colleges. Beinder states that there were numerous presentations to government about the impending Act (many of which have been described above in the section on 1970 to 1977), but

there was “a general feeling among college people that the provisions were pre-determined at the Minister and Deputy Minister level and that recommendations from the field had little impact” (p. 15). Certainly, the formation of the three councils went against a number of recommendations from the field. The passage of the long-awaited Act in September 1977 “confirmed many of the apprehensions which had been forming” (Beinder, 1983, p. 15). In summary, reactions to the passage of Bill 82, the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, both immediately following its passage and in the years ahead, show that most felt the Act had a centralizing effect on the development of a college “system.”

The short life of the three intermediary councils

As can be seen from the description above of the reaction to Bill 82, the establishment of the three intermediary councils (Occupational Training Council, Academic Council, and Management Advisory Council) received the strongest criticism from the field. The college community from its inception had opposed the creation of intermediary bodies that would stand in the way of a direct relationship between the local college and the provincial Ministry (Hollick-Kenyon, 1979). This opposition was evident in many of the reports described above that were written in the 1970s and continued after the Act was introduced. The purpose of this subsection is to describe the role of the three councils, provide further evidence of the criticism of the councils, and describe their abolishment in 1983.

The three councils created under the Act were established as a means of coordinating a range of activities across institutions. The Occupational Training Council was formed to provide a means of coordinating federal and provincial trades training programs. The Academic Council was responsible for coordinating all other programs in the institutions other than trades, including academic and career/technical programs. The Management Advisory Council’s role was to review financial requests from institutions and to make recommendations to the Minister regarding the allocation of funds (Mitchell, 1986). Mitchell (1986) states that

“although the Act established the three Councils as separate corporations, it made no provision either in the legislation, organizational structure or policies for them to consult one another” (p. 92), resulting in a lack of coordination of their activities.

Beinder (1986) describes the establishment of the three councils as “one of the most contentious issues emanating from the provisions of the new Act” (p. 147). From the council’s inception, criticism was leveled at the councils because they were thought to be over centralizing in their nature and confusing in terms of mandates and accountability. These criticisms came despite the fact that the original intent of the councils was to play a dual role, both effectively implementing government policies across institutions and representing the needs of colleges to government (Mitchell, 1986). Mitchell (1986) found in interviews for his doctoral research that senior officials not only from the colleges but also from the Ministry were resentful of the role of the councils because they had been “usurping the power and authority that once were theirs” (p. 93). Even the councils themselves were critical of the lack of coordination and conflicting roles across councils, as exemplified in an August 1981 paper endorsed by the Management Advisory Council and described by Mitchell.

Beinder (1986) states that college boards felt that the councils actually inhibited coordination rather than helped it because all three of them had some level of funding authority as well as the Ministry, who Beinder described as a “quasi fourth council” (p. 148). Moore (1980) is somewhat complimentary of the work of the three intermediary councils in advocating for colleges and institutes and removing the ad hoc nature of many of the Ministry decisions. However, he states that the formation of these councils had created havoc in the system. Moore states the following:

The insatiable demand of the Councils for more and more information from the system, their vastly diverse methods of operation, their overlapping areas of jurisdiction, the unclear lines between them and the Ministry, their relative inattention to coordinating their actions, ... all of those have added immeasurably

to the stress and frustration on virtually every segment of the post-secondary system. (pp. 11-12)

According to Beinder (1983), the creation of the three intermediary councils “has proved to be the most destructive influence. Curtailment of the autonomy of institutions is clearly within the power of the councils” (p. 17). Beinder goes on to state that he finds it ludicrous that college boards should have to propose programs to the Academic Council when the Board’s primary responsibility is to its community. Beinder is also highly critical of the confusion, increased administration costs, and extra workload created by the coordinating roles of the three councils and the Ministry. The presence of different councils “does not allow for effective co-ordination, if anything it inhibits co-ordination” (Beinder, 1983, p. 17). Beinder continues by stating “institutional autonomy has become the victim of the involvement of councils in the operation of particular institutions to an inappropriate level of detail” (p. 17). Dennison (1977) is also critical of the establishment of the three councils because of “the potential for complex administrative machinery, extension of time for decision-making, and jurisdictional disputes concerning budget allocation” (p. 26).

A few authors have written about the buffer that the three councils created between the Ministry and the institutions. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that the result of the systematizing influence of the three intermediary bodies was “to reduce the autonomy of the governing bodies of the institutions ... as well as to relieve the minister and his officials of some difficult political decision-making” (p. 93). Calder (1984) took a more cynical view when he stated the following:

Some political thinking at that time favoured devolution of central power. Such a climate meant that the formation of an interbody which appeared to be more autonomous than in fact it might be found favour with centralizers who sought to disguise their aspirations.
(p. 85)

In other words, Calder felt that government’s true intention was to centralize control through the formation of councils over which it had ultimate control.

Because of “considerable pressure on Government to abolish the provincial Councils” (Mitchell, 1986, pp. 89-90), they were eliminated in 1983 through the College and Institute Amendment Act. Through the Amendment Act, some of the duties previously ascribed to the three councils were given to the Minister while most of the duties were dropped altogether. Powers given to the Minister included the ability to establish articulation committees, require institutions to participate on articulation committees, and require institutions to accept equivalent courses deemed equivalent by the Minister. Thus program articulation, an area that had been carried out voluntarily until the passage of the Act in 1977 when it came under the purview of the Academic Council, was now included in the powers of the Minister. Another power that shifted from the Management Advisory Council to the Minister was that she or he could require institutions to avoid unnecessary duplication of course offerings. Interestingly, the 1977 Act had added the requirement for institutions to consult with each other to avoid duplication. Reference to required consultation was dropped in the 1983 Amendment.

Calder (1984) gives four principal reasons for the death of the three intermediary councils, which he calls “quangos,” an acronym for a “quasi-autonomous non-government organization” (p. 85). These reasons include the desire of the new Social Credit government to have greater central control over budget decisions because of the era of restraint; the willingness of the new government to accept the political consequences of centralized decision making; the lack of support or lobbying from any of the constituent groups for the councils upon their demise; and the changing personalities at the Minister and Deputy level, resulting in a loss of political advocacy for the role of the councils.

Gallagher (1984), in reference to the Amendment Act of 1983, states the following:

The Provincial Councils have passed out of existence-in part as a government policy to reduce the number of intermediary bodies

which have their own costs, and in part to allow a new Minister to exercise his proper responsibilities in relation to the colleges and institutes. (p. 7)

Beinder (1986) states that most supported the Amendment Act and the dissolution of the intermediary councils. It was seen as a return of the ability of college boards to deal directly with the Minister. As Beinder states, when the councils were abolished, “few people mourned their demise,” including Ministry officials. “Inevitably there were concerns expressed about increased authority reverting to the Minister but at least the institutions had escaped the tangled web” (p. 155). Thus, in 1983 the three intermediary councils, which had been created only six years earlier under the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, ceased to operate after a short life full of significant criticism of their existence from all quarters.

The reduction in school board involvement in college governance

Another important element of the College and Institute Amendment Act was that it reduced the total number of board members to five and gave the Minister the power to appoint all five members, thus completely removing school board involvement in college governance. This had a major centralizing effect in that it severed the historical relationship that had developed between locally developed colleges and their school boards, a relationship that had begun in 1963 with the amendments to the Public Schools Act, based on recommendations in the Macdonald Report. The 1983 Amendment Act resulted in 93 school board appointees being removed from office and replaced by 54 government appointees. The 1983 Act represented the culmination of a number of legislative changes that had been slowly diminishing school board control in college governance since 1970 (Mitchell, 1986).

Dennison (1986) conducted research into the impact of important government policy changes regarding colleges and institutes between 1982 and 1986. Based on his research, Dennison provided several official reasons for eliminating elected school board officials from college boards in 1983. These

included the fact that school boards had not provided funding for colleges since the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977, the assertion that large boards with representatives from several districts were too large and impractical to operate, and the assertion that the maturity and experience of college boards should result in greater autonomy and not reliance on the local school board. An unofficial reason given by many of Dennison's interviewees in his research was that elected officials were often openly critical of government and could not be controlled in the same manner as appointed officials could.

Fisher et al. (2000), referring to the removal of school board representatives from college boards, state that "while this went some distance to remove the conception of colleges being extended high schools, it withdrew governance from the local community. As the rhetoric of the times put it, community colleges in effect became state colleges" (p. 13). Beinder (1986) states that the BCAC was opposed to the appointment of all members of the boards by government and the removal of the role of school boards in appointing any members. This move was seen as being "incompatible with the community mandate of the colleges" (Beinder, 1986, p. 217). Furthermore, there was great concern about the danger of all future appointments being political in nature. Thus the removal of school board involvement in college governance was seen as one more example of increasing centralization and control of the colleges and institutes by the provincial government.

Government restraint and its impact on program rationalization

The following brief subsection will describe the period of government restraint that began in the early 1980s and its impact on government's move towards greater centralization. Dennison (1997a) gives three reasons for the restraint exercised by government in the early 1980s. These included "the federal government imposed limits upon the growth of transfer payments; the province entered a period of relatively deep recession and public support for education

seemed to wane as other policy concerns ... seized priority” (p. 43). Beinder (1986) states that the effects of the deepening recession and the rising unemployment rate caused the public as a whole to become more critical of all public spending, including spending for post-secondary education, which had hitherto experienced strong public support.

Gallagher (1984) writes of the New Reality brought in by Premier Bill Bennett in 1982, a reality that saw severe cuts to public spending as a result of a weak economy and high unemployment. Gallagher states that the ensuing Restraint Program had a major impact on B.C.’s colleges and institutes. Beinder (1986) writes that the combination of government spending restraint, cutbacks in programs and services, and the introduction of a Compensation Stabilization Program to establish wage and salary guidelines led to “the most abraisive [*sic*] period in British Columbia College history” (p. 210).

One of the results of the era of restraint and high unemployment was that government began viewing colleges and institutes as integral to the economic development of the province (Beinder, 1986). The focus of government also shifted to using its limited post-secondary resources for training a skilled workforce with less emphasis being put on the more general areas of education taught at colleges. Beinder (1983) felt strongly that the emphasis on training people for employment had diminished the colleges’ role in providing a comprehensive education, including general and academic education, for the whole person. He stated that many in the college system felt that government was using the need for restraint as a means to permanently restructure the college system to focus on technical and vocational programs under provincial control. Interestingly, history has proven Beinder’s apprehensions to be unfounded as colleges have continued to offer a comprehensive array of programming to the present time.

A major impact of government restraint was a focus on program rationalization as a means of making certain that scarce funds were being used to the best advantage. Beinder (1983) writes of the increasing use of the term

“rationalization” by politicians and bureaucrats and the use of the term “comprehensive system” instead of a “comprehensive community college.” “Many college people interpret the change in direction as a move towards massive centralization” (Beinder, 1983, p. 21). Beinder (1986) writes of the geographical comprehensiveness being considered by government in which a range of programs would be offered in all geographic regions of the province “while recognizing that the range of offerings in any given college region would have to be rationalized with surrounding college regions” (pp. 192-193). Rationalization was seen as a way of eliminating unnecessary duplication of programs at the system and regional level. However, Beinder (1986) states that “there were those who regarded it as a euphemism for massive centralization” and as “a serious threat to the elements of comprehensiveness and accessibility which had hitherto been the core of the college philosophy” (p. 195). Elsewhere, Beinder (1986) states that the concept of rationalization was seen as antithetical to the historical development of colleges that were developed as part of “a system in which more people would be in close proximity to educational opportunity” (p. 193).

Thus the economic recession and the ensuing economic restraint had caused the government to take a much more centralized approach to coordinating and rationalizing programs at the regional and provincial level, and institutions looked upon the actions of government as an erosion of institutional autonomy. The budget restrictions announced in 1981/82 and the increasing focus on program rationalization to meet provincial economic needs were followed by the first five-year planning process, which will be described in the next subsection.

Integrated five-year planning for 1982 to 1987

The development of the provincial mission, goals, and objectives for the period 1982 to 1987 through the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document was a significant move in the direction of greater centralization as each college was expected to align its own strategic directions with the provincial ones and achieve

the stated objectives. This was the first of a number of such planning documents that would be developed over the next two decades. The subsection below presents evidence of the centralizing aspects of the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document, beginning with a review of the reasons given for developing the plan followed by a focus on the elements of rationalization and accountability, which are central to the plan. The final subsection of the 1977 to 1983 time period will argue that the development of this document was also a good example of the growing cooperative relationship between government and the institutions.

The government felt it was necessary to develop a provincial plan to which colleges would adhere because the provincial government was now providing almost all funding for colleges and felt it must “develop provincial policies for these colleges in areas of governance, program rationalization, and support for economic and social policies of the Government” (Mitchell, 1986, p. 12). Mitchell states that government perceived a need for greater centralized control not only because it was now paying the majority of the costs of operating colleges but also because accountability for those expenditures was lacking. Beinder (1986) states that the changing economic framework and growing complexity of the college and institute system led to the need for provincial planning for the direction of the system.

The *Integrated Five Year Plan* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1983) gives a number of reasons why long-range planning was becoming necessary for the college and institute system. These included expectations of continuing restraint in public spending, an increasing focus on accountability for the use of public funds by both the provincial and federal governments, the inability to forecast accurately and to address skills shortages, and the continuation of technological advancements. Dennison (1986) also lists a number of factors leading to the production of the first five-year planning document by the Ministry of Education. These included the increased number of and variation in non-university,

post-secondary institutions; a skills shortage in certain occupations considered essential to the economy; and limited fiscal resources.

Also given as a reason was “a ‘general recognition’ of the need for increased provincial coordination” (Dennison, 1986, p. 9). According to Dennison, this “general recognition” arose in part from expressions of concern from college presidents and board members about a lack of clear direction from government about which programs and services should be provided by government and, therefore, funded. Beinder (1986) also states that it was the boards of institutions that demanded “an end to ad hoc planning and budgeting” (p. 176) because of the increased emphasis on meeting provincial priorities. Thus, the institutions through their presidents and boards were calling for a clear statement from government of its intentions, which presents an interesting mix of provincial coordination driven by government but requested by the system.

Under the provincial plan’s goal of comprehensiveness, the objective of program coordination was clearly stated, including the planning of program offerings on a broader regional basis as opposed to within individual college regions and the elimination of low priority programs to free up resources for high priority programs (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1983). One of the stated goals of the plan was to increase accessibility to these priority programs. However, the 1983 plan states that “priority programs will be deemed primarily to be career related and vocational programs which are in high demand or are needed by the economy or society” (p. 16). Elsewhere, under the goal of occupational and manpower development, the plan acknowledges the role of the college and institute system in providing general and academic education but states that “the provision of this latter training is not intended to take precedence over the attainment of anticipated high priority labour force and occupation skill needs” (p. 13). Thus the controlling role of government in determining what it considers to be a “priority” is obvious, as is the emphasis of government on the role of colleges and institutes in improving the economy through a focus on skills training.

Another major purpose of the Ministry of Education plan, as stated in the preamble to Draft 2, was “to provide an overall framework for planning within the college and institute system” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1982, p. vii) and to serve as “the basis for the preparation of long and short term plans by each of the constituent parts of the college and institute system” (p. iv). Institutional planning within a provincial framework would also help ensure accountability of institutions. The final 1983 document states clearly that there is a strong expectation by government that the institutions and intermediary councils, which had not yet been abolished, would be accountable and that “the 1982 to 1987 Objectives will serve as the basis for developing a multi-faceted accountability process at both the local and provincial levels and will provide a context for institutional five year plans” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1983, p. 19). A strong focus was on accountability for programs delivered with particular emphasis on cost-effectiveness in light of provincial restraint.

The Ministry of Education, in the preamble to the 1982 Draft 2 of the plan, makes the following statement regarding its understanding of the means by which the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document would impact institutions:

It must be pointed out that the numerous references in this document to the college and institute system are not intended to imply that the objectives defined in it are to be achieved through central control. Rather, the ministry expects individual boards and councils to negotiate with the Minister the role which they feel they should play in achieving each of the relevant objectives set out for the next five years. (p. v)

Thus the Ministry saw the implementation of the plan not as a matter of centralization and control but rather one of negotiation.

Others writing about the impact of the first five-year plan would not agree with the Ministry’s interpretation. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state the following with respect to the 1982 to 1987 plan:

The interests and priorities of government-such as financial restraint, avoidance of programme duplication, and high levels of

accountability-were to be basic assumptions upon which colleges would develop their five-year plans. The prime thrust of the new initiative was further centralization. (p. 93)

Fisher et al. (2000), in referring to the five-year planning exercise, state that “‘institutional comprehensiveness’ was translated to ‘system comprehensiveness,’ requiring that each institution reduce and rationalize its program range to avoid redundancies with proximate college regions” (p. 13). The movement towards regional and system rationalization represented a major shift towards centralization and loss of institutional autonomy. Dennison (1986) states that “for the first time the term ‘system’ was given an explicit meaning and the individual colleges were designated as components of the system” (p. 9). Beinder (1983) states that “the process of centralization has proceeded apace. In the Minister’s latest draft proposal—Integrated Five-Year Planning, all pretence of the maintenance of autonomous, community colleges is finally discarded” (p. 20).

Thus reaction to the 1982 to 1987 plan was that it had a further centralizing influence on colleges and institutes in B.C., not unlike reaction to the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977. The provincial plan focussed heavily on program rationalization and accountability with the expectation that the plan would serve as a guiding framework for the development of institutional plans. In the next subsection, further evidence is provided from the literature about the views of many that the 1977 to 1983 period was one of great centralization by government.

System reaction to perceived over-centralization

In the section above on reaction to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, a number of citations were given to show that many educators and authors in the area of college development felt that the Act represented a major move towards centralization. Further actions by government between 1977 and 1983, such as the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document and the 1983 amendment to the Act, were seen by many as further evidence of a massive move towards centralization by the

government of the day, as evidenced in the quotes in the previous subsection. A few key citations are presented below to provide further evidence of the general reaction to the centralizing moves of government in light of the history of autonomous institutions.

Mitchell (1986) stated the following with regards to the development of a provincial system:

The use of the word “system” for the college sector in B.C. has caused considerable consternation among those involved in its administration at the institutional level. Colleges in B.C. had previously been considered autonomous, independent, local agencies of particular facets of post-secondary education. To be combined with other similar organizations under provincial Government audit came as something of a surprise, and offered some threat to the previously perceived independence. (p. 85)

Similarly, Calder (1984) provides the following perspective on the gradual move towards a provincially coordinated system:

The course of the college system from the time of its origin in the early 1960s has been, on the whole, a progression towards centralization. In the beginning, decisions were made locally, as befitted the “community” college concept, while more recently, many more decisions have been made by authorities remote from those affected. The first mode is pluralistic and politically sensitive, and sacrifices coordination; the latter is monocentric, directive, inevitably less politically sensitive, but facilitates greater system-wide coordination. Implicit [*sic*] in this model also is the degree of coercion involved. The centralizing process inevitably implies compelling elements in the structure to do what they otherwise would not. (pp. 83-84)

Calder seems to be suggesting that government in this period was forcing colleges and institutes to do what they would rather not do.

Referring to the actions of the B.C. government in the early 1980s, Dennison and Harris (1984) state that “the British Columbia Ministry of Education has begun a series of planning initiatives which could usher in a new era of centralized authority in a college structure which had evolved in a climate of decentralized, community control” (p. 14). Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state the

idea more strongly when they write “many people concerned about college education in British Columbia see restraint, centralization, system planning, and ministry influence as the death knell of their institutions” (p. 94).

One of the strongest criticisms of increasing government control during that time was contained in Beinder’s 1983 document entitled *The Community College in British Columbia: The Emphasis Is on Community*. Beinder writes the following stinging criticism:

The trend in recent years has been to an ever-diminishing level of local lay control. To an increasing extent our colleges have become mere instruments of big government. Their boards have become little more than mere ciphers under the direction of the three provincial councils with legislated powers to act in the role of absentee managers. They are being further and consistently emasculated by bureaucratically developed edicts, designed with minimal institutional or community lay input. (p. 20)

Elsewhere, Beinder states “the new Act and a subsequent variety of Ministry directives and plans seem to have placed the early vision of comprehensive, flexible, community-responsive institutions in jeopardy” (p. 16). Thus a variety of key authors writing in the mid-1980s viewed the period from the late 1970s to the early 1980s as one of major centralization by government of formerly community-based institutions.

Continuation of efforts at voluntary collaboration

With the major push by government towards a more centralized, provincial system of colleges and institutes and the strong negative reaction to that centralization, as described above, it is useful to addressing the purpose of this study to explore the impact of the centralizing trend on voluntary cooperation. As shown in the sections covering the periods 1962 to 1969 and 1970 to 1977, there had been strong efforts at inter-institutional collaboration to make a system approach more possible. Indeed, in the early years, this voluntary collaboration occurred in an atmosphere almost void of any interest from government in providing central coordination. So how did this history of voluntary cooperation

fare during this very centralizing period? It is the author's opinion that increasing centralization between 1977 and 1983 had the effect of increasing efforts at voluntary cooperation among stakeholder groups who opposed this centralization. Below is evidence from the literature that shows a continuation of voluntary cooperation within groups of faculty, board chairs, and college principals and, in some cases, among these groups.

Evidence of the cooperation within the various system groups can be found in the many briefings and reports completed in response to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, as referenced in the subsection above. These reports were prepared by the BCAC, the CFF, the Council of College and Institute Principals, and the BCSTA. Within these reports, institutional and community representatives agreed on a uniform system response to the Act, particularly as it related to criticism of various parts of the Act.

One of these reports was the joint brief to the Minister prepared by the BCAC on behalf of the college boards and college principals on August 31, 1977. The brief included on its introductory, unnumbered page the statement that "at no time in the history of the college movement in our province has there been such clear identity of view between the governing bodies of the colleges and their chief executives officers" (British Columbia Association of Colleges and Council of B.C. College Principals, 1977). Thus opposition to some elements of the 1977 Act, especially the creation of the three councils, had brought board chairs and college principals together in an unprecedented way. Beinder also describes this growing relationship between boards and principals in a BCAC note written on November 6, 1978, as follows:

There must be continuing close liaison between the two groups. Chief Executive Officers must feel confident of B.C.A.C. support when their concern for specific system-wide issues calls for political action. There is perhaps no more important factor in the preservation of our philosophy of the comprehensive and autonomous community college than the development of a climate of trust and mutual support between college Boards and their Chief Executive Officers at the provincial level. (1978, pp. 2-3)

Another good example of different system groups banding together to oppose an unpopular move by government was a brief on the three intermediary councils emanating from a joint conference in October 1981 of the BCAC and College-Institute Educators Association (CIEA), which was formed in 1980 from the CFF. Both board chairs and faculty association representatives were in strong agreement in their criticism of the councils. In a brief submitted to the Minister of Education following the conference, Beinder (1986) noted that:

many of the participants had supported a single council which should be generated from within the college system and should not be a creature of government. Emphasis was placed on a council which should have purely advisory rather than executive function.
(p. 153)

Hence, both college governors and faculty were not opposed to the concept of a coordinating council to help institutions work as part of a system. However, they were adamant that the coordinating body must be created from the system, not from government, and its role should only be advisory, not authoritative. This sentiment on the part of board members and faculty provides evidence of the acceptance of institutions and educators of voluntary coordination but not of coordination imposed by government.

The growing interest of the provincial government in becoming involved in labour relations also caused coordinated activity among faculties and among boards. For instance, in 1979 Minister Pat McGeer asked colleges and institutes for “data on the extent of educational resources consumed in the collective bargaining process” (Beinder, 1986, p. 105). This request was seen as intrusive by colleges and angered them. However, the increasing interest by government in college bargaining also helped foster growing interest among institutions in working together on labour relations issues.

In 1980, the BCAC’s Labour Relations Committee undertook a number of activities to help develop a collective understanding of labour relations issues across institutions and to examine the feasibility of moving to provincial bargaining (Beinder, 1986). However, at its 1980 annual meeting Association members

rejected the concept of full provincial bargaining and opted for an Advisory Committee instead. “Emphasis was upon advice and assistance on request. Board autonomy was held inviolate” (Beinder, 1986, p. 108). Similarly, the new provincial faculty association, CIEA, was concerned with coordination around bargaining to protect the economic welfare of its members, but it did not plan to act as a provincial bargaining agent because of the continuing importance of local autonomy for its member associations (Beinder, 1986). Thus both college boards and faculty associations were moving to greater levels of provincial cooperation around bargaining but were doing so cautiously in continuing deference to institutional autonomy.

Strong evidence for the continuing understanding of the need for voluntary collaboration across institutions without Ministry involvement can be found in the *B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals Protocol for College and Institute Co-operation* from November 1982. The protocol had arisen “from the fact that, although the individual institutions have distinctive missions and aspirations, they recognize that the public interest requires them to function collaboratively” (B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals, 1982, p. 1).

A key purpose of the Protocol agreed to by the Council of College and Institute Principals was to set out the principles for inter-institutional cooperation, particularly as it related to the provision of off-campus programs. Interestingly, almost every point describing the mutual process of cooperation referred to actions by institutions without the intervention of government. Even disputes between two institutions that were difficult to resolve were to be mediated by a third institution. Only when all attempts at inter-institutional cooperation had failed were the institutions involved to invite the ADM of Post-Secondary Education to intervene. In other words, the Council favoured voluntary collaboration to government intervention, even in regards to solving issues of program rationalization. This voluntary approach to resolution of conflicts over programming was summed up by one of the principles agreed to in the Protocol, which stated that institutions

“collectively function as a voluntary co-operating network for the planning, development and delivery of programs and services” (B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals, 1982, p. 2). The Protocol thus provides solid evidence of the understanding among college principals of the benefits of voluntary cooperation without centralized involvement of the Ministry. The Protocol is a further example of the continuation of voluntary cooperation within and among groups of college principals, board chairs, and faculty, often in united opposition to the centralizing trends of government.

The beginnings of cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions

The literature on the period 1977 to 1983 has portrayed it as a time of great centralization with an increasing focus on provincial coordination of a system. At the same time, the evidence provided in the previous subsection shows that efforts at voluntary collaboration continued during this period, often in response to the perceived over-centralization by government. It is the opinion of this author that the increasing government interest in coordinating a provincial system combined with the history of voluntary collaboration resulted in a new level of cooperation developing between the Ministry and the institutions, cooperation that has been the hallmark of the college, university college, and institute system for the last two decades. This final subsection for the period 1977 to 1983 provides evidence of that growing level of cooperation.

The main evidence for this developing relationship between the Ministry and institutions comes from involvement of institutional representatives in some of the major policy and legislative initiatives of this time period. It seems apparent that many of these initiatives, such as the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act and the 1982 to 1987 five-year plan, were driven by the Ministry, yet the author has tried to present evidence from the literature that shows that the institutional representatives, whether board members or college principals or faculty associations, had encouraged government to take a lead in developing some form of

provincial framework for the developing system. System representatives were then involved to varying degrees in the development and implementation of these policies, as described below.

Often, the Ministry made changes in direction based on input from the field. For instance, Beinder (1986) states the following about the 1977 Act:

There was no reference to a policy-making function for the college boards. Policy making was the prerogative of the Minister of Education.... The requirement that such policy making should be done in consultation with the college boards was introduced into the final legislation only after representation by the B.C. Association of Colleges. (p. 123)

Furthermore, because of all the negative reaction to the proposal to have college principals sit as members of the Management Advisory Council, the government changed its mind and replaced college principals with board chairs or their designates (Dennison, 1977). As well, negative reaction from both college boards and faculty associations to some of the labour relations aspects of the Act caused government not to proclaim the relevant sections of the Act (Beinder, 1986). Thus input from the field did have an impact on government decisions.

The Ministry also began ceding control over important system initiatives to committees composed of a few Ministry representatives and a majority of system representatives. An important early example of this was the creation of the Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee in 1979, following strong resistance by the BCAC to having the important evaluation process directed by the Ministry or by an outside agency. The Committee had four institutional representatives, one BCAC representative, and one Ministry of Education representative. Yet the committee was charged with the important work of implementing the controversial aspects of the Act requiring institutional evaluation every five years (Beinder, 1986). According to Beinder (1986), the Committee showed how “given the authority and quite limited means the boards, administrators and faculties of our institutions can act efficiently and responsibly without undue bureaucratic or political interference” (p. 146). Beinder goes on to state that the Institutional

Evaluation Steering Committee provided a good example of the excellent relationships that can develop between Ministry officials and institutional representatives. In the present author's opinion, this Committee is one of the first examples of the kind of joint decision-making structures that would reign over the next 20 years, representing collaborative efforts across institutions and with Ministry involvement to develop system applications of policies often introduced by government. It represents a melding of voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination to meet system goals.

The development of the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document for the period 1982 to 1987 provides an excellent example of the growing relationship between the traditional collaborative efforts of institutions and the coordinating efforts of government and of the move towards the concept of a "system" with which individual institutions and administrators would feel comfortable.

When the first draft of the policy was circulated in February 1982, Beinder (1986) states that "college boards were highly critical of the document. They complained that the whole process signified a rapid move towards total centralization" (p. 176). Board members felt that the original, cherished concept of locally responsive, comprehensive institutions was being replaced by the concept of a comprehensive system, with little reference in the document to the traditional role played by community colleges. After extensive discussion between college and Ministry officials, with Ministry officials "trying desperately to meet the demands of the politicians without total sacrifice of cooperation from board members, institutional administrators and educators" (Beinder, 1986, p. 179), a second draft of the planning document was released in November 1982.

In the cover letter to Draft 2 of the document by Grant Fisher, ADM of Post-Secondary Education, on November 25, 1982, Fisher detailed a number of changes that had been made to Draft 1 of the document, based on discussions between Ministry and college officials. Fisher (1982) writes "I feel strongly that maintaining dialogue is essential to the development, improvement and

understanding of the overall framework which is expected to govern public post-secondary education in the 1982-87 period” (p. 2). Draft 2 of the 1982 document stated that 21 of 30 of the objectives required a high degree of cooperation and interdependency among individual institutions in order to meet system goals. Draft 2 also stated “it is the view of the Ministry that the present challenges will be met successfully only if those involved in shaping post-secondary education direct their energies to working toward common purposes” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1982, p. iii), referring to the efforts of the Ministry and the institutions.

College representatives were still critical of the second draft because of the de-emphasis on regional decision making and the increased emphasis on a system designed to meet provincial priorities and because of the heavy focus on the need for occupational training at the expense of institutional comprehensiveness. Based on the continuing concerns of college representatives with the policy framework, Ministry officials met for a full day with BCAC representatives and college principals, resulting in the college representatives taking the document and redrafting it “to reflect their understanding of the Ministry’s intent with some modifications calculated to increase acceptability in the field” (Beinder, 1986, p. 184). The result was a third draft being sent out from the Ministry in March 1983, and then a final version in May 1983, based almost entirely on the amended version from the BCAC. For instance, reference to the term “rationalization” in Draft 2 of the plan was removed in the final version, although the objectives to achieve a more rationalized system remained intact. Furthermore, the final version added a statement that the Ministry, as well as the institutions and intermediary councils, would be assessed to determine progress in meeting the mission, goals, and objectives. Finally, for no apparent reason, the preamble from Draft 2, which clearly stated the purpose of the plan, was left out in the final version.

This exercise of consensus building through hard work between college and Ministry officials is emblematic of the kind of relationship which developed over the next few decades, a relationship that involved autonomous colleges meeting

with Ministry officials to discuss system directions as well as consensus building among the various groups on the appropriate balance between provincial demands and institutional autonomy.

The struggle to achieve balance of control was aptly described by Dennison and Gallagher (1986) when they stated that the struggle would produce:

a new relationship between the colleges and the provincial government which will see the colleges become a co-operative network of post-secondary institutions balancing the legitimate needs for some rationalization on a provincial basis and the equally legitimate need for regional and local responsiveness on the part of individual colleges. (p. 95)

Thus the historical commitment to institutional autonomy and local responsiveness combined with the more recent desire of government for an accountable and rationalized system resulted in an evolving relationship between the Ministry and institutions.

Summary for 1977 to 1983

In summary, the period of 1977 to 1983 was one of major centralization by government of a larger and increasingly more complex college and institute system. Government chose to move to greater provincial coordination for a number of reasons, including a perception that the institutions' attempts at voluntary coordination up to that point were inadequate for the developing system. Other reasons for greater control by government were the fact that they were now paying 100 percent of college capital and operating costs following the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977, were interested in greater accountability for that funding, and wanted a college and institute system that would provide applied training in aid of a faltering provincial economy. The recession of the early 1980s also resulted in severe government restraint and the demand for program rationalization on a provincial and regional basis.

The main centralizing event of the period was the passage of the Act in 1977, in particular the provisions of the Act that removed local taxes as a source of

college support because of the 100 percent provincial funding, gave colleges corporate status, and created the three intermediary councils with significant powers over institutions. Although some response to the Act was positive, particularly from the BCAC and Council of College and Institute Principals, most reaction was quite negative because the Act was seen as being too centralist in nature at the expense of local autonomy. Institutional representatives were most vehemently opposed to the three intermediary bodies. In 1983, an Amendment to the Act was passed which abolished the three councils and removed all elected school board representatives from the college boards. The former move was applauded by many but the latter was criticized by some as being a further example of over-centralization by government. The development of the first *Integrated Five Year Planning* document in 1983 was another event that was seen as a major example of centralization of the system. However, largely because of the centralizing activities of government, efforts at voluntary collaboration continued to flourish during the 1977 to 1983 period. Furthermore, early signs were occurring of a growing level of cooperation between Ministry and institutional representatives on a number of initiatives with system-wide implications.

1984 TO 1991: INCREASING MINISTRY/INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION AND FURTHER INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION

The period from 1984 to 1991 witnessed increasing cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions on system-wide initiatives and included the creation of a new type of institution, the university college. The period was marked by a continuation of the government restraint program begun in the early 1980s followed by a focus on increasing access to post-secondary education. Throughout the period, the centralization that was so much a part of the 1977 to 1983 period continued. The following statement was made in a B.C. Ministry of Education, Skills and Training (1996) planning document entitled *Charting A New Course* regarding the restraint program of the early to mid-1980s and its impact on the system:

Fundamental shifts occurred which moved the system away from one driven by the community to one dominated by financial issues. At the same time, changes in Ministry policy, such as the adoption of educational approval processes, program profiles, and associated funding mechanisms, shifted the system away from a local focus toward greater centralization. (p. 10)

As in previous sections, the main focus in the following section is on the evidence from the literature which relates to the purpose of the dissertation, and that is to develop an understanding of the changing historical relationship between provincial coordination and inter-institutional collaboration, centralization and decentralization, and a provincial system and autonomous institutions. The following section is divided into five subsections: the development of the funding formula in 1984; the two provincial planning documents in 1986 and 1991; the Access Report of 1988, resulting in the creation of university colleges and the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT); the creation of the Advanced Education Council of B.C. (AECBC) in 1991; and evidence of continuing Ministry/institutional cooperation.

The development of the funding formula

The development of a funding formula in 1984 to bring more uniformity and predictability to annual college and institute funding allocations provides evidence of both the centralizing nature of government's efforts at provincial coordination during that period and, conversely, a high level of cooperation between the Ministry and institutions in the development of the formula.

Dennison (1986) states that when the three intermediary councils were abolished in 1983 through the Amendment to the College and Institute Act, the Minister of Education regained direct control over funding decisions. Dennison states that:

recognizing that funding to that date had followed a basically incremental and largely unsystematic process, both the Ministry and the institutions sought an approach which would be perceived as more equitable and more predictable with regard to resource allocation. (p. 10)

Similarly, Gallagher (1984) states that “a method of distributing funds to institutions has been developed jointly by institutions and Ministry personnel in an effort to get away from seemingly arbitrary or politically motivated fund distribution in previous years” (p. 7). Beinder (1986) states that the Ministry worked closely with the Council of College and Institute Principals to develop a funding formula, which was used for the first time in the 1984/85 fiscal year. Beinder continues by stating “formula funding has resulted in an increased level of confidence in the validity of the distribution of funds. That is mainly because the distribution is subject to systematic analysis although there remains concerns about equality” (p. 227). The above quotes show clearly that the development of the funding formula involved full participation by the institutions and was something that the institutions supported.

The reader should understand the funding formula and how it works because this formula has driven funding to institutions from 1984 to March 2002. Schuetze and Day (2001) provide a good description of the means by which institutions are funded. They are funded for a negotiated program profile that is based on the funding formula and results in the annual operating grant. The profile assigns funds to program areas based on various weightings. The profile thus distributes funds specifically to different program areas versus the block funding grant given to universities. Colleges then report out on their success in meeting the program profile through enrolment and fiscal audits. In the opinion of this author, the funding formula and program profile has necessitated a much higher level of Ministry involvement in directing college programming than would have been the case under block funding. The formula and profile have also resulted in an annual negotiation between colleges and the Ministry to determine the program mix,

balancing local and provincial priorities. Thus the formula has served as an important driver of Ministry/institutional cooperation. It has also prevented open competition among institutions for resources because of the predictable, equitable nature of funding.

Despite involvement of and support from institutions in the development of the formula, it was still viewed by many as a major act of centralization. Dennison (1986) differentiates between official and unofficial intentions of the introduction of the funding formula. Official reasons included a more fair and equitable means of distributing resources and a more predictable budget process. Most college representatives interviewed for Dennison's 1986 study, however, felt that the unofficial intent of government in introducing the policy was that:

greater power be extended to the Ministry to "steer" the direction and scope of programs within the system, to increase cost effectiveness, to upgrade productivity, and to give greater fiscal priority to programs consistent with the overall provincial plan.
(p. 11)

Dennison (1986) goes on to state that an impact of the introduction of the formula has been to bring more uniformity to the system, both in terms of equity in the cost of delivering various programs across institutions and in terms of equalizing collective agreements. At the same time, those interviewed by Dennison felt that the new program profile process, which was used to implement the funding formula at each institution, had placed the Ministry in a controlling position with respect to program development and that "fiscal control is much more centralized than in earlier periods" (p. 12). On a similar note, Fisher, et al. (2000) refer to the government's industrial approach to "centralized state management" in the 1980s, which included "government demands for increased productivity, ... swelling enrolments and differential allocation of dollars per student through formula funding weighted by government program priorities" (p. 14).

Thus the introduction of the funding formula in 1984 was seen as a centralizing act by government, but it was supported by institutional representatives, who participated in its development, because the formula brought

more uniformity and predictability to the way in which individual institutions were funded. In the opinion of the present author, this predictability lessened competition among institutions and made it more possible for them to cooperate with each other.

Provincial planning documents in 1986 and 1991

Following on the first *Integrated Five Year Planning* document for 1982 to 1987, government continued to update the planning documents about every five years in order to guide the system's development. These planning documents served as another means by which government was able to maintain some central control over college operations.

Mission, Goals and Objectives 1986-1991

The second planning document in 1986 was a clear continuation of the 1982 document and even had the same title, *Integrated Five-Year Planning*, along with the main title *Mission, Goals and Objectives 1986-1991*. Information was not available in the literature as to the extent of institutional involvement in developing the plan although the cover letter from the Minister of the day, Russell G. Fraser, states that "this brief document represents the work of countless people, all dedicated to the growth and enhancement of our College and Institute system" (British Columbia Ministry of Post-Secondary Education, 1986, p. iii).

The *Mission, Goals and Objectives* document (British Columbia Ministry of Post-Secondary Education, 1986) begins by stating that "the system is governed by the Minister responsible for colleges and institutes and the Boards of these colleges and institutes" (p. 1) and then lists the responsibilities of each. Thus the Minister sees a clear role for her or himself in governance of a "system." Throughout the document, the term "system" is used as if referring to a unified whole and the word "autonomy" does not show up in the document at all. The 1986 document represents an interesting mix of provincial coordination and inter-institutional

collaboration whereby the government document in several places requires institutions to collaborate.

Under the goal of Comprehensiveness, an objective for colleges is that they will “coordinate their program offerings with institutes and other colleges” (British Columbia Ministry of Post-Secondary Education, 1986). A similar objective is given for provincial institutes. Thus program coordination is assigned to institutions as an expectation of government. Also, under the goal of Use of Resources, a specific objective of the system is that it “will promote coordination of programs and services among institutions” (p. 11). Under the goal of Quality, the final objective on articulation states that “the system will ensure that an articulation process is in place to aid in achieving inter-institutional transfer credit, promote course equivalency, and provide a mechanism for enhancing cooperation and coordination in each instructional area” (p. 8). Once again, collaboration across institutions is mandated through a provincial plan driven by government. Rather than stating that the government would coordinate transfer, it is asking the institutions to collaborate on their own.

Finally, the expectation of the *Mission, Goals and Objectives* for 1986 to 1991, like its 1982 to 1987 predecessor, was that the provincial plan would influence the planning and setting of the mission and goals at each institution and that the whole planning framework would serve as the foundation for institutional evaluation (British Columbia Ministry of Post-Secondary Education, 1986). Thus institutions would be held accountable for operationalizing the provincial plan, which shows a continuing centralist approach to managing the system by government. However, the 1986 to 1991 plan also showed a clear recognition of the value of inter-institutional collaboration, and objectives mandating institutions to cooperate on system initiatives were woven throughout the document.

Partners for the Future: Ministry Plan, 1991

In July 1991, the third government planning document entitled *Partners for the Future: Ministry Plan* was released (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1991). This document, unlike the two previous *Integrated Five-Year Planning* documents, was developed by the Ministry as a Ministry plan for the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. The plan was also to provide direction to the Ministry's partners, including post-secondary education institutions. Unlike the first two plans, the 1991 *Ministry Plan* was designed for a much broader Ministry in which the University, Colleges and Institutes Division was one of three divisions in the Ministry. Thus, this was not a plan designed specifically for colleges and institutes as the previous two plans had been. Colleges and institutes were seen as important partners in a much broader education and training system that included the private sector, universities, and community-based organizations.

According to Fisher et al. (2000), the 1991 plan maintained the previous focus of the five-year planning exercises in the 1980s on the utilitarian nature of education and training; however, the tone of the plan was much more conciliatory than previous plans and “emphasized ‘synergy’ calling on the cooperation of all ‘partners’ in the system,” both inside and outside the public post-secondary system (p. 19). The *Ministry Plan* (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1991) stated the following:

Cooperation, coordination, partnerships, integration and articulation are recurring themes in this document. These strategies are based on the concept of synergy—the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The Ministry will build synergy among its divisions and partners, both public and private, within the system. (p. 1)

This quote shows that the Ministry had broadened its concept of “system” to include private deliverers, still valued cooperation and coordination among partners in this broader system, but would take a leading role in building these partnerships.

Despite the fact that the *Ministry Plan* was developed by the Ministry for the Ministry, the Ministry does urge “its partners throughout the system to develop

plans and programs which contribute to the achievement of these major directions” (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1991, p. 2). Thus the expectation was there that the provincial plan would still drive planning and program decisions at institutions as the two previous provincial plans had, although the 1991 plan appears to have been developed without consultation with institutions.

The Access for All report

After years of restraint, the Social Credit government under the new Minister, Stan Hagen, began recognizing the need to expand access to post-secondary programming for British Columbians. In 1987 the Minister appointed a Provincial Access Committee and eight Regional Access Committees to explore access to and participation in the various kinds of post-secondary education available in B.C. (Dennison, 1995b; Fisher et al., 2000). The Provincial Access Committee released its report entitled *Access to Advanced Education and Job Training in British Columbia* in September 1988.

The Committee found that B.C. lagged far behind other Canadian provinces in terms of participation in advanced education and job training and recommended a number of actions that should be undertaken to rectify the situation. The report of the committee received “immediate and widespread support throughout the system” (Fisher et al., 2000, p. 15) and many of its recommendations were implemented through the Social Credit government’s Access for All policy initiative. The recommendations of primary interest to the present study are the development of university colleges and the creation of a Coordinating Council on Admissions, Transfer, and Articulation. These two recommendations and their results will be dealt with individually below.

Although the Access Report definitely treated post-secondary institutions as part of a system and made system-wide recommendations, it also recognized regional needs and concerns. Thus, the government established eight regional

committees to work within their own regions and to feed input to the Provincial Access Committee. Furthermore, the Access Report contains recommendations that are specific to regions along with the provincial recommendations. Therefore, the traditional balance between meeting community and provincial needs was recognized in the development of the report.

The creation of university colleges

Because of concern for the lack of access to degree completion opportunities in B.C., the Provincial Access Committee recommended “that in more densely populated college regions outside the Lower Mainland and south Vancouver Island ..., university degree programs be expanded by means of the establishment of an upper level ‘university college’ component” (Provincial Access Committee, 1988, p. 16). The Committee further recommended that these new institutions develop their degrees under the auspices of one of the three traditional universities in B.C. or the Open Learning Agency (OLA) and that the university would grant the degrees and “set admission and graduation requirements, set and grade examinations, determine resources required, and select or approve participating faculty” (p. 17). Thus traditional universities were given a controlling role in the development of the new university colleges. Furthermore, the Access Report stated that, although university colleges were envisioned as being organizational components within a college, one of the future directions for this component as it expanded could be the development of an autonomous university.

Minister Hagen announced in 1989 that three colleges, Malaspina, Cariboo, and Okanagan, would become university colleges and offer four-year degrees by September 1990 (Fisher et al., 2000). Fraser Valley became a university college in 1991 and Kwantlen in 1995. The university college was a new concept in Canada in that “it attempted to introduce into one institution characteristics of both the university and the community college” (Dennison, 1995b, p. 16). As part of this new type of organization, the university college was to focus on teaching and

scholarly activity but not on research as was the case in traditional universities (Petch, 1998).

Evidence from the literature shows that there are those who feel that the creation of university colleges resulted in greater differentiation and had unforeseen impacts on what had been up to that point in time a comprehensive college and institute system. Schuetze and Day (2001) state that the creation of the new type of institution “elicited concerns from faculty, administrations, and boards of colleges about the impact of this ‘academic drift’ on the original mission and emphasis of community colleges” (p. 26). It is Gallagher’s (1999) view that the Access for All initiative placed such a strong emphasis on academic programming that it upset the delicate balance among program elements in the college system. Moran (1990), writing on behalf of the College-Institute Educators’ Association of B.C. (CIEA), expressed concerns about maintaining the integrity and the comprehensive nature of community colleges in the new university colleges and recommended against a “separate ‘university component’ within the college system” (p. 30). Schuetze and Day state that the seeds of the eventual split between university colleges and colleges were sown by the creation of academic institutions within the college sector. Thus the creation of university colleges is viewed as an important aspect in the development of an increasingly differentiated post-secondary system. More will be written about the development of university colleges in the final section of Chapter 4.

Transfer and the creation of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer

Chapter 4 has included in each of its previous sections evidence from the literature on the development of articulation and transfer arrangements among post-secondary institutions in B.C. and on the importance of transfer to developing a culture of voluntary collaboration in B.C. The overseeing of transfer arrangements belonged to the Academic Board from the 1960s to 1974, the Academic Council from 1977 to 1983, and the Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee

from 1984 to 1989. The latter Committee was formed by the Ministry of Education and was composed primarily of deans of instruction in academic, vocational, and technical areas (Beinder, 1986).¹

One of the six guiding principles of the Provincial Access Committee was that “similar courses and programs throughout the advanced education and job training system ... should be designed to facilitate credit transfer from one institution to another” (Provincial Access Committee, 1988, p. 11). As well, admissions, transfer, and articulation were among the five priority concerns of the Committee. The following important quote from the 1988 Access Report provides evidence for the purpose of this study and for the reason for the Committee’s interest in articulation and transfer:

One of the most important keys to the further growth in both quantity and quality of our system is co-operation between autonomous institutions. Bilateral and multilateral agreements between universities, colleges, institutes, the Open Learning Agency, Native Training institutes, school districts, industries and other private organizations are universally seen as the way to improve opportunities in the most efficient, cost-effective manner. Fortunately, the province has a history of such co-operation which, although not perfect, is nevertheless encouraging for the future. With respect to the transfer of course credit, the present system of articulation committees appears to be working reasonably well.... However, it is the Committee’s view that some difficulties remain in some program areas, and that other difficulties may arise as the roles of institutions become more differentiated. (p. 21)

¹ On November 22, 2002, the researcher received a phone call from Dr. Frank Gelin, Executive Director of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). Dr. Gelin stated that he had been reviewing a paper being prepared by Dr. John Dennison on the history of transfer in B.C. Dr. Dennison had referred to the researcher’s use above of the information provided by Beinder (1986) regarding the formation of the Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee in 1984, but Dr. Gelin said that, from his personal experience on the Committee, this was not accurate. Dr. Gelin stated that the Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee was actually formed in 1974 when the Academic Board was abolished and its membership included the senior academic officer from each public college and university and the registrar from each of the three public universities. The Committee continued its work until BCCAT was formed in 1989.

Because of these potential difficulties, a major recommendation of the Provincial Access Committee was the formation of a Coordinating Council on Admissions, Transfer, and Articulation. Government responded with the creation of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) in 1989 (Soles, 2001).

Several authors have written about the role of BCCAT and its success in coordinating voluntary collaborative efforts within the differentiated post-secondary system of B.C. Dennison, who served as the co-chair of BCCAT for a number of years, wrote extensively in this area. Dennison (1997b) states that, despite the fact that the establishment of BCCAT formalized transfer arrangements, the Council “was not given the authority to override the autonomy of university senates on credit transfer questions” (p. 52). Therefore, transfer remained a largely voluntary activity.

Dennison (1995c) describes what is required for successful transfer arrangements to be made. He states that transfer occurs through negotiation at the academic department level among institutions. The receiving institutions have the power to act as gatekeeper in an unequal relationship with sending institutions. Therefore, ongoing positive relationships must be built on trust and goodwill. The role of the provincial agency is to act as “the essential catalyst in the negotiation of satisfactory agreements” (Dennison, 1995c, p. 129). Dennison also states that because of the historical nature of institutional autonomy, particularly among universities, it would be difficult for a government body to enforce transfer among institutions. Instead, “such arrangements would have to be voluntary and would have to involve the full cooperation of the participating institutions” (Dennison, 1995c, p. 124). Dennison states that a quasi-government organization is better able to fulfill the coordinating role. Such an arm’s length agency would have “the power not to institute policies but to encourage their participatory development and approval. The authority of such an agency would flow from the credibility of its membership and its perceived objectivity” (Dennison, 1995c, p. 129).

Elsewhere Dennison (1997a) states that the establishment of BCCAT as a result of a recommendation in the Access Report:

has resulted in a much more coordinated system than those to be found in other provinces. Clearly, it was government policy that this ambitious goal could be accomplished through the actions of a quasi independent agency which encouraged voluntary cooperation of essentially autonomous institutions. (p. 10)

Similarly, Fisher et al. (2001) state the following:

BCCAT's key role is to provide the collaborative leadership that is required to develop and maintain a system of articulation that would improve transferability of academic credits.... This body has had considerable success without any legislated authority. It succeeds through the goodwill of the individuals who represent their institutions at the Council's discussions and through the skills of its staff in creating a supportive environment and in exercising their "good offices." (p. 20)

Thus ample evidence exists that the establishment of BCCAT as a quasi-independent organization because of the recommendation in the Access Report has resulted in a continuation and enhancement of the long history of successful transfer arrangements in B.C. based on voluntary collaboration and trusting relationships.

The creation of the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia

As has been shown previously in this chapter, the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC) and its predecessor organization, the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC), had played a key role in promoting voluntary collaboration among colleges at the board level. Similarly, the Council of Principals (COP) had been working together for many years on matters requiring inter-institutional cooperation. However, near the end of the 1980s efforts were being made to combine BCAC and COP for a number of reasons. Because of the importance of these two organizations to the story of voluntary collaboration, the melding of the organizations is described in some detail below.

In a BCAC discussion paper entitled *Informed Advocacy and Leadership* dated February 12, 1989, the following reason was given for exploring a melding of organizations:

Neither BCAC nor COP has, working independently but cooperatively, demonstrated the capacity to be the strong and informed mechanism to represent college and institute interests effectively and consistently to government and the public at large. (Task Force of the British Columbia Association of Colleges and the British Columbia Council of Principals, 1989, p. 3)

The discussion paper had been prepared by a Task Force that was formed to explore a possible relationship between BCAC and COP. The Task Force concluded that a key advantage of bringing the groups together would be the ability to play a stronger advocacy role outside government for the college and institute system. The Task Force differentiated between system advocacy and institutional advocacy, stating that advocacy by each institution was still necessary but system advocacy would deal with initiatives that required system-wide cooperation and response (Task Force of the British Columbia Association of Colleges and the British Columbia Council of Principals, 1989).

A key reason given for improved system-wide advocacy outside government was that there had been intense competition for limited public funds, both across the whole public sector and within the education sector, and that colleges and institutes as a group had not fared well in recent years in this competition. Interestingly, the Task Force states that some individual institutions had fared better than others in gaining funds (1989). Thus, the Task Force was recommending a higher level of voluntary cooperation among boards and college and institute principals for the good of the whole system, not just of individual institutions. The Task Force also recommended that BCAC and COP should continue to perform their own roles apart from each other.

The author reviewed handwritten notes from a number of meetings held across B.C. between February and April 1989 in which BCAC and COP representatives met with college and institute boards and officials. From the notes,

he found general support for the idea of a new association, with all colleges except Northern Lights College endorsing in principle the proposal for a closer liaison between BCAC and COP. However, concerns were expressed about the cost of the new organization and who would pay for it; having employers (boards) and employees (presidents) sitting at the same table; the potential of the focus on system advocacy over-riding the need for institutional advocacy; and the danger of a new organization taking on more of a centralizing, coordinating role over time instead of an advocacy role. Many of these concerns are similar to ones expressed in the early days of the BCAC when debates occurred for years about whether to staff the new organization and give it a greater role because of the fear of the loss of local autonomy (Beinder, 1986). The difference in 1989, though, was that there was almost unanimous support for the creation of a new body. The speed at which institutions agreed to explore a merger of BCAC and COP suggests that voluntary collaboration of institutions belonging to a system had matured considerably over the previous two decades.

In a proposal made in May 1989, the Executives of BCAC and COP recommended the formation of a new Association of Colleges and Institutes of B.C., based on the February 12 Task Force report and the ensuing consultation across the system. The new Association was being proposed because it was felt that in light of all the changes occurring in the system, “effective system responses will require capabilities on the part of the institutions collectively that do not currently exist” (Executives of the British Columbia Association of Colleges and the Council of Principals of B.C., 1989, p. 2). The document also stated that “the establishment of a new organization will require good will and collaborative effort on the part of all parties” (p. 3). The implication is that the Executives felt that they had not been operating enough as a system and thus voluntarily decided to improve system advocacy through a new organization.

At its 22nd Annual General Meeting on June 16 and 17, 1989, the BCAC agreed to the creation of a new organization as recommended by the BCAC and

COP Executives (British Columbia Association of Colleges, 1989a). At a Special General Meeting of the BCAC on December 9, 1989, a motion was passed to create a new organization that would have its founding meeting in June 1990. Support for the concept was very high with 177 out of 180 votes being in the affirmative and the other 3 ballots spoiled (British Columbia Association of Colleges, 1989b). A Special Joint Committee was established and developed a mission statement for the new association, yet to be named. The mission was “to represent the collective interests of the colleges and institutes of British Columbia to government and to the public, and to meet the common needs of the member institutions” (Special Joint Committee of the B.C. Association of Colleges and the Council of Principals, 1989, p. 1). Among its proposed goals and objectives was the following: “To exchange information and encourage cooperation within the college and institute system” (p. 1). Hence, the creation of the new association represented a major move towards a more systematic approach to voluntary collaboration across institutions.

Throughout this consultation period about the formation of a new association, the Ministry was absent from the discussion. A letter from Gary Mullins, Deputy Minister, to Valerie Buchanan, President of BCAC, on May 31, 1990, sheds light on the hands-off approach of government. In the letter, the Deputy makes it absolutely clear that government would not in any way be funding the operations of the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC), as the new association had become known. Mullins (1990) states that he is an enthusiastic supporter of a strong organization representing colleges and institutes because he believes “a strong organization is in the interest of all, including government” (p. 1). Mullins goes on to say that “AECBC can only be successful if it has earned the support of its members and that membership is voluntary, not imposed” (p. 2). Thus the Deputy recognized the value of and need for strong collaboration among institutions on a voluntary basis and, therefore, did not feel that government should either fund the new organization or mandate colleges to fund it.

AECBC had its founding meeting on June 16, 1990. The day before, the BCAC had its 23rd and final Annual General Meeting. A new era was born in inter-institutional collaboration among boards and principals. The formation of AECBC represented an important step among board chairs and college principals to take a more unified stance in advocating for the college, university college, and institute system. The next and final section of the 1984 to 1991 time period provides evidence that, besides continuing strong voluntary collaboration among institutions, there was also a strong relationship building between government and institutions around a number of provincial issues and initiatives.

Further evidence of increasing Ministry/institutional cooperation

The developing cooperative relationship between Ministry officials and institutional representatives described in the 1977 to 1983 time period was also evident in the 1984 to 1991 period. Gallagher (1984) argues that, although developments since 1977 had led to the creation of a post-secondary system, they had not resulted in greater centralization. He states that many institutional and board representatives welcomed a greater sense of order in the previously unplanned system. Gallagher states that what had resulted was the building of better relationships between the Ministry and institutions and among institutions through a number of joint projects. These included the development of the *Integrated Five Year Planning* document, the development of the funding formula, and the introduction of a new institutional evaluation process. The result of these initiatives was greater cohesion among institutions. Gallagher continues:

The total impact is the creation of new relationships between institutional and central authorities-the creation of a network of institutions which try at one and the same time to accommodate legitimate province-wide concerns and equally legitimate local or regional interests. (p. 7)

Dennison and Harris (1984) make a similar statement about the role of boards in helping to set provincial policy when they assert:

The boards are seen as determined to retain a high degree of involvement in framing the policies, provincial and regional, which affect the system. Clearly, there is a perceived role for a centralized authority, i.e., the Ministry of Education, but it is a role to be shared with institutional boards. (p. 30)

Solid evidence of the cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions was found in a letter dated April 3, 1985, by Leo Perra, past Chairman of the B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals, to Grant Fisher, Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of Post-Secondary Education. The letter was written regarding the role of the Council of Principals and its representatives on the new Joint Committee on Formula Funding. The Council agreed through consensus to a number of principles, including the following:

- a.) That the council continue to participate in the consultative processes of the Ministry of Education such as the Joint Committee on Formula Funding; b.) That the function of the Council's representatives be advisory to the Ministry of Education; c.) That the Ministry of Education will not make announcements indicating that Ministry decisions on funding are in fact decisions of the Joint Committee; d.) That the Ministry of Education accept responsibility for the decisions which are implemented; e.) That the purpose of the Committee is to provide a means of consultation between the Ministry and the Council on all aspects of the funding of the colleges and institutes, including the program profile; f.) That it is recognized that the Ministry of Education has the authority to determine all funding matters. However, it is understood that the Ministry will not introduce significant changes in the funding system without prior consultation with the Council, normally through the Joint Committee. (Perra, 1985, p. 1)

The letter from Perra provides a good description of the consultative relationship between the Council of Principals and the Ministry, with a clear delineation between advisory and decision-making roles. The letter also asked for a seventh institutional representative on the joint committee. In his response to Perra in a letter dated April 11, 1985, Fisher stated "the advisory role that you have outlined for principals on the committee makes sense. The addition of a seventh institutional representative is quite acceptable. We can use all of the good advice we can get"

(1985, p. 1). These two letters provide evidence of the trusting, cooperative relationship between the Ministry and college and institute principals on the important topic of the distribution of funds to institutions.

Other evidence from the literature suggests that this growing relationship between the Ministry and the system was more a function of the power of the Ministry to mandate such a partnership. Dennison (1997b) states that, compared with universities, “government influence over the college sector has been much more real, direct, and effective” (p. 50), largely because of the powers given to the Minister under legislation. Dennison goes on to state the following:

Policy initiatives such as formula funding and mandatory five-year planning based upon a predetermined format have been extremely influential in charting the course which colleges and provincial institutes have taken. Government has gradually become a powerful senior partner in the governance of colleges. (p. 50)

Other evidence of the Ministry being somewhat prescriptive in its desire to maintain cooperation among institutions can be found in their 1985 Plan Update sent to institutions in August 1985 to serve as guidelines for updating college and institute strategic plans. For instance, under the title “Distance Education Co-operation,” the Ministry states that “all British Columbia Community Colleges are expected to co-operate in every reasonable way in provision of these services” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 1), referring to the province-wide services of the Open Learning Institute. The Ministry then states it expects the institutions “to demonstrate real progress in the development of (a) co-operative endeavours ..., (b) co-operative program development ..., (c) co-operative awarding of credits” (p. 1). Hence, it appears that cooperation among institutions is being mandated, which suggests enforced collaboration.

In the same document, though, the Ministry shows the consultative nature of planning between the Ministry and the institutions when it states “the Ministry fully supports the review mechanism structure developed by the Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee of the Council of Principals” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 2), which was described in the previous section on

1977 to 1983. Thus, even in the important area of accountability, the Ministry abides by the recommendations of the system.

A final example of both Ministry/system cooperation and inter-institutional collaboration was found in Beinder (1986) when he described the formation of a Working Group on distance learning whose goal was to achieve “maximum cooperation and coordination and minimum conflict throughout the post-secondary system” (p. 172). The Working Group included representatives of BCAC, COP, and universities and included as resource persons two ADMs of the Universities and Post-Secondary divisions. Beinder directly quotes the Working Group’s April 1984 report as follows:

“They concluded that the creation of a climate of greater collaboration and cooperation among institutions in the service of students was the most critical factor in the continuing development of post-secondary and higher education in British Columbia.”
(p. 173)

Such collaboration was seen as an antidote to unbridled competition or centralization in the expanding field of distance learning. Thus, institutional collaboration and Ministry/system cooperation became more closely entwined in the period under study.

Summary for 1984 to 1991

The period of 1984 to 1991 witnessed a continuation of central control of the college and institute system by the Ministry but also the further development of a cooperative, trusting relationship between the Ministry and institutions on major institutional initiatives. Institutional representatives recognized the need for developing a balance between meeting provincial and local needs and thus for the Ministry to play an important role in setting directions for the system. The important role of the Ministry in steering the system was evident in the development of the funding formula and in the two planning documents developed in 1986 and 1991.

The late 1980s also saw a movement by government away from a focus on retrenchment to a focus on expanding access to help British Columbia improve its dismal showing in comparison to other provinces on statistics on post-secondary access. The result was the Access for All initiative, which followed on the heels of a major report that included recommendations to establish university colleges and a coordinating body for transfer. The formation of university colleges represented an increased level of differentiation in the post-secondary system, although they were created without separate legislation. Increased differentiation and more degree-granting opportunities was one of the reasons for creating a more formalized transfer coordinating body called BCCAT. However, a key to BCCAT's success was the continuing recognition by government and by institutions that transfer was best handled as voluntary collaboration among institutions rather than as being mandated by government.

In 1991, AECBC was created by combining the formal structures representing boards and presidents, BCAC and COP, to form a more effective advocacy group. The almost unanimous support for the creation of AECBC was a further example of the sophisticated level of inter-institutional collaboration that existed after three decades of college development and the building of trust among institutional representatives. Finally, the period from 1984 to 1991 witnessed greater Ministry/institutional cooperation and the building of trusting relationships between Ministry and institutional officials. This relationship was largely driven by the view the Ministry had of itself as a controlling partner in the college and institute system and by the acceptance by institutions that they had to meet both provincial and local goals.

1992 TO 2002: INCREASING ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN SYSTEM GOVERNANCE; INCREASING CENTRALIZATION; AND FRAGMENTATION OF THE COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, AND INSTITUTE SYSTEM

The final section of Chapter 4 deals with the last 10 years up to the end of March 2002, at which time the author of the present study completed the literature review for Chapter 4. This period witnessed a continuation of many of the trends described in previous sections of this chapter, including a balancing of provincial coordination and voluntary collaboration and continuing Ministry/institutional cooperation. However, the period also witnessed a marked change in traditional institutional and system governance structures with a significant rise in constituency-based governance, particularly in relation to the role of faculty. The perceived increased centralization as a result of the new system governance models, coupled with greater institutional differentiation without policy guidance from government, resulted in the fragmentation of the system as the 1990s drew to a close. This fragmentation occurred at the same time as the election of the new Liberal government in 2001, with a strong focus on deregulation, decentralization, and institutional accountability.

The following section is divided into 11 separate parts: the Human Resource Development Project report; the rise of constituency-based governance, the increasing role of faculty, and the focus on internal governance; the *Charting A New Course* Strategic Plan; the impact of increasing institutional differentiation; the development of university colleges as a separate sector; the continuation of transfer and articulation; recognition of the need for balance between provincial coordination and voluntary collaboration among autonomous institutions; evidence of Ministry/institutional cooperation; perceptions of increased centralization; the views of the Advanced Education Council of B.C. (AECBC) in 2000 and the dissolution of AECBC; and the new Liberal government and the return to decentralization.

The Human Resource Development Project report

In 1991, a Steering Committee was established to develop a “policy framework for the future of all forms of education, training and learning for adults” in B.C. (British Columbia Human Resource Development Project Steering Committee, 1992, p. 2). After extensive consultation by the Committee, which was composed of representatives of many constituencies involved in adult education, the Human Resource Development Project (HRDP) report was released in November 1992. The report is important in that it heralds several of the major themes that would be prevalent in coordination of post-secondary institutions throughout the 1990s.

The report was very focussed on education and training serving the economic needs of the province. The HRDP report (1992) stated “we are convinced that adult learning must be viewed as an investment in our people and as a competitive advantage in the industrial strategy of our province” (p. i). The report recommended dialogue among business, labour, and education providers to clarify their respective roles in workforce development and adjustment. Thus the report continued the trend begun in the 1991 Ministry plan *Partners for the Future* where colleges were viewed as part of a much broader education and training system. One of the major themes of the report was that all sectors involved in education and training, including business, labour, and educational institutions, must work collaboratively to offer a full array of transferable learning opportunities (Dennison, 1997b).

In order to meet the goal of a more coordinated education and training system that works strategically to meet the needs of individual learners, employers, and communities, the different elements of adult learning must be seen as “interrelated parts of a common whole” rather than as “autonomous free-standing agencies with only their own unique goals” (British Columbia Human Resource Development Project Steering Committee, 1992, p. 18). Several of the measures recommended under the goal of Responsiveness and Comprehensiveness in the

HRDP report would, if implemented, lead to a more coordinated, system approach to meeting learning needs. These included recognition of competencies on a system-wide basis, regardless of how they were required; laddered programs that offer degree completion for graduates of career and technical programs; and system-wide versus bilateral transfer agreements, including block transfer. The report also supported increasing institutional differentiation, which had been occurring in B.C. over the last few decades. However, the report called for an expansion of collaborative activity across differentiated institutions and between institutions and the clients and communities they serve.

The HRDP report (1992) also supported a more decentralized system, as is evident in the following excerpt where it states that the education and training system is:

too diversified and complex to be managed from the Centre. In fact, quite apart from the diversity and complexity, decentralization of responsibility for the operation of the system to its many participants is appropriate in its own right. Ownership of the system and its outcomes springs from shared responsibility for its performance, and shared responsibility is the product of decentralization of authority, ownership, and accountability. (p. 54)

The report continues that “the real key to a more decentralized learning system, however, is the method by which institutions are funded” (p. 55). The report recommends moving towards outcomes-based funding in which institutions set objectives and are held accountable by government to meet those objectives in whatever way they feel fit to do so. As will be seen in the remainder of this section, the 1990s evolved into a decade of greater centralization rather than decentralization, and the move to outcomes-based funding and accountability did not occur until 10 years later.

The HRDP report includes a separate section on Collaboration and Participation as a means of enhancing education and training investment. This section is particularly germane to the purpose of this study. The report states that a high level of collaboration is necessary among all elements of the education and

training system to provide a complete range of coherent learning opportunities.

“To be effective, a collaborative approach will require a voluntary, active, and meaningful cooperation” (British Columbia Human Resource Development Project Steering Committee, 1992, p. 58). The HRDP Report continues:

The return on investment in voluntary cooperation should be broader ownership of the results and greater responsiveness to the needs of both our society and individual learners. A collaborative approach should expand the potential contribution of each of the participants while respecting the diversity of views and priorities in a pluralistic society. Such an approach implies neither centralization nor uniformity ... diversity and differentiation within a common system can be achieved through the distribution of information, authority, and responsibility. (p. 58)

Thus the report recognized the importance of decentralized authority and voluntary collaboration as a means of sharing responsibility for developing a coherent education and training system.

One other important element of the 1992 HRDP report is that it supported greater stability in employment of faculty and staff in colleges and institutes and greater employee involvement in planning and decision making “in exchange for increased employee support for institutional change required to enhance the responsiveness of these institutions” (p. 63). In other words, the report was suggesting that employees be given a seat at the planning table, but in return they would have to support institutional reform. This approach is a harbinger of the approach taken by government throughout the 1990s, as will be shown in the next section. In summary, the HRDP report called for a more decentralized and highly collaborative education and training system that would lead to a more coordinated, system approach to meeting the varying needs of learners.

The rise of constituency-based governance, the focus on internal governance, and the increasing role of faculty

Gallagher (1999) states that the return of the NDP government in 1991 resulted in more consultative approaches being adopted to policy development,

meaning that stakeholder groups were invited to participate in a range of policy-making discussions. The term *stakeholder* for the purpose of this study refers to groups of individuals who play key roles within post-secondary institutions and in the broader post-secondary system. These include administrators, faculty, support staff, students, board members, and Ministry representatives. The rise in stakeholder input led to an increasing role for the College-Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) and an amendment to the College and Institute Act in 1996 allowing greater shared governance at the institutional level. These changes will be discussed in more detail below. Greater consultation with faculty, support staff, and students represented a major shift from the previous decades in which the Ministry consulted primarily with college board chairs and presidents. The NDP were strongly supported by organized labour and therefore had close relations with many in the organized labour movement, including CIEA.

Fisher et al. (2000) describe the NDP as follows:

The current government tries not to practice a top-down form of governance but instead attempts to achieve consensus, collaboration, high levels of trust and a sharing of power. It understands that if it is to be viewed as legitimate and gain the co-operation of those who help to fulfil its objectives, it is important to respect their self-governing capacity and involve them in shaping the institutions of government. (p. 27)

This consensus and collaboration included all stakeholder groups within the institutions, not just the administrators. Gallagher (1999) agrees that “during the 1990s, the governance of the ‘system’ (and of the individual colleges) became structurally more collegial than corporate” but asserts that “the ability of these institutions to manage their own affairs to suit their own community needs was constrained significantly by centralized decision making” (p. 8). Additional literature that described the 1990s and the tenure of the NDP as a centralizing era will be presented further in this section.

One result of the focus of the government on broad consultation was changes in the internal governance of institutions. The Committee on Governance

in Colleges and Institutes, composed of representatives from faculty, administrators, students, boards, and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, made recommendations to the Ministry on necessary changes to the governance of institutions. Among the main recommendations of the Committee's report (Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes, 1993) were the inclusion of internal stakeholder groups on college boards and the establishment of education councils that would have joint authority in certain educational matters with the college boards. Thus, although the report paid lip service to the need for colleges to continue serving their external communities, the main thrust of the report was the development of more of an internal focus to college governance. Interestingly, the above recommendations were in keeping with those made in a 1990 report by CIEA, which recommended that "students, staff and faculty should each have the right to elect one member to the college/institute board with full voice and full participation rights in all board decisions" and that "provision be made for an Education Council ... for each college and institute" (Moran, 1990, p. 33).

The result of the Committee's recommendations was an Amendment to the College and Institute Act (College and Institute Act, Chapter 52, 1996), which moved institutions closer to a model of shared governance. The Amendment changed the board composition to include elected representatives of faculty, support staff, and students and the Chair of the Education Council. The Amendment also allowed the creation of Education Councils and laid out the powers and advisory role of the Education Councils in relation to the powers of the college board. Gallagher (1999) states that as a result of internal constituency representation on boards, "many of the colleges became more institution-focussed than community focussed" (p. 5). Furthermore, Gallagher states that the creation of Education Councils meant that instructional decision making became more internalized than previously.

The adoption of constituency-based governance led to an increasing role for faculty in decision making at the institutional level, and certain centralizing trends increased faculty's role at the provincial level as well. Schuetze and Day (2001) assert that fiscal restraint in 1994 led to legislated control of public sector expenditures and the creation of bodies such as the Post-Secondary Employers Council. The formation of the Council was the precursor of province-wide collective bargaining with CIEA and the British Columbia Government Employees Union, representing college and institute faculty associations at the system-wide table. Gallagher (1999) states that the ensuing formation of the Post-Secondary Employers' Association in 1994 as the bargaining agent for college employers removed labour relations responsibilities from AECBC. Thus what had previously been the purview of a voluntary collaborative organization became the role of a new provincial intermediary body, and organizations like CIEA gained in power and influence.

Gallagher (1999) states that CIEA had a huge amount of influence on governance and policy development in the 1990s because of its role in provincial collective bargaining and on provincial steering committees and boards of intermediary bodies. In return for this new-found power, government was able to keep salary increases to a minimum. Thus the NDP were able to work with their supporters in the trade unions to keep costs under control in the 1990s by giving the unions access to decision-making tables at the institutional and provincial level.

Evidence of the role of faculty and staff on provincial committees can be found in a number of important initiatives, including system planning and accountability. System planning will be discussed in the next section on *Charting A New Course*. In terms of accountability, Fisher et al. (2000) state that the 1997 and 1998 performance measurement reports "point to the ongoing consultation and collaboration between the ministry and 'system partners,' including board members, college and institute presidents, faculty, staff and students" (p. 33). The Ministry worked through field-based committee structures, such as the Standing

Committee on Evaluation and Accountability, to develop and administer performance measures. Hence accountability, which had previously been managed by a collaborative endeavour between the Ministry and college presidents, was now being managed by a multiple stakeholder committee, which is very emblematic of system governance in the 1990s under the NDP.

Schuetze and Day (2001) state that the college and institute system stabilized in 1997/98 and 1998/99 as a result of many of the collaborative structures that had been created by *Charting A New Course*. Schuetze and Day continue that “coupled with mandated central bargaining within the colleges and institutes and similar controls on university expenditures, these have produced a very stable collective environment” (p. 39). The author’s opinion is that the stable environment was also created because of the very good working relationship between the NDP and their labour union supporters, who represented faculty and staff. In summary, the 1990s under the NDP government involved an increasing focus on internal governance in institutions and on constituency-based decision making at the institutional and provincial level with faculty playing a dominant role. *Charting A New Course*, the most important system document produced in the 1990s, will be discussed next.

The strategic planning document *Charting A New Course*

Charting A New Course: A Strategic Plan for the Future of British Columbia’s College, Institute and Agency System is a very important document from the 1990s in terms of providing evidence of the changing nature of the concept of “system” and the increasing role of key stakeholders in setting provincial policy; therefore, the document will be explored in some depth. *Charting A New Course*, released in 1996, represented a continuation of the five-year planning documents previously undertaken in 1982, 1986, and 1991. However, the 1996 document differed from the 1991 *Partners for the Future* document in that *Charting A New Course* once again represented a plan specifically for the college

and institute system within the context of a broader education and training system. The document also differed from the planning documents of the 1980s in that *Charting A New Course* involved multiple stakeholder groups in its development rather than only college administrators.

Gallagher (1999) provides the following assessment of the state of the college system by 1996:

By this time it was clear that the colleges had become ... parts of a “system,” that the system was being driven from the centre, that shared governance had extended to the entire system, and that uniformity within the system was more highly prized than differentiation.... The colleges had become community institutions in name only. (p. 6)

A close review of the Strategic Plan shows some truth to Gallagher’s statement. However, elsewhere Schuetze and Day (2001) state that *Charting A New Course* was developed “after years of pressure from the college and institute system” (p. 30). Thus, as in the first strategic plan in 1982, the plan resulted from a combination of Ministry direction and institutional pressure.

The plan was developed through an extensive collaborative process involving the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training and “a provincial steering committee composed of institutional presidents, board members, faculty, students and government representatives” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996, p. 1). Thus the development of the plan provides a good example of the constituency-based governance described in the previous subsection. Among the stated values that guided the Steering Committee in the development of the plan were respect and trust among all participants and a sense of equal partnership among those involved in changing the system. However, Gallagher (1999) stated his view that the voice of the main faculty group, CIEA, had the strongest influence on the Steering Committee, providing further evidence of the increasing power of faculty in provincial planning in the 1990s under the NDP.

The strong hand of the Ministry in developing the plan, though, is obvious in the three options given for managing the magnitude of change required to adopt to the changing environment and fiscal realities. The plan rejects the first two options, which are maintain the status quo or move to a market-driven model in which communities and individuals make funding decisions and public institutions become one of a variety of sources from which consumers can purchase services. Instead, the plan opts for “revitalized partnerships” in which a reinvigorated public system acts as the hub of a broader learning system that offers new approaches to lifelong learning. The plan (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996) states the following:

Revitalization, in the scenario preferred by the Ministry, must involve every partner in the system. It will require that partners work together or face the reality that an alternate scenario will prevail in shaping and directing the system—a scenario that may not be the most desirable option either for the system or for British Columbians. (p. 29)

Thus the Ministry chooses a collaborative approach: collaboration among institutions, between the Ministry and institutions, and among the stakeholder groups in the system. Because of the thinly veiled threat of alternative options, the author feels that *Charting A New Course* represents an example of somewhat enforced rather than purely voluntary collaboration.

The main focus of *Charting A New Course* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996) is that individual institutions must work as part of a coherent system designed to meet the diverse needs of learners through achieving the goals of relevance and quality, access, affordability, and accountability. Under the goal of access, the plan refers to new partnerships among institutions in the system to ensure more efficient delivery of programs and the elimination of unnecessary overlap and duplication in post-secondary programs. Likewise, under the goal of affordability, the plan describes the development by the Ministry of a Program Planning and Rationalization Model by which new programs would be approved and existing programs would be reviewed. Under the goal of

accountability, the plan speaks of the Ministry's role in ongoing strategic planning and introduces the concept of an annual management letter from the Ministry to each institution to outline the Ministry's expectations for the coming year.

Thus the centralist nature of *Charting A New Course* and the view of institutions as parts of a single system in which the Ministry plays a controlling role are very obvious. Elsewhere in the plan, the roles of the Ministry are described as setting the overarching context in which education and training will take place. The Ministry's broad roles include establishing policy, establishing planning models, providing direction to system institutions and agencies, ensuring financial stewardship, and fostering accountability.

Yet the plan was created by a wide variety of stakeholders representing individual institutions as well as a system perspective, and the role of individual institutions is recognized. *Charting A New Course* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996) states:

Consistent, system-wide approaches are essential in order to respond to a diverse group of learners. It is also critical that system integration be balanced with institutional autonomy. Individual institutions will continue to develop and provide key educational services in response to community and regional needs. (p. 31)

Thus the plan appears to recognize the need for a proper balance between system-wide work and institutional autonomy. However, a key message in the plan is that system responsiveness has to improve and take precedence. *Charting A New Course* recognizes that "responsiveness of institutions to their communities has created a decentralized system with unique vitality" (p. 32). This has resulted in institutions developing curriculum and programs to meet local community and employer needs. However, the plan states that the increased need for flexibility and portability of learning requires "a policy framework that provides for consistent approaches, with a capacity for system-wide application where appropriate" (p. 32).

In order to ensure more of a system approach to the work of individual institutions, one of the strategies given for institutions to achieve system goals is "**fostering collaboration** and positive working relationships between all

representative groups and constituents of the post-secondary system, including those between and among institutions” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996, p. 64). Thus fostering inter-institutional collaboration is a recognized strategy deemed necessary to bring about the kinds of change envisioned in *Charting A New Course*. As in other provincial planning documents, collaboration among institutions, which had been occurring voluntarily for decades, is mandated as a strategy in the 1996 plan. The above quote also provides further evidence of the strong focus on involving all constituency groups in making the required changes.

One major result of *Charting A New Course* was the creation of the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2) and the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS), two system-wide agencies whose role was to work with system partners to implement many of the initiatives flowing from the Strategic Plan. The two agencies were formed by realigning and merging existing system-wide organizations and initiatives to provide greater synergy and efficiency.

However, the Steering Committee that developed the plan was wary of developing intermediary bodies that would have any form of control over institutions, which is similar to concerns expressed about the three intermediary councils between 1977 and 1983. Hence, the following statement was made in *Charting A New Course* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996):

System-wide organizations will work with individual institutions in a consultative and collaborative manner that fosters linkages between institutions and agencies. While change will be encouraged on a system-wide basis, authority will not be exercised by new agencies in relation to established institutional autonomy and their ability to be responsive to community needs. (p. 58)

Thus the plan guarded against a centralist role for the agencies. Furthermore, to ensure that the agencies functioned for the good of the system, their boards were made up of representatives from the various constituency groups that made up the

Charting A New Course Steering Committee. This ensured that the role of the two agencies would be to foster collaboration among institutions on inter-institutional initiatives with system-wide benefits.

Once the plan was released, the author is aware that all institutions and constituency groups were asked to indicate their acceptance of the plan. The author is also aware from conversations he has had over the years that not everyone was satisfied with the process that had been used to develop and approve the plan. However, the plan did receive widespread support and served as a blueprint for many of the activities in colleges, university colleges, institutes, and agencies over the next five years. To ensure that the plan continued to be adhered to, a constituency-based provincial Steering Committee was established and met regularly with Ministry officials over the next several years until it was disbanded in the late 1990s.

The impact of increasing institutional differentiation

While the 1990s were a time of more centralized decision making through mechanisms like *Charting A New Course*, they were also a time in which the post-secondary system was becoming more and more complex, diverse, and differentiated. Skolnik (2000), a scholar from Ontario, states that in his view “British Columbia has probably the most differentiated postsecondary system in Canada” (p. 3). Yet several authors argue that this differentiation has occurred in the absence of firm policy direction from government. The present author also feels that progressive differentiation has led to the state of fragmentation that exists in 2002, as will be discussed near the end of this section on the 1992 to 2002 period.

Fisher et al. (2000) describe binary and stratified post-secondary systems with the former representing two major elements, normally colleges and universities, and the latter representing several elements. Fisher et al. state:

Over the past decade, the British Columbia system of post-secondary education has evolved from being “binary” to become

“stratified.” Yet in the process we have yet to establish either a set of principles or a plan that will guide the operation of the system as a whole. (p. 37)

Fisher, Rubenson, and Della Mattia (2001) also state that the differentiated system has arisen without a provincial plan to guide its development. Similarly, in the summary of a workshop held by the UBC Center for Policy Studies in Post-secondary Education and Training at UBC on February 3, 2000, the following statement was made:

It was noted that the evolution of the BC post-secondary system is a history of creation of new institutions as the existing ones were not able to address new demands. As one participant put it, *diversification is a consequence of government’s inability to govern the existing system.* (p. 15)

Brown (2000) describes the present post-secondary system in B.C. as having three tiers: colleges and institutes, university colleges, and universities. Brown states that there is no formal mechanism in place for the three sectors to plan together and to work together as a system so as to avoid competition for limited resources. Brown states that he sees danger in this situation because:

if we cannot find a way to work together as a system, government has the opportunity and the excuse, [*sic*] to limit our autonomy.... One only need look at state systems across the border in the United States to see examples of government limiting institutional autonomy. (p. 9)

In the present author’s opinion, these three tiers are further differentiated in that colleges and institutes are often described as being divided into three groups: large urban colleges, small rural colleges, and provincial institutes. Furthermore, two provincial institutes have been given degree-granting status. Competition for resources also exists among these sub-sectors, as can be seen in the Small Colleges Project Report (Weninger, 1997), which makes a case regarding the special problems faced by small and rural colleges.

Fisher et al. (2000) provide a pertinent quote to summarize this short subsection on progressive differentiation in the absence of a provincial plan:

The debate over differentiation, coordination and centralization has run throughout the period. MacDonald [*sic*] envisioned a stratified system with institutions having different purposes but integrated in a common plan. McGeer preferred a centralized, coordinated system. In British Columbia a binary system of community colleges and universities emerged first, but with the creation of four-year university colleges and other degree-granting institutions, the system has become stratified into three clear layers: two-year community colleges, four-year university-colleges and other degree-granting institutions, and universities.... However, the stratified system has risen without any serious discussion of which principles should form the basis for such a system, the balance between the strata and their coordination. (p. 39)

The development of university colleges as a separate sector

The greatest driver of differentiation within the non-university side of the post-secondary system in B.C. has been the creation of five university colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees while maintaining all the functions of a traditional college. The creation of university colleges through the Access for All initiative was described in the previous section dealing with 1984 to 1991. Included in that description were a few citations from the literature showing that some felt that the creation of university colleges led to the future fragmentation of what had been up to that point a fairly coherent college and institute system. Below are references to other important literature from the 1992 to 2002 time period regarding the evolution of university college development and its impact.

Poole (1994) conducted doctoral research “to examine the process that led to the 1989 decision to establish three university colleges” (p. 4) with a particular emphasis on the political motivation for the decision. Poole interviewed government bureaucrats about their understanding of the development of university colleges. Among his findings was that the government officials were in full agreement that the new institutions should not become universities. Interestingly, the same bureaucrats agreed that the movement to university status would probably happen anyway, particularly in the Okanagan region.

Poole also interviewed the three presidents of institutions being converted to university colleges: Malaspina, Cariboo, and Okanagan. Poole (1994) found that “not one of the participants disagreed with the stated need of university colleges to be responsive to the community. In fact, each argued that this single facet of the colleges most succinctly set them apart from the traditional universities” (p. 58). Thus, at the outset of university college development, the presidents of the new institutions had a strong appreciation for the community versus traditional university focus of these new institutions. Each of the three presidents “had an extensive background in the community college movement” (Poole, 1994, p. 57), which might help to explain their understanding of the need for a community focus.

From interviewing the three presidents, Poole (1994) found that scholarly activity was considered to be the most contentious issue in the establishment of the new institutions. Government bureaucrats also agreed with the contentious nature of the unresolved issue. According to the presidents, the mandated affiliation of the new university colleges with traditional universities resulted in hiring faculty with high levels of credentials and with an expectation that resources for research activities would be available. Because of the university involvement in hiring and the lack of clear policy in this area, a rift developed between university level and regular college faculty. According to Poole, all three presidents supported the concept that quality teaching should be the primary role of university colleges. Elsewhere, Dennison (1998) states that “colleges were required to absorb, not only a contingent of new faculty whose appreciation of the community college idea was limited at best, but also a set of values largely reflective of a university milieu well entrenched in Canada” (pp. 2-3).

The College and Institute Amendment Act of 1996 extended independent degree-granting authority to a number of institutions, including the five university colleges and two provincial institutes. Thus, the link to traditional universities was broken. However, Dennison (1997a) states the following regarding the Amendment:

This initiative created a variety of tensions into [*sic*] these institutions, such as ambiguity about mandate and mission, conflict over university and college values, lack of clarity over the roles and responsibilities of faculty, and what might be the status of applied knowledge. (p. 11)

In the opinion of the present author, the lack of a clear legislative or policy framework from government regarding the development of university colleges has caused much of the ambiguity that exists within these institutions.

In 1998, Howard Petch produced what became known as the Petch Report. The report had been commissioned by the presidents of the five university colleges to evaluate the success of baccalaureate degree programs offered at university colleges and to discuss issues relating to institutional mandate, governance, and funding. The report found that university colleges had been very successful at expanding access to academically strong degrees as well as at meeting regional needs. However, the report found that the academic infrastructure, such as library collections, was inadequate for the growth in the number and kind of degree programs. Petch (1998) recommended a separate act for university colleges to accommodate their unique needs. The report also called for increased funding for university college degree programs, third and fourth year courses in existing degrees, libraries, and capital. Finally, the report argued for an expansion of the concept of scholarly activity to include more focus on research. In the opinion of the present author, the Petch Report represented a major move towards university colleges viewing themselves as a separate sector in B.C.'s post-secondary system and as being deserving of different legislation and additional funding compared to other colleges and institutes.

Dennison (1998) prepared a commentary on the Petch Report in which he was somewhat critical of the report focussing too much attention on the baccalaureate side of university college programming and not on other important program components. Dennison states that for those involved in the other program areas the report "will surely reinforce a view that the spotlight remains firmly fixed

upon the degree granting enterprises in their institutions” (p. 2). Dennison writes of the uncertainty that exists over the future direction of university colleges in terms of the balancing of the diverse aspects of their mission and states that “the Minister responsible should make clear what government’s expectations and mandate limitations are held for the university colleges” (pp. 4-5). This statement provides evidence for the impact of the lack of clear direction from government on the evolution of university colleges.

Dennison (1998) also makes reference to the speculation of several observers of the possible future impact on university college development from the fact that three of the new presidents had just arrived from out of the province and from the university sector. This statement is understandable when compared with Poole’s (1994) description of the three original university college presidents as having a strong community college background. The statement also suggests the importance of individuals to the changing understanding of what constitutes a system in B.C.

Dennison (1998) concludes his commentary on the Petch Report by stating “in the final analysis university colleges must capitalize upon their uniqueness and realize a new institution with a culture which integrates the essential values of the community college, ... with those of the traditional university” (p. 15). However, since 1998 further developments have occurred which suggest that the university colleges seem to be moving more towards university status. The Consortium of B.C. University Colleges was formed in 1998 to lobby government for many of the funding and legislative changes being sought by university colleges. In the spring of 2001, Okanagan University College (OUC) and the University College of the Cariboo (UCC) began making public pronouncements about their desire to have university colleges come under the University Act as opposed to separate legislation for university colleges. In a Briefing Paper prepared by UCC on April 11, 2001, the following statement was made:

UCC seeks to be included in University Legislation with a mandate to continue to provide a full range of college and university

programs throughout the region, and to further develop the unique advantages of connecting (laddering) college and university programs.

... all five B.C. university colleges have been discussing this issue. After originally considering separate “university college” legislation, they have now determined that moving under the existing University Act would be easier and more appropriate. (p. 1)

Reasons given for wanting to move from under the College and Institute Act to the University Act included receiving funding for degree programming at the same level as universities, being able to recruit faculty, and being able to receive funding for research and scholarly activity.

In September, 2001, the Consortium of B.C. University Colleges presented a paper to the new Liberal government in preparation for the government’s Core Review of all publicly funded institutions. In the paper, the Consortium described the characteristics that it felt had led to a very successful model of integrating academic and vocational streams within one institution. These characteristics included comprehensive as well as specialized programming, a regional focus, a focus on access and student success, a focus on teaching and learning excellence, research and scholarship, student diversity, and ladder programs. In the *Core Review Reply*, the Consortium recommended among other things separate legislation that recognized the unique aspects of university colleges, the ability to grant post-graduate degrees, revised labour relations practices, and streamlined reporting requirements (Consortium of B.C. University Colleges, 2001). In general, the report recommended more autonomy for university colleges and a recognition of how they were different from either colleges or universities. The report provides a further example of how university colleges were now functioning as a separate sector apart from their colleges and institute counterparts. Over the decade of the 1990s, the university colleges had grown apart from colleges and institutes in the absence of a provincial plan that would provide clarity about the position of university colleges within a broader, differentiated post-secondary system.

The continuation of transfer and articulation

The previous section on 1984 to 1991 described the creation of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) and provided evidence from the literature about the success of BCCAT in encouraging voluntary collaboration among colleges and universities to promote efficient transfer for students. The increasing differentiation of institutions in the 1990s with the establishment of university colleges, degree-granting provincial institutes, and two more stand-alone universities (Royal Roads University and the Technical University of B.C.) added to the complexity of arranging transfer agreements among autonomous institutions. Yet the success of transfer and articulation within the system continued throughout the 1990s. Below is evidence of that success from recently published documents.

Soles (2001) conducted a study for BCCAT on the “existing policies, practices and trends affecting student admissions with a focus on transfer students” (p. 5). Soles states that the success and effectiveness of the B.C. transfer system is not due to legislation as universities have autonomy in setting standards of admission and colleges exercise similar autonomy through the respective roles of Education Councils and boards in recommending and approving admissions policy. Soles states, however, that “the Ministry does have discretionary powers under section 2 of the Act that allow an opportunity to influence admissions policy, but in practice these powers have not been used” (p. 13). Soles explains that the success of the transfer system in B.C. is built on voluntary cooperation rather than legislative edict. Soles states the following:

While the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer plays an important coordination role, the effectiveness of the transfer system is dependent to a great extent on the trust, goodwill, commitment and cooperation of all the universities, colleges, university colleges and institutes. The relative success that the B.C. system has enjoyed to date with respect to transfer suggests that the policy context built on goodwill and cooperation, with coordination from BCCAT, is effective for the province. (p. 14)

Soles interviewed representatives of the Ministry and institutions to determine their views on the success of the transfer system and the role of BCCAT. Soles (2001) states the following regarding the Ministry's view:

There was general consensus that it is appropriate for the Ministry to set the broad policy and funding context for transfer, but not intervene in institutional decision-making with respect to these issues. The Ministry noted that it respects the independence of institutions with respect to transfer and was clearly comfortable with the system role played by the Council. (p. 31)

Similarly, institutional representatives interviewed by Soles felt that while BCCAT's role was to raise transfer issues as they arise, it was the institutions that worked to find solutions. "Many representatives specifically used the word 'nudging' and pointed out that it was the gentle, but persistent approach of the Council that was the key to its success" (Soles, 2001, p. 31).

Schuetze and Day (2001) concur that the work of BCCAT has been important in clarifying relationships among the different components of the post-secondary system and their respective roles in meeting system goals. However, Schuetze and Day (2001) state about BCCAT that "as it must rely on the voluntary collaboration of the various institutions, and there is a wide variety of institutional types and programs, progress is relatively slow" (p. 59). Although progress may be slow, it does seem to meet the needs of both the Ministry and institutions, as shown in the quotes from Soles (2001) above. It appears that articulation and transfer in B.C., from its inception under the Academic Board in 1968 to 2002 under the auspices of BCCAT, has been a very successful example of what can be accomplished through voluntary collaboration among institutions.

Recognition of the need for balance between provincial coordination and voluntary collaboration among autonomous institutions

The work on transfer described above is an example of voluntary collaboration in the B.C. post-secondary education system. Other literature from the 1990s shows a continuing understanding among Ministry and institutional

representatives of the value of voluntary collaboration and also of the need for an appropriate balance between meeting the needs of the province and yet remaining autonomous institutions. This literature is cited below in the chronological order in which it appeared.

The Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes (1993) referred to the balance between meeting provincial and local needs when it stated “the college and institute mandates must continue to include responsiveness to local, sectoral and regional communities, as well as recognition of their role in the provincial network of post-secondary institutions” (p. 2). Among the general principles to be used in designing new governance structures, the Committee stated that “educational decision-making structures must support inter-dependence and cooperation among all public post-secondary institutions in the province” (p. 4). Thus, the need for collaborative relationships among institutions was recognized by the Committee.

Dennison (1995c) describes the challenge of providing post-secondary education as one of moving towards a true system approach, an approach in which institutions work closely together to ensure maximum mobility for the student in terms of articulation, transfer, and standardization of curricula while at the same time maintaining differentiation among and autonomy of institutions. Such autonomy promotes quality and innovation at the institutional level. Elsewhere, Dennison (1997b) states that post-secondary institutions have an important and challenging role to play in meeting B.C.’s human resource needs and continues with the following statement:

This challenge, however, must be met without sacrificing those appropriate aspects of institutional autonomy which bear upon quality, nor can it be accomplished without recognition of the legitimate expectations of government respecting the role of higher education as a corporate partner in the pursuit of economic growth, productivity, and competitiveness. There is clearly a “tightrope of compromise” between these two goals which must be achieved.
(p. 55)

The Distributed Learning Task Force report entitled *Access and Choice* provides an example of the solid understanding of the importance of collaborative endeavours to meet system goals. The Task Force included representatives from college and university presidents and the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training. The report, written by two employees of institutions, Adrian Kershaw and Jim Bizzocchi, recommended an evolutionary rather than revolutionary approach to change in terms of the gradual adoption of distributed learning approaches in the delivery of post-secondary education.

The *Access and Choice* report recognizes the importance of institutional autonomy and mandates but states that this autonomy must exist within the framework of system-wide values. Kershaw and Bizzocchi (1997) state the following:

The post-secondary system can maximize success and minimize risk by having a clear vision of these values, recognizing diversity, committing to both autonomous and collaborative investment in change, and finding ways to share an implementation strategy. (p. 1)

In this case, “collaboration” appears to include inter-institutional and ministry/post-secondary system collaboration as these were the players at the table creating this report.

One of the four principles that informed the report’s recommendations was “partnership within a diverse system.” Under this principle, there was strong recognition of the value of collaboration among autonomous institutions. The report (Kershaw & Bizzocchi, 1997) states that while there is recognition that duplication in distributed learning programs and services must be avoided:

colleges, institutes, universities and their private sector partners are autonomous bodies and would not welcome a centralized approach to coordination. Therefore, mechanisms that encourage partnerships, coordination and collaboration between institutions and the private sector, while respecting the autonomy and diversity of the various agents, need to be found. (p. 5)

This statement reflects an understanding of the balance required to engage in collaborative endeavours among autonomous institutions for the good of the system.

Evidence was also found of a continuing understanding among institutional representatives that successful voluntary collaboration among institutions would negate over-centralization by government. This evidence comes from the summary of the February 3, 2000, workshop put on by the Centre for Policy Studies in Post-secondary Education and Training at UBC. The summary states that a key debate at the workshop was whether or not institutions are able to coordinate their own activities and reduce the need for government intervention to manage such coordination. The summary states that “it was suggested that the more we can coordinate, the less there will be a need for far reaching integration” (University of British Columbia Centre for Policy Studies in Post-secondary Education and Training, 2000, p. 13). Thus throughout the decades under study, there has been evidence of an understanding by institutional representatives that working together on system initiatives can prevent the government from taking a controlling role. There has also been evidence of an understanding among institutional and Ministry representatives of the balance that must be maintained between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination.

Evidence of Ministry/institutional cooperation

The work of the Distributed Learning Task Force and the Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes described above provides a good example of the continuing cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions on various system reports and initiatives. However, as described in the section on the rise of constituency-based governance and the increasing role of faculty, the 1990s witnessed a significant broadening of the consultative process by the Ministry with the inclusion of faculty, staff, and students along with administrators and board members on many of the system-wide committees that were struck. Prime

examples of this were the Charting A New Course Steering Committee and the Standing Committee on Evaluation and Accountability. The seat of organized labour at the planning table was made more possible by the connections of the governing NDP party to organized labour. In return, government was able to maintain an acceptable limit on wage hikes in the sector (Gallagher, 1999).

A few citations from the literature were found that show an understanding of the importance of a good working relationship between the Ministry and the system. Poole (1994), in his doctoral research on the formation of university colleges, interviewed the three original university college presidents, who commented on the positive nature of the relationship between colleges and bureaucrats, particularly at the middle and junior management level, which include the important level of director. Dennison (1997a) stated that “ultimately, it will be policies which engender a creative partnership between government and institutions which will ensure the healthy survival of one of society’s most essential resources, its post-secondary education enterprise” (pp. 12-13).

Among the strengths noted in *Charting A New Course* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996) of B.C.’s post-secondary education system was “loosely structured yet effective communication and planning processes linking autonomous institutions with the Ministry” (p. 7). This quote shows acknowledgement by the constituency-based Steering Committee that produced the Strategic Plan of the importance of the positive relations that had developed with the Ministry over time. One of the stated goals of the Ministry in *Charting A New Course* is that it “encourages active cooperation and partnership among the institutions, agencies and individuals within the B.C. learning system” (1996, p. 7). In this statement, the role of government is seen as encouraging coordination not only across institutions but also throughout the broader learning system.

From the author’s reading of the literature over the four decades of this study, another factor became apparent to him as a possible cause of the ongoing

positive working relationship between the Ministry and the post-secondary system. From 1970 until the late 1980s, the Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) were recruited to the Ministry from colleges. Andrew Soles was the former President of Selkirk College, Grant Fisher the former president of Camosun College, and John Watson the former Vice President of Finance and Administration and Student Services at Okanagan College. Then from the late 1980s to the present, ADMs were appointed from within government. An advantage of hiring ADMs from the system would have been that they understood the impact of government decisions on institutions because of their previous leadership role within colleges. Secondly, the ADMs would have brought with them to their new jobs the long-standing relationships they would have had with their counterparts in the college system. Thus, the two decades of ADM appointments from the system to the Ministry probably went a long way to building the spirit of trust and respect between Ministry and system officials that was necessary to work closely together to develop the college and institute system and that continued into the 1990s.

Perceptions of increased centralization

As seen in the literature above on the move to a constituency-based governance process and the development and implementation of *Charting A New Course*, there were those who felt that the 1990s represented a major centralization by government of the post-secondary system. The result was a reduction in the power of boards and administrators and a de-emphasis on the importance of institutions serving their local communities (Gallagher, 1999). Below are further citations from the literature that describe the actions of government in the 1990s as having a centralizing influence.

Gallagher (1999) states that the history of college development in B.C. over the decades has been one of ongoing tension between centralization and decentralization. Gallagher goes on to state the following:

During the 1990s, however, as institutions struggled to keep their heads above water financially yet expand levels of service, the

moves to centralization of decision making and constituency representation on policy bodies shifted the balance markedly toward centralization of direction, management, and control of “the system.” (p. 7)

Gallagher asserts that the result of “the system” and the role of new intermediary bodies, like CEISS and C2T2, was that college boards and administrators had less decision-making authority. College administrators, rather than providing educational leadership within their own institutions, “now find themselves expected to serve more as coordinators of implementation of system and institutional policy and practice established by others within their institutions and the ‘system’” (p. 7). Thus, Gallagher feels very strongly that the 1990s and the development of the college, university college, and institute system under the NDP was a period of greatly increased centralization.

Similarly, Schuetze and Day (2001) conclude that the financial mechanisms, and in particular targeted funding, used by government to implement the Access for All policies have resulted in the Ministry having greater involvement “in decision-making processes that used to be the primary domain of the [*sic*] individual institution” (p. 57). The result has been an infringement on institutional autonomy, especially for universities. Schuetze and Day conclude that the result of the Access for All initiative was a centralizing trend in terms of the relationships between the Ministry and institutions.

Further evidence from the literature of centralizing actions of government can be found in Fisher et al. (2001). They write about the New Degree Approval Process, established in the mid-1990s, as an example of government taking a much more direct role in regulating the development of new degrees. The authors state that the New Degree Approval Process was brought about because of the increasingly complex array of differentiated institutions offering degrees and the perceived need to prevent unnecessary duplication.

The above citations have been presented to provide further evidence of the centralizing nature of government policies in the 1990s. Combined with the

evidence provided in the subsections on increasing constituency-based governance and the impact of *Charting A New Course*, there is compelling evidence that the college, university college, and institute system had reached a high level of centralization, despite evidence of continuing cooperation between the Ministry and institutions around system initiatives and continuing voluntary collaboration. The last two subsections of the 1992 to 2002 time period, however, will show a rapid breakdown of both voluntary collaboration and government centralization.

The views of AECBC in 2000 and its dissolution in 2001

Throughout the 1990s, the Advanced Education Council of B.C. (AECBC), which had been founded in 1990, had continued in its advocacy and coordinating role for the college, university college, and institute system. However, as stated by Gallagher (1999) above, the role of institutional boards and administrators was lessened in the 1990s because of the rise of centralization and constituency-based decision making at the institutional and provincial level. As well, by the end of the decade, university colleges were functioning very much as a separate sector from the colleges and institutes because of their aspirations for separate legislation and new funding arrangements. It was within this context that AECBC released a paper on September 26, 2000, entitled *Building for the Next Generation*. This paper will be discussed in some depth below because it provides evidence of the state that the system had arrived at by the end of the 1990s in relation to the purpose of the study. The recommendations of the paper also portend the developments that ensued with the election of a new Liberal government in 2001, as will be described in the next subsection.

In its September 26, 2000, paper, AECBC supports the four goals of the *Charting A New Course* Strategic Plan but is critical of the fact that the Strategic Plan hardly mentioned institutional autonomy. AECBC (2000) states:

we believe that greater autonomy for our institutions would enhance the ability of individual institutions to fulfill their geographic and

sectoral mandates. Unity, unlike uniformity, makes room for very different kinds of institutions working together for a common goal.
(p. 2)

In the document, AECBC is also critical of the various structures emerging from the Strategic Plan and the constituency-based approach by which it was developed.

AECBC also states that the system had become too centralized and too much under the influence of provincial stakeholder groups since *Charting A New Course*. AECBC (2000) asserts that changes should be made:

towards more institutional autonomy within an agreed set of province-wide objectives. Strategies for collaboration are clearly necessary, but should spring from cooperative efforts of institutions rather than imposed and expensive structures which extend the reach of government. (p. 4)

The structures referred to were arm's length agencies like CEISS and C2T2, created through *Charting A New Course*. Thus, AECBC made a strong statement about relying on voluntary collaboration rather than central coordination to achieve a coordinated system. However, AECBC goes on to say that "we recognize that there is an important role for government in assuring the smooth running of our system" and that what was needed was an "unambiguous statement regarding the precise role and function of the Ministry in the functioning of our entire post-secondary system" (p. 4). Thus, AECBC appears to have been advocating for a coordinated system in which fully autonomous institutions collaborate voluntarily within defined objectives set by government.

AECBC (2000) makes the case that it is time to give institutions more autonomy, within an accountability framework, for a number of reasons, including that the institutions have matured considerably since their inception, the system has become more differentiated, and the decade of the 1990s has seen an increasing move towards greater centralization. "We therefore believe that the time has come to return to each institution the responsibility and authority to conduct its own affairs as a responsible and accountable member of an inclusive and collaborative system" (Advanced Education Council of British Columbia, 2000, p. 6). AECBC

goes on to state that “an increased level of autonomy would empower us to better serve our constituencies while at the same time lending itself to a cooperative collegial relationship with other institutions and with the Ministry” (p. 6). Thus, AECBC appears to recognize the importance of both collaborative relationships among institutions and good working relationships with the Ministry.

AECBC (2000) includes a recommendation that “careful scrutiny be applied to the governmental setting up or maintenance of any body that acts as intermediary between government and institution to ensure that it does not unduly interfere with institutional autonomy” (p. 7). Instead, AECBC recommends a model in which institutions voluntarily work together to solve common issues, as is the case with BCCAT. The above quote harkens back to the strong criticism in the late 1970s and early 1980s about the three intermediary councils, which in that case had been given legislated powers over institutions. Agencies like CEISS and C2T2, however, had arisen from a provincial policy document and had no real powers. In this sense, the two agencies were similar to BCCAT, which arose from the Access for All policy initiative and had no legislative authority. Finally, AECBC also recommended that “a more formal and effective liaison mechanism be created between the universities and the rest of the advanced education system” (p. 9). One of the main criticisms of *Charting A New Course* was that the Plan had been developed to the exclusion of universities, thus inhibiting future cooperation with this very important sector of the post-secondary system.

AECBC prepared its document *Building for the Next Generation* near the end of the second term of the NDP government and with the knowledge that a new government was almost certain to take over power. Thus, AECBC used the document to state its views on changes that had to be made to the relationship between government and the institutions to ensure greater autonomy and more power for administrators and boards. In the present author’s opinion, AECBC was recommending changes that harkened back to previous decades when institutions had more local autonomy, presidents and board chairs were the key contacts with

the Ministry, and constituency groups were not involved at decision-making tables at the provincial level.

It is also the present author's opinion that AECBC (2000) wrote the paper in an attempt to appease the various sectors which had formed among the 22 institutions that it represented and to show that a single agency like AECBC could still have relevance to all sectors. It was obvious in reading the document that some statements had been included at the request of one sector, such as university colleges. Furthermore, the document states that the various points raised do not represent consensus. Indeed, most recommendations are accompanied by an asterisk that denotes that one or more institutions had raised the issue. The opinion of one institution is hardly the same as a system-wide viewpoint. Thus, the document reads as a collection of ideas from different sectors and does not constitute the views of a coherent system.

Despite attempts by AECBC to reinvigorate the organization as one that could represent the various sectors under one umbrella, its demise came about a year after the publication of the above document. On June 14, 2001, at a Special General Meeting, members voted to instruct the AECBC Executive to prepare a plan for dissolution of the organization to be brought back to a further general meeting in the fall. At the June 16, 2001, Annual General Meeting, Ann Frost, the Chair of AECBC, stated that a proposed new structure for AECBC had met with widespread approval leading up to June 14, but in her opinion, "the collective will to act together was simply not there" (Advanced Education Council of British Columbia, 2001, p. 1). She stated her opinion that if the vision now being discussed had been prepared two or three years earlier, the outcome of the June 16th meeting may have been different. However, Frost stated "advocacy turned out to be the crunch issue when it came to the survival of the AECBC because we were not able to agree upon what common advocacy should be like" (p. 1). In this statement, Frost was referring to the difficulty in advocating for a common system when sectors within that system were more interested in advocating for their own specific

needs. Thus, AECBC, the organization that had been established in 1990 to provide stronger advocacy for the entire college, university college, and institute system, was dissolved in 2001 because it was seen as being unable to provide sector-specific advocacy through its centralized role.

AECBC was finally dissolved at a Special General Meeting in October, 2001. At the same time, the Council of Presidents was formed to represent the presidents of the 17 colleges and institutes and OLA. The five university college presidents were already working closely together as the Consortium of B.C. University Colleges. However, for the first time since the creation of the colleges in the early 1960s, the board chairs were without a provincial organization to represent their interests across institutions. The decline of the influence of board chairs was now complete as they no longer had any voice by which to approach government on issues of system-wide importance.

The new Liberal government and the return to decentralization

The requests for more autonomy by both AECBC in its September 2000 document and the Consortium of B.C. University Colleges in its September 2001 *Core Review Reply* were in many ways answered by the directions taken by the new Liberal government, which came to power in May 2001. The Liberals were elected with a strong majority of 76 out of 78 available seats in the Provincial Legislature. They used their massive majority to implement quickly their New Era plan for British Columbia, upon which the party's election platform had been based. Major actions taken by the new government included a significant tax reduction, an unprecedented downsizing of government, and a move toward greater deregulation and accountability. The new government was very much driven by a free enterprise, market-driven approach to managing the province, which differed greatly from the previous social democratic approach taken by the NDP. The subsection below is divided into four parts dealing with the following: the two position papers submitted by the Council of Presidents (COP), the passage of Bill

28, the Ministry of Advanced Education's three-year *Service Plan*, and the budget letter to institutions on March 11, 2002.

The Council of Presidents' position papers

Soon after taking office, the new government undertook a Core Review of all publicly funded programs and services. The submission by the University Colleges Consortium described above was part of that Core Review. As well, the newly formed Council of Presidents (COP), representing the presidents of the 17 colleges, institutes, and OLA, submitted a number of position papers to government in an attempt to influence the eventual decisions of government on the direction that the college and institute system would take. These papers provide interesting evidence of the thinking of the presidents about system in relation to autonomous institutions.

In the COP paper entitled *Position Paper on the System Agencies*, dated December 12, 2001, the COP state the following:

The Council has identified that the primary purpose of any System Agency is to provide services that respond to and are aligned with the System's interests and purposes. In addition, when identified and requested by the System, the Agencies may provide specialized services, which when provided by a centralized body, are provided in a more economic and efficient manner than having the service duplicated at each institution. (p. 1)

This statement shows a continuing recognition among presidents of the value of having work done at the system level. The COP continues, though, by reiterating "the importance of consultation with the institutions with regard to the services provided to them, at their request" (Council of Presidents, 2001b, p. 1). Hence, the benefits of provincial coordination are understood as long as it results from full cooperation between the Ministry and the institutions and at the request of the institutions. This suggests a much stronger role for institutions and their presidents in determining system work than had been the case in the 1990s.

In another COP position paper dealing with the topic of online learning, also dated December 12, 2001, the COP agrees that “there is an obvious need for the design and development of a provincial on-line learning strategy” (p. 1). They continue by stating “**coordination is definitely the key to the provision of on-line learning that provides the greatest degree of access, choice and success for learners. Contributing to a coordinated approach is our commitment**” (Council of Presidents, 2001a, p. 3). The presidents support building on the work of the E-merge (BCcampus) initiative, which involved voluntary collaboration across institutions coupled with provincial coordination through C2T2 and funding and policy leadership from the Ministry. These two position papers to the new Liberal government provide evidence of the high level of understanding by college and institute presidents at the end of 2001 of the delicate balance required among institutional autonomy, voluntary collaboration, and provincial coordination.

The passage of Bill 28

Although the arrival of a new provincial government heralded a move towards a more decentralized post-secondary system, evidence also points towards a very centralized approach to decision making about the direction of the system. Although input was sought from institutional presidents on some of these changes, other constituency groups were not consulted.

The Liberals surprised everyone with the passage of the Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act, known as Bill 28, in January 2002. According to the Backgrounder prepared on January 25, 2002, the Act was designed to “put students first by focussing education resources on core services” and to “increase flexibility for colleges and school districts, in keeping with the government’s New Era commitment to ensure proper management of tax dollars, facilities and resources” (British Columbia Ministry of Skills Development and Labour, 2002, p. 1). In order to remove what were called “restrictions” under the various acts dealing with colleges, institutes, and OLA, Bill 28 (Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act,

First Reading, 2002) overrode collective agreements and gave each institution unilateral rights to establish class sizes and the number of students assigned to each faculty member, assign faculty to use distributed learning in their instruction, determine the hours of operation and the time of instruction throughout the year, allocate vacation time and professional development time, and provide support to faculty in the form of teaching and student assistants. Thus, the Act gave considerable freedom to college administrators to make unilateral changes within their institutions to improve the flexibility of their program offerings.

The provincial unions were unhappy with Bill 28, as could be predicted. In a Media Release dated January 25, 2002, CIEA made the following statement:

College educators expressed outrage today that the provincial government has torn up significant parts of collective agreements affecting faculty in BC's colleges, university colleges, institutes and agencies. Maureen Shaw, President of the College Institute Educators' Association of BC, said that she was shocked that with no prior discussion or rationale, government has attacked the working conditions of faculty and the quality of post-secondary education. ...

Shaw noted that no elected representatives or senior bureaucrats have raised concerns about faculty agreements. (College Institute Educators' Association, 2002, p. 1)

The passage of Bill 28 and the reaction from CIEA provide strong evidence that the former close working relationship between the NDP government and the unions had ended under the new Liberal government. The sudden nature of the Bill's appearance also provides evidence of the willingness of the new government to make substantial changes impacting the governance of institutions without consultation.

The Ministry of Advanced Education's three-year Service Plan

Solid evidence of the new direction being taken by government to post-secondary education comes from the Ministry of Advanced Education's (AVED) *Service Plan 2002/2003-2004/2005* released in February 2002. The *Service Plan*

heralds a major change in Ministry/system relations in which the government appears to be adopting many of the elements of a market-driven philosophy for the management of the post-secondary system. These elements include greater decentralization and more institutional autonomy, deregulation, accountability for public dollars, and an expansion of the role of private deliverers. The Strategic Shifts emphasized in the *Service Plan* (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002) include “more choice for students,” “more accountability to taxpayers,” “better alignment between the costs and benefits,” “better links to the public interest and the economy,” and a “coherent and integrated public system” (p. 5).

The move towards greater accountability is obvious throughout the *Service Plan*. The Plan (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002) states that “as the post-secondary environment becomes more complex, Government must ensure that greater autonomy for deliverers is balanced by accountability to both students and taxpayers” (p. 4). Under Strategic Shifts, the Ministry commits to “encouraging the acceptance of explicit results-oriented accountability by the post-secondary system” (p. 5). Under the goal of Responsive and Effective Management, AVED commits to establishing an accountability framework in the 2002/03 fiscal year while at the same time eliminating a number of regulatory requirements. Thus accountability and greater autonomy are closely intertwined throughout the *Service Plan*, which provides further evidence of the market-driven approach of government.

The *Service Plan*, while committing to more autonomy and less red tape for institutions, also comments on building a more integrated system. The Plan (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002) states that the Ministry will “reshape public post-secondary institutions into a more coherent, integrated system with differentiated institutions working together in a complementary manner” (p. 5). The Ministry also commits to a review of institutional roles and mandates that will “promote more cooperation among institutions. Clearer mandates and

more integration among the differentiated set of institutions will provide students with the programs and courses they need, in the forms and at the times they want them” (p. 6). Thus a more coherent system is tied to more student choice, and the plan hints at a more rationalized set of programs and institutions, although the term “rationalization” is not used.

The *Service Plan*, which is written much like a business plan, provides a number of performance measures and targets to assess how the Ministry itself will be held accountable for implementing the Plan. One performance measure that will achieve a more efficient and integrated post-secondary education system is improved credit transfer arrangements. A measure that will enhance student choice is an expansion of online access through further development of the E-merge/BCcampus initiative. A measure that will lead to less regulation of institutions is the revision of the existing profile-based funding formula and a movement to block funding. The *Service Plan* also commits to forming a Ministry’s Advisory Committee that “will be created to bring together the system’s stakeholders to ensure better focus on priorities and achieving the strategic shifts” (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002, p. 6). Finally, the Plan commits to legislative changes in 2002 to make many of these strategic shifts possible.

Adrian Kershaw from the University College of the Cariboo prepared an analysis in January 2002 of an earlier summary of AVED’s three-year *Service Plan*. Kershaw (2002) refers to the strategic shift of a “coherent and integrated public system” as implying “rationalization and change” and says that it could lead to “program rationalization to cut down on duplication” (p. 2). Kershaw also states that in his opinion, many of the strategic shifts will result in demands by government for a much more flexible public post-secondary system. According to Kershaw, this flexibility will be gained through a market-driven approach that will include “stiff competition from private sector providers for significantly reduced funding” (p. 4) and “a focus on accountability measures which are market driven” (p. 5).

In conclusion, AVED's three-year *Service Plan* points to a conflicting set of directions in the years ahead. On the one hand, government appears to be moving towards a more market-driven, decentralized system with autonomous public and private institutions competing for resources as they offer more flexible learning options designed to meet the needs of their customers, the students. On the other hand, it appears that actions will be taken by government to develop a more centralized system where government will lead a process to clarify roles and mandates across a coherent and integrated system, which hints at Ministry-driven program and institutional rationalization. How these conflicting directions will play out remains to be seen and is beyond the scope of the present study.

Budget letter to institutions dated March 11, 2002

Final evidence of the new direction being taken by the Liberal government to implement its three-year *Service Plan* is found in the annual budget letter that was sent to institutions on March 11, 2002. The Ministry generally uses the budget letter as an opportunity to state its expectations of institutions in the year ahead for the funding that is being received from government. The 2002/03 budget letter is no exception.

In the March 11 letter, written by the Deputy Minister, Gerry Armstrong, the Ministry commits to giving institutions more autonomy and to building a new accountability framework. Armstrong (2002) states the following:

As a result of the Core Services Review, the Ministry has been reorganized and refocussed on essential core services, an integral part of which is the shift to results-based management and greater accountability for the public funds invested in the public post-secondary system. (p. 1)

Armstrong states that the accountability framework must focus more on actual results achieved and less on input measures, which had been the case in the past. However, Armstrong recognizes the importance of "collaborative effort between the Ministry and system partners" and states that "institutional participation in the process of developing this framework is essential" (p. 2).

In terms of institutional autonomy, a number of measures contained in the letter point towards giving institutions more choice in how they run their affairs. These measures include the full deregulation of the setting of tuition fees, which had been frozen by legislation for the last several years under the NDP, and the move to block grants versus program profile funding based on the funding formula. With regards to the move towards block funding, Armstrong (2002) states that it “will give institutions the flexibility to achieve their targeted level of educational program delivery” (p. 2). The letter also provides institutions with block grant levels and service delivery targets for the next three fiscal years.

Thus the 2002/03 budget letter to institutions represents a major shift towards a different relationship between the Ministry and institutions, a shift that results in far greater institutional autonomy within a more results-based accountability framework and more predictable funding. The letter and the three-year *Service Plan* described above also show a shift towards decentralization in terms of allowing institutional decision making at the local level within broad provincial parameters. Interestingly, though, the March 11, 2002, letter by Armstrong also recognizes the need for institutions and the Ministry to collaborate in the development of the accountability framework, which suggests a continuing understanding on the part of the Ministry of the value of cooperation with what it terms its “system partners” (p. 2).

Summary for 1992 to 2002

The period from 1992 to 2002 witnessed a period of increasing centralization of the college, university college, and institute system but in a manner different from previous decades. The NDP government that was in power during the 1990s favoured a constituency-based approach to governance at both the institution and system level, as was shown in many of the recommendations in the HRDP report of 1992. A main driver of the increasing role of all stakeholder groups, and especially faculty, in decision-making processes was the 1996

Amendment to the College and Institute Act, which moved institutions closer to a model of shared governance by legislating elected members of faculty, staff, and students on institutional boards and by creating Education Councils. Throughout the 1990s, these stakeholder groups held prominent positions on a number of influential system-wide committees, thus reducing the former predominant role played by presidents and board chairs in working with the Ministry. The provincial Strategic Plan *Charting A New Course*, released in 1996, was another example of a centralizing document that was developed by a constituency-based committee and that drove much of the interaction between the Ministry and the institutions for the next five years.

While much of the evidence in the literature points toward greater centralization during the 1990s, there is also evidence of the successful continuation of voluntary articulation and transfer arrangements and of a continuing understanding of the value of voluntary collaboration as well as of positive system/Ministry relationships. The period from 1992 to 2002 also saw increasing institutional differentiation that was due largely to the creation of the university college sector as distinct from colleges and institutes. This differentiation occurred in the absence of a solid policy or legislative framework from government. As a result of the increasing differentiation among institutions, the increasing centralization, and the changing role of constituency groups in system governance, a backlash developed in which institutional presidents called for greater institutional autonomy and a return of power to institutions and their presidents in the decision-making process. Another result of the changes in the 1990s was the eventual dissolution of AECBC in 2001. This occurred just as the new Liberal government gained power with a massive majority. The new government began pursuing an ambitious agenda for change in the post-secondary system, an agenda that combines the conflicting goals of a more decentralized and market-driven system working in a more coherent and integrated fashion.

This concludes the analysis of the important literature from the fifth and final phase being studied in this research. The following is a brief summary of the key findings from the entire Chapter 4, complete with a table of important events in relation to the purpose of this study.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

The final section of the chapter serves as a synthesis of the key findings from the literature. The section begins with a discussion of the relationship among the three dichotomies inherent in the purpose of the study: centralization/ decentralization, system/autonomy, and coordination/collaboration. This discussion is accompanied by a diagram that attempts to show this relationship visually. The section continues with a listing of the key findings from the review of literature as they relate to the purpose of this study. The findings are followed by a table that provides a listing of the key events between 1962 and 2002 that are important to the findings of this study.

The relationship among decentralization/centralization, autonomy/system, and collaboration/coordination

The purpose of this study has been to better understand the historical development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system with the focus on the changing nature of voluntary inter-institutional collaboration in relation to provincial coordination. The study also examined the related themes of centralization and decentralization and the development of a provincial system of autonomous institutions.

A review of the literature has shown a clear relationship among the three dichotomies inherent in the research purpose: decentralization/centralization, autonomy/system, and collaboration/coordination. In general, a move from a decentralized collection of institutions to a centralized system was accompanied by a loss of institutional autonomy and a move towards institutions being seen as part of a larger provincial system. At the same time, voluntary collaboration, which was

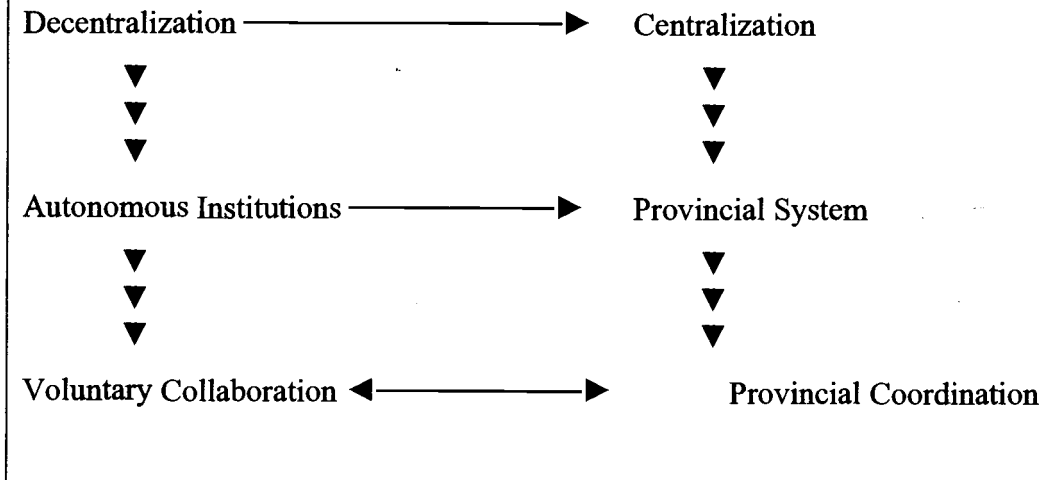
more necessary in a decentralized system with little government intervention, was replaced by ever increasing levels of provincial coordination with government playing a senior role in that coordination.

However, over time voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination became less distinguishable as separate entities as the Ministry and institutions worked closely together to achieve system goals, often based on government policy and planning documents that encouraged, if not mandated, inter-institutional cooperation. Thus voluntary collaboration became more formalized and more closely intertwined with provincial coordination. This latter finding is expanded upon in the next subsection on key findings.

In the early 2000s, the new Liberal government began moving the system back towards decentralization based on their market-driven ideology. With increased decentralization came increased autonomy and less provincial coordination. There is no evidence in the literature yet as to whether or not more voluntary collaboration will develop because of the reduction in government involvement at the system level. The competitive nature of a deregulated post-secondary system may mitigate against inter-institutional collaboration.

In order to better understand the relationship among the three dichotomies, the following diagram (see figure following) has been prepared. The bottom row in the figure denotes a two-way flow between collaboration and coordination to reflect the above finding that the two processes have become closely related over time.

Figure: The relationship among decentralization/centralization, autonomy/system, and collaboration/coordination



Key findings from the literature

Below are the major findings that emerged from the review of the literature that has been presented in the previous sections of Chapter 4.

1. **Roots of institutional autonomy**: The Macdonald Report and the subsequent enabling amendment to the Public Schools Act, coupled with the lack of interest on the part of government in directing college development in the early days, are at the root of the strong sense of institutional autonomy, community responsiveness, and resistance to centralization that developed in B.C. and has been maintained to some extent to the present.
2. **Centralization and decentralization**: The pendulum has swung from a decentralized set of institutions to a centralized system and is now swinging back to a decentralized system. However, the reasons for decentralization have changed, with the 1960s witnessing the development of autonomous, community-based institutions based on grassroots support for the democratization of education and on a lack of government interest and the

2000s experiencing a move to decentralization based on a market-driven ideology that favours deregulation, less intervention by government in the affairs of autonomous institutions, and greater accountability for outcomes.

3. **Relationship between funding and centralization**: The increasing level of centralization by government of the developing college and institute system was related in large part to the increasing level of funding provided by government for both capital and operating costs of larger numbers of institutions coupled with decreasing levels of local funding. More government funds also meant an increasing emphasis on accountability for the use of those funds.
4. **Relationship between the economy and centralization**: Whenever the provincial economy has worsened and public resources have become limited, various governments have tended to take a more centralized approach to the management of institutions and a greater interest in program rationalization to ensure that provincial funds are being used efficiently and that programs are applied in nature and are meeting the province's economic needs. In the economic downturn of the early 2000s, however, government is responding with a decentralist approach based on a market-driven ideology.
5. **Voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration**: Institutional representatives have always realized that a degree of inter-institutional coordination is necessary. Therefore, they have put considerable time and effort over the last four decades into voluntary collaboration so as to prevent unnecessary program duplication, ensure student transfer, lobby government, and prevent government from becoming too directive in the coordination of a system.
6. **Voluntary nature of transfer**: The Academic Board developed a facilitative rather than directive approach to dealing with college development in the 1960s and created a voluntary approach to solving transfer and articulation issues. These voluntary collaborative efforts at improving transfer of students have continued over the last four decades and are at the root of much of the

collaboration and goodwill that have existed among institutions, including universities. Furthermore, the Ministry has recognized the importance of this voluntary approach to the success of the transfer initiative.

7. **System/Ministry cooperation**: While institutions have recognized the benefits of voluntary collaboration, both institutions and the Ministry have recognized the value of working closely together to plan and implement system-wide initiatives. The institutions have understood the important role that the Ministry must play in coordinating an accountable provincial system while the Ministry has understood that system-wide initiatives are more successful if the institutions have a role in their planning and implementation. The result has been the development of a positive working relationship in which both the Ministry and institutions agree to and have ownership of system-wide initiatives.
8. **Blending of collaboration and coordination**: Beginning with the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act and continuing through a number of Ministry policy and planning documents over the next two decades, inter-institutional cooperation was recognized by the Ministry as a necessary element of a cohesive provincial system. Therefore, what had previously existed as voluntary collaboration among institutions without Ministry intervention became required cooperation as part of system-wide goals. As system/Ministry partnerships became more prevalent in guiding the development of system-wide initiatives, provincial coordination and inter-institutional collaboration often became blended into a single effort at developing and maintaining a coherent system, with the Ministry as a senior partner in the process.
9. **Impact of abolishing the intermediary councils on system/Ministry cooperation**: Institutions were particularly critical of the role of the three intermediary councils in interfering with institutional autonomy and in serving as a buffer between institutions and the Ministry. The abolishment of the three councils in 1983 through an amendment to the Colleges and Provincial

Institutes Act was a key factor in allowing a strong, direct working relationship to build over the years between Ministry officials and institutional representatives.

- 10. Importance of the funding formula:** The funding formula, developed in 1984 by the Ministry in close cooperation with institutional representatives, has brought stability to the system by creating a predictable and an equitable means of funding institutions of different size and mandate. This predictability and equitability has lessened competition among institutions for resources and has had a major impact on the ability of institutions to cooperate for the good of the system.
- 11. Institutional differentiation:** The history of the B.C. public post-secondary system has been one of progressive differentiation, beginning with a single university until the early 1960s and expanding to include 28 institutions made up of colleges, university colleges, institutes, agencies, and different kinds of universities. This differentiation, and in particular the development of university colleges since 1990, has occurred in the absence of a provincial policy or legislative framework for the development of a coherent system and has resulted in part in the present fragmentation of the post-secondary system.
- 12. Importance of personal relationships:** One of the key stabilizing influences throughout the 1980s and 1990s on the development of a coordinated college, university college, and institute system has been the personal relationships that have developed between Ministry and institutional officials and among institutional officials. These relationships have been built on trust and goodwill and were remarkably stable over the two decades. However, the change in key personnel in both the Ministry and institutions beginning in the late 1990s has had a negative impact on the maintenance of a balanced and coordinated provincial system.
- 13. Impact of stakeholder involvement in provincial governance:** An increase in centralizing efforts by government in the 1990s, coupled with an increase in

stakeholder involvement in provincial decision making, led to greater centralization of the college, university college, and institute system and weakened the historic relationship between the Ministry and institutional administrators and boards. This weakened relationship and the backlash to perceived over-centralization are in part responsible for the present fragmentation of the system.

- 14. The declining role of boards:** The powerful role played by the institutional boards in the coordination of a system and in communicating with government on institutional and system concerns has been gradually eroded over the years, and by 2001 there was no formal mechanism remaining for boards to work with each other on inter-institutional or system concerns. At the same time, the role of institutional presidents has become increasingly important, both in terms of inter-institutional relationships and relationships with the Ministry.
- 15. Role of important individuals:** Over the decades, and particularly in the first 25 years of college and institute development, certain individuals have played a very important role in the way in which institutions and the system have developed. These individuals held strong views on the values of institutional autonomy and/or the need for system coordination, and these views helped shape the system. Such important individuals include John Macdonald, author of the Macdonald Report; Dean Chant, Chair of the Academic Board; Frank Beinder, the first Executive Director of the B.C. Association of Colleges; Andrew Soles, the first ADM responsible for colleges and institutes; Patrick McGeer, the Minister who introduced the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977; and Grant Fisher, the ADM for much of the 1980s.

Table of key events

The chapter concludes with the presentation of a table that provides a list of the key events pertinent to this study of the development of a coordinated and collaborative college, university college, and institute system in B.C. The events

represent a progressive movement from 1962 to 1999 from a decentralized collection of autonomous institutions to a centralized provincial system. Over the same time period, voluntary collaboration was either replaced or melded with provincial coordination. From 1999 to 2002, the system began to fragment and the pendulum began to swing back to decentralization based on a market-driven ideology.

Table: Key Events in the Development of a Coordinated and Collaborative College, University College, and Institute System in B.C.

1962-1969

- 1962 Release of the Macdonald Report
- 1963 Amendment to the Public Schools Act allowing school boards to establish colleges
- 1963 Creation of the Academic Board of Higher Education of B.C. through amendment to the Universities Act
- 1965 Vancouver City College becomes first autonomous community college
- 1966 Selkirk College opens in Castlegar after a successful plebiscite and referendum
- 1966 Creation of the Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC)
- 1968 Development by Academic Board of first standing committees to deal with transfer problems in specific disciplines

1970-1977

- 1970 Regional and District Colleges Association of B.C. (RDCABC) changes name to the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC)
- 1971 Meld of the regional colleges and the provincial vocational institutes
- 1973 Province begins funding 100 percent of college capital expenditures
- 1974 Report of the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia
- 1974 BCAC expands its role and hires its first Executive Director, Frank Beinder
- 1974 The Academic Board is dissolved
- 1975 Four new institutions established by government in areas not yet served by colleges (Northeastern, Northwestern, East Kootenay, and North Vancouver Island) as a result of the Task Force report

1977-1983

- 1977 Passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act
- 1977 Five new provincial institutes created as a result of the Act
- 1977 Three intermediary councils created as a result of the Act: the Academic Council, the Occupational Training Council, and the Management Advisory Council
- 1977 Province begins funding 100 percent of college and institute operating expenditures as a result of the Act
- 1979 Creation of the Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee with system and Ministry representatives
- 1980 College-Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) formed from the College Faculties Federation (CFF) of B.C.
- 1983 Development of 1982 to 1987 *Integrated Five Year Planning* document through system and Ministry cooperation
- 1983 College and Institute Amendment Act abolishes three intermediary councils and gives Minister authority to appoint all board members, thus removing elected school board representatives from the boards

1984-1991

- 1984 Implementation of the Funding Formula, developed through system and Ministry cooperation, to bring uniformity and predictability to annual funding allocations
- 1986 Development of 1986 to 1991 *Integrated Five-Year Planning* document
- 1988 Release of the Access for All report, resulting in significant expansion of access to post-secondary opportunities
- 1989 Creation of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) as a result of the Access for All report
- 1990 Designation, as a result of the Access for All report, of three colleges (Okanagan, Cariboo, and Malaspina) as university colleges to be developed under auspices of traditional universities
- 1990 Formation of the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC) by combining the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC) and the Council of Principals (COP)
- 1991 Development of the 1991 document *Partners for the Future: Ministry Plan*
- 1991 Election of the New Democratic Party (NDP), replacing the Social Credit government

1992-2002

- 1992 Release of the Human Resource Development Project report
- 1993 Release of the report of the Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes
- 1994 Formation of Post-Secondary Employers' Association as provincial bargaining agent for college employers
- 1996 Amendment to the College and Institute Act creating Education Councils and allowing elected internal representatives of faculty, support staff, and students on institutions' boards
- 1996 Extension of degree-granting authority to several institutions, including five university colleges and two institutes, through the Amendment to the College and Institute Act
- 1996 Release of *Charting A New Course* Strategic Plan developed by Ministry and a committee of multiple stakeholders
- 1996 Formation of the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS) and Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2) as a result of *Charting A New Course*
- 1998 Formation of the Consortium of B.C. University Colleges
- 2001 Dissolution of the Advanced Education Council of B.C. (AECBC)
- 2001 Election of the Liberal government
- 2002 Passage of Bill 28, the Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act
- 2002 Release of the Ministry of Advanced Education's *Service Plan 2002/2003-2004/2005*

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEW DATA

Chapter 5 reports the author's interpretation of the findings from the interview data. Ten interviews were conducted with individuals who either worked or still work in the B.C. public post-secondary education system and were, therefore, witnesses to some of the key events that have taken place in the development of the B.C. system. The interviewees were chosen to represent multiple perspectives, in keeping with the hermeneutic approach to understanding adopted in this study. Interviewees included institutional presidents, board members, Ministry staff, and faculty association leaders. Please refer to Appendix C for the names of and brief biographical data on each of the interviewees. All interviewees provided permission to the researcher to use their names as appropriate to identify important statements that they had made and were provided the opportunity to review and approve both the transcripts and researcher's analyses of those transcripts. In historical research, it is important to identify the interviewees to add credence to the statements being made by witnesses of the historical past.

The interviews were conducted to confirm findings and fill gaps in understanding from the literature review of historical B.C. documents, which represented the main source of data for the study. Therefore, the interview questions were developed to address directly or indirectly the 15 findings that concluded Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 has been written using those 15 findings as its primary structure. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of the 17 interview questions that were asked, with only a portion of the questions having been asked of each interviewee. Each finding is presented verbatim from Chapter 4, followed by the question or questions that were designed to gain evidence regarding that finding. For each finding, the researcher points out similarities and differences between interview responses and findings from the literature in Chapter 4 as well as similarities and differences among interviewees' responses. Whenever possible, the

researcher provides his interpretation of the reasons for any differences that exist. Throughout the chapter, the researcher also summarizes key insights gained from interviewees that differ from the findings from literature. A summary of the support for the findings from literature and of additional insights from the interviews is presented at the end of Chapter 5. A summary of findings from both the literature review and the interviews is presented at the beginning of Chapter 6.

In general, there was a high degree of support for the findings from the literature from many of the respondents on most questions. However, some differences in responses did occur, as would be expected using a hermeneutic approach because each interviewee brings a different perspective to the interpretation of the past, based on her or his time, role, and experiences in the post-secondary system. A primary reason for interviewing for multiple perspectives was for the researcher to gain greater depth in his developing understanding in relation to the purpose of this study. In many cases, the responses of the interviewees went well beyond what the researcher had found through his extensive literature review for Chapter 4 and thus provided a rich source of additional data for the study. In other cases, the responses may have differed from the specific content of the 15 findings but were similar to evidence that the researcher reported in the literature review throughout Chapter 4.

Most of the information presented below represents the analyses conducted by the researcher of the responses to the interviews, based on the transcripts. As well, direct quotes were used when they were best able to convey the meaning of the interviewee. Direct quotes are provided verbatim from the approved transcripts, but occasional words may be deleted, as denoted by three periods, or words may be added in brackets to ensure grammatically correct text. The deletions or additions are not intended to change the meaning of the speaker. Several interviewees pointed out that they were surprised upon reviewing their verbatim transcripts at how they had “butchered the English language,” but the researcher assured them

that any quotes used in the dissertation would be edited so as to be as grammatically correct as possible without changing their meaning.

RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Below is the researcher's interpretation of the interviewees' responses to interview questions, organized into subsections based on each of the 15 findings presented in Chapter 4.

Roots of institutional autonomy

Finding 1: The Macdonald Report and the subsequent enabling amendment to the Public Schools Act, coupled with the lack of interest on the part of government in directing college development in the early days, are at the root of the strong sense of institutional autonomy, community responsiveness, and resistance to centralization that developed in B.C. and has been maintained to some extent to the present.

Question 1: What has been the impact of the Macdonald Report on provincial coordination of colleges and on the development of autonomous institutions? What was the approach of the provincial government to college development in the 1960s?

Question 1 was asked of six individuals. Responses to the two parts of the question were quite uniform and provided strong evidence for Finding 1 from the literature review. With regards to the first part of the question dealing with the importance of the Macdonald Report, five of six interviewees described the Report as having a major impact on the development of colleges, with Bill Day calling it an "enormous impact," Jack Newberry describing the Report as "the blueprint for the establishment of post-secondary education in the province," and Leo Perra calling the Report the "catalyst to the creation of the college system in B.C." A sixth interviewee, John Ellis, did not feel that the Macdonald Report had much influence on the development of a college system because Macdonald's main

concern was with the development of a state university system for B.C. based on the California model. Ellis may have responded as he did because his perspective has been developed through his long career in the university sector of B.C. rather than in the college sector. Two other interviewees also acknowledged that a main emphasis of Macdonald was on the development of a junior college system that would relieve enrolment pressure on UBC, where John Macdonald was the President.

Most interviewees acknowledged that the Macdonald Report gave the government impetus to amend the Public Schools Act, which was described by several interviewees as “enabling legislation.” This amendment gave local school boards and their communities authority to establish community colleges through plebiscites and referenda. The result was, as summarized by Ellis, that “the major impetus for the college system came from a local level.” Others described the important role played by school boards in the early development of colleges in the 1960s. Lloyd Morin, referring to the Macdonald Report, stated that “because of the way it was followed up on, using the school boards as the generating body, there was a strong community focus and ... autonomy was jealously guarded.”

In terms of the second part of the question, there was strong agreement among interviewees on the lack of direct involvement by government in the development of early colleges or their coordination. Day stated that “the Macdonald Report ... forcefully injected the provincial government into the business of development of institutions. Up to that point, ... Victoria viewed post-secondary education reluctantly as only a quasi-responsibility.” Morin described the approach of government to college development in the 1960s as “laissez faire” because of the permissive nature of the amendments to the Public Schools Act. Morin continued that there was no particular initiative on the part of government to encourage or discourage the development of colleges in different regions of the province, a process that was driven at the local level. According to Day, the Act

ensured that the role of government was limited to setting up the procedures and framework by which colleges could be established locally.

Two interviewees spoke of the slow development of colleges in the 1960s because of the lack of government funding and the difficulty in raising adequate funding at the local level. Ed Lavalley stated that “until government bit the funding bullet, ... you had this enabling legislation and this enormous public enthusiasm, but very little to show for it in terms of actual tangible development.” Lavalley continued that “they finally came to the conclusion that maybe these institutions were not going to survive if something wasn’t done about it.” Other interviewees agreed that the high level of public support for colleges and the growing understanding of the benefits of these new institutions led government to provide more support, particularly in the 1970s. Perra stated that government was supportive of the developing colleges in the 1960s and provided its share of funding once local taxpayers had agreed to pay their share. Perra also felt that, despite the autonomy of locally driven institutions, the beginnings of a relationship were building between the Ministry and the institutions.

In summary, there was generally a high level of agreement between interviewees’ responses and Finding 1 from the Chapter 4 literature review as well as a high level of agreement among interviewees.

Centralization and decentralization

Finding 2: The pendulum has swung from a decentralized set of institutions to a centralized system and is now swinging back to a decentralized system. However, the reasons for decentralization have changed, with the 1960s witnessing the development of autonomous, community-based institutions based on grassroots support for the democratization of education and on a lack of government interest and the 2000s experiencing a move to decentralization based on a market-driven ideology that favours deregulation, less intervention by government in the affairs of autonomous institutions, and greater accountability for outcomes.

Question 2: What were the reasons for decentralization of the developing college system in the 1960s? How would you describe the development of the college, university college, and institute system in 2002 in terms of the centralization/decentralization continuum? Compare the reasons for decentralization in the 1960s with the reasons for decentralization in the 2000s.

Question 2 was asked of seven individuals, but one was unable to provide a response because of not having worked in the post-secondary system during the two decades in question. Similar to Question 1, the responses to Question 2 provided a high degree of support for the assertions in Finding 2 that arose from the literature review in Chapter 4, although the responses to the first part of the question dealing with the reasons for decentralization in the 1960s were more uniform across interviewees than the responses regarding the 2000s. Thus the two parts of the question will be dealt with differently below, with the first part of the question receiving more of a summary description and the second part presenting more individual interviewee's responses. The third part of the question asking for a comparison of the reasons for decentralization in the 1960s and 2000s will not be covered separately because the answer to this part of the question is inherent in the first two parts.

In the first part of the question dealing with decentralization in the 1960s, five out of six interviewees gave as a major reason the strong community involvement in creating community colleges. As Shell Harvey stated, "the community college movement was alive and well in the '60s, and the whole concept of a college being a creature of the community was part of it." A further three interviewees gave as a closely related reason the fact that local taxation via school boards was used to pay a portion of the college's funding needs. Out of these two sets of responses, Perra had a slightly different perspective in his response in that he said that government insisted on community involvement and local tax support, thus suggesting more of a role for government than other interviewees. Morin gave another closely related reason when he stated that "every

college region was considered unique, and therefore there was an insistence that the decisions taken about the priority of programs and the method of delivery and so on had to be uniquely suited to that particular community.” Ellis gave yet another reason in saying that decentralization was due to a lack of government involvement. Therefore, the above responses show a strong consistency among interviewees and between interviewees’ responses and the first part of Finding 2.

Both Day and Perra commented on the very small size of the Ministry in the 1960s as a cause of a decentralist approach to college development. Day described this as the “sheer inability of the Ministry to manage a very rapidly developing system.” A further reason given by Day for decentralization in the 1960s was the lack of provincial resources for college development and the concomitant difficulty in raising local funding that, although used by government as a means of controlling growth of the colleges, was still described by Day as a decentralist approach of government.

Although not asked specifically about the move towards a centralist approach in the intervening decades between the 1960s and 2000s, three interviewees did mention this centralist trend in their responses, thus providing further support for Finding 2. A lengthy quote by Harvey is provided below because it spans the decades in terms of his opinion of decentralizing and centralizing trends.

It probably started off being incredibly autonomous institutions. Once the provincial government ... was paying the full shot, then it gradually began to put in place mechanisms like the funding formula and other kinds of mechanisms that would give them some control over expenditures of their own money.... Then increasingly, ... they’ve commented that in fact what they really want to do is to be able to hold the college accountable for delivering on the outcomes, but in the absence of a perfect mechanism to do that ... during ... the ‘80s and ‘90s, ... they actually got quite involved in various parts of the management.

Before proceeding to the next set of responses, it should be mentioned that Ellis stated that in his view the colleges, university colleges, and institutes are not

part of a centralized system but are rather a grouping of autonomous institutions. Dr. Ellis agreed that there are some centralist mechanisms in place, such as funding, but in general he believed that there is a common lack of emphasis on systems in Canada, which differentiates post-secondary education in Canada from the United States. A reason for this differing opinion of Ellis may be that his strong involvement with universities rather than with colleges would have meant that he was more familiar with the higher level of autonomy afforded to universities in B.C. and the traditional lack of system-level work among universities.

In terms of the second part of Question 2, three interviewees did refer to politics and the ideology of the present Liberal government as a reason for decentralization in the 2000s, thus providing some support for Finding 2. However, there were many other reasons given, which deserve separate mention. Newberry viewed the 1990s under the NDP government as “a tremendous movement toward centralization and control ... with as little room left for creativity or independent action as possible.” Newberry continued by stating that in his view this high level of control has been a failure in terms of affordability and the inability to produce the desired results. He stated that the Liberal government in 2002 is reacting to the high level of centralist control in the 1990s by moving in the opposite direction, giving more autonomy to institutions to meet established outcomes in whatever way they can.

Perra was one of the interviewees who agreed that the non-interventionist approach of the Liberal government was a reason for the move towards decentralization. He stated that “certainly under this current government ... there seems to be a pretty significant decentralization of decision making to the local institutions.” Other reasons given by Perra included the fragmentation that has occurred among the sectors in the college, university college, and institute system; the desire of individual institutions for greater autonomy in decision making; and the smaller size of the Ministry. Perra felt that the result of these factors and the ensuing decentralization is that there is likely to be less system coordination in the

years ahead. Day also gave the smaller size of the Ministry in 2002 as a reason for greater decentralization. Interestingly, Day stated that, in his opinion, the two main reasons for decentralization in the 1960s and 2000s are similar. One is the inability to micromanage because the Ministry was very small in the 1960s and has been downsized since the late 1990s. The other is the tight control of money by government, which is similar in the 1960s and the present. Day stated that the present focus on global budgeting and the delivery of programming within wide parameters are indeed decentralizing trends, but restraints on access to funding, coupled with holding institutions accountable for delivering with that limited funding, results in a continuing macro level of control by government.

Thus, while there was good support for Finding 2 on the nature of decentralization in the 1960s and 2000s from most of the responses to Question 2, there was also considerable variation among interviewees' responses. This variation provided a number of other possible reasons for decentralization having taken place than those provided in Finding 2 although some of these additional reasons have been referred to in the text of Chapter 4. Additional reasons given for decentralization in the 2000s included the reaction of the present government and of institutions to the perceived over-centralization of the 1990s, the fragmentation that has developed among institutions and sectors, and the smaller size of the Ministry.

Relationship between funding and centralization

Finding 3: The increasing level of centralization by government of the developing college and institute system was related in large part to the increasing level of funding provided by government for both capital and operating costs of larger numbers of institutions coupled with decreasing levels of local funding. More government funds also meant an increasing emphasis on accountability for the use of those funds.

Question 3: What do you think the main reasons are that government took an increasingly centralist approach to the development of the college and institute system in the late 1970s and early 1980s?

Question 3 was actually designed to relate to Findings 3 and 4, which are closely related in that they deal with the relationship between the centralizing trends of government and increased funding by government (Finding 3) and a worsening economy (Finding 4). However, the author has chosen to divide the responses to Question 3 into the two separate findings, largely because Question 4 and 5 were also designed to gain interviewees' perceptions regarding Finding 4. Therefore, the subsection that follows this one will deal with the three questions related to Finding 4.

Question 3 was asked of seven individuals, and strong support was provided for the finding that increasing government funding increased its tendency to take a more centralist approach to the development of colleges. Six of seven interviewees listed cost control of the burgeoning college system as a primary reason for greater centralization by government beginning in the late 1970s. Day stated that "the best efforts of government in the late '60s, very early '70s, to control the pace of development ... were to no avail. These new institutions were incredibly popular." Similarly, Morin stated "I think people just got a little nervous that things were evolving so fast and going in all different directions and probably [there was] a need to ... put some reins on these horses and provide some steerage." Elizabeth Fleet stated "I think that was the beginning of the realization that there wasn't a bottomless pit of money, and so therefore there must be some control.... There had to be some limits." Of the six interviewees who gave cost control as a primary reason for increased centralization, only Lavalley referred indirectly to the concomitant reduction in local funding by stating that government had now taken over complete funding of the colleges.

Related to the need for cost control in the rapidly growing college system were the comments of two interviewees on the need to control unbridled program

growth. Newberry, a former finance director in government, referred to the need of government to provide central coordination to rationalize programs and reduce costly and unnecessary duplication at institutions. Rich Johnston spoke of the need of government to direct program growth into program areas that met its needs and, in particular, into areas that responded to changing demands in the labour market.

In terms of the increasing emphasis on accountability for the use of government funds, only two individuals made specific reference to accountability as a reason for greater centralization. Morin stated that government was somewhat suspicious that institutions and their boards were not being fully accountable for the funding received. Therefore, government became more centralist through the collecting of institutional data and monitoring of institutional performance. Similarly, Lavalle, describing the increasing role of government, stated that “their direct involvement, their administrative involvement, their programmatic involvement came from the fact that they were spending public funds, ... and they were accountable to the voters of B.C.” Elsewhere, Lavalle stated:

They moved from ... having an enabling role to having the role of a driver, ... both organizationally and financially. ... They took provincial responsibility for funding ... and ... by taking over the funding, the outcomes, the success or failure of the institutions, was definitely part of government record.

A third interviewee, Day, did not use the term “accountability” in his response but did say that government became more involved in controlling growth “to make sure that the money was well spent.”

As with past questions, interviewees gave other reasons for increasing centralization of government than those provided in Finding 3, and these reasons add depth to the finding. Three interviewees spoke of the government becoming more centralist because of the need to coordinate the development of a system. Johnston described this as “trying to force the system ... to come together, to cooperate.” Newberry stated that “there was some sense that collectively, functioning as a system rather than [as] totally and utterly independent entities, that there would be an enhanced service for ... the people of British Columbia in general

if there was some coordination.” Such coordination would also lead to a greater rationalization of programs. On a somewhat related vein, Morin spoke of increasing centralization because of a growing feeling of inequity among institutions in terms of how individual institutions were being treated by government.

A few interviewees gave further reasons for increasing centralization in their responses to Question 3. Lavalle and Day both spoke of the desire of government to provide more funding to colleges because it was a very popular thing to do politically. Newberry provided a political reason for the centralizing move by government to replace school board appointees with government appointees. He stated that the Social Credit government of the day wanted to prevent the NDP from gaining control over college boards by sponsoring NDP school board appointees to the college boards.

One interviewee, Ellis, did not feel there had been greater centralization by government. He stated:

I don't think that this was a matter of centralization, to add a new community college.... A local need was identified within the local community and was gradually sold to the provincial government, not as a centralizing agency, but in many ways, [as] a decentralization of educational opportunity.

This response is similar to Ellis's response to Question 2.

In summary, the responses from interviewees to Question 3 provided strong support for Finding 3 regarding the impact of increasing government funding on the centralizing trend of government. Interviewees provided further reasons for this centralization, including the need of government to begin coordinating a system of institutions and the growing feeling among institutions that they were being treated inequitably. This latter reason supports the finding from the literature in Chapter 4 that the institutions themselves saw benefits in government playing a greater role in coordinating the development of a system.

Relationship between the economy and centralization

Finding 4: Whenever the provincial economy has worsened and public resources have become limited, various governments have tended to take a more centralized approach to the management of institutions and a greater interest in program rationalization to ensure that provincial funds are being used efficiently and that programs are applied in nature and are meeting the province's economic needs. In the economic downturn of the early 2000s, however, government is responding with a decentralist approach based on a market-driven ideology.

Question 3: What do you think the main reasons are that government took an increasingly centralist approach to the development of the college and institute system in the late 1970s and early 1980s?

Question 4: What was the impact of the 1982 to 1987 Five-Year Integrated Plan on program rationalization at the provincial and regional level?

Question 5: What has been the historic relationship between the state of the economy and the centralizing or decentralizing approach of government to the development of the college, university college, and institute system? What is the status of this relationship in 2002?

As stated previously, Questions 3, 4, and 5 were all designed to gain information from interviewees with regards to Finding 4. Therefore, all three questions will be dealt with in turn below. As the interviews progressed, the researcher realized that neither Question 3 nor 4 was resulting in responses that could be related to Finding 4. Therefore, he developed Question 5 for the second half of the interviews to be able to determine whether there was support or not for Finding 4.

As described above, most interviewees responded to Question 3 by referring to the increase in centralization as a result of increased government funding for colleges, thus providing strong evidence for Finding 3. In their responses regarding the need to control costs, three interviewees also mentioned the worsening state of the economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s as a reason for government to take a

more centralist approach. Day stated that the centralization by government was tied to the need to control the previously unbridled growth of colleges and was brought about because of a worsening economy. Morin said that some level of centralization was necessary for cost containment, particularly when the restraint program was introduced in the early 1980s. Similarly, Fleet referred to the need to control mounting costs because of government's need to make severe cutbacks at the time, and she gave as an example the closure of the David Thompson University Centre in Nelson, B.C.

Although not referring specifically to the state of the economy as a reason for centralization, Lavalle did state that government "recognized that post-secondary education was an important economic driver," thus providing evidence for the assertion in Finding 4 that government wanted colleges to serve the province's economic needs. As well, Johnston referred to the desire of government to use the college system as a means of responding to changing demands in the labour market. Finally, Newberry spoke of the efforts of government in the early 1980s to rationalize programming to result in the more efficient use of government funds.

Question 4, dealing with the impact of the 1982 to 1987 *Integrated Five Year Planning* document on program rationalization, had been constructed to seek information related to two findings: Finding 4 dealing with the effects of a worsening economy on centralization and Finding 7 dealing with growing cooperation between the college and institute system and the Ministry. The question was asked of five individuals, but one was unable to provide a response because he could not recall the planning document in any detail. Out of the remaining four interviewees, not one made reference to the relationship between a worsening economy and increased centralization, thus providing no evidence for Finding 4, although all four respondents to this question were in agreement that the 1982 to 1987 document had very little if any impact on program rationalization

during that time period. The responses of the interviewees did not provide evidence confirming or disconfirming Finding 7 either.

Question 5 was asked of the last five interviewees. In terms of the first part of the question, there was strong support from four out of the five interviewees that a worsening economy and limited public resources resulted in a more centralized approach by government to the management of institutions. As well, three of five interviewees specifically stated that when the economy improved, government tended to take a more decentralist approach. For instance, Harvey stated “A strong economy, more towards decentralization. Tough economy, more towards centralization,” and Jack Finnbogason said “bad times equal a high degree of interference; good times equal a lower degree of interference.” Johnston said that the government tends to want to have more control in a weak economy so that it can address labour market needs.

Interviewees provided interesting additional viewpoints about the relationship between the state of the economy and the centralist tendencies of government. Lavalley stated that worsening government revenues have resulted in a more controlling, centralist approach by government through targeted funding and through intervention in institutions at the program level. He continued that the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act of 1977 gave the government the tools it needed to micro-manage the system. Harvey stated that the relationship between the state of the economy and centralization applies particularly to the growth or shrinkage of programs but less to the operation of the system as a whole. He also stated that there are more important factors than the economy that impact the decentralist or centralist approach of government, including the need to move to greater accountability, the views of the government in power, and the hands-on or hands-off nature of the Minister of the day. Similarly, Perra, who did not make reference to the relationship between the state of the economy and centralization trends, stated that he felt government priorities were more important than the changing economy in driving the directions of government. He gave as an example

periods of rapid growth in colleges that were not supported by the state of the economy at that time.

The responses to the second part of the question dealing with the status of this relationship in 2002 were more varied, with three interviewees supporting the assertion in Finding 4 that the Liberal government had taken a decentralist approach to managing the college, university college, and institute system in 2002, despite the worsening economy, and two interviewees stating that the Liberals were taking a strong centralist approach. Interviewees also made interesting comments on the influence of political ideology on centralist and decentralist approaches. Lavalley stated that there are interventionist and non-interventionist approaches to dealing with institutions. Centre left politicians, whether NDP or Social Credit, tend to exert “fewer controls as the economy blossoms, more controls as the economy contracts” because of their desire to get the most out of their publicly funded system. Lavalley described the Liberals, on the other hand, as “ideologically ... committed to the marketplace,” which entails a decentralist approach that gives more autonomy to institutions and opens up the education and training system to private competition. Perra also felt that the Liberals were taking a decentralist approach that allowed more local autonomy in program decisions. However, Perra felt that the hands-off approach may only continue “until there are political consequences to pay as a result.” Johnston agreed that the Liberals were taking a more decentralist approach but felt they may have embarked upon that path when they thought the economy was going to be better than it has been.

Harvey, on the other hand, felt that the Liberals have taken a very directive role in the addition and expansion of programs to ensure that the highest priority is given to their New Era commitments. Likewise, the Liberals have taken a very hands-on approach with regards to the Core Review that they conducted to determine their funding priorities. Finnbogason also felt that the Liberal government is exhibiting a high level of intrusiveness and centralism. They are doing so by giving the institutions less money, placing higher demands on them for

productivity and accountability, and expecting them to meet the New Era commitments. Finnbogason refers to this as a form of macro- versus micro-management. This description of the present state of affairs is similar to the response that Day provided for Question 2 where he described the restrictions in funding and high demands for accountability at present as a form of macro control by government.

Thus there was strong support for the first part of Finding 4 dealing with the relationship between the state of the economy and the centralist or decentralist approach of government but a mixed response to the second part of the question dealing with the status of this relationship in 2002. This mixed response is not unlike summary statements made by the author at the end of the section in Chapter 4 on the 1992 to 2002 period where he stated that certain centralizing actions by the new Liberal government, coupled with the government's general move towards greater decentralization, point to conflicting directions in the years ahead. It is likely too early in the Liberal's tenure in office to understand completely their intentions with respect to the future directions of the post-secondary system. Hence, it is not surprising that interviewees had different perceptions about the centralizing or decentralizing nature of the new government's actions.

Voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration

Finding 5: Institutional representatives have always realized that a degree of inter-institutional coordination is necessary. Therefore, they have put considerable time and effort over the last four decades into voluntary collaboration so as to prevent unnecessary program duplication, ensure student transfer, lobby government, and prevent government from becoming too directive in the coordination of a system.

Question 6: Do you think that colleges, university colleges, and institutes have a history of voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration beginning in the 1960s and

continuing until the late 1990s? If so, what are the principal reasons for that voluntary collaboration?

Question 6 was asked of all 10 interviewees because of the importance of Finding 5 to the purpose of this research study. The responses to the first part of the question gave strong support for the assertion in Finding 5 that there has been a history of voluntary collaboration among institutions. In total, 8 of 10 interviewees answered in the affirmative although they gave varied answers as to the period in which collaboration had been strongest. Day felt that there had been a lot of rhetoric in the early years of college development but no examples of enduring collaboration until the early to mid-1980s after the introduction of the funding formula, which resulted in a more transparent funding system that allowed trust to build among institutions. Day felt that there was growth in collaborative efforts after the formula was introduced. Morin stated that the 1960s witnessed a high level of collaboration among college CEOs, but as the system grew and became more complex, systematic coordination overtook voluntary collaboration, a statement that will be explored in more depth under Finding 8. Fleet stated that there had probably been collaborative efforts in the 1960s and 1970s but she was more aware of the high level of collaboration in the 1990s.

Lavalle agreed that there had been collaboration over time, but he said “if by voluntary, you mean an exercise of free will, the answer is no. There was always push ... to solve problems on an inter-institutional basis.” The reasons for that “push” are described below in the summary of the responses to part two of Question 6. Perra felt that there was good voluntary collaboration in the early days of the development of colleges. However, the level of cooperation among institutions has been lessening because of the competition for dwindling resources and the strong focus on accountability for the use of those resources. In such an environment, institutions become more interested in their own well being and not the well being of other institutions. Harvey agreed that there has been a history of voluntary collaboration and that this collaboration has provided a foundation for the

development of a coordinated system, but he stated that collaboration was not the sole basis upon which coordination was built. Finally, both Johnston and Finnbogason agreed that institutions had collaborated voluntarily over time with Finnbogason stating that such collaboration was strongest in the 1970s and then again in the 1990s because of the consultative mechanisms developed under the NDP. However, he stated that the financial restraint of the early to mid-1980s killed the spirit of cooperation that had existed because institutions then had to fight over resources and inequities were created in working conditions across institutions.

Two interviewees did not feel that there had been a true sense of voluntary collaboration among institutions. Ellis agreed that presidents had become good friends and worked on common endeavours so as to develop a common front to approach the Ministry, but he did not feel this represented a true collaborative effort. Ellis felt that at times institutions collaborated because they were forced to by circumstances and because it was in their own best interests to work with other institutions on an initiative. This response is similar to that provided by Lavalle regarding the external forces necessary for collaboration to occur. Newberry was also of the opinion that there has not been a lot of true collaboration among institutions. He agreed that college presidents have known each other well and have met regularly, but there are very few examples of them having accomplished anything of substance as a group. He stated that the reason for this is that “they saw themselves as competitors: they were competing for students; they were competing to get programs; they were competing for money.” Newberry’s different response from the others may have been rooted in his long career in the Ministry as the Director of Finance dealing with institutions vying with each other for resources.

The second part of Question 6 asked for the principal reasons for voluntary collaboration having existed. The reasons given were extremely varied, with a moderate level of support being provided for the four reasons given by the researcher in Finding 5. Three interviewees stated that collaboration existed to assist with program planning and rationalization across institutions or to be more

effective and efficient in the development of curriculum or policies. Four interviewees felt that the need to ensure adequate student transfer was a reason for institutions to cooperate over time. Three interviewees gave the ability to lobby government more effectively as a group as a reason for voluntary collaboration. As Fleet stated, "AECBC [Advanced Education Council of B.C.] developed because there was a feeling that if the presidents and governors could work together as one body, there would be a stronger lobbying influence to government." Finally, only one interviewee, Lavalle, spoke of the need to collaborate voluntarily to prevent the Ministry from becoming too involved in directing the system. He stated "the government basically took a point of view, you either manage this problem or we will." Lavalle's response is in keeping with his view that collaboration was more forced than voluntary in nature.

As with the responses to other questions, there was a host of other reasons given for voluntary collaboration, and these reasons add considerable depth to Finding 5. All of the reasons that were given by more than one interviewee are described below, along with a few reasons given by only one respondent.

Four individuals, not surprisingly three of them being existing or former college and university college presidents, gave the development of a supportive network and goodwill among early college presidents as a reason for them beginning to cooperate with each other. Morin described the 1960s as "a kinder and gentler time" in which presidents in high risk positions banded together in a "mutual support society," which resulted in "extensive collaboration and brotherhood among the colleges." Perra referred to "the socialization process that took place among a group of peers" when presidents met. Johnston described the high level of goodwill that built up among presidents and other administrators because of "working together, getting to know each other." Harvey described early college leaders as generally being "predisposed to collaboration."

A second reason given by three interviewees, representing the views of a former board member, a president, and a union leader, was the need to be able to

develop system-wide responses on important system issues and to deal collectively with government when necessary. This was considered different from the process of lobbying government. A related reason given by the two former faculty leader interviewees for growing collaboration across institutions was the organization of faculty unions into a provincial body. Lavalley stated “within CIEA [College Institute Educators’ Association] itself there emerged a perceived need to deal with the employers and the government in a corporate fashion, in other words, as a group.” Interestingly, Perra stated that increased unionization in the institutions in the early years was a reason for presidents to work more closely together to share information. A further reason given by three interviewees for collaboration in the early days of college development was the need to share expertise. Perra stated that “a lot of people were breaking ground. ... There wasn’t a history of experience that you could fall back on ... people needed to share their experiences at the early stages.”

Two other interviewees spoke of voluntary collaboration resulting from the very nature of the community college movement in the early years. Harvey stated that “the community college culture tended towards collaboration.” Likewise, Finnbogason described the early development of colleges as “the missionary phase” in which “we all regarded another college as our brother/sister, and there was tremendous collegiality and sharing.” Finnbogason continued that there was a “powerful, almost emotional attachment to the notion of doing something different, of the first significant post-secondary experiment in a very long time.” Two interviewees gave as a reason for more voluntary cooperation in the early days the fact that funding was more available and thus institutions did not have to compete for it. Finnbogason stated that “cooperation is easy when you’re not fighting over too small a pot.” Finally, Johnston gave as his final reason for voluntary collaboration the statement that institutions cooperated because it was for the good of students. Institutions put the interests of the students first, which he felt is the appropriate motive for collaboration.

In summary, interviewees provided fairly strong support for the finding that there is a history of voluntary collaboration among institutions in B.C., but they gave different time periods for the height of collaborative efforts and different reasons for these efforts having taken place. Some of the reasons included the development of a supportive network among early college presidents, the need to develop system-wide responses on issues and deal collectively with government, the organization of faculty into a provincial association, and the assumption that collaboration was good for students. Another reason given was that the availability of funding meant institutions did not have to compete for funding, suggesting that collaboration was more difficult in a competitive environment. The variety of reasons given is likely due to the various roles played by these individuals in the college, university college, and institute system. It is more difficult to explain the variation given in people's perceptions of the time when collaboration was at its greatest.

The voluntary nature of transfer

Finding 6: The Academic Board developed a facilitative rather than directive approach to dealing with college development in the 1960s and created a voluntary approach to solving transfer and articulation issues. These voluntary collaborative efforts at improving transfer of students have continued over the last four decades and are at the root of much of the collaboration and goodwill that have existed among institutions, including universities. Furthermore, the Ministry has recognized the importance of this voluntary approach to the success of the transfer initiative.

Question 7: How would you evaluate the success of the transfer system that has developed in B.C. over the last four decades? What are the main reasons for that success or lack of success?

Question 7 was asked of six individuals, but two others, Day and Perra, referred to the transfer system in their interviews although they had not been asked

Question 7. All eight interviewees' responses are described below. This subsection will begin by summarizing the responses to the two parts of Question 7 with the second part, dealing with reasons for the success or lack of success of transfer, detailing the reasons given by each of the interviewees asked this question. The subsection will conclude by analyzing the interviewee responses to determine support or lack of support for the three assertions presented in Finding 6 above.

The response to the first part of the question on the success of the transfer system was fairly positive, with four interviewees giving unequivocal support to that success and Day calling it a "huge success." For instance, Ellis said "I think it's a very good system. I think it's a system that is every bit as good, possibly better ... [than] the California system." Newberry stated "I think it's superb.... That's one of the success stories in the B.C. system, no question," and Morin called the transfer system "a phenomenal success." Johnston called the model of developing two-year colleges as transfer institutions a "wonderful model, actually, brilliant," although in another part of his response to this question, Johnston was less enthusiastic when he said transfer was improving, although there is still a level of tension between the universities and other institutions.

The two interviewees who were more guarded in their assessment of the success of the transfer system were both former faculty association leaders, Lavallo and Finnbogason. Lavallo stated "considering how laissez-faire the whole thing is, it's been relatively successful," which seems to suggest that a more mandatory approach to transfer may have been more successful. Lavallo went on to state that the two main drawbacks of the transfer system are that articulation is ultimately driven by the universities as receiving institutions and colleges continue to play the lesser role of feeder institutions. Secondly, innovation at colleges over time has been stifled because they were limited to doing only first and second year programming. Colleges could have been more innovative in what they delivered had they been allowed to mount their own degrees.

Finnbogason stated that transfer has improved dramatically for students over the last 35 years or so, but it is still too convoluted a process based on thousands of individual course transfers. He stated that he does not understand why after all these years “an institution can’t just be accepted as an equal partner and be able to transfer a year. ... I think the senior versus junior institutions is really a waste of time.” Finnbogason continued that the senior/junior dichotomy has been overcome somewhat by university colleges becoming receiving institutions and by the work of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). However, he stated that “BCCAT has functioned chiefly as a peacekeeper and has always walked softly, and I would rather have seen it at times be more aggressive.” This statement is similar to that of Lavalley’s and suggests a leaning toward a more mandatory approach to transfer.

Interviewees gave a number of reasons for their analysis of the success of the transfer system. Ellis said that the main reason for its success is that it is “a very sensible, workable system.” It arose from an emergency situation in which Simon Fraser University (SFU) had to arrange transfer with the various colleges in a way that ensured the autonomy of both the colleges and the university while providing predictability for the students enrolling in college transfer courses. The approach involved colleges and universities working together on a discipline basis so that universities would acknowledge that college courses “would be seen as the equivalent of university courses.” Thus, the development of the transfer system was done “with no involvement from Victoria.”

Newberry gave as a reason for the success of transfer that the system was deemed as a necessary service for students and, therefore, it was in the interest of faculty and the institutions to arrange transfer opportunities for students. Thus everyone worked very hard to make the transfer system work. Government supported the transfer initiative but it was the institutions and the faculty that did the actual work of arranging transfer through articulation meetings. Similarly, Morin gave as reasons for the success of transfer that it began as a voluntary,

grassroots initiative that became more regularized with the formation of BCCAT following the Access for All initiative. Government allows BCCAT to exist and funds them, but it stays out of the business of arranging transfer agreements because the institutions do a good job on their own. The reason transfer has been so successful in B.C. is that the idea came from the colleges in the first place, not from the Ministry. Morin stated that faculty are very much at the heart of transfer through their work on articulation committees. He felt that if transfer had been mandated by government, it would not likely have been as successful because faculty would have balked at the demands from government.

Johnston gave several reasons for the success of the transfer initiative in B.C. These included the role that university colleges are now playing as receiving institutions, the work of BCCAT, the desire on the part of institutions to help students, the support and encouragement of government, and the fact that Ministers over time have all seen the value of maintaining a good transfer system.

Finnbogason also gave a number of reasons for success, including goodwill among institutions and faculty; the leadership of BCCAT; the governance model of BCCAT, which includes all levels of institutions involved in transfer at the decision-making table; and the discipline base of faculty, which means they are familiar with like-minded faculty at colleges, university colleges, and universities.

The final part of this subsection deals with support from interviewees for the three statements made in the body of Finding 6 above. In terms of the statement on the important role of the Academic Board in creating the voluntary approach to transfer, only Ellis mentioned the role of the Academic Board, under the leadership of Dean Chant, in developing the mechanism for future transfer, based on a report from SFU. As well, Perra, who was not asked Question 7 directly, stated that the Academic Board's role in developing articulation agreements "forced the institutions to work cooperatively."

There was much broader support for the second statement in Finding 6 dealing with the continuing voluntary nature of transfer. Ellis's statement about

Victoria not being involved in the development of the transfer system suggests the voluntary nature of the endeavour. Newberry stated that transfer was a good example of voluntary collaboration as defined in this research study, except in this case it included universities in the collaboration process. Morin stated that the voluntary rather than Ministry-directed nature of the transfer system is a key reason for its success. Elsewhere, Morin stated that transfer is “one of those things that grew out of the voluntary collaboration area.” Finnbogason also stated that BCCAT is more an example of collaboration than coordination, according to the definitions for this research. Finally, Perra, in his answer to Question 6 on voluntary collaboration, gave the transfer system as an example of voluntary collaboration.

The final statement in Finding 6 states that the Ministry recognized the importance of a voluntary approach to the success of the transfer initiative. Newberry did not state this specifically but did say that the Ministry has continued to support the initiative while leaving the work of arranging articulation and transfer agreements to faculty and institutions. Johnston said that government has been supportive of transfer over time and that successive Ministers have realized the value of maintaining a good transfer system. The only direct statement supporting this final assertion in Finding 6 came from Morin who said “because the articulation and transfer [system] is so well looked after, ... I don’t think the Ministry has to concern itself much with it,” suggesting an understanding of the success of the voluntary approach that has developed.

Thus there was good support for Finding 6 on the success of the transfer system, and a wide range of reasons was given for that success. There was also strong support for the voluntary nature of transfer in B.C. but less support for the other assertions in Finding 6 regarding the important role of the Academic Board and the recognition by the Ministry of the value of a collaborative approach to transfer. It is interesting that the two faculty association representatives interviewed both seemed to favour a more mandatory than voluntary approach to transfer. This view may be a result of the inferiority felt by faculty in sending institutions because

of the power of universities, the receiving institutions, to accept or reject courses for transfer.

System/Ministry cooperation

Finding 7: While institutions have recognized the benefits of voluntary collaboration, both institutions and the Ministry have recognized the value of working closely together to plan and implement system-wide initiatives. The institutions have understood the important role that the Ministry must play in coordinating an accountable provincial system while the Ministry has understood that system-wide initiatives are more successful if the institutions have a role in their planning and implementation. The result has been the development of a positive working relationship in which both the Ministry and institutions agree to and have ownership of system-wide initiatives.

Question 8: How would you describe the nature of the relationship between the Ministry and the colleges, university colleges, and institutes in each of the last three decades, beginning with the 1970s? How has that relationship impacted the development and implementation of system-wide initiatives?

Finding 7 is very important to the purpose of the present research, and therefore Question 8 was asked of all 10 interviewees. However, one interviewee did not respond other than to say that he had always had good working relationships with Ministry officials. The responses of the remaining nine interviewees are described below. It was difficult to summarize the responses to Question 8 in relation to Finding 7 for two reasons. First, the question as asked did not seem to get directly at many of the assertions in Finding 7, although interviewees provided a number of interesting perspectives on the ongoing relationship between the Ministry and the institutions. Second, responses from individuals regarding the nature of that relationship varied dramatically within and across decades. Therefore, the information below will aggregate the responses to the two parts of the question as much as possible by highlighting the most salient

points of interviewees' responses and will relate those responses where appropriate to the assertions in Finding 7. The subsection will conclude with a review of a few themes that emerged from the responses, some of which are more closely related to other findings in this research.

When asked about the nature of the relationship across decades, interviewees provided responses only for those decades in which they had direct experience in the post-secondary system. In terms of the 1970s, opinions varied widely on the nature of the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions. Day stated "in the '70s, I would characterize the relationship as being one of raw power." He continued "whenever you have a raw power relationship, there tends to be compliance, a lot of not-so-buried resentment, some levels of subversion, and a desire to stay as far away from the Ministry as possible." This power relationship was particularly true with the Social Credit government when Pat McGeer was Minister. Similarly, Lavalle stated that the role of the Ministry, which had begun as that of an enabler in the 1960s and early 1970s, changed to a more interventionist and controlling role, beginning in the mid-1970s with the passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act and the assumption of 100 percent funding for operating and capital expenditures by the provincial government. The focus of this control was very much on assuring the achievement of outcomes by colleges. On a similar note, Perra described the 1970s by stating "there was certainly a dependency on the Ministry, particularly from a resource point of view, because we tended to do, primarily, those things that were funded to a great extent by government grants."

Other interviewees described the 1970s as a highly collaborative period between the Ministry and the institutions. Newberry attributed this collaboration to the major development phase that was occurring at institutions during this decade in terms of opening up new institutions, building new facilities, and planning the expansion of programming. Morin described the early 1970s as "very collaborative between the people in the Ministry and those of us in administration in the field. I

think we really felt like we were on the same team. We were working together towards common goals.” Johnston stated that the institutions’ relationship with the Ministry in the 1970s was a good one, partially because there was a lot of funding available and partially because of the fact that bureaucrats in the Ministry had come from the college system. Finnbogason gave yet a different kind of response when he said the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions was laissez-faire in the 1970s, largely due to the abundance of funding for institutions.

Responses regarding the status of that relationship in the 1980s were equally varied, although five interviewees described the relationship as collaborative in that decade. Day said that the relationship improved dramatically because of the collaborative style of Grant Fisher, the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) at that time, and because of the transparent and equitable nature of the funding formula that was developed in the early 1980s. The result was a high level of trust in and communication with the Ministry and confidence in the Ministry’s ability to work for the system. Day said that this positive relationship existed both through the severe restraint period of the early 1980s and the growth period at the end of the decade until about 1992. Newberry felt that collaboration continued in the 1980s in the development of the funding formula and in the implementation of the Access for All initiative. Newberry stated that the positive relationships in both the 1970s and 1980s were in large part due to the fact that many senior level Ministry officials either came from an institution or had an education background.

Morin stated that the collaborative relationship of the 1970s continued into the 1980s when Grant Fisher was the ADM and said that “the funding formula was very much a collaborative thing.” However, Morin stated that as the system grew and became more complex in the mid- to late 1980s, it also became more bureaucratized and impersonalized. He said that “it seemed like we lost that ... sense that the Ministry and the people in the field were on the same side. We often seemed to run into each other as being in conflict, or in opposition.” Fleet stated “I would say there was a high degree of cooperation at the end of the ‘80s,” as

exemplified in the Access for All initiative in which eight regional chairs came together to form the provincial committee that produced the final report. Finally, Johnston viewed the relationship in the 1980s as continuing to be positive for the same reasons as in the 1970s.

Three interviewees, on the other hand, viewed the 1980s as being one of considerable control by the Ministry, whereas Perra saw it as a period of less control. Lavalle stated that what had begun as more global funding by the Ministry shifted to more targeted funding for training programs within colleges in the 1980s, which meant greater control by the Ministry of institutions' programs, a trend that continued into the 1990s. Harvey stated that the 1980s were likely perceived by college presidents to be far more centralist, partially because of the funding formula that was seen as centralist in nature, at least in its early days of implementation. However, Harvey did refer to a gradual building towards an integrated system in the late 1980s, as will be described in more depth below. He gave the Access for All initiative and the resulting creation of university colleges and BCCAT as examples of collaborative efforts. Finnbogason saw the 1980s as the exact opposite of the laissez-faire attitude of government in the 1970s as government began to exert a high level of centralization because of a desire to control how provincial resources were being used by institutions. Perra did not feel that government was able to exert as much control in the 1980s, largely because of reduced reliance by institutions on Ministry resources due to the raising of funds from other sources through continuing education and international education.

The responses to the state of the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions in the 1990s were also varied. Three interviewees described the 1990s as a collaborative period because of the involvement of multiple stakeholders in provincial decision making. Fleet, referring to the state of collaboration, said "I honestly think that it peaked in 1995, with *Charting A New Course*," which she had played a part in developing as a representative of AECBC. Harvey felt that the move to developing a more integrated system continued in the 1990s, and he gave

Charting A New Course as an example of collaborative efforts in that decade. Finnbogason felt that the 1990s were a consultative period in which stakeholder groups and the Ministry worked together on a number of system-wide committees and initiatives. He gave several examples of initiatives impacted by that relationship, including the development of *Charting A New Course*, the work of BCCAT, and the development of other system agencies. Newberry, on the other hand, saw the rising power of faculty and support staff unions in the 1990s and their influence with government as causing Ministry and college administrators to work even more closely together. Similarly, Morin stated that the success of CIEA caused the institutions to work more closely together through AECBC in order to counteract the effectiveness of CIEA. Perra also mentioned the “tri-governance pattern” that developed in the 1990s and the rising power of unions. Perra mentioned *Charting A New Course* and the structures created out of it as examples of results from this period of consultation among stakeholder groups.

Day described the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions in the 1990s as worsening because of the increased role of the provincial government in dictating how funding would be used at institutions and the resulting exodus from the Ministry of many of the trusted officials that had worked with institutions in the past. He stated that the trust and respect that had been part of the relationship “was eroded powerfully throughout the decade.” Day did, however, give *Charting A New Course* and the development of system agencies as examples of successful collaborative initiatives in the 1990s. Similarly, Johnston said that in the 1990s, many of the people who had worked in the Ministry for a long period of time retired or quit and were replaced by people with government experience but not with institutional experience, which reduced their level of understanding of institutional needs. Furthermore, throughout the 1990s, bureaucrats began paying more attention to meeting the needs of politicians and less attention to institutions. Finally, Perra saw the 1990s as being a period when college presidents and board chairs pushed for greater autonomy, which coincided with institutions’ ability to

raise more and more funding from other sources. The result was that by the end of the decade, the role of the Ministry was further reduced to a much more limited level than in previous decades.

Harvey provided some of the strongest evidence for the assertion in Finding 7 that both the Ministry and the institutions realized that they had to work together to build a system that met both the province's and the institutions' needs. He described an event in the early 1980s by saying "I can remember a Ministry official using the word 'college system' at a presidents' meeting and being chastised vigorously by several of the presidents" because of the jealously guarded concepts of community responsiveness and local autonomy. However, Harvey stated that "there's no question that through the '80s and the early '90s, the provincial government saw it as a system, desired an integrated system, and put in place policies that moved in that direction" because of a desire for greater standards and consistency. Harvey continued:

Very gradually and steadily, it became an accepted concept that, in fact, we have a post-secondary system, and that there are certain things that we need to do collaboratively, there are certain things we need to do collectively, and there are certain things we need to do in a standardized manner.... College presidents would say ... I agree to all that, but there's also this whole range of things we need to [do] locally, to meet local demands, local needs, because our needs are different than the next community.

Thus both Ministry and college officials appeared to be agreeing to the need for a system but recognized the continuing importance of institutional autonomy.

Newberry, in a response to Question 13 on interpersonal relationships, made another statement that provides strong evidence of a mutual understanding of the balance required to have autonomous institutions act as a system. He stated:

The interaction with post-secondary ... has always been ... a much more open and respectful relationship, ... the people in the institutions knew that the Ministry people had a job to do, and a set of responsibilities they had to carry out, and the people in the Ministry knew that the people in the institutions had that, and they

came from different perspectives, but they came because there was this intersection of interests and they had to make it work. I think it's been very positive over the years.

Lavalle provided similar evidence of the balance that has been struck when he stated that the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions has generally been a positive one for two main reasons. First, the Ministry's involvement has prevented too much autonomy for institutions, which would not have resulted in institutions working to meet public policy objectives and the needs of students. Secondly, for the most part government has not used its interventionist tendencies to infringe upon academic freedom and the development of curriculum within institutions. This allowed an appropriate balance to develop between government intervention and institutional and educator autonomy.

This subsection will conclude with reference to some of the important themes that were mentioned throughout the interview responses to Question 8. These themes add greater depth to Finding 7 from the literature review. Almost all interviewees mentioned as part of their response the importance of the status of funding from government to the state of the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions. Generally, many, but not all, interviewees seemed to agree that more funding and growth meant greater cooperation whereas less funding meant greater levels of control by government and a worsening of the relationship, which is similar to Finding 4 on the relationship between the economy and centralization. As Newberry stated, "any time the government was going to put money on the table, the institutions were interested and saw that as an avenue for their growth, so there was cooperation." A second recurring theme is the importance of personal relationships to the level of cooperation between Ministry and institutional officials, with five interviewees mentioning this in their response. This finding will be delved into in more depth under Finding 12. Finally, five interviewees referred to the importance of stakeholder involvement to the level of collaboration in the 1990s, a theme that will be explored in more depth under Finding 13.

In summary, all interviewees stated that there had been a positive and collaborative working relationship at some point in time between the Ministry and the institutions and gave a variety of examples of initiatives that have resulted from this relationship. However, there was little agreement among interviewees on the status of that relationship in any given decade, nor was there, for the most part, a direct correlation between interviewee's responses and the assertions made in Finding 7. It is difficult for the researcher to explain the variations in responses regarding the state of the relationship in the three decades, which is similar to the variation in time periods given by interviewees for the height of collaboration in Finding 5. The responses did not seem to vary according to the role played by the interviewees in the post-secondary system. Perhaps the broad variation can best be explained by the hermeneutic stance that every interpreter enters the situation with her or his own predisposition and place in the present, which results in multiple interpretations of the past.

Blending of collaboration and coordination

Finding 8: Beginning with the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act and continuing through a number of Ministry policy and planning documents over the next two decades, inter-institutional cooperation was recognized by the Ministry as a necessary element of a cohesive provincial system. Therefore, what had previously existed as voluntary collaboration among institutions without Ministry intervention became required cooperation as part of system-wide goals. As system/Ministry partnerships became more prevalent in guiding the development of system-wide initiatives, provincial coordination and inter-institutional collaboration often became blended into a single effort at developing and maintaining a coherent system, with the Ministry as a senior partner in the process.

Question 9: How would you describe the nature of the relationship between voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration on the one hand and provincial coordination on the other over the last four decades?

As with Findings 5 and 7, Finding 8 is very important to the purpose of the present research. Therefore, Question 9 was asked of all 10 interviewees. As with Question 8, responses to this question varied considerably, representing the multiple perspectives of the interviewees. The responses also provided additional evidence on interviewees' views on voluntary collaboration, the topic of Finding 5.

There are two basic assertions in Finding 8 based on the review of literature in Chapter 4: first, that the Ministry recognized the importance of inter-institutional cooperation and thus began to mandate it as part of system-wide planning and second, that system coordination and voluntary collaboration eventually became blended into a single effort around important system initiatives. Only one interviewee, Harvey, made a statement supporting the first assertion when he stated in his response to another question that the Ministry knew it was important for institutions to talk to each other and work together towards an integrated system. Six interviewees made statements that provided some level of support for the second assertion, and these statements will be described below along with other interviewees' opinions on the nature of the relationship between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination.

In terms of the six interviewees who addressed in some way the blending of collaboration and coordination, Newberry stated that there had been increasing centralization until the late 1990s and therefore a greater move towards provincial coordination rather than voluntary collaboration. Newberry said that he felt only government could take an overview of the system from its position outside of individual institutions and could thus see the necessary inter-relationships among institutions. Newberry restated his opinion that there had not been much true collaboration among institutions although there were examples of institutions working together for various reasons. He continued that any time institutions do work together, there has to be something in it for each institution or the collaborative activity will not occur. Similarly, Morin stated that collaboration is always voluntary in nature, and people engage in collaboration because they find

some pragmatic reason to do so. However, Morin felt that voluntary collaboration has been largely replaced by provincial coordination over time. He stated “it seems to me [that] as there is more and more systemic coordination and ... top-down coordination, the areas for voluntary collaboration probably are, well partly not as necessary, but also partly more constrained.” Morin gave as an example of collaboration no longer being necessary the work of the B.C. Enrollment Forecasting Committee that started as a voluntary endeavour among institutions and then grew into a system of data sharing when it was “taken over” and “regularized” by government. As an example of collaboration being constrained, he described the collaborative proposal in the mid-1990s by four institutions to develop the B.C. Open University to serve students in their catchment areas, but the proposal was quashed by the provincial government.

Four other interviewees made statements that indicated that a balance had been achieved between collaborative and coordinated efforts. Fleet gave two examples of initiatives that she described as the “peaks” of both collaboration and coordination. The first was the Access for All initiative in the late 1980s, which was a Ministry-directed initiative that involved eight regional committees in a broad consultative process across college regions to produce a provincial report on access. The second was the development of *Charting A New Course* in the mid-1990s, which involved a high level of collaboration among institutions, among stakeholders, and between the Ministry and AECBC. However, Fleet stated that this collaborative initiative “was coordinated through the Ministry. It was a Ministry initiative.”

Lavalle stated that institutions tended to cooperate as a response to government intervention and in order to work collaboratively to address the detrimental actions of government. This was particularly true in the 1980s when college boards and administrators worked closely together in response to the impacts of the funding cutbacks. However, when describing stakeholder involvement in the 1990s, Lavalle stated that similar cooperation between CIEA

and AECBC “partly evolved because the Ministry set up the frameworks in which the discussions could happen.” He continued that the Ministry did not direct the collaboration but made it possible. Like Fleet, Lavalle described the development of *Charting A New Course* as an example of both coordination and collaboration. He stated “the establishment of *Charting A New Course* was coordination, by your definition. The outcome was stakeholder collaboration, by and large.” This supportive rather than directive role of the Ministry that allowed collaboration to exist among system stakeholders on system-wide initiatives provides good evidence of a blending of the concepts of coordination and collaboration.

Perra responded to Question 9 by giving examples of provincial coordination through Ministry-led initiatives, including the development of the funding formula, the development of accountability and data collection structures, staff development, and curriculum development. However, he stated that all of these initiatives involved close consultation with the institutions, which suggests institutions collaborating with each other and with the Ministry to achieve common goals. Perra stated that one of the reasons this level of consultation was possible is that some of the early leaders in the Ministry, such as Andy Soles and Grant Fisher, came from the system and thus understood the challenges faced by presidents and institutions. Perra concluded by stating that inter-institutional collaboration takes resources to continue and may be in jeopardy because resource-strapped institutions may not be able to continue these efforts.

The fourth interviewee who spoke of the intricate balance between collaboration and coordination was Finnbogason. He stated that “collaboration precedes coordination” in that there has to be a willingness among institutions to cooperate at the outset. However, he said that “institutions don’t have a natural urge to be cooperative” and thus government intervention is needed for sustained inter-institutional efforts to occur because only government has the needs of the system in mind as its principal concern. Nevertheless, government intervention cannot be seen as top down in nature and must build on the willingness to cooperate, which is

best accomplished through long periods of genuine collaboration among key stakeholders. Thus, Finnbogason appeared to be speaking of enduring inter-institutional efforts resulting from a blending of the willingness of institutions to collaborate and the Ministry's role as the driver of system initiatives.

Other interviewees had very different responses from the ones above to Question 9 about the relationship between collaboration and coordination. Ellis stated his opinion that the relationship between coordination and collaboration occurs in a somewhat mechanical way around common issues, such as budgeting, facilities planning, and student aid. The procedure involves the Ministry negotiating with various institutions how to best achieve the Ministry's goals while meeting the needs of institutions. However, Ellis saw this sort of negotiation as a low level of coordination and collaboration. Day felt that there were few examples of enduring collaboration that involved the sharing of resources and common program objectives. The main reasons for the failure of true collaborative efforts over time were the high levels of energy required to keep inter-institutional collaboration going, the lack of rewards to institutions to maintain that collaboration, and the ambitions of individual institutions. However, there was a high level of communication among institutions through such mechanisms as the British Columbia Association of Colleges (BCAC) and AECBC. In terms of the relationship between collaboration and coordination, Day felt the Ministry did not have the structures in place to support collaborative efforts, which sometimes happened in spite of the Ministry, not because of it.

Johnston said that despite increasing Ministry control and coordination, presidents have continued to work together as best as they can. The difficulty is that, despite good interpersonal relationships and a willingness to work together, each President is very involved in meeting the needs of her or his own institution and community. Local needs almost always take precedence over system needs. In his response to Question 9, Harvey did not see a direct relationship between collaboration and coordination. However, elsewhere in his interview he had

described voluntary collaboration as one of the factors that has resulted in a coordinated college, university college, and institute system in B.C.

In summary, interviewees had differing views of the relationship between voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration and provincial coordination, although six of the interviewees did reference in some way the blending of the two concepts over time, providing support for the second assertion in Finding 8. Despite lack of full agreement with the two assertions in Finding 8, interviewees did provide greater depth to the researcher's understanding by delving into the intricacies of the relationship between collaboration and coordination. Of particular interest is the assertion that some form of government intervention is required to sustain inter-institutional cooperation over time but that such intervention must build on established relationships and a willingness to collaborate. Related to this assertion are the statements that the role of the Ministry is to set up the framework in which collaboration can occur and that only government can have a true overview of the system because individual institutions must ultimately be concerned with local rather than system needs. The above statements seem to suggest that a blending of collaboration, which is voluntary in nature, and coordination, which is Ministry driven, is not only possible but inevitable. What has been created is something greater than either collaboration or coordination, something that allows Ministry coordination to build on the history of voluntary collaboration and institutional collaboration to be sustained by Ministry involvement. Thus they appear to have become mutually dependent rather than mutually exclusive constructs.

Some of the responses to Question 9 showed confusion among interviewees about the difference between the two concepts of coordination and collaboration, despite the definitions that they were given in writing prior to the interview. It may be that the close nature of the two concepts, which have been separated for the purpose of this research study, and the emerging synthesis of the two concepts over time made it more difficult for people to answer consistently about the relationship

between them. As well, different perspectives are to be expected from such a diverse group of interviewees.

Impact of abolishing the intermediary councils on system/Ministry cooperation

Finding 9: Institutions were particularly critical of the role of the three intermediary councils in interfering with institutional autonomy and in serving as a buffer between institutions and the Ministry. The abolishment of the three councils in 1983 through an amendment to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act was a key factor in allowing a strong, direct working relationship to build over the years between Ministry officials and institutional representatives.

Question 10: The 1983 Amendment to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, which included abolishing the three intermediary councils and removing elected officials from the college boards, gave more power to the Minister over the development of institutions and the system. What was the result of the Amendment in terms of the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions over the remainder of the 1980s?

Question 10 was asked of six individuals although one, Fleet, was not very familiar with the Amendment because it predated her work on college boards. She did make some statements about the possible reaction to the removal of school board members from college boards but did not speak directly about the three intermediary bodies. Finding 9 has two assertions, the first being that the three intermediary councils were not well liked by institutions because they interfered with institutional autonomy and the second being that the abolishment of the boards restored a direct relationship between colleges and government. Two of the remaining five interviewees made reference to the unpopularity of the councils and, therefore, the positive response to their abolishment. Four of the five interviewees made statements about the restoration of a direct relationship between government and institutions, providing strong support for Finding 9. Each of the five interviewees' responses is presented in turn below. As the question included a

reference to the removal of elected officials to college boards as a result of the Amendment to the Colleges and Institutes Act, a few respondents spoke of this impact, as will be described below.

Day said that abolishing the intermediary bodies clarified things because the councils had been confusing and a huge waste of energy without accomplishing anything of substance. He said “it was a blessing getting rid of those inter-bodies. The inter-bodies are the most ... terribly divisive model.” Elsewhere, Day called it a “divide and conquer and compete model. ... It was a nightmare.” The abolition of the councils allowed the Ministry to resume being responsible and accountable, both to the system and to government, for the management of the system. Day said that not having the councils allowed for a more direct relationship with the Ministry, who could once again serve as the “boss” of the system. It also allowed the institutions to focus more on their own needs because they no longer had to waste time reporting to or dealing with the three councils. Day also made reference to the replacement of elected school board officials with government appointees and said that, despite his initial opposition to this move, he was surprised because within months the new board members became better advocates for the colleges than the previous ones had been.

Similarly, Newberry said that there was “enormous relief that the three interstitial bodies were gone ... because they were deemed to be just another layer of bureaucracy; it wasn’t helpful at all to anyone. So that was viewed as positive.” Interestingly, Day, a former college president, and Newberry, a former director in government, both had the same opinion on the positive response to the abolition of the councils. Newberry continued “there was a general relief that there was direct access to government rather than having to go through these other bodies,” thus providing strong support for Finding 9. Ellis said that he did not feel the intermediary bodies had much power in the first place. He said that he assumed that bureaucrats in Victoria became more powerful and directly involved with the institutions with the demise of the councils, although “there were some very well

disposed bureaucrats in Victoria, guys like Andy Soles” who tempered the use of that power.

Harvey stated that abolishing the intermediary councils “put the Ministry directly in charge of the allocation of funds, and the Ministry chose to do that using the infamous funding formula,” which some saw as a major centralizing initiative because government could now prescribe programs at individual institutions. Harvey continued by describing the relationship in the remainder of the 1980s in response to Question 10. He felt that the early to mid-1980s witnessed a fairly acrimonious relationship between the Ministry and the institutions but that this relationship improved in the late 1980s and the 1990s as the Ministry and institutions agreed to work together collaboratively on common issues.

Finnbogason was not familiar with the impact of abolishing the three intermediary councils. He did state, though, that the Ministry exerted more power in the 1980s as a result of the 1983 Amendment. Finnbogason stated that appointing all board members and removing school board appointees had the effect of government exerting more control over boards, taking away their ability to be independent and critical of government. Presidents were also stifled by the 1983 Amendment because they now had to be careful to please their government-appointed boards. Thus, removing school board members from college boards had a centralizing effect.

In summary, the responses of interviewees provided fairly consistent and strong support for Finding 9, in particular the assertion that the removal of the intermediary councils restored direct relationships between Ministry officials and institutional representatives.

Importance of the funding formula

Finding 10: The funding formula, developed in 1984 by the Ministry in close cooperation with institutional representatives, has brought stability to the system by creating a predictable and an equitable means of funding institutions of different

size and mandate. This predictability and equitability has lessened competition among institutions for resources and has had a major impact on the ability of institutions to cooperate for the good of the system.

Question 11: What was the impact of the development of the funding formula in 1984 on future relationships among institutions and between the Ministry and institutions?

Question 7 was asked of seven individuals. The two assertions made in Finding 10 based on the literature review were that the funding formula brought predictability and a sense of fairness to the funding allocation process and that this predictability and transparency lessened competition and increased cooperation among institutions. Six interviewees made statements that supported the assertion that the formula resulted in a more equitable, transparent, and/or objective funding process and three stated that the introduction of the formula reduced competition and/or increased cooperation among institutions. Interestingly, another four interviewees felt that the introduction of the funding formula actually increased competition among institutions. As well, five interviewees stated that the formula improved or clarified relationships between the Ministry and the institutions while one stated that it increased friction between them. The more salient comments of each interviewee are presented as evidence below.

Day attributed the development of the formula to the leadership of Grant Fisher, the ADM in the early 1980s. Day described the formula by saying “it was fair and it was transparent.” It rationalized the way in which funding was distributed and provided “a common language that allowed people to operate with each other with relatively little paranoia over finance.” The formula eliminated many of the suspicions and jealousies that had existed among institutions in terms of who was getting preferential treatment from the Ministry. Day described the effect of the funding formula on inter-institutional relationships as “totally benign” and said “it opened the door for whatever forms of institutional cooperation became possible, and it was only after the Fisher Formula that you ... find any substantial

collaborative efforts between institutions.” In terms of Ministry/institution relationships, Day said that the introduction of the formula professionalized what had previously been a more personalized system in which interpersonal relationships between college and Ministry officials determined funding levels.

Similarly, Newberry, who had played a major role in developing the formula, said that the formula was developed not as a mechanism for gaining control but as a means of developing a more rational approach of focussing on what institutions were going to achieve with their funding. He stated that the formula “brought an increased level of stability and predictability because ... [institutions] knew what they had to prepare for, the Ministry knew what we had to prepare for, and all understood what the process would be.” Referring to the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions, Newberry continued that the formula “took a lot of the unknowns out of the relationship and made it much more stable and much more predictable.” However, elsewhere in his interview, he stated that the funding formula brought increased competition among institutions because its transparent nature showed them what they were competing for with each other.

Morin stated that the introduction of the funding formula was received differently by different institutions, depending on whether they benefited from it or not based on their previous funding scenario. Morin continued that the formula did remove “a barrier to collaboration that had been there before because we always had this terrible suspicion that there was all kinds of subjectivity to the process before.” He stated that the formula “was a real breath of fresh air, [to be able] to say, now we’re going to be treated at least equitably.” Morin also felt that the development of the formula was a collaborative process and that the formula brought clarity to and improved the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions. Similarly, Johnston stated that the formula lessened competition among institutions and was seen as a fairer means of distributing money because it prevented individual presidents from lobbying the Ministry for more money for their institutions. The formula also clarified the relationship between the Ministry

and the institutions because of the program profile process that resulted. Johnston did state, however, that the formula caused increased competition among program areas within an institution because staff in each program area could now see the value of the Full-Time Equivalent spaces they were being given.

Other interviewees gave a different perspective on the effect of the introduction of the funding formula on relationships among institutions. Perra stated that the Ministry introduced the formula through a consultative process in order to be able to reward productivity and have a more objective allocation process. However, he stated that formula funding was introduced as an enrolment driven model, which rewarded urban institutions with high enrolment and penalized small, rural institutions with lower enrolment. The enrolment driven model was chosen because larger institutions outnumbered the smaller institutions at the decision-making table. As a former president of a smaller institution, Perra was less enthusiastic about the formula than Day, Morin, and Johnston had been, all past or present presidents of larger institutions. Perra stated that the formula has not improved relationships or cooperation among institutions but it has not “undermined cooperation and coordination” either. However, he felt that the formula served as the beginning of system fragmentation because institutions began to compete for the more transparent funding. It was difficult to fix the formula once it was introduced because it would always have a negative impact on somebody if changes were made to the original formula. Perra concluded by stating that the funding formula did not negatively impact relationships between the Ministry and the system although he did not say it improved relationships. More important to these relationships were the individuals involved and the amount of consultation involved in introducing initiatives.

Harvey stated that the funding formula “served its purpose remarkably well” in that it removed ad hoc funding that had existed for years with each institution. The formula was designed to bring institutions closer to the same levels of funding. However, the formula did create greater competition among institutions

because it highlighted the inequities that had existed previously and because there were still perceived inequities as a result of the new formula. The formula also caused friction between the Ministry and the institutions because everyone wanted to see the formula improved. However, the formula did work better than most funding models and did not cause significant problems in its implementation. Harvey also stated that the formula was perceived by many to be centralizing in nature because it allowed government to make funding decisions on the allocation of seats at the local level. Thus Harvey said that some felt the formula took the “community” out of “community colleges.”

Similarly, Finnbogason said that the funding formula “substituted competition for cooperation in many ways” because the formula enshrined inequitable levels of funding among institutions rather than starting with a clean slate. The formula was supposed to bring fairness to the funding process, but it never did to the level that it should have because there were still a number of inequities in the application of the formula across institutions, such as with the application of the multi-campus funding rules. Finnbogason stated that the formula also skewed the program mix within individual institutions because differential funding made some programs more lucrative than others. In terms of Ministry relationships with the institutions, he said that the formula professionalized the funding mechanism and made it more difficult for individual institutions to lobby the government for special treatment and funding.

In summary, most interviewees provided support for the assertions in Finding 10 while others gave opposite responses, particularly in relation to the question of whether the funding formula decreased or increased competition among institutions. Interviewees seemed to suggest that a competitive environment existed both before and after the introduction of the funding formula, despite the agreement by most that the formula did bring more predictability and transparency to the way in which institutions were funded. Thus, the statement in Finding 10 that the formula decreased competition may more aptly be stated by saying competition due

to perceived inequity was replaced by competition based on vying for resources that were now readily apparent. Part of the variation in the responses of presidents to the question of increased or decreased competition may be explained by the size of institution in which they worked or work and the resulting perceived benefit or lack of benefit from the introduction of the formula. As well, both former Ministry officials, Newberry and Harvey, were consistent in their response that competition increased, a response that likely arose from their experiences working with institutions in the post-formula environment. As with other questions, different interviewees bring multiple perspectives that cannot always be fully explained.

Institutional differentiation

Finding 11: The history of the B.C. public post-secondary system has been one of progressive differentiation, beginning with a single university until the early 1960s and expanding to include 28 institutions made up of colleges, university colleges, institutes, agencies, and different kinds of universities. This differentiation, and in particular the development of university colleges since 1990, has occurred in the absence of a provincial policy or legislative framework for the development of a coherent system and has resulted in part in the present fragmentation of the post-secondary system.

Question 12: What has been the relationship between the increasing differentiation among the types of post-secondary institutions in the non-university sector of B.C. over the last three decades on the one hand and the development of a coordinated system on the other?

Question 12 was asked of nine individuals in total. Finding 11 has three principal assertions: first, the system has become more differentiated over time; second, this differentiation, and in particular the development of university colleges, has occurred in the absence of policy direction from government; and third, this differentiation has resulted in fragmentation of the post-secondary system. Question 12 acknowledged this differentiation in the text of the question

and asked about its impact on the development of a coordinated system. Responses to the question gave very strong and consistent support that the college, university college, and institute system is presently fragmented as a result of institutional differentiation. However, only one interviewee provided evidence for the assertion in Finding 12 that the differentiation occurred in the absence of direction from government, possibly because the question was worded in such a way that it did not invoke that particular response. Selected information from the interviews is provided below to show the level of support for the assertions in Finding 12.

A total of eight out of nine interviewees made statements to the effect that the differentiation had resulted in a fragmented system and several said that this had made provincial coordination more difficult. Eight interviewees also spoke of university college development as a key factor having led to the present state of fragmentation. Day said that “the impact on coordination of the system” from increased differentiation “has been to increase levels of hostility, distrust, and suspicion within the system because the old commonalities that allowed the old system to be viewed as transparent vanished.” He stated that the university colleges, at both the administrative and faculty levels, felt that their needs were different, and this resulted in university colleges communicating more and more with each other about their common needs and aspirations and less with other colleges and institutes. Eventually, AECBC folded as a result of the lack of common interests. Likewise, Newberry said “certainly the system has split apart, and university colleges see themselves as an entity that is totally unrelated to the colleges.” He continued that “I would think it hasn’t helped cooperation very much, and probably not collaboration either.” He added that students are only concerned with receiving good service and do not care about the various sectors within the system.

Fleet made very similar statements when she said that coordination flourished until the mid-1990s, several years after university colleges were formed.

Over time, though, the university colleges began to feel that they had less in common with the college sector, partially because of the influx of new presidents from outside the province. This sense of separation has “contributed to the fragmentation of the system.” Fleet also said that a shortage of experienced board governors willing to play a continuing role in AECBC in the latter part of the 1990s has been another leading cause of fragmentation. Perra stated that the needs and aspirations of a university college are quite different from those of a college. As university colleges grew further apart from colleges and institutes, they had less and less common ground on which to cooperate over time. The result was a serious diminishing of the “willingness to work together like there used to be.” Harvey stated that “there’s no question that the five ... university colleges, and particularly in the second generation of presidents, have grown apart from the other colleges and institutes.” Like others, Harvey attributes this separation to the different aspirations of university colleges and states the result has been the demise of AECBC, the termination of regular meetings among presidents, university colleges calling for special legislation, and some colleges wanting degree-granting capability. These weakened relationships among institutions make it “certainly much harder to coordinate” a provincial system, according to Harvey.

Lavalle stated that past Ministers and Deputy Ministers have viewed the post-secondary system as an instrument for achieving the social policy objectives of government and have understood that differentiated and autonomous institutions all had an important role to play in system-wide initiatives. However, Lavalle stated that differentiation has more negative consequences for a coordinated system when individual institutions or sectors begin competing for resources, become less accountable to government, and no longer work for the good of the whole system. He continued that over time, different parts of the system, such as BCIT and university colleges, have developed elitist notions of their roles in relation to other institutions. The inexorable move of university colleges to gain university status has had a negative impact on the coordination of a system. In Lavalle’s opinion,

AECBC dissolved because of its inability to accommodate the different aspirations of its constituents. Lavalle was the one interviewee who made reference to the importance of a government policy framework to control the development of a differentiated public system. He stated that “unfortunately, without a strong master the institutions are given over to competition and eventually socially unproductive activities.” It is important that government plays the purposeful role of keeping elements of the system working together. Lavalle concluded that the last few years of the NDP and the beginning of the Liberals’ reign have seen the differentiation in the system becoming more and more of a negative. He stated that he fears the laissez-faire attitude of government towards the concept of system will result in no one playing the important role of “master.”

Johnston, the president of a university college, acknowledged the role of sectors, such as university colleges, in creating a more differentiated system that is more difficult to coordinate provincially. However, he had a different slant on why that occurs. He stated that there has always been a desire within institutions to work together as a system. However, as sectors evolved, there was a natural tendency for institutions to spend their time collaborating with institutions within their sector because they had more in common. Johnston stated that there simply is not enough time to cooperate with other institutions outside the sector, even though the desire may still be there to work as a system on important initiatives. Finnbogason is another university college administrator who described university colleges as one of many sectors involved in a differentiated system. He stated that at present the system is very fragmented, unlike the 1970s when there was a high level of cooperation and support across institutions. Finnbogason stated “it’s just politically idiotic to be fracturing ourselves into five or six groups, collapsing our provincial board organization [AECBC], and spending so much time specifying our differences.” Focussing on differences rather than similarities and having each sector making the case that it deserves more resources than the next do not benefit students or institutions. Finnbogason stated that such fragmentation plays into the

hands of government because there is not a concerted front opposing the decisions of government.

The only interviewee who responded differently to Question 12 on the impact of differentiation was Ellis. He stated that he does not believe that there is a provincially coordinated system of differentiated institutions in B.C. What is more important than differentiated sectors are the differences between individual institutions based on such considerations as size, location, and proximity to other post-secondary institutions. The local context is more important than the provincial context. Ellis did, however, in his concluding comments to his interview, make reference to concerns that he had about the university college system because of the negative impact that degree-granting status might have on the other program elements of institutions and on the desire of students to continue taking what might be considered less prestigious programs than degrees.

In summary, the responses of interviewees to Question 12 relating to Finding 11 provided among the highest levels of support for a finding and consistency among interviewees' responses of any finding. However, only one interviewee mentioned the important role of government in ensuring that a collection of differentiated institutions remains an accountable system that works for the good of the whole and not just its parts. The lack of support for this assertion in Finding 11 may have been due in part to the way in which the question was worded.

Importance of personal relationships

Finding 12: One of the key stabilizing influences throughout the 1980s and 1990s on the development of a coordinated college, university college, and institute system has been the personal relationships that have developed between Ministry and institutional officials and among institutional officials. These relationships have been built on trust and goodwill and were remarkably stable over the two decades. However, the change in key personnel in both the Ministry and

institutions beginning in the late 1990s has had a negative impact on the maintenance of a balanced and coordinated provincial system.

Question 13: What has been the impact of interpersonal relationships on the development of a coordinated provincial system, both in terms of relationships among institutional representatives and in terms of relationships between institutions and the Ministry?

Like Finding 11, there was also a high level of support and consistency in responses regarding Finding 12. Question 13 was asked of eight individuals with seven of them responding that interpersonal relationships, both between Ministry and institutional staff and among institutional representatives, have been important to building and maintaining a provincial system and six of them mentioning the importance of qualities such as trust, respect, openness, and integrity to maintaining those relationships. A further four interviewees commented that the relationships had deteriorated in the 1990s because of the change in players in the Ministry and institutions and on boards. The highlights of the eight responses are presented below.

Day said that interpersonal relationships were very important to being able to operate as a system. Ministry representatives who were successful in working with the system were good communicators and were known as people of integrity in the eyes of institutional representatives. Similarly, college presidents became good friends after working together over time, and this friendship built trust that allowed them to help each other out in good and bad times. Day stated that “you can get a bad system ... or a ramshackle system, and if the players have confidence in each other and they learn to trust, usually through time, it can actually work quite well.”

Newberry stated that he felt there had been very positive relationships between the Ministry and the system over the years and that “most of the progress that was made was due to the high quality of staff that the Ministry had.” Newberry described the relationship as very positive over the years and as one of goodwill,

candor, openness, and respect between the two parties. Both Ministry and college representatives have recognized each other's respective roles and responsibilities and have worked together towards common goals. Elsewhere, Newberry stated that in the 1970s and 1980s, there were a number of Ministry bureaucrats who had worked at an institution and/or had an educational background, whereas in the 1990s that is not the case. He felt that the change in personnel "has a ... tremendous impact on ... how the Ministry functions vis-a-vis the institutions." In terms of inter-institutional relationships, Newberry stated that presidents and other institutional groups have had good relationships and have met regularly over the years, working together for mutual benefit. However, he did not feel that regular meetings and friendly relationships equated to a true level of collaboration as defined in this research study.

Johnston stated that interpersonal relationships, particularly between the Ministry and the institutions, have been extremely important to the development of a coordinated provincial system. In order to have good relationships, it is important to build trust between the presidents and Ministry officials and to understand and appreciate the different roles that each player must play. Like Newberry, Johnston felt that the relationships between Ministry and institutional personnel were very important in the 1970s and 1980s when many of the Ministry personnel had worked previously in the institutions. These relationships changed in the 1990s when others took over in the Ministry and, although they were very well meaning, they did not have the same understanding of the institutions' needs and situation. Fleet stated "I think interpersonal relations have been very, very important" to the development of a coordinated provincial system, in much the same way that constant communications across institutions is important. Fleet felt that in the early to mid-1990s, the Ministry seemed to have strong faith in AECBC and its representatives, as evidenced in the development of *Charting A New Course*. However, Fleet stated that changing Ministry representatives and presidents in the system have "made a phenomenal difference" to the willingness to collaborate. As well, inexperienced

board governors without adequate time to put into provincial planning have been detrimental to ongoing provincial coordination.

Harvey stated that B.C. has a remarkable history of good relationships between the Ministry and the institutions. As a former ADM, Harvey felt he had developed a friendship with many of the presidents. As a result of the friendship and trust built between Ministry and institutional officials, they were able to work well together to solve tough issues and to be more constructive and creative in finding solutions to common problems. Unlike Newberry and Johnston, though, Harvey felt that the collaborative relationship between the Ministry and system had steadily improved from the late 1980s and on but also felt that it had deteriorated in more recent years, in part because of the reduced number of staff in the Ministry. Morin made a statement similar to Harvey's when he stated that individuals in the Ministry that are trusted and respected are more successful in implementing system changes because institutional representatives are prepared to give the initiative a chance to succeed. If a system change is imposed without institutional cooperation, it has less chance of being successful. Similarly, Lavalle stated that interpersonal relationships have been important and that some bureaucrats have had more vision than others and have been able to develop open relationships with institutional representatives. This openness resulted in a sense of trust and respect being built, which allowed the bureaucrats to be more successful in introducing system-wide initiatives.

Ellis was the one interviewee who did not answer Question 13 in terms of the positive impact of interpersonal relationships. The reason may have been the nature of his limited experience in the 1970s dealing with college officials when he was the President of the Open Learning Institute. He stated that the Institute was placed in a particularly awkward situation because, as part of its mandate, it was delivering distance education courses and competing for students in course areas delivered by other institutions, which caused considerable friction between him and

representatives of smaller institutions. Ellis did state that some college principals may have had better relationships among each other.

In summary, Question 13 provided positive and consistent support for Finding 12, although only half the interviewees made mention of a worsening relationship in the 1990s and its possible impact on maintaining a coordinated system. Several of the interviewees focused more on the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions than on relationships among institutions. The positive assessment of this relationship and its impact on the ability to move forward on system-wide initiatives provided further support for Finding 7 on the growing sense of system/Ministry cooperation.

Impact of stakeholder involvement in provincial governance

Finding 13: An increase in centralizing efforts by government in the 1990s, coupled with an increase in stakeholder involvement in provincial decision making, led to greater centralization of the college, university college, and institute system and weakened the historic relationship between the Ministry and institutional administrators and boards. This weakened relationship and the backlash to perceived over-centralization are in part responsible for the present fragmentation of the system.

Question 14: What has been the overall impact on the college, university college, and institute system of stakeholder involvement in provincial decision making during the 1990s?

Question 15: How effective has *Charting A New Course* been in steering developments in the system since 1996? Why did the Charting a New Course Steering Committee cease to exist?

For the purpose of the present study, *stakeholder* refers to groups of individuals, such as administrators, faculty, support staff, students, board members, and Ministry representatives, who play key roles within post-secondary institutions and in the broader post-secondary system. The researcher prepared two questions to

collect evidence from interviewees with respect to Finding 13. Questions 14 and 15 are dealt with separately below so as to summarize effectively the responses to each question. Question 14 was asked of seven individuals. Although the interviewees gave very interesting responses, which helped to fill in gaps in the researcher's understanding and will be summarized below, they provided very little support for Finding 13, which asserts that increased stakeholder involvement caused a move to greater centralization and a weakened relationship between administrators and the Ministry, which in turn caused fragmentation in the system. Indeed, five of the seven interviewees stated that they felt the impact of stakeholder involvement on provincial decision making had been positive. One of the reasons that Question 14 did not provide support for the finding may be that Finding 13 gives both increasing centralizing efforts of government in the 1990s and increasing stakeholder involvement as reasons for perceived over-centralization and fragmentation whereas the question only asks about the effects of stakeholder involvement. Nevertheless, the interviewees did provide unique perspectives in their responses to the question and all agreed that stakeholder involvement in provincial decision making had been a major factor in the 1990s. These responses are summarized below.

As stated previously, the majority of interviewees were positive about the impact of stakeholder involvement. The two former faculty association leaders, Lavalle and Finnbogason, both gave positive responses, as one would expect given their previous roles. Lavalle stated that in the 1990s key stakeholders, such as faculty, support staff, and students, were moved from a point of "disconnectedness" to one of full partners in collaborative decision-making processes. Thus groups like CIEA and AECBC were able to work closely together on system initiatives with the support of the Ministry. Lavalle stated that one result of stakeholder involvement was that it brought more status and funding to the college, university college, and institute system. The researcher surmises that this was likely because the NDP government of the day favoured such collaboration and was on friendly

terms with the college unions. Lavalle did provide some evidence for the assertion in Finding 12 that administrators were not pleased with their weakened relationship with the Ministry as a result of increasing stakeholder involvement. Speaking of administrators, he said “I would say, without exception, they were mostly hostile” to the increased role of stakeholders because most of the administrators were used to working in hierarchical organizations where power was not shared with others. Lavalle said most administrators saw stakeholder involvement as disempowering and as an intrusion on institutional autonomy because of the centralizing nature of many of the provincial decision-making structures and because of the statutory power now accorded to stakeholder groups. Lavalle added that over time, more board members than administrators began to accept stakeholder involvement.

Finnbogason also felt that the impact of stakeholder involvement on provincial decision making had been very positive because one gets better solutions when everyone is involved in creating the solution. He added that during the 1990s, “faculty probably had an easier time getting the ear of government than presidents.” He stated that one of the reasons that the consultative model in the 1990s was so effective is that there was “a tremendous amount of energy spent on an amazing array of committees.” He continued that “it’s impossible to sit on a committee and see anybody as an enemy,” particularly when the committees meet for long periods of time. Finnbogason stated that he saw the consultative approach of the 1990s as exemplifying the inclusiveness and tolerance that are at the root of being community colleges. He described B.C. as always having had an “egalitarian imprint” that has involved everyone sitting at the table to find common solutions, unlike other provinces, such as Ontario.

Other positive assessments of the impact of stakeholder involvement came from a former ADM, a university college president, and a former board member. Harvey stated that stakeholder involvement at the system level has been “incredibly effective” in helping to develop an integrated post-secondary system. It would not have been possible to develop as integrated a system as the one that has developed

without stakeholder involvement because the Ministry was too small to provide the total integrating force. Harvey did say, however, that initially in the early 1990s when the NDP first came to power, stakeholder involvement had strained relationships between presidents and the Ministry because presidents felt that they should be the key contacts and main spokespersons for the institution, rather than faculty and students. This statement provides support for the assertion in Finding 13 that the historic relationship between the Ministry and institutions was strained. Johnston stated that stakeholder involvement has had a strong influence on the way in which both the institutions and the system have developed over the last 10 years. This involvement at the provincial level has resulted in better decision making and the voluntary participation of stakeholders in implementing decisions they had a role in making. Fleet stated that stakeholder involvement in the development of *Charting A New Course* had a positive impact, particularly because of the individuals who represented the various stakeholder groups at the table.

Two former college presidents did not have as positive an assessment of the impact of stakeholder involvement on decision making in the 1990s. Perra stated that such involvement has created stresses in the system because stakeholder groups tend to come to the table trying to advance their own agendas more than the system's agenda and are not held accountable for the decisions made. Perra stated "I strongly believe [in] and support a lay governance model rather than a stakeholder-based governance model." He continued that some presidents were clearly unhappy with the multilateral governance structure and preferred to be independent from system structures that employed this governance model. This statement provides evidence for the assertion in Finding 13 that there was a backlash against stakeholder involvement and centralization. However, Perra continued by saying "I'm not sure if these structures led to the balkanization that's taking place," continuing that such fragmentation was more likely due to the natural evolution of university colleges. Morin stated that CIEA in the 1990s "was

certainly pushing the whole thing towards a provincial system rather than local autonomy,” providing further evidence for the centralizing effect of stakeholder involvement. He continued that the power of the unions and the coordinated provincial system of faculty associations that they developed left the individual colleges feeling vulnerable and “pushed the colleges towards the AECBC to have some kind of countervailing provincial force to protect themselves from the effectiveness of the provincial union.”

In summary, most interviewees from a variety of backgrounds held a positive view of the impact of stakeholder involvement in the 1990s. Interviewees stated that stakeholder involvement had resulted in better decision making and a more integrated post-secondary system. A few interviewees provided evidence for the negative reaction of administrators to the rise of stakeholder input because of the perceived infringement on the traditional role of administrators and the feeling of over-centralization at the expense of institutional autonomy. However, in general the responses to Question 14, although informative in their own right, did not provide much support for Finding 13.

Question 15, which dealt with the effectiveness of the *Charting A New Course* Strategic Plan, was asked of six individuals. Like Question 14, the responses did not provide direct evidence for Finding 13 but did provide some fairly consistent responses to the two parts of the question. All six interviewees stated that the plan had been effective in steering developments in the system and five of them said that a main reason for its success was the consultative process that was used in its development. In terms of the second part of the question, responses varied considerably with three of the interviewees saying that the departure of many of the key players that developed the plan was a key reason for the wane of its influence, thus providing further evidence for Finding 12 and the impact of changing key personnel in the late 1990s. The responses to Question 15 are divided below according to the two separate parts of the question.

As stated above, all six interviewees gave a positive response when asked about the effectiveness of the *Charting A New Course* Strategic Plan. Fleet said that the plan has been effective in influencing decision making at the provincial level. She stated that the planning process was very successful in bringing the key stakeholders together to cooperate in developing and implementing the plan. Lavalle said that *Charting A New Course* has been more successful than many planning initiatives because of its impact on policy evolution in the system over a considerable period of time. He stated that “most of the things that were promised in it were carried out, at least in the formative stage” and that the consultative process, which involved both coordination and collaboration, has been successful. In Lavalle’s opinion, the biggest failure of the Strategic Plan was the inability to involve universities with the college, university college, and institute sector in the planning process. Perra concurred that *Charting A New Course* has been effective, particularly in creating trilateral governed organizations, such as the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS) and the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2), to carry out the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. The plan had good endorsement from most sectors because of their involvement in creating it. Perra continued that he believes that people involved in creating something have a much higher ownership of it and are more committed to its implementation.

Harvey said “I think the process and the product were incredibly effective” and that the development of the plan involved a “once-in-a-lifetime convergence of a whole bunch of environmental situations that allowed that to happen.” The process of multi-stakeholder involvement in developing the plan was very important to its success. Finnbogason agreed that the Strategic Plan has been effective in steering developments in the system since 1996 because it involved everyone in the consultation process. The development of the plan got people to agree on common system goals that institutions would not necessarily have agreed upon voluntarily. Finally, Johnston stated that *Charting A New Course* has had a

big impact in terms of determining resource allocation and major initiatives over the last several years. He stated that the plan has proven to be an effective tool for the Ministry to accomplish its goals.

In terms of the second part of the question dealing with reasons for the Charting A New Course Steering Committee ceasing to exist, answers varied considerably with respondents speaking more about the general demise of the influence of the plan than about the Steering Committee itself. Fleet, Perra, and Johnston all gave the departure of key players, who were involved in developing the plan, as a reason for the fading influence of the plan. Perra also gave other reasons, including the statement that consulting regularly and reaching consensus with stakeholder groups is a time-consuming process and the fact that institutions had become more adept at raising funding from other sources over which the Strategic Plan held no sway. Johnston gave as an additional reason the statement that the presidents of institutions may have stopped supporting the Steering Committee because they felt that the unions had an overly strong influence on the committee.

Lavalle stated that the Steering Committee ceased to exist because its work continued through a number of other venues, such as the boards of C2T2, CEISS, and the Contract Training and Marketing Society. Harvey stated that *Charting A New Course* ceased to function effectively as a system plan around 1998 for a number of reasons. These included the fact that some external threats that had served as motives for developing the plan, such as the withdrawal of federal funds, were no longer present; the overall environment had changed; and the process became stale. Finnbogason stated that the impact of *Charting A New Course* faded largely because new governments in B.C. tend not to accept the creations of previous governments, despite the value of what might have been created.

In summary, there was a high level of consistency in the interviewees' responses to the first part of the question regarding the effectiveness of *Charting A New Course* in steering developments in the system since 1996 and an interesting

but mixed set of responses to the second part of the question dealing with the demise of the Charting A New Course Steering Committee. Neither set of responses provided evidence for Finding 13, partially because the wording of the question was very indirectly related to the finding. The question did, however, provide the researcher with valuable information from interviewees on the impact of the most recent strategic plan for the college, university college, and institute system. Such information was lacking in the literature because of the recentness of the plan's development and implementation. The positive assessment of the development of the plan showed a different view of the impact of centralized decision making than the view reflected in Finding 13. Rather than viewing stakeholder involvement as a negative, most interviewees felt that collaborative decision making at the provincial level was an effective means of developing ownership of the implementation of those decisions and of moving the institutions further than they would have gone on their own accord.

The declining role of boards

Finding 14: The powerful role played by the institutional boards in the coordination of a system and in communicating with government on institutional and system concerns has been gradually eroded over the years, and by 2001 there was no formal mechanism remaining for boards to work with each other on inter-institutional or system concerns. At the same time, the role of institutional presidents has become increasingly important, both in terms of inter-institutional relationships and relationships with the Ministry.

Question 16: How would you describe the role of boards in system-wide decision making in the 1970s and 1980s versus the 1990s and the present? How would you describe the role of presidents in system-wide decision making from the 1970s to the present?

Finding 14 has two assertions, the first being that the role of boards in provincial coordination was once important but has declined in recent years,

culminating with the demise of AECBC, and the second being that the role of presidents has become increasingly important, both in relationships across institutions and in relationships between the institutions and the Ministry. Question 16, which was asked of six individuals, thus had two parts, one dealing with each of the assertions in Finding 14. The response to the first part was mixed with three interviewees agreeing that the role of boards has declined and three stating that boards have never played a very strong role. In terms of the second part of the question, five of six interviewees agreed that presidents had played a strong role in system development. Three of those interviewees remarked on the importance of the status of the relationship with the Ministry to the effectiveness of the presidents' role. Two of them stated that the present fractured nature of the group of presidents has likely detracted from their influence. The responses to Question 16 are presented below according to the two parts of the question.

Johnston stated "I think the boards in the '70s and '80s ... had more power, had more responsibility. I think they were somewhat neutered in the '90s." Their reduced authority was due to a number of factors, including the addition of faculty and staff on the boards, the ability of stakeholder groups to bypass boards and go directly to the Ministry with their concerns, and the formation of the Post-Secondary Employers' Association with its authority for provincial bargaining, which took away a key role of boards. Perra felt that in the 1970s, board chairs were more effective in political processes and in playing an advocacy role because of their backgrounds on public school boards. However, after the 1983 Amendment to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, board members were less effective because of their lack of experience and the fact that they were less likely to take issue with the government that had appointed them. Perra said that AECBC was formed in part because the presidents felt that the boards needed to play a more effective advocacy and lobbying role as a group; however, AECBC was never seen as being very successful as a lobbyist of government. Perra concluded that he believes it is still necessary for board representatives to work together at the system

level to provide a system voice and serve as a watchdog over government actions. Fleet, whose comments were limited to the late 1980s and 1990s when she was most involved in board politics, stated that the role of boards, particularly working through their representatives at AECBC, was very positive until the mid-1990s but declined after that due to inexperienced governors and new CEOs from out of the province entering the system.

Three other interviewees were less positive about boards having played an effective role. Ellis stated that board chairs did not function very effectively as a collective. Boards would work together on occasion, but this was usually in order to solve an immediate problem rather than for the purpose of building a coordinated system. Similarly, Morin stated that most board chairs have only been interested in working at the institutional level rather than at the provincial level. Even at the institutional level, many boards took a hands-off approach to governance and were not proactive in setting policies. Morin continued that the BCAC did have some powerful leaders in its early days, such as Frank Beinder, but the organization was not very effective at the provincial level. He stated that one of the reasons that boards were unable to play an important role at the provincial level may have been that there was little role for them to play in light of the high levels of provincial coordination that have evolved. Finally, Finnbogason stated that board members have never played an important role in system-wide decision making for a number of reasons, including the lack of time and energy that voluntary members have to put into board work; the fact that members cannot be appointed beyond six years in total, which is not long enough to accomplish major change; and the fact that board members do not normally have a background in the field of education. Finnbogason did feel, however, that boards made their biggest contribution in policy development, both at the institution and at the system level.

As stated previously, five of six interviewees agreed with the strong role played by presidents, with the sixth interviewee not being asked this portion of the question and therefore not providing a response. Morin stated “I think that there

was some pretty good work done by the Council of Principals, and we had pretty good relationships ... with the senior bureaucrats in the Ministry, involved them in most meetings and most discussions,” particularly in the 1970s and 1980s.

However, he said the increased politicization of the system over time has made such cooperation more and more difficult to achieve. Similarly, Perra stated: “I’ve always believed ... that presidents have a very strong influence on system policies, and I think when presidents articulated a position, people did pay attention to it.”

However, this influence has been eroded lately because of the lack of cohesiveness among institutional presidents and the lack of a common voice. Furthermore, there is less interaction in general now than previously between the Ministry and the system, partially because of the loss of corporate history in the Ministry and the reduced number of Ministry personnel with whom to meet.

Johnston felt that presidents have played an increasing role in system-wide decision making, although their role at their own institutions has changed to fit within the new participatory governance structure. Some presidents have been more influential than others, though, depending on their relationship to the Ministry and Ministers. Likewise, Finnbogason felt that presidents have been very important in system-wide decision making, largely because they are a small group that has traditionally worked well together and has been successful at getting the ear of government. However, presidents are less successful at influencing governments that are ideologically driven, regardless of the political stripe, because such governments are more impervious to outside influence. Finnbogason concluded that presidents in 2002 are fractured as a group and are driving the fragmentation within the system, which plays well into the hands of the government of the day. Finally, Fleet referred to the important role of presidents in terms of their work on AECBC. She stated that presidents are always more powerful than board members in organizations like AECBC because they are longer serving, paid employees versus board members, who are volunteers with a short tenure limited to six years at maximum.

In summary, Question 16 provided strong support for the assertion in Finding 14 that presidents have played an important role in provincial coordination but only mixed support for the important but declining role of boards. The researcher may have found more evidence in the literature of a greater perceived role of boards at the provincial level because he had read a number of important documents written by board associations and/or their representatives. Several interviewees did not agree with this finding from their personal experiences in the system. Interestingly, no one mentioned the demise of AECBC as evidence of that declining role, although several interviewees spoke of the death of AECBC in their response to Question 12 on the impact of institutional differentiation on system coordination.

Role of important individuals

Finding 15: Over the decades, and particularly in the first 25 years of college and institute development, certain individuals have played a very important role in the way in which institutions and the system have developed. These individuals held strong views on the values of institutional autonomy and/or the need for system coordination, and these views helped shape the system. Such important individuals include John Macdonald, author of the Macdonald Report; Dean Chant, Chair of the Academic Board; Frank Beinder, the first Executive Director of the B.C. Association of Colleges; Andrew Soles, the first ADM responsible for colleges and institutes; Patrick McGeer, the Minister who introduced the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977; and Grant Fisher, the ADM for much of the 1980s.

Question 17: Who were the most important individuals involved in the early development of the college system in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s? What impact did they have on the developing system?

Question 17 was asked of four individuals, but two others provided their viewpoints on this question without having been asked it. After the researcher

received consistent responses from the first few interviewees, he decided not to ask the question further. Because of the way interviewees responded to the first part of the question, it was unnecessary to ask the second part. Therefore, the two parts of the question are treated as one below. All of the important individuals mentioned in Finding 15 were referred to by at least one interviewee, with some of them being referred to several times. The various individuals mentioned by interviewees and, where given, the importance of their roles, are described below.

The two individuals receiving the most support from interviewees were Andy Soles and Grant Fisher, the two ADMs for much of the 1970s and 1980s respectively. Soles was mentioned by Day, Ellis, Morin, Newberry, and Perra, and Fisher was referred to by Day, Morin, Johnston, and Perra for their important work. Morin said Soles had “a real commitment to education and to the whole college idea and was very supportive of the institutions and their presidents.” Newberry, in describing the positive working relationship between the Ministry and the system over the years, said “I put it down to Andy Soles setting that tone, and it’s just kind of permeated the Ministry ever since.” Perra said that both Soles and Fisher were important early leaders who had served as presidents and thus understood the challenges and needs of institutions. Morin stated that Fisher made a “tremendous contribution to the system” in a number of roles, including college president, ADM, and the first head of BCCAT. Day stated that in his opinion, Fisher “bestrides the system like a colossus ... in qualitative impact.”

Other individuals listed in Finding 15 were also mentioned by interviewees. Frank Beinder was mentioned by both Ellis and Morin with Morin describing him as “the conscience of the community” because of his tireless efforts to remind people of the importance of keeping the community focus of colleges. Pat McGeer was mentioned by Day and Ellis. John Macdonald and Dean Chant were both mentioned by Ellis for their respective roles in the early development of the system.

A number of important college presidents were also singled out for their work in developing the college system. These included Lloyd Morin, Paul

Gallagher, Bill Day, Jake McInnis, and Bruce Fraser. Other Ministry officials noted for their work were Jack Newberry, Dean Goard, and Duncan McRae. Other Ministers mentioned as being important were Donald Brothers for his role in bringing about the meld of colleges and provincial vocational institutes and Bill Vander Zalm for his work as Education Minister in the early 1980s. Finally, Ian McTaggart-Cowan was mentioned by both Ellis and Day for his important early influence as Chair of the Academic Board and on the inception of the transfer system in B.C.

Thus interviewees provided good support for Finding 15 in terms of the important individuals listed and their roles in shaping the system. Interviewees did not make direct reference, though, to the views of these individuals on the importance of institutional autonomy and system coordination. The lack of support for this statement in Finding 15 is not surprising in that Question 17 did not ask for interviewees to comment specifically on this topic.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW DATA

The interview data provided a high level of support for many of the findings but also provided different perspectives from those that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 4. The researcher found strong support for Findings 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 12, and 15. This included support for Finding 5 regarding the important assertions about the long history of voluntary collaboration in B.C., although interviewees gave different time periods for the height of that collaboration and a variety of reasons for the collaboration having taken place. There was also a high level of support for at least some of the assertions in Findings 4, 6, 10, 11, and 14.

The interview responses related to Findings 7 and 8 provided mixed support for these two important findings related to the purpose of this research. For Finding 7, all interviewees agreed that there had been a positive working relationship between the Ministry and the institutions over time, but interviewees had very different opinions on the decade in which such cooperative efforts had

been at their peak. Furthermore, there was little direct support for specific assertions in Finding 7, although three interviewees made statements that supported the assertion about the growing understanding among institutional and Ministry representatives that they had to work together in their respective roles to build a strong system. Similarly for Finding 8 on the eventual blending of collaborative and coordinated efforts, there was mixed support with only one interviewee providing support for the first assertion on the growing understanding by the Ministry of the value of inter-institutional cooperation. However, six interviewees made statements that supported the assertion that over time the collaborative work among institutions and the coordinated efforts of government became merged into a coherent effort at building a system. Interviewees added depth to this finding by suggesting that the two concepts of collaboration and coordination have in a sense become mutually dependent constructs by which system initiatives can be successfully implemented.

The one finding that did not receive direct support from the interviews was Finding 13 on the impact of stakeholder involvement on perceptions of increased centralization in the 1990s. The finding focussed on the negative consequences of stakeholder involvement whereas most interviewees responded to Question 13 that such involvement had a positive effect on provincial decision making because collaboration in decision making promotes ownership of the implementation of those decisions. Similarly, the responses to Question 14, while almost unanimous on the important impact of *Charting A New Course*, did not provide direct support for Finding 13.

As stated in the introduction to Chapter 5, the purpose of the chapter was to analyze the interview data to find support for the 15 findings and fill in gaps in understanding. However, the findings represented a high level synthesis of the numerous findings in Chapter 4, and many additional findings from the literature not specifically mentioned in the 15 key findings were referenced by interviewees. Several examples of such references follow. For instance, statements were made by

interviewees about the importance of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act to the ability of the Ministry to take a more centralist approach to managing the development of the system, the importance of early ADMs having worked at institutions in terms of setting a positive tone for the relationship between Ministry and institutional representatives, the impact of demands for greater autonomy by presidents in the late 1990s on the decentralization that occurred when the Liberals gained power, the impact of the formation of the Post-Secondary Employers' Association and its assumption of provincial bargaining responsibilities on the removal of an important role for AECBC, and the dissolution of AECBC because of its inability to represent the divergent aspirations of the sectors that belonged to AECBC. The reader will likely find several other examples of statements made by interviewees that relate to findings from the literature in Chapter 4. These statements provide further corroboration for the findings from the literature in relation to the purpose of this study.

In closing, the varied perspectives of the 10 interviewees provided both support for the findings from literature in Chapter 4 and additional information that deepened the researcher's understanding in relation to the purpose of the study. From a hermeneutic stance, such variety in perspectives is to be expected and honoured as each interviewee entered the interview with her or his own memories of the past, based on different experiences, roles, and times in the post-secondary system. The interviewees, as witnesses of and participants in many of the events and initiatives of the past, were able to add depth to the researcher's understanding, which had developed based solely on the literature review prior to the interviews taking place. The researcher had not lived in B.C. for most of the period under study and was thus able to gain valuable insights from those who had been part of the college, university college, and institute system over the decades.

Any variation in interpretation of past events between interviewees and the researcher is also to be expected because the researcher had the benefit of just having conducted a thorough review of over 100 primary and secondary literature

sources over a six-month period. So while the interviewees had the advantage of actually having witnessed the events that took place, the researcher had the advantage of being able to study in an in-depth way what has been written about the past and to develop his own interpretations of what the authors were saying. The end result has been the building of a deeper understanding, based on the researcher's interpretation of the text and the interviews, of the coordinated and collaborative nature of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system and the movement over time between decentralization and centralization. Chapter 6, which follows, will bring this research project to conclusion.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of Chapter 6 is to bring closure to the present study by comparing and synthesizing what was learned from Chapters 2, 4, and 5. The first section of the chapter briefly summarizes the major findings from the literature review in Chapter 4 and the interview data in Chapter 5 in relation to the purpose of the study and serves as a synthesis of the findings from the two main sources of data. This section also relates the findings from Chapters 4 and 5 to the pertinent literature from Chapter 2 and from one other key literature source. In doing so, the author relates his findings from the B.C. context to the broader context of coordination and collaboration and centralist versus decentralist approaches to higher education, primarily in the United States, the focus of much of the literature in Chapter 2. The second section of Chapter 6 presents a review of the relevant literature, both Canadian and American, on the design of higher education systems and on considerations that should be taken into account by jurisdictions trying to achieve an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization of higher education. The third section of the chapter presents the researcher's conclusions, which represent a synthesis of the key insights and understandings that have emerged through the data collection and analysis for this research project. The fourth and final section of the chapter involves a review of possible areas for further research, based on the present research study.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH IN RELATION TO CHAPTER 2

The purpose of the research was to review the historical development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system in terms of three different themes represented by dichotomies: first and foremost, the changing nature of voluntary inter-institutional collaboration in relation to provincial coordination; second, centralization and decentralization; and third, the development of a provincial system of autonomous institutions. The following subsection reviews the

major findings from Chapter 4, the literature review, and Chapter 5, the interviews, as they relate to these three dichotomies of the research purpose, and the next subsection relates these findings to the most relevant literature in Chapter 2.

Synthesis of major findings from the literature review and interview data

Colleges in B.C. began in the 1960s as highly autonomous institutions with strong community involvement and with partial funding from local taxation. They did so in a decentralized environment with minimal direction from the Ministry, which was small in size and served more as an enabler of the development of institutions. As the number of institutions grew because of their popularity with the public and the cost to government grew accordingly, the Ministry became more involved in the mid- to late 1970s in providing central direction to institutions and demanding greater accountability for the use of provincial funds. The passage of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act in 1977 provided government with the tools it needed to take increasing control. The worsening of the provincial economy, particularly in the early 1980s, resulted in severe government restraint and a more centralist approach being taken by government, including the development of the first five-year strategic plan for the system and demands for program rationalization across institutions. A funding formula was also developed by the Ministry through a consultative process in the early 1980s. The literature provided evidence that the formula reduced competition among institutions because it removed perceptions of inequitable treatment of institutions by government. Some interviewees agreed with this finding while others believed that the formula actually increased competition for resources because of the transparency of the funding allocation model. As the Ministry took an increasingly active role in coordinating the development of institutions, the term “system” became commonplace in the Ministry’s description of colleges and institutes.

The improving economy in the late 1980s resulted in the expansion of the college and institute system through the Access for All initiative and the creation of university colleges. In the early 1990s when the NDP came to power, there was a significant increase in stakeholder input into governance and decision making at both the institutional and provincial levels and a more centralist approach of government to the planning of an integrated system. The impact of stakeholder involvement was viewed positively by most interviewees. The increasing centralization, coupled with the increasing differentiation among sectors of the college, university college, and institute system, resulted in a fragmenting of what had been until the mid-1990s a fairly uniform system of autonomous institutions. In 2001, the Liberals gained power and adopted, despite the worsening economy, a more decentralist approach to institutions, based on a market-driven ideology that involved deregulation, increased autonomy for institutions, and a focus on accountability. At the same time, the new government was quite centralist in its approach to directing institutions to meet the government's New Era commitments.

The history of centralization and decentralization and the development of a system of autonomous institutions serve as the backdrop for the discussion on voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination. The colleges, university colleges, and institutes of B.C. have a long history of voluntary, inter-institutional collaborative efforts rooted in the early development of autonomous institutions with minimal government intervention. However, interviewees had different perspectives on the time periods in which the height of collaboration had occurred. There were numerous reasons given in the literature and by interviewees for this voluntary cooperation, including the need to develop an adequate transfer system to allow student mobility, to do joint program planning across institutions, to present a common voice to government on important issues, to lobby government, to provide a support network among CEOs, and to share expertise in the developing college system. Other reasons included the organization of faculty into a provincial association and the availability of adequate funding, which prevented competition

and made collaboration possible. At the same time, a positive working relationship between the Ministry and the institutions grew over time, but the status of that relationship varied considerably from decade to decade according to the different perspectives of interviewees, depending on such factors as the availability of funding, the development of the funding formula, the changing reliance of institutions on the Ministry for funding because of the development of new funding sources, the growing complexity of the system, and the personalities and backgrounds of senior level bureaucrats working in the Ministry.

Throughout this changing relationship, the literature suggests that both institutions and the Ministry realized the need to cooperate with each other in their respective roles to build a provincial system of autonomous institutions. Over time, there was a gradual blending of voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination as the Ministry played an increasingly important role in involving institutions and, later, stakeholder groups, in important system initiatives, such as establishing an accountability framework, developing data collection systems, and developing provincial strategic plans. Interviewees provided additional insights into the intricate nature of the evolving relationship between coordination and collaboration and seemed to suggest that some form of Ministry intervention was required to sustain collaborative efforts across institutions. At the same time, the Ministry could not lead system initiatives unless institutions cooperated with the Ministry and with each other willingly and relationships among individuals were positive. Thus voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination became mutually dependent constructs.

The fragmentation of the college, university college, and institute system beginning in the mid-1990s; the changing leadership at both the Ministry and institutional level; and competition for limited resources have made both inter-institutional collaboration and provincial coordination more difficult in 2002. At the same time, the Liberal government in 2002 has made a commitment in its three-year *Service Plan* to build a more integrated post-secondary system over the next

few years, although many of its early actions, such as the move towards block funding and the full deregulation of tuition fees, have resulted in greater decentralization and increased autonomy for institutions. Interviewees' opinions were divided on whether the new government is being more decentralist or centralist in its actions.

Relationship of research findings to the literature review in Chapter 2

The following subsection reviews pertinent literature from Chapter 2 and a new source by Richardson, Bracco, Callan, and Finney (1999) with regard to the findings from Chapters 4 and 5. The subsection begins with an exploration of the timing of and reasons for trends in centralization and decentralization in American jurisdictions in comparison to B.C. and continues with references in the literature to voluntary collaboration and coordination in relation to the B.C. context. The reader should be aware that the literature from the U.S. includes reference to all of higher education, including community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. The focus of the present study was on the development of the college, university college, and institute system in B.C., although the histories of the American and B.C. systems do appear to be quite similar.

Centralization and decentralization

The history in B.C. of having begun as autonomous institutions with a decentralized approach by government, moving to a much more centralized system under government control, and then moving back to a more decentralized model based on a market-driven ideology is similar in many ways to the history of higher education in the United States. However, the swings back and forth between decentralization and centralization have tended to be later in B.C. because of the relative youth of the college system in Canada compared to that of the U.S.

Novak (1996) states that the period from the 1950s to the early 1970s represented a significant move in the U.S. to consolidation of authority and the

development of coordinated and multicampus systems. Similarly, Langenberg (1999) states that multicampus systems emerged after the Second World War in order for governments to gain some system control over the rapid growth of what would otherwise have been independent and autonomous institutions. Richardson, Bracco, Callan, and Finney (1999) refer to the period from 1950 to 1980 as “the era of growth and coordination” in which “the role of state government changed from principally that of provider of institutional resources to both provider and regulator of institutional aspirations” (p. 6). According to Richardson et al., prior to 1950 many institutions had developed with considerable autonomy, although there were the beginnings in several states of the various types of coordinating systems that later emerged across the U.S. In B.C., the emergence of autonomous institutions did not begin until the mid-1960s, and the growth of a centralizing trend did not begin until the mid- to late 1970s. Thus development of a coordinated system in B.C. was significantly later than in U.S. jurisdictions. However, some of the reasons for increasing centralization were similar in the States and in Canada, including B.C., as will be described below.

Novak (1996) gives a number of reasons for greater consolidation of institutions into coordinated systems by the 1960s, including the coordination of enrolment growth among institutions, the reduction in institutional competition over resources and programs, the control of the proliferation of graduate and professional programs, the improvement of cooperation among institutions, and the orderly development of new institutions. Richardson et al. (1999) give many of the same reasons for state systems developing and add the desire of the state to limit the lobbying of individual institutions and to reduce barriers to effective transfer and articulation. Richardson et al. also state that a key reason for increased regulation of higher education in the 1970s and early 1980s was concern over fiscal restraints. Dennison (1995b) gives a number of similar reasons for an increasing focus on coordination of community colleges in Canada and emphasizes a growing

concern among governments about the cost of maintaining a number of institutions and a questioning of the effectiveness of how the resources were being spent.

Evidence for the reasons for increased centralization in B.C. came both from the literature summarized in Chapter 4 and from the interviews. The reasons were similar to many of those stated in Chapter 2. Some of the reasons for a growing interest in control of institutions by government in B.C. were the growing number of institutions and the increasing cost, especially when government assumed 100 percent of the funding in 1977; the worsening economy in the early 1980s and the need to control program growth and engage in program rationalization; the perceived need by government for greater accountability for the use of funds; the feeling that locally driven development had led to inconsistent service across the province; support from institutional representatives for a greater role by government in coordinating, but not controlling, a college system; a growing feeling of inequity in terms of how individual institutions were being treated; the need for coordination of vocational training; and the need to direct post-secondary programming into applied areas to assist the province in its human resource development needs. Improved transfer was also deemed a reason for a more coordinated system, but the role of maintaining a transfer system in the early days of college development fell more to the collaborative efforts of individual institutions than to a provincial coordinating board.

In terms of the finding that increased government funding was a reason for centralization, Garrett (1993) provides evidence from his study that found a significant positive correlation between the level of state funding and the degree of centralization by government and a significant negative correlation between the level of local funding and centralization. Similarly, in B.C., the researcher found evidence in both the literature and the interviews that increasing funding from government and the elimination of funding from the local tax base resulted in increased centralization by government.

The literature in Chapter 2 also provided information on the main functions and benefits of coordinated and multicampus systems, which included working as a system on accountability, budgeting, program planning, strategic planning, and the development and implementation of distance education. Although none of the major findings in Chapter 4 dealt specifically with the functions and benefits of increased coordination and centralization, much of the Chapter 4 literature review did deal with examples over time of the increasing involvement of the Ministry in the five areas listed above, as well as in other areas such as enrolment management and data collection. However, evidence from the literature in Chapter 4 and the interviews showed that in B.C. most of the examples of Ministry initiatives in this area either were initiated by the Ministry but involved a collaborative effort with the institutions, such as the development and implementation of the funding formula, or grew out of voluntary collaboration, such as the work on enrolment management.

The American literature also provided evidence of a move towards greater decentralization in the last few decades, based on a growing focus on competition and accountability and a market approach to education. McGuinness (1996) states that the trend of previous decades towards centralization was reversed between 1985 and 1995 with a move towards decentralization in many jurisdictions. Novak (1996) describes a study in which 9 out of 16 states engaged in a move towards more decentralized models with increased institutional autonomy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Likewise, Burke (1999) writes of greater decentralization in a number of jurisdictions in the early 1990s as a result of a move towards a competitive paradigm, based on business practices and political conservatism, that involved greater institutional autonomy and increased accountability following a market-based approach to education.

In a similar vein, MacTaggart (1996) and Novak (1996) describe the move towards increased competition in higher education based on the philosophy of reinventing government, which is rooted in a market-driven ideology. Richardson

et al. (1999) describe the efforts of a number of states since 1980 to decentralize higher education by “breaking up systems or providing individual institutions with greater decisional authority, albeit within the context of management information systems that assured some reasonable accountability” (p. 10). Finally, Novak writes that the move to market-driven approaches to providing public education “is fostered by the state disinvestment in colleges and universities” (p. 35), a statement that is echoed by Burke (1999) as a major reason for the move to decentralization in the 1990s. Thus ample evidence exists in the American literature about moves over the 1980s and 1990s to greater decentralization, increased institutional autonomy, and increased accountability for outcomes.

Evidence from the literature and from several of the interviews showed a similar move to decentralization by government in B.C. at the present time for similar reasons. Once again, the move in B.C. has occurred at a later date than in the U.S. with the main thrust toward a more decentralist approach beginning with the election of the Liberal government in 2001. Documents from the new government showed clearly a move away from the more centralist tendencies of the 1990s to a decentralist approach based on a market-driven ideology that promotes deregulation, increased institutional autonomy, and greater accountability for outcomes. Thus the experiences in the U.S. and in B.C. appear similar with regards to the move towards decentralization. Other reasons given by interviewees and found in the Chapter 4 literature for the present move to decentralization included the declining portion of institutional funds received from the provincial government; fragmentation that has resulted among colleges, university colleges, and institutes, partially as a result of increasing differentiation; a desire within institutions for increased autonomy; a negative reaction to the perceived over-centralization of the 1990s; the departure of long-standing leaders from both the Ministry and the institutions; and the smaller size of the Ministry, leaving it incapable of its past level of intervention.

In summary, both centralization and decentralization of colleges, university colleges, and institutes in B.C. have occurred for some of the same reasons that these trends have occurred in higher education in general in the U.S. However, additional reasons were provided for the present move to decentralization in B.C. Furthermore, the timing of the swings between centralization and decentralization in B.C. has occurred later than it has in the U.S., partially because of the relative youth of B.C. institutions compared to their American counterparts, as described in Chapter 1.

Coordination and collaboration

This part of Chapter 6 begins with a brief comparison of the mechanisms for state coordination of higher education systems in the U.S. and in B.C. and then focuses on the scant literature on voluntary collaboration in relation to the B.C. context. Novak (1996) states that the two main types of coordinating bodies at the state level are coordinating boards, with regulating authority over colleges and universities throughout the state, and governing boards, with responsibility for managing multicampus systems. According to Gaither (1999), McGuinness (1996), and Langenberg (1999), the main form of public higher education in the U.S. is the multicampus system. Richardson et al. (1999) write of coordinating boards in 24 states, 21 of them with regulatory authority, and consolidated governing boards in 24 states. They also mention a third type of structure called planning agencies that “have no organization with authority that extends much beyond voluntary planning and convening of higher education” (p. 3). Interestingly, only two states have this kind of structure, which relies solely on voluntary planning.

B.C., on the other hand, would be described more like a quasi-system (Dennison, 1995c) in that it does not have a multicampus system but rather 27 autonomous post-secondary institutions, each with its own board. B.C. does not have a coordinating agency or board, either, in the same way that many of the American states have. Most coordinating agencies and boards in the U.S. appear to

be either closely tied to government or have the status of an independent agency but, in either case, serve an intermediary function between government and institutions. However, the literature in Chapter 4 showed that responsibility for post-secondary institutions in B.C. has always rested within government through a series of ministries with responsibility for advanced education. The three intermediary councils that were created in 1977 with regulatory authority were quickly abolished because of widespread dissatisfaction with them. The other agencies that have existed in B.C., such as the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT), the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS), and the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2), have no regulatory authority and, although they serve some of the functions of coordinating boards, they often do so based on broad policies of government and on the strength of their relationships with institutions. Thus, unlike American states, there is no structure in B.C. with regulatory functions that would act as an intermediary between the government and the institutions. Instead, each institution deals with government directly regarding its operational and capital needs. As well, institutions lobby government through various sector organizations that have developed with part-time or full-time staff. This difference between B.C. and the U.S. in terms of the relationship of the coordinating board to government is germane to the next section of Chapter 6 on means by which jurisdictions can achieve a balance between centralization and decentralization.

In terms of voluntary collaboration, Chapter 2 showed a dearth of literature on this topic, which added to the significance of this study. As Richardson et al. (1999) found, only 2 out of 50 states have adopted a planning agency structure that relies on voluntary planning of the higher education system. However, several references were made throughout Chapter 2 about voluntary collaboration, and these will be discussed below in relation to the findings in this study.

Johnstone (1999), Healy (1997), and Novak (1996) all mention that a central function of statewide and multicampus systems is fostering collaboration

and cooperation among institutions. Similarly, Szutz (1999) mentions the importance of collaboration among institutions and between institutions and the government in statewide strategic planning. These statements provide some support for the finding from the literature in Chapter 4 that government in B.C. recognized the value of institutional cooperation to achieving system goals and began to include such cooperation as an important element of provincial strategic plans. The statements by the above authors also provide evidence of a blending of the concepts of coordination and collaboration among institutions by coordinating and governing bodies, similar to another finding from the literature. The statement by Szutz also supports the importance of close cooperation among institutions and between institutions and the Ministry in strategic planning exercises in B.C. since 1982. Evidence from the interviews showed that it is this cooperative endeavour on inter-institutional initiatives, often driven by the Ministry but built on the history of cooperation among institutions, that has resulted in the concepts of collaboration and coordination being synthesized into a unified and sustainable approach to building and maintaining a system.

Tollefson (1981) provides further support for a potential reason for the blending of collaboration and coordination in B.C. when he describes the many benefits that accrue from the work of voluntary academic consortia. The benefits of such voluntary collaboration, as described by Tollefson, were very similar to the benefits of coordinating systems. If the benefits of both collaboration and coordination are indeed similar, this would provide support for the possibility of the two concepts merging over time, which was a finding from the literature in Chapter 4 and from some of the interviews.

Glenny (1959) provides evidence for the importance of interpersonal relationships in maintaining voluntary collaboration when he states that mutual respect, goodwill, and trust among presidents were very important to success of voluntary coordinating systems. The researcher found similar evidence in the literature in Chapter 4 and the interviews of the importance of trust and goodwill in

the development of both collaborative and coordinated activities in the B.C. system over time. Glenny also describes the weaknesses of systems built on voluntary collaboration, with the most significant one being the tendency of such systems to maintain the status quo because ultimately, the allegiances of individual participants lie first with their own organizations and not with the system as a whole. Burke (1999) and Langenberg (1999) also make statements about the inability of individual campuses in multicampus systems to make decisions and take concerted action on their own accord to benefit the system as a whole. These statements are very similar to statements made by some of the interviewees about the difficulty of voluntary collaboration alone achieving enduring system change because an institutional representative must put the needs of her or his institution ahead of the needs of the system. Hence, these interviewees said that the Ministry must play a facilitative role to allow collaboration to continue and to blend collaboration with coordination.

Finally, Glenny (1959) states that the ability of institutions to reach unanimity in a voluntary coordinating system is essential but becomes more and more difficult as systems grow and become more complex and differentiated with various sectors forming. Such differentiation impacts negatively on interpersonal relationships and the trust and goodwill so necessary for a voluntary system to work. Glenny's statements are very similar to findings from the literature in Chapter 4 and the interviews that the present state of fragmentation in B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system is in large part due to increasing differentiation and the erosion of interpersonal relationships. Indeed, a stated reason for the eventual dissolution of the Advanced Education Council of B.C. (AECBC), a voluntary organization, was the inability of the organization to represent the varying needs of the evolving sectors of institutions.

Thus, the few references in the literature to voluntary collaboration in Chapter 2 do appear to corroborate the findings in Chapter 4 and from the interviews. This concludes the section on findings from the literature and

interviews and their relation to Chapter 2. The next section will delve into the literature on different ways of thinking about and organizing higher education systems in order to achieve an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization.

DESIGNING A POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM THAT BALANCES CENTRALIST AND DECENTRALIST TENDENCIES

The second section of Chapter 6 is designed to explore system designs for higher education and to report on recent work that has been done by jurisdictions trying to seek an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization. This information is being provided to develop for the reader a deeper understanding of ways of balancing centralist/decentralist tendencies and to set the context for some of the conclusions that follow. The section begins by presenting some of the Canadian literature on post-secondary system designs in Canada as they relate to the B.C. context. The section continues with a review of relevant American literature on developing a balanced approach to higher education coordination, with a particular emphasis on the work of Richardson et al. (1999). The section makes occasional reference to the role of voluntary coordination where relevant to do so, but the main emphasis here is on system design and coordination, as that is the emphasis in the literature.

The Canadian literature

One way of describing post-secondary systems is by reviewing the state of differentiation or stratification that exists in systems. Fisher, Rubenson, and Della Mattia (2001) state that the B.C. post-secondary system, particularly in the 1990s, has moved from a binary system to a stratified system. The binary system is representative of most Canadian provinces and involves two sectors of institutions, usually colleges and universities, working together in a complementary manner. The stratified system, on the other hand, is more complex and involves a number of sectors working together in some form of cooperative arrangement. Skolnik (2000)

agrees that the post-secondary system in B.C. is the most differentiated system in Canada and states that “the predominant view in the literature on institutional differentiation ... is that the natural evolution of postsecondary institutions is toward greater differentiation” (p. 2). The evidence from the interviews supported the findings from the literature in Chapter 4 that B.C. has reached a high state of differentiation and fragmentation, which makes coordination and collaboration more difficult to achieve. The question becomes one of how to maintain the diversity of sectors and institutions and yet function as a system in which government plays its necessary role while respecting the historical autonomy of institutions.

Fisher et al. (2001) write of the work of Skolnik, Jones, and Soren in 1998 on the different levels of coordination between college and university sectors in Canada. The three major approaches to coordination in Canada include the institutional level, sector level, and system level. Coordination at the institutional level involves autonomous institutions in bilateral relationships whereas system-level coordination involves planning at the system level and treating institutions as parts of a greater whole. Fisher et al. state that “coordination at sector level characterizes all Canadian provinces” (p. 5), meaning primarily college and university sectors. Unlike the experience in the U. S., Fisher et al. argue that, “no province is yet at the system level of coordination where agencies transcend institutional and sector boundaries” (p. 6). This lack of a mechanism for system coordination is also true for B.C. although B.C. is recognized as having “developed a *system* of higher education which has been articulated and coordinated to a somewhat greater extent than is the case in other Canadian provinces, with the exception of Quebec and, perhaps, Alberta” (Dennison, 1997b, p. 51).

Skolnik (2000) speaks of the need for a system design, rather than a system plan, that balances the roles of governments and post-secondary institutions. Skolnik argues that such a design should acknowledge institutional autonomy by providing them with “procedural autonomy” over institutional operations while

limiting “substantial autonomy such that the state through a consultative process which involves all stakeholders would determine the mission and major goals of all postsecondary institutions” (p. 3). Fisher et al. (2001) agree with Skolnik’s distinction between procedural and substantial autonomy and assert that “the state can and should set the mandate and major goals for institutions” and that “institutions should have full procedural autonomy in deciding how best to achieve the substantive goals set by the state” (p. 6). Fisher et al. go on to state “when institutions engage in exercises to determine their mandate and major goals, it is not uncommon for them to under-emphasize the goals of a whole system” (p. 6). Elsewhere, Fisher et al. state that “voluntary coordination seems to mean that if it is in the institution’s [*sic*] interests to coordinate they will do so. When it is not, they will not” (p. 41). The authors confirm the statements of several interviewees about the drawbacks of a full reliance on voluntary collaboration because of the priority that is given to institutional needs.

Fisher et al. (2001) provide their ideas on the important role of government in setting a system’s direction and build on Skolnik’s work by stating the following:

Design means articulating a vision of a system that clearly communicates the overall mission, and within this the mission for each segment of the system. Mission, in this sense, makes explicit how the segments are interrelated and the degree of their coordination. Without a guiding provincial design it is difficult to provide a strong policy direction for the system as a whole to the people who are responsible for making decision in the post-secondary sectors or institutions. (p. 6)

The work in B.C. on developing *Charting A New Course* appears to meet some of the stipulations of Skolnik and Fisher et al. in that it did involve the Ministry working in a highly consultative process with key system stakeholders to develop a strategic vision and plan for the college, university college, and institute system. However, the plan did not adequately recognize the important roles played by the various sectors in the highly differentiated system that had evolved in B.C. Rather the plan tended to treat the institutions as more similar to each other than as being

members of distinct sectors. This homogeneous treatment of institutions by *Charting A New Course* may help to explain in part the demise of its influence in the latter part of the 1990s as the so-called system became more fragmented along sector lines.

Fisher et al. (2001) refer to the important work of Richardson et al. (1999) in their analysis of a possible suitable design for B.C.'s post-secondary system, which includes universities. This work will be discussed in some depth below as part of the American literature about appropriate system designs for a balanced approach to coordination of higher education systems.

The American literature

The history of higher education in B.C. and the rest of Canada differs somewhat from that of the U. S., and the literature referenced above shows that the approach to system-wide coordination across sectors in a differentiated system differs as well. However, recent work on trends in the U.S. with respect to the balancing of the centralization/decentralization continuum holds possible lessons for the B.C. context and is complementary to the work described above by Skolnik (2000) and Fisher et al. (2001). Some of the American literature is described below.

In the first section of Chapter 6, reference was made to statements by McGuinness (1996) and Novak (1996) about the increase in decentralization in higher education in a number of states in the latter part of the 1980s and early 1990s. However, both McGuinness and Novak state that systems in the future are likely to rely more rather than less on some form of central system to achieve the goals of state governments. McGuinness states that the question is not whether some form of centralized system will exist or not but rather what is the appropriate balance in systems between centralized authority and autonomous institutions. Similarly, Novak asserts that different states are developing increasingly complex models in an attempt to find the appropriate balance between centralized control and institutional autonomy.

Chapter 2 concluded with a description by McGuinness (1996) of a hypothetical system which would incorporate elements of both centralized and decentralized systems, assuring a higher education system that would meet the changing needs of the state while at the same time being based on more of a market-driven philosophy. In McGuinness's model system, strong central coordination is provided by a higher education corporation with full responsibility for the allocation of resources, the development of accountability systems, and the provision of funding to promote institutional innovation. The corporation would also provide a wide array of services to institutions on a competitive basis. Institutions in McGuinness's system would have a high degree of autonomy, would have their own boards, and would be fully accountable for meeting established performance indicators, with a portion of their future funding being determined by their success on those indicators. Institutions would also be encouraged to be more market- and consumer-driven based on incentives from the state. Such a balanced approach to system coordination may have applicability in the B.C. context, which already possesses many of the attributes of the system described by McGuinness. The approach could also satisfy the goal of the present government of having a more coherent and integrated post-secondary system within a more market-based framework.

Richardson et al. (1999) conducted a study of seven American jurisdictions to determine the influences that shape higher education performance in adopting appropriate policies and system designs. Like Novak (1996), Richardson et al. refer to the period between 1980 and the present as one of "incremental rebalancing" in which states adopted a variety of approaches that "defy simple, one-dimensional explanations" (p. 9) in order to find a balance between over-centralization and institutional autonomy. Richardson et al. state that "institutional autonomy versus state authority, or centralization versus decentralization" (p. 2), the focus of much of the present study, is the traditional approach to studying state governance of higher education. Instead, the authors state that the performance of systems should

be judged by examining the symmetry or disconnect between the state policy environment and its system design.

According to Richardson et al. (1999), state policy involves “the role that the state government chooses in balancing the competing influences of professional values and the market” (p. 11). Professional values include institutional independence and academic freedom whereas the market includes “a broad array of interests and influences that are external to the formal structures of both state government and higher education institutions” (Richardson et al., 1999, p. 12). Included in the authors’ definition of the market are a number of economic influences, such as competitive pressures and student demand, and non-economic influences, such as demographics and political pressure.

Richardson et al.’s model determines a state’s policy role in higher education according to the use it makes of the market with respect to higher education. The four possible roles of the state are that of providing resources, regulating, consumer advocacy, and steering. On the provider end of the continuum, the state does not take into consideration the market whereas in the regulating role the state “specifies the relationship between institutions and the market” (Richardson et al., 1999, p. 14). In the consumer advocate role, the state provides some resources directly to students and allows them choice in where they purchase their education. In the steering role, based on the concept of reinventing government as discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 2 by MacTaggart (1996) and Novak (1996), “states steer by structuring the market for higher education services to produce outcomes consistent with governmental priorities” (Richardson et al., 1999, p. 14). Examples of the steering function include the use of private institutions to meet public needs and the use of vouchers, both of which were mentioned previously as aspects of the move towards competition in higher education.

Richardson et al. (1999) assert that states have varying degrees of success in terms of how they balance the professional values of higher education with the

needs of the market. The authors make the following important statement regarding potential imbalances:

Ignoring the market in favor of state-planned systems of public higher education increases costs and limits responsiveness to emerging needs and priorities. Excessive state regulation removes institutional incentives for efficiency and quality. Excessive reliance on consumer choice substitutes what people are willing to buy for longer term investment strategies. Overzealous market structuring can leave the most expensive tasks to public institutions, while stripping them of critical mass and flexibility. (pp. 15-16)

The various policy roles described by Richardson et al. and the dangers of jurisdictions taking an imbalanced approach are very apropos to the B.C. context where the literature and interviews have shown a swing over time between decentralizing and centralizing tendencies based, among other things, on the changing economy and political ideology of the day. As stated by other authors in this section of Chapter 6, finding an appropriate balance of roles appears to be very important.

The second important element for Richardson et al. (1999) in determining higher education performance at the state level is system design, which they describe as “the tools policy makers and professional leaders have available to improve or change higher education performance” (p. 16). System design includes decisions about governance structures, work processes, mission, and capacity. In terms of governance structures, the three possible structures are segmented, unified, and federal. A segmented structure involves no central agency and multiple governing boards with each institution making direct representation to government through the budget process. The only power of government is to determine annual funding allocations. A unified structure involves a single governing board for all higher education institutions, much like the governing boards for multicampus systems described in Chapter 2. A federal structure is similar to the coordinating boards described in Chapter 2. Richardson et al. describe this structure by saying “there is a state agency that is neither state government nor higher education that acts as an interface between government and institutions” (p. 172). The agency or

board has full responsibility for four work processes, including information management, budgeting, program planning, and articulation. In federal systems, the powers of the state agency and the individual institutions are clearly defined and institutions have their own governing boards.

The three different governance structures described by Richardson et al. (1999) do not apply completely to the B.C. context. As Fisher et al. (2001) have pointed out, no province in Canada has reached a stage of system coordination in which a central agency has authority over institutions and sectors within a provincial system. However, elements of both the segmented and federal models seem to apply to B.C. Although autonomous institutions each approach the Ministry directly to discuss funding and other institutional concerns, the Ministry does have authority for many of the other work processes held by boards or agencies in a federal system. Furthermore, B.C. has a history of voluntary collaboration, which is a means of inter-institutional cooperation in a segmented system, yet it also has a long history of provincial coordination with government playing a key role in system-wide initiatives. B.C. appears to be almost a hybrid of the segmented and federal systems, as described by Richardson et al. Interestingly, Fisher et al. (2001), in describing Richardson et al.'s work on system designs, state "no unified or federal system in the United States has ever moved back to become segmented" (p. 41), which means moving from a coordinated system back to one that relies on voluntary coordination.

Richardson et al. (1999) conclude their study by analyzing which states were best able to integrate state policy and system design to achieve state goals. Richardson et al. state that "unified or federal systems that operated in a steering or consumer advocacy environment tended to identify priorities, shape institutional responses through all four of the work processes, and use information to communicate progress" (p. 183). Richardson et al. continue by stating that "in federal systems, coordinating boards typically built consensus among institutions and segments rather than relying on their statutory or regulatory authority, which

was often weak” (p. 183). The authors conclude by stating that their data showed that institutional autonomy was less constrained within a federal system than in more segmented systems, contrary to conventional wisdom.

The work of Richardson et al. (1999) is very important within the B.C. context because it shows how some American states have managed to meet their goals for higher education while maintaining an appropriate balance between state control and institutional autonomy. Furthermore, their work shows that those states that maintain a federal system with an intermediary state agency that builds consensus among self-governed institutions are better able to meet their goals within a market-based philosophy that encourages competition and consumer advocacy. The importance of consensus rather than relying on statutory authority is similar to the approach taken over the decades by the Ministry in B.C. as it has built high levels of consultation into most system-wide initiatives. Richardson et al.’s findings are similar to the hypothetical system described by McGuinness (1996), which balanced elements of centralized coordination and a market philosophy. These American examples could be informative to the B.C. government as it tries to find the right balance for a coordinated system of fully autonomous institutions.

This concludes the second section of Chapter 6 dealing with the pertinent Canadian and American literature on system designs that can be used to balance centralization and decentralization as well as a coordinated system and autonomous institutions. The chapter continues with a presentation of the conclusions from the research.

CONCLUSIONS

The previous sections of Chapter 6 have provided a review of the major findings from the literature review in Chapter 4 and interview data analysis in Chapter 5 and have related those findings to the relevant literature in Chapter 2 in order to place the results of this research on the B.C. college, university college,

and institute system within the wider North American context. Chapter 6 has also presented important recent literature on designs for higher education systems and on the means of achieving an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization and between meeting the needs of the state and of autonomous institutions. The following section builds on the previous sections of the chapter and presents the researcher's conclusions or key understandings that have emerged from the study.

Before proceeding with the main conclusions, it is important to review the research methodology to develop a better understanding of what is meant by the term "conclusions," which refers to the author's understandings of and insights into past events in relation to the research purpose. The research was conducted using the historical method, which is subjective and qualitative in nature. The research was also conducted using a hermeneutic or interpretive approach in which the researcher developed his understanding through the reading and interpretation of a number of primary and secondary texts and through interviews, which added depth to his understanding. The researcher understood that there is no one right interpretation of text or of the historical past and that each person entering the research process may develop different understandings because of her or his predispositions and place in time.

The researcher also acknowledged at the outset his biases and possible influence on the research process and kept these in mind through bracketing and reflexivity. He took a number of steps to ensure the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research data and the trustworthiness and rigour of the research. Although transferability is not a purpose of hermeneutic research, others doing similar research can review the findings of hermeneutic research for commonalities based on the rigour of that research (Eichelberger, 1989). Based on the above methodology, the researcher hopes that the findings and conclusions from this research project on the historical development of collaboration and coordination in the B.C. college, university college, and institute system may be of

use to others studying in this area or developing policy on the future direction of post-secondary systems, in B.C. or elsewhere.

There are seven main conclusions or understandings in relation to the research purpose. A search for balance between the elements of the three dichotomies inherent in the research purpose is a key theme through many of the conclusions, which tend to focus on the researcher's insights into possible directions for the B.C. post-secondary system in the future based on this study of the past.

Finding a balance between centralization and decentralization

The history of the development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system has involved a swing from decentralization to centralization and back to decentralization, based among other things on the state of the economy, political ideology, and growing demands for accountability. The system that has been built over the last four decades in B.C. is considered to be among the most coordinated in Canada; however, in recent years the system has become much more fragmented, partially as a result of increased differentiation among sectors and also as a result of the reaction of government and institutions to the perceived over-centralization of the 1990s.

Finding an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization may be both desirable and achievable, but it might only be achieved through systematic and conscious efforts on the part of both government and the institutions. How could B.C. build on its history of collaboration and coordination to develop a responsive college, university college, and institute system that meets the changing needs of the province, acknowledges the legitimate role of government, and yet maintains the necessary level of institutional autonomy and accountability? What would be required to find a balance between the role of government in setting broad directions for a coherent system and for fostering inter-institutional cooperation and the role of institutions in managing their own

affairs and responding to community needs while meeting the needs of the province? How could a balance between the centralist and decentralist tendencies of government be achieved over time despite changing governments and ideological approaches of those governments?

Developing a policy framework for institutional differentiation

The present state of fragmentation in the B.C. college, university college, and institute system is greater than it has been since colleges were first developed in the 1960s, largely due to institutional drift into distinct sectors that has occurred over the last decade or so. This fragmentation seems to be jeopardizing the ability of the Ministry to work with institutions on coordinated system-wide initiatives, to have lessened the level of inter-institutional and inter-sector cooperation necessary for coordinated activities to take place, and to have increased competition among institutions and sectors. As well, universities continue to operate apart from the other sectors in most planning and program activities, other than transfer.

What may be lacking in B.C. is a policy framework, or system design, that would set the substantial directions at the system level for a differentiated post-secondary system, thus transcending the institutional and sector levels. Evidence from the literature and from the interviews suggests that such a framework may be more successful in its implementation if a consultative process is used to develop it. Usually, government plays a lead role in bringing key players together to develop such a framework. The framework could spell out clearly the mission and goals for a post-secondary system and the roles of the various sectors, including universities, and of individual institutions in meeting those goals. The framework could allow sectors and institutions procedural autonomy to meet the goals and could hold them fully accountable for meeting system goals that they have had a role in creating. An important aspect of a provincial system design could be to determine the role and accountabilities of the Ministry in meeting the substantial directions that are set. An advantage of such a design may be that it could bring some stability to the swings

between micro- and macro-management that governments are prone to make based on ideology.

Learning from the experiences of other jurisdictions

In seeking an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization and between an integrated post-secondary system and autonomous institutions, much can be learned from the historical knowledge available on the development of the B.C. system, including the present study, to help develop a provincial policy framework. As well, the researcher found very relevant literature about the experiences of other jurisdictions, both within Canada and elsewhere, in developing balanced systems of higher education. Of particular interest was the work of Richardson et al. (1999), which provides an interesting backdrop for studying the B.C. context to examine the symmetry or disconnect between the provincial government's policy role and the system design. In terms of the policy role, it would be interesting to explore the balance that has or has not been achieved by the province in its relationship with post-secondary education on the one hand and the market on the other.

In reviewing other jurisdictions in the U.S., it would be informative to study the various governance structures used in different states and to determine their potential applicability to the B.C. context. One of the most interesting elements of federal post-secondary systems in the U.S. is the intermediary board or agency responsible for system coordination. Would such a body be appropriate in B.C. in order to achieve a coherent system of accountable, autonomous institutions and more uniformity in the system over time, despite changing governments? What are the pros and cons of such a body as compared to the current Ministry/institution relationship? How would such a body acknowledge and deal with the important distinctions among the different sectors in the B.C. system? Would the body have a regulatory function and, if so, in what areas, or would the body operate solely on a consensus basis? What would be the relationship between a new regulatory body

and the non-regulatory agencies that have developed in B.C. over the last number of years, such as BCCAT, CEISS, and C2T2? What would be the governance structure of such a body? How would this body be held accountable to the Ministry and to institutions? Answers to these and other questions could help determine if B.C. should move to a new model of system coordination or if the present model, with possible alterations, remains adequate.

Maintaining a balance between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination

The present research has shown a long history in B.C. of voluntary collaboration among institutions on issues of inter-institutional concern. Over time, much of this voluntary collaboration became intertwined with provincial coordination, with the Ministry and institutions working closely together on system-wide initiatives. Recently, the extent of voluntary collaboration has been eroded by the fragmentation of the college, university college, and institute system and the competition for scarce resources among sectors and institutions. Evidence from the interviews and the literature also pointed towards the difficulty of maintaining enduring collaborative efforts without the Ministry providing the framework for such collaboration to flourish, partially because an institution's first responsibility is to meeting community needs and not the needs of the system as a whole. Conversely, it appears to be difficult for government to mount or sustain system initiatives unless there is a willingness within institutions to cooperate and there are good working relationships among institutions and between the Ministry and institutions. Thus, collaboration and coordination appear to have become blended over time and have become mutually dependent rather than mutually exclusive constructs as the Ministry and institutions have worked together on system-wide initiatives.

Institutional collaboration may well be an important element of the Ministry's goal of achieving a more coherent and integrated post-secondary system. Likewise, evidence from the literature showed that institutions have recognized for

decades that their inability to cooperate may result in increased and unwanted government intervention. It may be possible and desirable to build upon the different motivations of government and institutions for a collaborative working environment and to develop a sustainable balance between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination. This balance represents a formalization of the blending of coordination and collaboration that has occurred over the last few decades. A balanced approach could involve agreed upon objectives for necessary inter-institutional activity and accountability requirements and reward structures for meeting those objectives. In many cases, institutions could meet system objectives by working without direct Ministry intervention, as is the case with transfer in B.C., while in other cases it would be more important for the Ministry to be at the table, such as when determining funding structures and data collection systems.

Inter-institutional cooperation requires resources in order to carry out the work across institutional boundaries. Historically in B.C., much of the work that makes inter-institutional collaboration possible has been carried out by agencies that are apart from both government and institutions. A key to an agency's long-term success may be to be seen by institutions and the Ministry as providing value-added services and being integral to accomplishing necessary activities across institutions. The BCCAT model of working successfully across institutions and sectors and its governance model may be worth exploring as an appropriate model for enduring inter-institutional cooperation on system issues.

Maintaining relationships among institutions at the program level

The transfer system that has developed in B.C. over the last 35 years is a good example of enduring inter-institutional collaboration with full Ministry support but minimal involvement in terms of the actual mechanics of developing and maintaining transfer arrangements across institutions. From the outset, the transfer system has involved faculty and administrators working together across institutions, including universities, at the course and program level. It is this sort of

voluntary cooperation at the faculty and administrator levels, brought about through the necessity of ensuring adequate student transfer, which seems to serve as the backbone of enduring inter-institutional collaboration.

A similar model to that used in the transfer system may be appropriate to build and maintain other relationships at the program level across institutions with minimal involvement of government. Such relationships over time among faculty and administrators, often based on the need to solve inter-institutional problems, can result in the building of trust and goodwill that allows cooperation and sharing across institutions to continue. Examples of areas in which institutions could be held accountable for working quite independently of the Ministry to cooperate at the program level include collaborative online development and delivery of courses and programs as well as program planning and rationalization.

Valuing the importance of interpersonal relationships

The research has shown the importance of interpersonal relationships to the development and maintenance of a coordinated and collaborative college, university college, and institute system. In many ways, such relationships have served as the foundation of a cooperative system. The original Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) and some of the other senior managers in the Ministry came to government from colleges or had an educational background, and their knowledge of the reality of working within institutions and their relationships with institutional officials allowed them to build a strong collaborative relationship between the Ministry and the institutions. Evidence from the literature and interviews showed that the changes in personnel in the last few years at both the Ministry and institutional level have had an impact on the ability to maintain collaborative working relationships, both among institutions and between the Ministry and institutions.

The importance of interpersonal relationships to the development of a coordinated system raises a number of questions. What can be done at the Ministry

and at institutions to maintain strong personal relationships, especially in light of the impending wave of retirements that is expected to sweep through the post-secondary system in the next few years? Are there ways of using secondment or exchange opportunities so that both Ministry and institutional personnel can develop a better understanding of the milieus in which each other works? Is there a way of hiring individuals in the Ministry who would be more successful at working with institutions because they tend to operate in a highly consultative manner?

Developing a funding mechanism that rewards productivity but maintains cooperation

The research has shown that the development of the funding formula in the early 1980s was important in terms of making transparent and more equitable the process of providing institutions with their annual budget allocations. However, over time the formula became more complex to administer and, from its inception, it was seen as a centralist means by which the Ministry could be involved in making program decisions at the institutional level, thus detracting from institutional autonomy. Interviewees were divided on whether the formula reduced or increased competition for resources among institutions. The important point here is that there appears to be a strong relationship between the way in which institutions are funded by government and the level of cooperation or competition among institutions.

The impact of the funding mechanism on institutions' desire to cooperate or compete with each other is important in that the method of funding institutions can be detrimental to the building of a coherent and integrated post-secondary system. It is understandable that government would want to use its primary lever, funding, to reward productivity and innovation within institutions. However, are there ways in which productivity targets can be achieved without pitting one institution against another in a battle for resources? Are there ways in which the funding mechanism can be fully transparent, which may cause increased competition for a known level of resources on the one hand but removes the potential for inequitable treatment of

institutions on the other? How can government learn from other jurisdictions that have developed an appropriate balance between improving institutional responsiveness through developing a market-based, competitive funding approach on the one hand and a coordinated system on the other?

POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The final section of Chapter 6 presents some ideas on possible areas of future research based on the work that has been done in the present research study. The list of ideas is by no means exhaustive but is meant to describe important areas of research that others may wish to undertake in the future, building on the understandings that have been gained through the research on collaboration and coordination, decentralization and centralization, and building a system of autonomous institutions in the B.C. context.

1. The present research has traced the development of the B.C. college, university college, and institute system from its inception in 1962 to the present. The researcher found swings between decentralization and centralization as the government became more involved in building a system of autonomous institutions. In 2002, a new government with a market-driven approach is moving rapidly towards a decentralized system. Yet some of the actions of government have been more centralist in nature, and one of government's stated goals is to develop a more integrated and coherent post-secondary system, which will include universities as part of that system. It would be very interesting for someone in 5 and/or 10 years to continue the research conducted on developments to date to determine the status of a post-secondary system in B.C. Such research could explore the state of the relationship among institutions and between institutions and the Ministry. The research could also explore the evolution of the various sectors within a differentiated post-secondary system and could determine what sort of balance has or has not been

achieved between the needs of the province and the aspirations of individual sectors and institutions.

2. A further study could be conducted to compare the understandings that have emerged through this research about the history of coordination and collaboration in the B.C. college, university college, and institute system with similar developments in other Canadian jurisdictions. The purpose of such a study would be to build a stronger Canadian base of research on the coordination of quasi-systems in Canada and about the variations in the relationships between governments and institutions across the provinces and territories. A secondary purpose of such research would be to build a better understanding of what constitutes an effective balance between centralization and decentralization and between meeting the needs of the state and of autonomous institutions in the Canadian context.
3. A related piece of research would be to compare the Canadian and American experiences in selected provincial and state jurisdictions in building effective system designs for higher education. The two countries have historically had very different approaches with the U.S. building coordinated or multicampus systems and Canada developing quasi-systems of relatively autonomous institutions. Yet the present research shows that many of the trends in centralization and decentralization in the U.S. are similar to those in B.C. as are the drivers for much of the change that has occurred in the relationship between the state and higher education systems and institutions, including the increasing demands for accountability in recent decades. It would be interesting to compare the effectiveness of more mandatory approaches to system coordination, as evidenced in many of the states, with the more voluntary nature of system cooperation in B.C. and elsewhere in Canada. It would also be interesting to compare the actual level of autonomy of institutions in federal and segmented systems versus the autonomy of institutions in Canada where formal systems do not exist. Finally, it would be important to compare the role

of intermediary agencies and boards in the U.S. with the direct role of government in Canadian provinces in terms of the effectiveness in meeting state and provincial goals.

4. The present study has shown wide support for the finding that the transfer system in B.C. that has developed over the last 35 years has been very successful at arranging course transfers among a multitude of institutions for the good of students. It appears that the voluntary nature of the transfer system and the involvement of faculty and administrators at the program level across institutions are important factors in the success of this system, as is the continuing level of relatively hands-off support from government. Someone may wish to conduct a more in-depth study into the history of the transfer system in B.C. and the reasons for its apparent success. Such a study could include a review of the numerous publications that have been produced over the years documenting the success of transfer among institutions and could also involve interviews with important witnesses of the development of the transfer system. The knowledge gained from the more in-depth review of the success of transfer could be used to determine how to build other successful, enduring inter-institutional relationships around system issues with minimal involvement from government.
5. The present study on collaboration and coordination in B.C.'s college, university college, and institute system has been conducted very much from the perspective of institutions and government, both in terms of the literature sources that were reviewed and the individuals that were interviewed. It would be very interesting to understand the perspective of students on the benefits of a coordinated system with high levels of cooperation across institutions. Such a study could make use of both qualitative and quantitative data to answer a number of questions. Are students concerned about or aware of the differences among institutions and sectors that have developed? What are the main services students expect from a coordinated system and how do those services benefit

students? What are the reasons a student might choose to attend a publicly funded institution that is part of a coordinated post-secondary system versus a private institution? What are the ideal attributes of a post-secondary system from a student's perspective? The answers to these and other questions could be very useful in informing policy makers and educators about the value of the services provided by post-secondary institutions and about directions they might want to take in developing a coherent and integrated system. A similar research study could be conducted to determine the benefits of a coordinated post-secondary system from the perspective of community leaders.

SUMMARY

Chapter 6 has attempted to provide closure to this research project by comparing the findings from the literature and interviews on the B.C. context with the literature in Chapter 2 on the broader North American context and by exploring recent literature on system designs that create a successful balance between meeting the needs of government and the aspirations of autonomous institutions. Chapter 6 continued with the researcher providing a number of conclusions or understandings that have emerged from this historical and hermeneutic research project, with a focus on achieving balance between centralization and decentralization, coordination and collaboration, provincial policy and system design, and building a coherent system and maintaining institutional autonomy. The chapter concluded with a description of areas of further research that others might be interested in pursuing, building on the findings and conclusions in the present research.

This concludes the dissertation entitled *Provincial Coordination and Inter-Institutional Collaboration in British Columbia's College, University College, and Institute System*. Hopefully, the research has been interesting to the reader and its results might prove useful to those who are charged with developing policy in this area or who would like to do further research in the area.

REFERENCES

- Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. (1965, January). *The role of district and regional colleges in the British Columbia system of higher education*. Unpublished report.
- Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. (1966, November). *College standards*. Unpublished report.
- Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. (1969a, February). *College-university articulation*. Unpublished report.
- Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. (1969b, June). *A review of current developments*. Unpublished report.
- Academic Board for Higher Education in British Columbia. (1974, March). *Higher education: Responsiveness and responsibility*. Unpublished report.
- Advanced Education Council of British Columbia. (2000, September 26). *Building for the next generation*. Unpublished report.
- Advanced Education Council of British Columbia. (2001, April). *Problem: Faculty retention and renewal (issue paper 001)*. Vancouver, BC: author.
- Advanced Education Council of British Columbia. (2001, June 16). Chair's remarks in the attachment to minutes of the annual general meeting of AECBC on June 16, 2001. North Vancouver, BC.
- Ambert, A., Adler, P. A., Adler, P., & Detzner, D. F. (1999). Appendix B: Understanding and evaluating qualitative research. In A. K. Milinki (Ed.), *Cases in qualitative research: Research reports for discussion and evaluation* (pp. 166-172). Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing.
- Armstrong, G. (2002, March 11). 2002/2003 budget letter. Victoria, BC.
- B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals. (1982, November). *B.C. Council of College and Institute Principals protocol for college and institute co-operation*. Unpublished report.
- Beinder, F. (1971, May 28-29). *The relationship of the college council with its participating school boards and the community at large*. Paper presented at the First Assembly of the College Councils of the Public Colleges of British Columbia, Burnaby, BC.

- Beinder, F. (1977, September 2). Memo on Bill 82 meeting of BCAC Executive with the Minister and Ministry officials on August 31, 1977. Vancouver, BC.
- Beinder, F. (1977, September 15). Memo on committee of the whole on Bill 82, Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act. Vancouver, BC.
- Beinder, F. (1978, November 6). Notes on changes relative to provision of Bill 82. Vancouver, BC.
- Beinder, F. (1983). *The community college in British Columbia: The emphasis is on community*. Author.
- Beinder, F. (1986). *College development in British Columbia: Recollections of a layman*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Blake, L. J. (1977, August 4). Letter to Dr. Walter Hardwick. Abbotsford, BC.
- Boatright, K. J. (1999). Many voices, one choir: Managing external affairs. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 21-39). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges. (1976, September). *College act: Proposals for consideration*. Unpublished report.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges. (1977, August 12). Untitled analysis of the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act. Unpublished report.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges. (1980, January). *College and provincial institute board members handbook*. Vancouver, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges. (1989a, June 16 & 17). Minutes of the twenty-second annual general meeting of the British Columbia Association of Colleges. Burnaby, BC.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges. (1989b, December 9). Minutes of the special general meeting of the British Columbia Association of Colleges. Vancouver, BC.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges and Council of B.C. College Principals. (1977, August 31). *Bill 82 Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act brief*. Unpublished report.
- British Columbia Association of Colleges Incorporation Act, Chapter 57 (1976, June 30). Province of British Columbia.

- British Columbia Department of Education. (1976). *Recommended department and provincial committee structure*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Human Resource Development Project Steering Committee. (1992, November). *British Columbia Human Resource Development Project: Report of the Steering Committee*. Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education. (2002). *Ministry of Advanced Education Service Plan: 2002/2003-2004/2005*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training. (1996). *Charting a new course: A strategic plan for the future of British Columbia's college, institute and agency system*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. (1991). *Partners for the future: Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology Ministry plan*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (1982, November 5). *Integrated five year planning for the British Columbia college and institute system: Part 1. System Objectives 1982-87, Draft #2*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (1983, May 4). *Integrated five year planning for the British Columbia college and institute system: System mission and goals and system objectives 1982-1987*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (1985). *Plan update-1985: Guidelines for the updating of the college and institute strategic plans, 1986-91*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Post-Secondary Education. (1986). *Mission, goals, and objectives 1986-1991: Integrated five-year planning for the British Columbia college and institute system*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia Ministry of Skills Development and Labour. (2002, January 25). *Backgrounder on introduction of Bill 28: the Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- British Columbia School Trustees Association. (1962, November 15). *Public education and community colleges: A brief presented to Dr. John B. Macdonald, President, University of British Columbia*. Unpublished report.

- British Columbia School Trustees Association. (1974, December 24). *Task force report on community colleges*. Unpublished report.
- Brothers, D. L. (1971, May 28-29). *Welcoming address*. Paper presented at the First Assembly of the College Councils of the Public Colleges of British Columbia, Burnaby, BC.
- Brown, R. C. (2000, November 4). *Working together as a system? Challenges and opportunities for the BC post-secondary system in the first decade of the new millennium*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Advanced Education Council of B.C.
- Brubacher, J. S., & Rudy, W. (1976). *Higher education in transition: A history of American colleges and universities, 1636-1976*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Burke, J. J. (1999). Multicampus systems: The challenge of the nineties. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 40-79). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Calder, J. (1984). Lessons from the death of a quango: The British Columbia system of lay-councils: 1977-1983. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, XIV(2), 83-89.
- Capra, F. (1996). *The web of life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Centre for Education Information. (2001). BC college and institute system faculty profile. *Education Outlook*, 2(1), 1-4.
- Chant, S. N. F. (1971, May 28-29). *The role of the college in post-secondary education*. Paper presented at the First Assembly of the College Councils of the Public Colleges of British Columbia, Burnaby, BC.
- College and Institute Act, Chapter 52 (1996). Province of British Columbia.
- College Faculties Federation of British Columbia. (1977a, January). *The college system in British Columbia and the proposed college legislation*. Unpublished report.
- College Faculties Federation of British Columbia. (1977b, August). *Bill 82: The Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act*. Unpublished report.
- College Faculties Federation of British Columbia. (n.d.). *Position paper re College Act*. Unpublished report.

- College Institute Educators' Association. (2002, January 25). *Media release: College agreements under attack*. Vancouver, BC: Author.
- Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, Chapter 67 (1977, September 27). Province of British Columbia.
- Commission on Vocational, Technical and Trades Training in British Columbia. (1977, January). *Report of the Commission on Vocational, Technical and Trades Training in British Columbia*. Unpublished report.
- Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes. (1993, May). *Report of the Committee on Governance in Colleges and Institutes: Recommendations for revised governance structures*. Unpublished report.
- Consortium of B.C. University Colleges. (2001, September). *University colleges of British Columbia: Core review reply*. Unpublished report.
- Council of Community College Principals. (1976, May). *Toward the development of B.C. Colleges: A statement prepared by the Council of Community College Principals for the purpose of stimulating further planning for college development in B.C.* Unpublished report.
- Council of Presidents. (2001a, December 12). *Position paper on on-line learning strategy*. Unpublished report.
- Council of Presidents. (2001b, December 12). *Position paper on system agencies*. Unpublished report.
- Crawford, M. (1983). *Policy initiatives in community college education, 1969-1979*. Victoria, BC: Political Science, B.C. Project, University of Victoria.
- Dennison, J. D. (1971, May 28-29). *Characteristics of British Columbia college students*. Paper presented at the First Assembly of College Councils of the Public Colleges of British Columbia, Burnaby, BC.
- Dennison, J. D. (1977). Post-secondary education in British Columbia, 1977-A coming of age. *Journal of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges*, 1(2), 13-35.
- Dennison, J. D. (1986). Some aspects of government policy towards community colleges in British Columbia: 1982-86. *Journal of Educational Administration and Foundations*, 1(2), 4-16.

- Dennison, J. D. (Ed.). (1995a). *Challenge and opportunity: Canada's community colleges at the crossroads*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Dennison, J. D. (1995b). Community college development since 1985. In J. D. Dennison (Ed.), *Challenge and opportunity: Canada's community colleges at the crossroads* (pp. 13-104). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Dennison, J. D. (1995c). Organization and function in postsecondary education. In J. D. Dennison (Ed.), *Challenge and opportunity: Canada's community colleges at the crossroads* (pp. 121-140). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Dennison, J. D. (1997a). *Government Policy and its Consequences for Higher Education in British Columbia*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Dennison, J. D. (1997b). Higher education in British Columbia, 1945-1995: Opportunity and diversity. In G. A. Jones (Ed.), *Higher education in Canada: Different systems, different perspectives* (pp. 31-57). New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Dennison, J. D. (1998). *A commentary on the Petch Report on university colleges- and related issues*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Dennison, J. D., & Gallagher, P. (1986). *Canada's community colleges: A critical analysis*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.
- Dennison, J. D., & Harris, R. (1984). Governing boards in postsecondary education. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, XIV(2), 13-31.
- Dennison, J. D., Tunner, A., Jones, G., & Forrester, G. C. (1975). *The impact of community colleges: A study of the college concept in British Columbia*. Vancouver, BC: B.C. Research.
- 'Education bill of the decade' unveiled.(1977, August 3). *The Vancouver Province*, p. 25.
- Eichelberger, R. T. (1989). *Disciplined inquiry: Understanding and doing educational research*. White Plains, NY: Longman Inc.
- Epper, R. M. (1997). Coordination and competition in postsecondary distance education. *Journal of Higher Education*, 68(5), 551-587.
- Executives of the British Columbia Association of Colleges and the Council of Principals of B.C. (1989, May). *A proposal for a new association of B.C. colleges and institutes*. Unpublished report.

- Finn, C. E., Jr. (2001). Reinventing public education via the marketplace. In C. R. Hepburn (Ed.), *Can the market save our schools?* (pp. 41-51). Vancouver, BC: The Fraser Institute.
- Fisher, D., House, D., & Rubenson, K. (2000). *The evolution of post-secondary education policy in British Columbia: 1960-2000*. Discussion paper prepared for the workshop series The Prospects for an Integrated System of Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC.
- Fisher, D., Rubenson, K., & Della Mattia, G. (2001). *Prospects for a provincial design of the British Columbia post-secondary education system*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training.
- Fisher, G. L. (1982, November 5). Memo to college and institute board chairmen and principals and post-secondary council chairmen accompanying Draft #2 of *Integrated Five Year Planning for the British Columbia College and Institute System*. Victoria, BC.
- Fisher, G. L. (1985, April 11). Letter to Leo Perra about the Joint Committee on Formula Funding. Victoria, BC.
- Fisher, J. L. (1995, June 16). The failure of statewide coordination. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, A48.
- Gaber, D. (1988). The use of the reciprocal teaching method to improve the reading comprehension of functionally illiterate adults. *Reading-Canada-Lecture*, 6(2), 121-128.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1975). *Truth and method*. New York: The Seabury Press.
- Gaither, G. H. (Ed.). (1999). *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Gall, J. P., Gall, M. D., & Borg, W. R. (1999). *Applying educational research: A practical guide*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Gallagher, P. (1984). Trend towards centralization. *College Canada*, 9(2), 7.
- Gallagher, P. (1999). *A vanishing vision: Part 11*. Unpublished manuscript.

- Garrett, R. L. (1993). A profile of state community college system characteristics and their relationship to degrees of centralization. *Community College Review*, 20(5), 6-15.
- Glenny, L. A. (1959). *Autonomy of public colleges: The challenge of coordination*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
- Gottschalk, L. (1950). *Understanding history: A primer of historical method*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 29(2), 75-91.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 195-220). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Healy, P. (1997, June 27). Report calls for strong state coordination of public colleges. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, A34-A35.
- Hollick-Kenyon, T. H. (1979). An analysis of the coordination of community colleges in British Columbia (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, 1979). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 40, no. 06A, 3145.
- Hooker, M. (1997). The transformation of higher education. In D. Oblinger & S. C. Rush (Eds.), *The learning revolution*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc. Retrieved July 7, 2001, from <http://horizon.unc.edu/projects/seminars/Hooker.asp>
- Jeffels, R. R. (1972). *College and university: Towards the first decade, Occasional Paper No. 1*. Victoria, BC: British Columbia Department of Education, Post-Secondary Education.
- Johnson, R. B. (1999). Appendix A: Examining the validity structure of qualitative research. In A. K. Milinki (Ed.), *Cases in qualitative research: Research reports for discussion and evaluation* (pp. 160-165). Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing.
- Johnstone, D. B. (1999). Management and leadership challenges of multicampus systems. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 3-20). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

- Kava, T. (1975). *A working paper on college governance in British Columbia*. Unpublished report.
- Kershaw, A. (2002). *Reading the tea leaves: Comments upon the Ministry of Advanced Education's 2002/03 to 2004/05 Service Plan Summary*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Kershaw, A., & Bizzocchi, J. (1997). *Access and choice: The future of distributed learning in British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology.
- Kneller, G. F. (1984). *Movements in thought in modern education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Krefting, L. (1999). Appendix C: Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. In A. K. Milinki (Ed.), *Cases in qualitative research: Research reports for discussion and evaluation* (pp. 173-181). Los Angeles, CA: Pyczak Publishing.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Langenberg, D. N. (1994). Why a system? Understanding the costs and benefits of joining together. *Change*, 26(2), 8-9.
- Langenberg, D. N. (1999). On the horizon: The learning system. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 215-230). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Layzell, D. T., & Caruthers, J. K. (1999). Budget and budget-related policy issues for multicampus systems. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 110-127). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Macdonald, J. B. (1962). *Higher education in British Columbia and a plan for the future*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia.
- MacTaggart, T. J. (1996). Restructuring and the failure of reform. In T. J. MacTaggart & Associates (Eds.), *Restructuring higher education: What works and what doesn't in reorganizing governing systems* (pp. 3-15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Marsh, L. (1975). *A learning community for the Lower Mainland: Report of the Survey Committee on Community Colleges in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Department of Education.
- McGuinness, A. C., Jr. (1996). A model for successful restructuring. In T. J. MacTaggart & Associates (Eds.), *Restructuring higher education: What works and what doesn't in reorganizing governing systems* (pp. 203-229). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Minister's Task Force. (1973, November 1). *Report of the Minister's Task Force on the melding of community colleges and British Columbia adult vocational schools*. Unpublished report.
- Mitchell, A. R. (1986). Administrators' perceptions of the outcomes of implementing three provincial policies on community college governance in British Columbia (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1986). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 49, no. 05A, 1042.
- Moore, B. (1980). *A matter of principal*. Unpublished report.
- Moran, R. (1990). *Profile for the nineties: Vital issues for B.C. colleges and institutes*. Unpublished report for the College Institute Educators' Association of BC.
- Moss, W. W. (1974). *Oral history program manual*. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Mullins, G. (1990, May 31). Letter to Valerie Buchanan, President of the British Columbia Association of Colleges. Victoria, BC.
- Norris, D. M. (1999). Systemwide strategic planning in the knowledge age. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 98-109). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Novak, R. J. (1996). Methods, objectives, and consequences of restructuring. In T. J. MacTaggart & Associates (Eds.), *Restructuring higher education: What works and what doesn't in reorganizing governing systems* (pp. 16-50). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Oregon State University. (2000). *Oregon State University human subjects handbook: Institutional review board for the protection of human subjects*. Corvallis, OR: Author.

- Palmer, R. E. (1969). *Hermeneutics: Interpretation theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Perra, L. (1985, April 3). Letter to Grant Fisher about the Joint Committee on Formula Funding. Castlegar, BC.
- Petch, H. E. (1998). *Degree programs at the university colleges: A British Columbia success story*. Unpublished report.
- Poole, D. W. (1994). Political/bureaucratic decision-making: The establishment of the first university colleges in British Columbia (Doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, 1994). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 56, no. 03A, 0787.
- Province of British Columbia. (1977, August 2). *News release on Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act*. Victoria, BC: Author.
- Provincial Access Committee. (1988, September). *Access to advanced education and job training in British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Advanced Education.
- Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act, First Reading (2002, January 25). Province of British Columbia.
- Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia. (1968, October 16). *Financing of regional and district colleges: A brief to the Honourable Donald Leslie Brothers, Q.C., Minister of Education, Province of British Columbia*. Unpublished report.
- Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia. (1969a, June 7). Minutes of the third annual meeting of the Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia. North Vancouver, BC.
- Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia. (1969b, October 4). Minutes of the semi-annual general meeting of the Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia. Vancouver, BC.
- Richardson, R. C., Jr., Bracco, K. R., Callan, P. M., & Finney, J. E. (1999). *Designing state higher education systems for a new century*. Phoenix, AZ: American Council on Education and The Oryx Press.

- Royal Commission on Education. (1960). *Report of the Royal Commission on Education*. Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia.
- Schuetze, H. G., & Day, W. L. (2001). *Post secondary education in BC 1989-98: The impact of policy and finance on access, participation, and outcomes*. Vancouver, BC: Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training, University of British Columbia.
- Schwandt, T. A. (1998). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 221-259). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Selkirk College Faculty Association College Act Committee. (1969, February). *Report of the Faculty Association College Act Committee*. Unpublished report.
- Shafer, R. J. (1969). *A guide to historical method*. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press.
- Skolnik, M. L. (2000, March 2). *The prospects for an integrated system of postsecondary education in British Columbia: Reflections on the Ontario experience*. Paper presented at the Workshop on the Prospects for an Integrated System of Postsecondary Education in British Columbia hosted by the Center for Policy Studies in Postsecondary Education and Training, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC.
- Soles, A. E. (1968). *The development of the two-year college in British Columbia*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC.
- Soles, A. E. (1971). *The "melding" of the British Columbia provincial vocational schools with the British Columbia public colleges*. Unpublished report.
- Soles, A. E. (1977, September 7). *A note on Bill 82*. Address given to the Vancouver Board of Trade, Vancouver, BC.
- Soles, J. (2001). *Admission of transfer students in British Columbia post-secondary institutions: Policies, practices and capacity*. Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer.
- Special Joint Committee of the B.C. Association of Colleges and the Council of Principals. (1989, December). *First report of the Special Joint Committee of the B.C. Association of Colleges and the Council of Principals*. Unpublished report.

- Strivastava, L. M. (1977, August 18). Letter to Minister Patrick McGeer. North Vancouver, BC.
- Szutz, J. J. (1999). Higher education systems and strategic planning. In G. H. Gaither (Ed.), *The multicampus system: Perspectives on practice and prospects* (pp. 82-97). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Task Force of the British Columbia Association of Colleges and the British Columbia Council of Principals. (1989, February 12). *Informed advocacy and leadership*. Unpublished report.
- Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia. (1974, August). *Towards the learning community: Report of the Task Force on the Community College in British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Department of Education, Research and Development Division.
- Threat to college boards seen in Bill 82 proposals. (1977, August 16). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 10.
- Tollefson, D. E. (1981). P2E 1B F4Z-Identifiers for twenty-first century learning communities. In T. M. Stauffer (Ed.), *Competition and cooperation in American higher education* (pp. 126-131). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- University College of the Cariboo. (2001, April 11). *In consideration of moving UCC under the University Act of B.C.: A briefing paper*. Unpublished report.
- University of British Columbia Center for Policy Studies in Post-secondary Education and Training. (2000, February 3). *The evolution of post-secondary education policy in British Columbia: Workshop summary*. Unpublished report.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Vaughan, G. B. (1985). *The community college in America: A short history*. Washington, DC: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole & V. John-Steiner & S. Scribner & E. Souberman, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weninger, T. (1997, September). *Small colleges project report*. Unpublished report.

Wilson, B. A. (1990). *Hermeneutical studies: Dilthey, Sophocles and Plato* (Vol. 25). Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Melin Press.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

The following list contains acronyms and abbreviations and the full name of what they represent, as found throughout the text of this dissertation.

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
AECBC	Advanced Education Council of British Columbia
AVED	Ministry of Advanced Education
BCAC	British Columbia Association of Colleges
BCCAT	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer
BCIT	British Columbia Institute of Technology
BCSTA	British Columbia School Trustees Association
C2T2	Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology
CEISS	Centre for Education Information Standards and Services
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFE	College Faculties Federation
CIEA	College Institute Educators' Association
COP	Council of Presidents
COP	Council of Principals
HRDP	Human Resource Development Project
NDP	New Democratic Party
OLA	Open Learning Agency
OSU	Oregon State University
OUC	Okanagan University College
RDCABC	Regional and District Colleges Association of British Columbia
Socreds	Social Credit Party
SFU	Simon Fraser University
UBC	University of British Columbia
UCC	University College of the Cariboo

APPENDIX B: RULES USED TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN CITATIONS AND REFERENCES AND IN ABBREVIATIONS

The research for this dissertation was based on the historical method and relied primarily on data from the literature for its findings. Many of the sources used for that data were relatively obscure documents, such as memos, letters, minutes of meetings, and reports from various organizations. The difficulty with such literature is that it was not referenced in the guidelines in the 2001 edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, or APA Manual, which was the format used for citations and references in this dissertation. Therefore, the author had to improvise in those cases where clear rules did not exist in the APA Manual for some of the references in this dissertation. In order to ensure full consistency in the references for which the APA manual did not give explicit directions, the author created a number of rules that are listed below. The author also created a set of rules for abbreviations that vary from the APA manual rule, as described below.

Unpublished reports: Many of the documents were informal, unpublished documents and reports, often with no clear information on the place in which the document was prepared. In other cases, documents were formally bound and appeared in the local university library, but no publication information was given, such as copyright information or place of publication. The above documents were all treated as unpublished documents. APA has a rule for an “unpublished manuscript not submitted for publication,” referring to academic documents, but this did not adequately describe many of the unpublished references for this dissertation. Therefore, the author has established a category called “unpublished report,” which follows the rules for unpublished manuscripts by giving the author, date, and title but no information on publisher or place of publication.

In a few cases, documents were described as published but no place of publication or publisher was given. In these cases, documents were treated in the reference list as published by the author but no place of publication was given.

Letters, memos, and notes: The present research used several letters, memos, and notes from the past as references, but APA has no rule for these sorts of references other than for those that are personal communications sent directly to the author of the research. Therefore, the author has created a category of references for these documents, giving the author; full date (year, month, and day); description of the letter, memo, or note; and place that it was written.

Minutes of meetings: The present research also referred to several sets of minutes from important meetings of various associations involved in the development of post-secondary education in B.C. However, APA does not provide any direction on

how to report minutes of meetings. Therefore, the author has created a reference type that names the organization, gives the full date of the meeting, describes the meeting, and gives the place of the meeting.

Government documents: A number of the documents referred to in the research were produced by the provincial government. Such documents are reported as published documents, giving the author, date, title, and place of publication and describing the author as publisher. This approach mirrors what is suggested in APA although no report numbers are provided for the B.C. government documents as such numbers do not exist.

Media and news releases: APA does not provide specific information on how to reference media and news releases. Therefore, the author created a reference type in which media and news releases by government and other organizations were reported in the same way that published documents are.

Legislation: APA gives a number of rules for referencing American legislation, but these rules do not apply to Canadian legislation. Therefore, the author created a category that gave the name of the act, chapter number or number of reading, and date (year only or full date, depending on which was given). This type of reference ends with “Province of British Columbia” to denote the jurisdiction in which the legislation was passed.

Canadian documents: APA states that for any references for documents from outside of the United States, including Canada, the author must give the full name of the city, province, and country for each reference. However, in the case of the present research, it is obvious to the reader from the topic of the research that the vast majority of references are for documents prepared in B.C. Thus, the author did not feel it was necessary to spell out the full name of the location for each reference. Therefore, the author treated Canadian references like American references, giving the name of the city and abbreviation for the province but not listing the country.

Dates in citations and references: APA states clearly that citations in text must only give the year that the document was produced, even if the reference contains the full date. APA does suggest that the year and month be given in a variety of references, including meetings, reports from private organizations, unpublished papers presented at meetings, unpublished contributions to a symposium, and poster sessions. APA also suggests that the year, month, and date be given for dailies and weeklies, magazines, newsletters, and newspapers.

The author followed APA guidelines and did not give full dates in citations but did give the full date in the types of references listed above as well as in several other types of references. The author’s primary concern was that the reader should be

given the full date for referenced documents, particularly for the more obscure and difficult to find documents, should the reader wish to locate those references in the future. References for the same author are ordered chronologically from the earliest to the most recent document following APA guidelines.

Abbreviations: APA states that abbreviations should be used sparingly in text. Authors can either spell out a name in full each time throughout the text or spell it out the first time only and abbreviate every time thereafter. The author did not follow this guideline because he did not feel it added to the readability of such a lengthy document, particularly because of the lengthy and obscure nature of many of the abbreviations.

Instead the author spelled out the full name each time it appeared in a new chapter of the document or in a new section of Chapter 4 and then used abbreviations thereafter in that chapter or section. As well the author sometimes used the full name whenever it added to the document's readability. In some cases, where an abbreviation was used throughout the document and was thus more familiar to the reader, it was not necessary to restate the full name at intervals throughout the document. The author also provided Appendix A, the *List of Acronyms and Abbreviations*, as a guide for readers to use if uncertain about the meaning of any abbreviations or acronyms used in text.

**APPENDIX C:
NAMES OF AND BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION
ABOUT INTERVIEWEES**

The information about each of the 10 individuals interviewed for the research project is presented below in alphabetical order.

Bill Day: Bill Day has had a long career as an adult educator and post-secondary administrator in B.C. He began working as a Director of Adult Education in Maple Ridge School District in 1958 and joined Douglas College as a Dean of Continuing Education in 1970. He was principal of the New Westminster Campus from 1978 to 1981 and then President of Douglas College from 1981 to 1995 when he retired. Day was the Vice-Chair of the Council of College Principals from 1983 to 1985 and Chair of that group in 1985/86. Day has also been active in the college movement at the national level for many years and was Chair of the Board of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges from 1993 to 1995.

John Ellis: John Ellis served on the Board of Capilano College in North Vancouver for four years beginning with the college's inception in 1968. Ellis began working at Simon Fraser University (SFU) when it was first established in 1965 and served as the Dean of the Faculty of Education in the 1970s. He was seconded from SFU to become the President of the Open Learning Institute from 1978 to 1981. Ellis returned to SFU in 1981 and worked there until his retirement in 1986. He continued working for five years after retirement to manage an Open University project in Indonesia.

Jack Finnbogason: Jack Finnbogason has been a faculty member in B.C. for many years and served as the President of the Faculty Association at Douglas College in 1980/81. He was also the president of the provincial College Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) from 1983 to 1985. Finnbogason served as the President of the Faculty Association at Kwantlen University College from 1995 to 1997. He has worked at Kwantlen as an administrator for the last four years and has held the position of Dean of Humanities for the last two years.

Elizabeth Fleet: Elizabeth Fleet served on the Board of Selkirk College from 1983 to 1992 and was Board Chair for four of those years. She was appointed to the Open Learning Agency (OLA) Board of Directors in May 1992 and completed her six-year term at OLA in 1998. Fleet became a Director of the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC) in 1992 and served as the President of AECBC from 1994 to 1996. In 1999, she was appointed to the Board of Royal Roads University. Fleet was also a member of the provincial committee that developed *Charting A New Course*. Fleet is a former teacher who has taught in Prince Rupert, Terrace, and Castlegar.

Shell Harvey: Shell Harvey began working with the Ministry responsible for advanced education in B.C. in 1980 and served as the coordinator responsible for adult education programs in colleges and school boards. In the mid-1980s, Harvey became the Director of Funding and Analysis and then the Director of University Programs. He became Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the Post-Secondary Education Division of the Ministry in 1989 and held that position until 1998. Harvey was also a member of the provincial committee that developed *Charting A New Course*. Between 1998 and 2001, Harvey served as an ADM in the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for K to 12 education until his retirement in 2002.

Rich Johnston: Rich Johnston has had a lengthy career as an adult educator and post-secondary administrator in B.C. He began his career in 1968 as an Adult Basic Education instructor in the Kootenays and then became an Industrial Training Consultant. In 1976, he was hired as Assistant Dean of Vocational Programs at Malaspina College and then became the Dean in 1982. In 1986, he became President of Malaspina, which became a University College in 1989, and remains President in 2002. Johnston has been active since 1986 in the Council of Principals and in AECBC.

Ed Lavalle: Ed Lavalle joined the faculty of Capilano College in 1973. He became a director of the College Faculties Federation (CFF) in 1974 and chaired the Bargaining Support Committee for CFF. In 1982, he became the Treasurer of CIEA and then served as Vice President for five years until 1989. Lavalle served as President of CIEA for three years beginning in 1989, then as Past President for three years, followed by another four years as President and then as Past President until 2000. Lavalle was also a member of the provincial committee that developed *Charting A New Course*.

Lloyd Morin: Lloyd Morin began his post-secondary administrative career as Director of Instructional Development and Institutional Research at Camosun College in Victoria in 1971. He served as President of Camosun from 1979 to 1989. Between 1989 and 1993, Morin worked on various projects for the Ministry responsible for post-secondary education and retired in 1993. He also served for a short time as Executive Director of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) and was Interim President of Douglas College in 1996/97. Morin was active in the Council of Principals and AECBC throughout his career as President.

Jack Newberry: Jack Newberry has held a variety of management positions in the Ministry responsible for post-secondary education over two decades. He served in various management roles between 1972 and 1977 and then served in a variety of Director roles in the Post-Secondary Division between 1977 and 1993. During the early 1980s, Newberry was instrumental in the development of the funding formula. He became Vice President of Administration at the University of Northern

British Columbia in Prince George in 1993 and served in that capacity until 1996 when he retired.

Leo Perra: Leo Perra served as the President of Selkirk College in the West Kootenay region of B.C. between 1980 and 2000, when he retired. Prior to that, he worked as the Dean of Continuing Education at Cariboo College in Williams Lake between 1971 and 1974 and then as the Vice-Principal of Cariboo between 1974 and 1980. Perra served two terms as President of the Council of Principals, including the period at the end of the 1980s when AECBC was formed. He also served on the Post-Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA) from 1993 to 1999 and as a member of the provincial committee that developed *Charting A New Course*.

**APPENDIX D:
LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What was the impact of the Macdonald Report on provincial coordination of colleges and on the development of autonomous institutions? What was the approach of the provincial government to college development in the 1960s?
2. What were the reasons for decentralization of the developing college system in the 1960s? How would you describe the development of the college, university college, and institute system in 2002 in terms of the centralization/decentralization continuum? Compare the reasons for decentralization in the 1960s with the reasons for decentralization in the 2000s.
3. What do you think the main reasons are that government took an increasingly centralist approach to the development of the college and institute system in the late 1970s and early 1980s?
4. What was the impact of the 1982 to 1987 Five Year Integrated Plan on program rationalization at the provincial and regional level?
5. What has been the historic relationship between the state of the economy and the centralizing or decentralizing approach of government to the development of the college, university college, and institute system? What is the status of this relationship in 2002?
6. Do you think that colleges, university colleges, and institutes have a history of voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration beginning in the 1960s and continuing until the late 1990s? If so, what are the principal reasons for that voluntary collaboration?
7. How would you evaluate the success of the transfer system that has developed in B.C. over the last four decades? What are the main reasons for that success or lack of success?
8. How would you describe the nature of the relationship between the Ministry and the colleges, university colleges, and institutes in each of the last three decades, beginning with the 1970s? How has that relationship impacted the development and implementation of system-wide initiatives?
9. How would you describe the relationship between voluntary, inter-institutional collaboration on the one hand and provincial coordination on the other over the last four decades?

10. The 1983 Amendment to the Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act, which included abolishing the three intermediary councils and removing elected officials from the college boards, gave more power to the Minister over the development of institutions and the system. What was the result of the Amendment in terms of the relationship between the Ministry and the institutions over the remainder of the 1980s?
11. What was the impact of the development of the funding formula in 1984 on future relationships among institutions and between the Ministry and institutions?
12. What has been the relationship between the increasing differentiation among the types of post-secondary institutions in the non-university sector of B.C. over the last three decades on the one hand and the development of a coordinated system on the other?
13. What has been the impact of interpersonal relationships on the development of a coordinated provincial system, both in terms of relationships among institutional representatives and in terms of relationships between institutions and the Ministry?
14. What has been the overall impact on the college, university college, and institute system of stakeholder involvement in provincial decision making during the 1990s?
15. How effective has *Charting A New Course* been in steering developments in the system since 1996? Why did the Charting A New Course Steering Committee cease to exist?
16. How would you describe the role of boards in system-wide decision making in the 1970s and 1980s versus the 1990s and the present? How would you describe the role of presidents in system-wide decision making from the 1970s to the present?
17. Who were the most important individuals involved in the early development of the college system in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s? What impact did they have on the developing system?

**APPENDIX E:
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT**

**School of Education
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331**

- A. **Title of the Research Project.** Provincial Coordination and Inter-Institutional Collaboration in British Columbia's College, University College, and Institute System
- B. **Investigators.** Dr. George Copa, Professor; and Devron Gaber, Doctoral Student. Devron Gaber is also the CEO of the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology in Victoria, BC.
- C. **Purpose of the Research Project.** This study will examine the coordinated and collaborative nature of the British Columbia (B.C.) college, university college, and institute system of autonomous institutions from an historical perspective. The focus of the study is on the historical interplay between voluntary collaboration and provincial coordination brought about through the intervention of government. We would like to understand the history of the development of a coordinated and collaborative system in B.C. in part because the present system has become more fragmented and balkanized, thus jeopardizing the level of cooperation that has existed previously among institutions. We would like to use our findings to draw implications for the further development of the system in B.C.
- D. **Procedures.** I understand that as a participant in this study the following things will happen:
1. **Participant Selection.** I understand that I have been identified by the researchers as one of 10 or more participants in the study because of my historical knowledge and/or because I was a primary witness of many of the historical events that have led to the development of the B.C. post-secondary system. I also understand that the first three to five interviewees will be chosen with the assistance of two research advisors, who are respected, long-standing leaders in the B.C. college system. The next five or more interviewees will be chosen through discussion with the earlier interviewees.
 2. **Interview Process.** Devron Gaber will conduct the interview. I understand that interviews will be conducted with up to 10 or more individuals who have a thorough knowledge of the B.C. college,

university college, and institute system. The questions will be developed by Mr. Gaber to fill in gaps that emerge from his extensive literature review. The interview will take up to 90 minutes maximum and will be scheduled to occur in person at my convenience. The interview will be recorded on audiotape and I will be able to ask to have the tape recorder stopped at any time. Alternatively, I may ask to have Mr. Gaber take notes from the interview rather than have it recorded. I may also request at any time to end the interview and may choose not to answer any questions that I do not wish to answer. After the interview, Mr. Gaber will transcribe the tape and analyze my responses to the questions. He will then review with me in person or by phone the transcription and his analysis and I will have the opportunity to approve them or ask for changes to more accurately reflect what I said. I will also have the opportunity at that time to add any additional comments I might have based on the original questions.

3. **Foreseeable risks or benefits.** There may be limited risk to my participation because I will be identified in the research. However, Mr. Gaber will take the necessary measures to lessen this risk and gain my approval as described in the section on confidentiality below. I understand that my participation will be on a voluntary basis with no financial remuneration.
4. **Confidentiality.** I understand that because of the nature of the historical research, greater credence can be added to the findings by naming the interviewees and the qualifications they bring to the subject under study. Therefore, I agree to allow Mr. Gaber to identify me in his research and to attribute comments to me. However, I will be given the opportunity to review and approve the transcript of what I said and Mr. Gaber's analysis of what I said. I also understand that I will be given the opportunity to ask that confidentiality with respect to my identity be maintained throughout the study or in relation to specific statements that I might make. Finally, I understand that the audiotape of my interview will be erased and destroyed once the study has been completed. Likewise, paper and digital copies of the transcript will be destroyed/deleted once the study has been completed.

- E. **Voluntary Participation Statement.** I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I may either refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I understand that if I withdraw from the study before it is completed all information that I have individually provided will be destroyed.

- F. **If I Have Questions.** I understand that any questions I have about the research study or specific procedures should be directed to Devron Gaber at (250) 920-2030 or Dr. George Copa at (541) 737-8202. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I should call the IRB Coordinator, OSU Research Office, (541) 737-3437.

My signature below indicates that I have read and that I understand the procedures described above and give my informed and voluntary consent to participate in this study. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of participant

Date signed

Participant's printed or typed name

Participant's phone number

Address