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by

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## PAPER 3: PROBLEMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE—

## SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

*Several institutions of higher education have experienced governance problems. Survey governance structures used by private institutions of higher education and similar institutions. Describe and analyze reported governance problems. Synthesize a possible alternative structure and/or mode of governance, suitable for use in a private non-profit university, which may avoid or minimize such problems.*

## Introduction

Governance of higher education institutions, both public and private, is oft criticized. Recent book titles such as *Competing Conceptions of Academic Governance: Negotiating the Perfect Storm* (Tierney, 2004) and *Chaos Theory and Higher Education: Leadership, Planning, and Policy* (Cutright, 2001), the dust cover of *Governing Academia* (Ehrenberg, 2004) which asks “who is in charge at the modern university,” plus the dozens of titles that they collectively contain, attest to this criticism. Shinn (2004) describes the criticism as ubiquitous and coming from all constituencies and directions (p. 18). External critics often argue that college governance is cumbersome and hinders rapid changes needed to respond to changing market conditions. Internal critics frequently argue either that they are left out of the governance process or that the process of shared governance demands too much time and energy that should be devoted to their primary work (teaching, research, or support).

Kaplan (2004) argues that many of the criticisms of academic governance are anecdotal and “circulate in an environment distinguished by a dearth of systematic and comprehensive information” (p. 167). However, some studies exist that examine parts of the overall problem (e.g., Fitzelle, 1998; Gill, 2000; Joyce, 1990; Maloney, 2003; Nuesse, 1990; Shinn, 2004). Gale, Tewarie, & White (2003) believe that global economic conditions, including privatization and globalization, have subjected universities and their governance to “break-point change” (p. 2) during the past 25 years. The predominantly Anglo student population is becoming multicultural,

particularly at the community college level. Programs like *No Child Left Behind* are supposed to prepare all children for college, although many elite public universities only have room for about 10 percent of the high school population. More adults now attend college, often seeking applied education. For-profit colleges (e.g., University of Phoenix, National University, and Capella University) compete for student customers, offering local convenience and expedited timeframes. U.S. businesses demand flexible and adaptable workers, while knowledge simultaneously has become more specialized and interdisciplinary. Rising tuition rates, declining interest in public investments, increased competition from for-profit and international institutions, demand for improved performance, student and faculty mobility, and advances in communications technology have forced institutions to remain flexible and alter strategies. On many campuses, pressure is being applied to eliminate programs that are no longer in demand. These changes have been imposed upon institutions that have significant investments in the status quo, represented by sprawling campuses, rigid administrative procedures, and somewhat individualized institutional cultures that typically are highly political and resistant to change.

This paper examines governance in private higher education, describes and analyzes reported governance problems, and identifies possible sources of such problems. Theoretically identification of common sources of governance problems enables avoidance and, thereby, minimizes potential for such issues to arise. However, in the case of higher education, it appears that tensions between professional values of faculty and bureaucratic expectations sometimes cause those being governed (principally faculty) to trump the bureaucracy. More troubling is that faculty often comprise a silent majority that prefers to focus on professional pursuits, unless and until a bureaucracy action causes a general revolt. Thus, the principle challenge seems to be discovering how to successfully involve the silent majority in positive governance.

The first section of this paper discusses the essential characteristics of governance. The second section examines the organizational structure that is commonly used in private higher education. The third section identifies the typical players and roles in higher education management. The fourth section examines the political framework of governance. This is followed by a discussion of additional sources of governance problems. The sixth section examines the role of chaotic events. That is followed by a discussion of the preceding material and a model for success that suggests a research perspective which might serve as a framework for successful governance.

### Essential Characteristics of Governance

Paper 1 (Smith, 2005a) reviewed organizational management literature that pertains to mission statements, organizational futuring, and strategic planning, and concluded that “an effective mission statement . . . is key to institutional success” (p. 28) in part because it identifies common objectives and inspires staff towards achieving a common goal. The paper also concluded that institutions of higher education exist in an environment that is ever changing and that each institution would be best served by involving staff throughout the organization in intelligence gathering and quality improvement activities (p. 29).

This paper extends the process, exploring the relationship of governance paradigms to current conditions that seem ever-changing and demanding of immediate action. Once changes are detected that warrant action, who decides (a) what action to take, (b) when to take it, and (c) when the objective is achieved?

The term *governance* is used in social science (especially economics and political science) to describe action by executives, assemblies (e.g., boards, parliaments), and judicial bodies. European Union (n.d.) suggests that governance includes the rules, processes, and behaviors that

guide the exercise of power, “particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness, and coherence” (§ 7). Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (n.d.) states:

Good, effective public governance helps to strengthen democracy and human rights, promote economic prosperity and social cohesion, reduce poverty, enhance environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, and deepen confidence in government and public administration. (§ 1)

Although these two references are discussing national and international governance, similar concerns are expressed with respect to corporate governance. Bonn and Fisher (2005) suggest that corporate governance involves “the processes by which organisations are directed, controlled, and held accountable” (p. 730). McRitchie (2005) raises the issues of wealth creation, wage distribution, social responsibility, and “unaccountable power” (§ 11) as important considerations in corporate governance. Monks and Minow (n.d.) suggest that trust is a major issue in corporate governance. Rasheed (n.d.) notes that corporate governance balances the rights of various stakeholders (management, employees, customers, owners, and the public) and their relationships while trying to benefit all parties.

Gomez and Korine (2005) identify three parties as being involved in governance: (a) the sovereign (shareholders or owners), the governed (stakeholders), and the governing (those who manage or direct the organization). As in political governance, corporate governance involves “consent by the governed” (p. 739). After observing corporate governance in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States, Gomez and Korine suggest that consent of the governed slowly forced governance to incorporate “the fundamental democratic procedures of enfranchisement, separation of powers, and representation” (p. 739).

Barnetson (2001) suggests that organizations may be viewed mechanically (examine the various parts, structure, and organizational design to determine how each part fits with the others and how all work together or against each other) or politically (goal-driven, comprised of specific organizational behaviors and coalitions). Mechanical metaphors, typified by organizational charts—boxes of authority with connecting hierarchical lines—assume tight control. However, such systems tend to break down, especially as the environment rapidly changes and the system can no longer adapt or accommodate the new conditions. Maintaining tight mechanical control requires an ability to control all contributing factors (economic environment; new staff capabilities, beliefs, and behaviors; new student capabilities, beliefs and behaviors; externally imposed requirements; etc.).

Political metaphors typically assume that each individual will act in his or her own self interest, even at the expense of organizational goals (Barnetson,2001). Such metaphors assume a competitive nature. In most public institutions, controls are imposed to prevent private interests from subverting the public interest. In higher education, such controls may be imposed by government (e.g., regulations mandating existence of a board of trustees and specified officers, recordkeeping requirements, sound business practices, specified student and employee rights and protections, faculty qualifications, and program content), accreditation entities (e.g., mandates for public input processes; curriculum and program approvals), and internal entities (directives, decisions, policies, norms, or other inputs from boards, executive officers, faculty senates, and unions of faculties and/or students).

Given the rapid environmental changes and internal turmoil that some institutions experience, Barnetson (2001) suggests that colleges and universities may reflect chaos theory because “chaos theory suggests order is an inherent aspect of systems as they shape and reshape

themselves in order to facilitate their primary purpose” (p. 148). Williams (1997) summarizes chaos theory as describing a sequence of haphazard-looking events that actually follow one or more rules. For example, weather patterns appear random, but really are linked to barometric pressure. This linkage suggests that some law, process, or relationship dictates the results. Chaos theory deals with determining how something changes over a long period of time. Williams notes that chaos occurs “only in deterministic, nonlinear and dynamical systems” (p. 9). In other words, changes in output are not proportional to input—one may observe large responses to small changes in input or small responses to large changes in input.

Local pulses may persist for long periods of time. For example, in an ecosystem, ample food supplies may cause overpopulation which causes greater consumption. Increased consumption diminishes the food supply which triggers starvation and a decline in population. Fewer animals gives the food source for a species a chance to recover, marking the start of a new cycle. These cycles may persist for decades or more.

The system is dynamic—that is, it changes or evolves over time—and typically involves feedback. As recording sales climb, radio play increases. Increased radio play causes more sales of the recording. However, at some point saturation occurs and boredom sets in, causing a decline in sales and decreased radio play (Williams, 1997).

Williams (1997) notes that it is difficult to discern the underlying law or equation that governs the chaos in a system. Analysis of chaotic systems requires large volumes of data which usually are not available. Also, chaos is hypersensitive to initial conditions; that is, minor differences in initial conditions can produce radically different results. Therefore, initial data are not relevant later in the process. Short-term forecasts may have value, but long-term forecasts

contain such large margins of error as to be meaningless. “A tiny historical accident can bring about a radically different outcome” (p. 218).

Internally chaotic systems may appear outwardly organized. For example, electrons within an atom are chaotic, but the electron usually is within a specified distance of the nucleus. Thus a chaotic system may lack predictability at a micro level but “have a degree of predictability at the macro level” (Bright & Prior, 2005, p. 293). Furthermore, external forces (e.g., control factors) may cause this random field to shift slightly (Williams, 1997).

One important practical implication is that “complex behavior can have simple causes” (Williams, 1997, p. 7). Attractors within the system help organize it by establishing boundaries and patterns of behavior. Multiple attractors can cause unstable or complex behavior, and major changes can destabilize the system, at least temporarily. A chaotic field may be self organized (as a flock of birds) wherein individuals “perpetually interact and seek mutual accommodation in any of many possible ways. The units or agents spontaneously organize and reorganize themselves in the process into ever larger and more involved structures over time” (p. 234). Complex dynamic behavior involves, among other things, a progression wherein rules become more efficient and sophisticated as the system evolves into a larger and more complex structure. As the system becomes larger, new forms of adaptive systems may emerge. This complexity implies that one cannot examine and analyze the component parts of the structure and understand how the whole system works. Thus one must examine the whole system to gain additional insights

These three metaphors (mechanical, political, and chaotic) provide a useful framework for examining higher education governance. That is, an examination of the mechanical or orderly

components of governance and the inner political workings plus existing and potential sources of chaos may yield insights that lead to improved governance.

### Mechanical Framework of Higher Education Governance

In the United States, private institutions of higher education exist as corporate entities licensed or authorized by each individual state. In general terms, each corporation declares either a profit-driven or a non-profit motive and mode of operation. Per state and federal laws, both profit-driven (e.g., University of Phoenix and Capella University) and non-profit institutions (e.g., University of the Pacific, Stanford University, and Harvard University) have boards of directors; however, some states (such as California) permit a board that consists of one person. In California, that one board member may serve as executive officer and either treasurer or secretary, but not both (Mancusco, 2004). However, accrediting entities typically impose requirements that necessitate a larger board. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (2005), for example, requires a majority of the board to not be related to employees of the institution and prohibits the executive officer from serving on the board. Association for Biblical Higher Education (2004a; 2004b) explicitly requires a board of at least five members, one of whom may be the executive officer.

Each corporation (including colleges and universities) typically has an executive officer, treasurer, and secretary. Some church-affiliated institutions may also receive direction from a denominational board or officer (e.g., the Papal See provides some policy direction to Catholic universities and seminaries). Each institution's corporate documents (typically a constitution and associated by-laws) specify the composition and process by which board members and corporate officers are selected.

University organizational charts usually are similar to the schematic shown in Figure 1. Titles vary, but a board of directors (or trustees or governors) provides overall direction and selects a chief executive (president or executive officer). Depending on the size of the institution, the executive typically supervises one or more vice presidents, provosts, and deans. In turn, these manage various support departments (registrar, housing, finance, information technology, etc.) or academic schools and colleges. Each school or college typically is comprised of several academically-based departments.

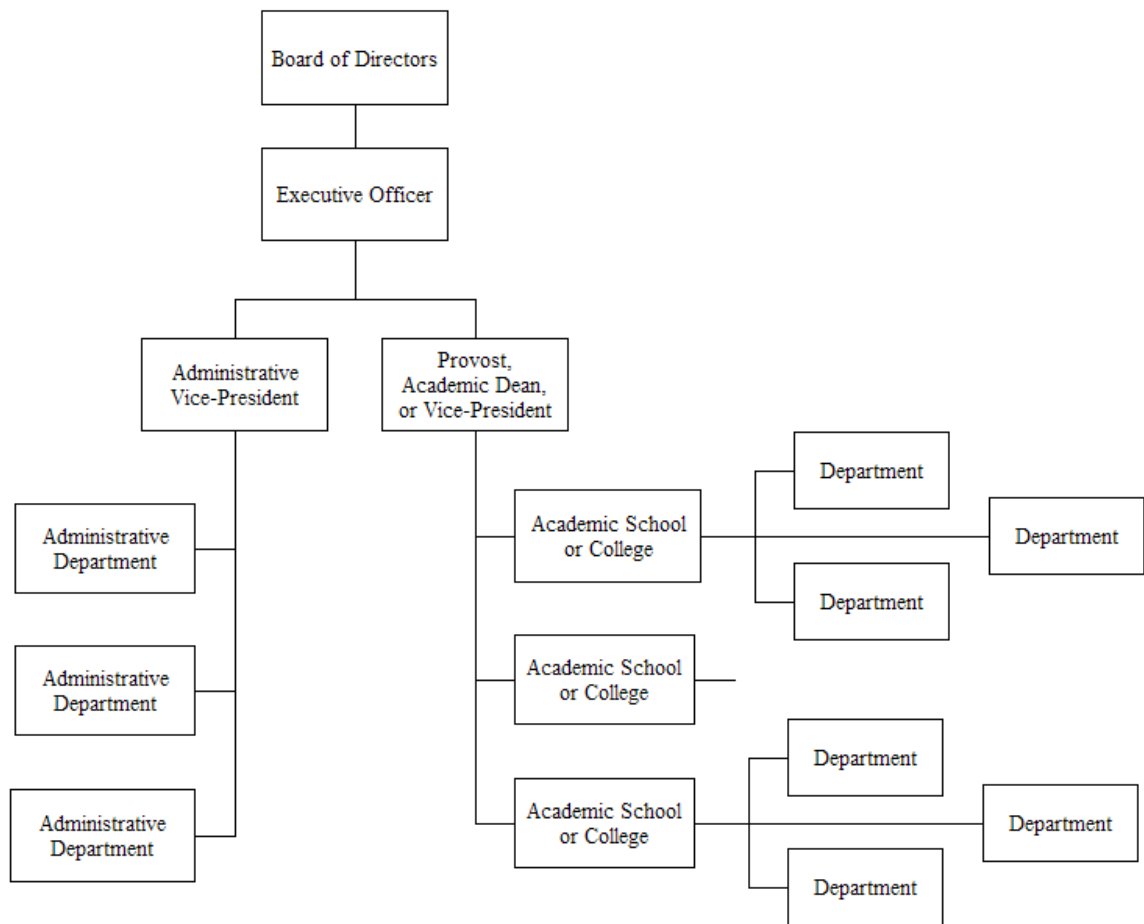


Figure 1

Basic elements of a typical private university organizational chart. Additional vice-presidents, deans, departments, schools, and colleges may be added depending on size of the institution.

Hammond (2004) suggests that the basic building blocks of any organization chart are the departments. While it is possible that departments might be defined based on societal problems (e.g., health care), type of research (e.g., theoretical or applied), departments in most universities tend to be based on academic discipline (e.g., economics, history, physics). Some universities develop interdisciplinary departments. The organization may include elements of arbitrariness. For example, specialties such as geomorphology could be housed in either a geography or a geology department or taught collaboratively by the two. There is no standardized method for deciding how to split fields; therefore, the organizations of universities differ.

Departments usually are grouped into schools and colleges. Again, variations are infinite. The structure of a university might depend on external forces—driven by social, political, or economic interests. For example, Texas A & M, University of California-Davis, and Michigan State University (founded as Michigan Agricultural College) grew out of a desire for agricultural education. Hammond (2004) indicates that any attempts to reorganize the agricultural schools in those and similar universities may generate lobbying by agricultural interests and, eventually, impact the budget (donations, governmental support, etc.) of the entire university. Thus, the internal structure of the institution might reflect the desires of a “critical constituency” (p. 103). Hammond (2004) also indicates that faculty sometimes influence where a department will be located, citing a case where faculty in one borderline department (economics) wanted higher salaries and, therefore, aligned themselves with the business school instead of social science (pp. 103-104).

The policy-making process in higher education typically occurs in three parts or stages (Table 1). The orientation stage involves recognizing and defining the problem and is impacted by perceptions and processes. The advising and policy implementation stages are impacted by

processes and methods. For example, Hammond (2004) believes that top-down organizational theories used in selecting a specific organizational structure require a thorough understanding of bottom-up processes, particularly those that affect flow of information that impact policy decisions. He asserts that the formal structure of the university may affect the type of data available to administrators. In particular, because details often are deleted during editing processes at lower levels, upper-level administrators essentially rely on lower-level staff to make reasonable choices. Furthermore, if top managers are dependent on subordinates to screen or summarize data, differences within the messages (e.g., how the data are presented) and analyses may affect outcomes and decisions. In the early stages of a problem, worrisome data might never reach top management, thereby allowing the problem to grow to significance (p. 110).

*Table 1*

*Typical policy-making process in higher education*

Stage	Step
1. Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Recognize and define the problem</li> <li>b. Process by which administrators become aware of the problem</li> <li>c. Perception of the problem</li> <li>d. Collect data – Questions of how and what to collect</li> </ul>
2. Advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deciding whether to ask for advice</li> <li>b. Process by which administrators gather advice form subordinates regarding possible actions</li> <li>c. How choices are made</li> <li>d. How options are compared</li> </ul>
3. Policy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Process by which the selected policy is implemented</li> <li>b. How conflicts are resolved (e.g., compromise by equals or appeals to higher authority)</li> </ul>

Source: Compiled from Hammond (2004, p. 105), with slight modifications.

Individual biases can impact perceptions of managers and, in turn, policy decisions. These biases may yield different choice sets that determine or limit options being considered and criteria used. For example, departments that *make* the stronger case may tend to win more often. However, the *presentation* of that case might actually reflect a view or standard practice of the departmental chair rather than any significant difference in data. If a chair tends not to mention or diminish cons and emphasize pros, that chair may win more often than a chair who values a more balanced assessment (Hammond, 2004). Similarly, a school comprised of chairs that tend to emphasize pros or be entrepreneurial may grow faster than schools where chairs prize a more balanced perspective or seek to maintain the status quo with modest growth.

Hammond (2004) also argues that because top-level administrators cannot foresee all contingencies, when policy is implemented from the top, the lower-level administrators are given a degree of latitude. Conflicts between subordinates may result. Those conflicts typically rise up the chain of command to the lowest level at which both parties have a common supervisor. Thus, the structural design coupled with differences in outlook, style, biases, knowledge, and abilities among staff will yield imperfect (and, sometimes, unpalatable) choices (p. 136).

Finally, Hammond (2004) warns that although formal organizational charts are fairly easy to develop, powerful faculty may render such charts meaningless. This will be discussed more fully in a later section.

## Key Players and Roles

### *Governing Boards*

Governing boards are variously titled (board of directors, board of trustees, board of governors). In private institutions, under state and federal law, all such boards have fairly similar responsibilities. Public university counterparts often are appointed by an elected state governor

or legislative act. However, private boards essentially are self-perpetuating (Pusser & Turner, 2004). When the corporation is created (or shortly thereafter), an initial board is selected and installed by some organizing individual, group, or entity. As board members leave, they are replaced by new members selected by the current board.

Board members are the responsible guardians, designated owners of the corporation under state and federal law. In a for-profit institution, the board members represent the share holders and act on their behalf. In a non-profit institution, the board has four basic responsibilities:

1. Ensure that the organization adheres to all legal requirements and pursues the mission and purpose for which the non-profit status was granted.
2. Assure that the organization is well run.
3. Assure that the organization has the funds that it needs to operate.
4. Represent or provide opportunities for constituents and interested parties to provide input regarding programs, policies, and actions of the board and the organization.

Even though a board member might represent a particular constituency, she is expected to render decisions based on the organization's best interest (BoardSource, 2002).

Boards of for-profit institutions may have substantial fiduciary interests (stocks partial or sole ownership) and may receive substantial compensation for serving on the board. Boards of non-profit institutions usually receive little or no compensation for their service. The goals of for-profit boards typically focus on maximizing shareholder value. The goals of non-profit boards tend to focus on maximizing the benefits and functions of the institution (Pusser & Turner, 2004).

Chait, Ryan, and Taylor (2005) note that effective boards address both their fiduciary responsibilities and long-term strategy development. Boards need to engage in constructing a consensus, not merely planning or certifying what the organization should be. Board activities need to foster strategic thinking and cultivate strategic partnerships, including a partnership with the institution's chief executive officer (p. 69). For their 1993 book, Chait, Holland, and Taylor interviewed 108 trustees at 22 private colleges. They identified six essential competencies of effective boards (Tables 2a and 2b).

Carver (1997) notes that while boards of for-profit institutions have a fairly well-defined and measurable criterion for success (maximized profit), non-profit organizations lack any market force regarding price of the product. For that reason, consumer decisions regarding whether the product is worth the cost of production typically becomes the driving force.

However,

Most nonprofit and public organizations lack a behavioral process to aggregate the many individual evaluations of product and cost. The organization is missing the foundation that would enable it to define success and failure, to know what is worth doing, and, in the largest sense, even to recognize good performance.” (p. 6)

In such a setting, objectives become difficult to define and there is no danger signal—that is, because profits do not exist, they also do not evaporate. Carver believes that in the absence of such tests, boards must fill the gap and “perform that function” (p. 7).

Usually boards tend to adopt single modalities to the exclusion of others. Some boards become watchdogs, closely monitoring activities and expenditures in minute detail. Other boards become less involved, delegating all responsibilities to executive officers and staff (Carver, 1997).

Table 2a

*Competencies of Governing Boards*

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- 1) Contextual Dimension. The board understands and takes into account the culture and norms of the organization it governs. The board:
  - a) Adapts to the distinctive characteristics and culture of the college's environment.
  - b) Relies on the institution's mission, values, and traditions as a guide for decisions.
  - c) Acts so as to exemplify and reinforce the organization's core values.
- 2) Educational Dimension. The board takes the necessary steps to ensure that trustees are well-informed about the institution, the profession, and the board's roles, responsibilities, and performance. The board:
  - a) Consciously creates opportunities for trustee education and development.
  - b) Regularly seeks information and feedback on its own performance.
  - c) Pauses periodically for self-reflection, to diagnose its strengths and limitations, and to examine its mistakes.
- 3) Interpersonal Dimension. The board nurtures the development of trustees as a group, attends to the board's collective welfare, and fosters a sense of cohesiveness. The board:
  - a) Creates a sense of inclusiveness among trustees.
  - b) Develops group goals and recognizes group achievements.
  - c) Identifies and cultivates leadership within the board.

Table 2b

*The Competencies of Governing Boards (continued)*

- 
- 4) Analytical Dimension. The board recognizes complexities and subtleties in the issues it faces and draws upon multiple perspectives to dissect complex problems and to synthesize appropriate responses. The board:
- a) Approaches problems from a broad institutional outlook.
  - b) Searches widely for concrete information and actively seeks different viewpoints from multiple constituencies.
  - c) Tolerates ambiguity and recognizes that complex matters rarely yield to perfect solutions.
- 5) Political Dimension. The board accepts as one of its primary responsibilities the need to develop and maintain healthy relationships among key constituencies. The board:
- a) Respects the integrity of the governance process and the legitimate roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders.
  - b) Consults often and communicates directly with key constituencies.
  - c) Attempts to minimize conflict and win/lose situations.
- 6) Strategic Dimension. The board helps envision and shape institutional direction and helps ensure a strategic approach to the organization's future. The board:
- a) Cultivates and concentrates on processes that sharpen institutional priorities.
  - b) Directs its attention to priorities or decisions of strategic or symbolic magnitude to the institution.
  - c) Anticipates potential problems and acts before issues become urgent.
- 

Source: Chait, Holland, and Taylor (1996, pp. 2-3).

Chait et al. (1996) indicate that there are three paradoxes that all boards face:

1. Boards have fiduciary responsibility, but the institution's administrators have the expertise, infrastructure, and staff to fulfill [or thwart] this responsibility.
2. The board must be sufficiently independent to render objective decisions yet identify with the organization and develop bonds with the executive officer and staff.
3. The board must strike a balance that allows members to relate well to one another yet avoid becoming a "cozy club" (p. 2).

Regarding item 2, a board must strike a proper balance between psychologically and financially supporting the institution and maintaining sufficient distance that it can evaluate the executive officer's performance objectively (Chait et al., 1996, p. 3). Trustees often are successful businesspeople or politicians. This creates two types of problems. First, the board is comprised of leaders, each accustomed to leading, each with his or her ego and agenda. On a board of 15, somehow the leaders must decide which of the 15 will lead on specific issues. Second, board members frequently have corporate board experiences but "are baffled by the academic world." In short, they lack "know-how about academic governance and how it should work" (p. 4). This lack of knowledge typically produce two types of boards: (a) one that tends to defer to management or (b) one that forces a corporate model on the institution.

Regarding the analytical dimension, Chait et al. (1996) note that the board should emphasize that ambiguity and uncertainty are acceptable "healthy preconditions for comprehensive and critical discussions" (p. 9). Uncertainties encourage doubts to be raised, options to be examined and analyzed, and open discussion.

On less competent boards . . . the staff and trustees present information, reports, and recommendations with such certainty and conviction as to chill debate. Presidents are

expected to present perfect solutions to knotty problems. Trustees are expected to dutifully endorse committee recommendations with little or no conversation or dissent.

(p. 9).

Chait et al. believe that the most effective boards gift institutions with valuable contributions “decisions and actions that enhance the long-term quality, vitality, and stability” (p. 9), usually through five interrelated approaches:

1. Help senior management identify the most important matters. This requires discipline. Undisciplined boards tend to identify everything as most important (pp. 9-10).
2. Create opportunities for the executive to “think out loud” (p. 11), to test ideas, express dreams, and freely discuss preliminary plans and notions.
3. Encourage experimentation and stimulate change. Chait et al. (p. 13-14) suggest that innovative role playing and *what if* questions among the board sometimes produce “germs of ideas” to explore and possibly implement. Chait, Ryan, and Taylor (2005) extend this concept further, arguing that boards need to be, and encourage others in the institution to be, generative thinkers (pp. 90-91)
4. Monitor progress and performance. This requires boards to ensure that policies and strategic plans contain benchmarks and means to gauge results and assess effectiveness.
5. Model the desired behaviors. This may include, for example, such actions as downsizing the board when calling for the institution to be downsized, denying reappointments to incapable trustees, diversifying the board, participating in public service days, or undergoing periodic review by outside parties (Chait, et al., 1996, pp. 15-16).

Based on the results of a trustee demonstration project, Chait et al. (1996) determined that board improvement could not be mandated by either the board or the executive—to be

successful, both parties had to commit to effective governance. Furthermore, board development has to be “*embedded*” in the normal activities of the board. Significant positive impacts sometimes result from small changes in behavior, structure, or process. However, board development is an intensive, long-term process that requires vigilance. “Relax for a moment too long and the currents will sweep the board (and the institution) out to sea” (p. 17).

While the above issues are important, there is one more crucial factor—commitment. Trustees must be committed to the institution. This means that the board must take care in selecting and training new board members. Chait et al. (1996) encourage boards to recruit members who have the time, commitment (including a firm endorsement of the institution’s mission), financial capacity, and chemistry to devote to the institution and the existing members of the board. They recommend that new members be assigned a board mentor to help them link with other board members and learn the way that the board conducts its business. Chait et al. also advise against acquiring or retaining “renegade trustees” (p. 78) who regularly violate the board’s norms and confidences. If the board does acquire a renegade, then it must quickly and tactfully deal with the situation, either counseling a change in behavior or a peaceful exit.

### *Executive Officers*

Chait et al. (1996) found that most boards agree that hiring an effective executive who has good rapport with the board is key to success. However, they also warn that some executives try to assure that individual board members are loyal to the executive, and not necessarily to the institution. When that happens, the board tends to devalue teamwork. Executives also sometimes denigrate the efforts of individual board members, which undercuts the board’s cohesiveness. Carver (1997) notes that executives too often “stage manage” board meetings so that boards “wander aimlessly” and do not disrupt or contest the manager’s work and authority. And, Chait

et al. recount cases where an executive upbraided a board member who questioned budget assumptions by “telling him that it wasn’t his place to raise a question” (p. 80).

Clearly a lack of rapport with the board creates a significant rift in the management structure—a rift that can stress the board, the manager, and many parts of the institution.

However, in addition to board rapport, the executive faces myriad challenges. He must:

1. Be a good time manager. Walton (1998) opines that managers spend too much time (perhaps 80%) working on trivia. He suggests that managers need time to philosophize about self purpose and organizational purposes and should avoid the “tyranny of trivia” (p. 205).
2. “Create a shared and inspiring vision” (Lick, 2002, p. 33).
3. Champion, encourage, and enable transformation. This requires administrators, faculty, and staff to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to effect a change (Hotchkiss, 2002; O’Banion, 2003; Ramaley, 2002).
4. Develop and maintain a good working relationship with faculty and staff. Adversarial roles and attitudes can undermine the loftiest of missions (Estepa, 1997).
5. Foster trust (Hamilton, 2004). Shaw (2002) suggests that executives should be open about the timing and process of planned changes, provide reassurance to those involved, and help people succeed by offering training and other support.
6. Focus on leading. Lick (2002) believes that leadership (setting direction, aligning people, motivating, and inspiring) is key but often is overshadowed by day-to-day management tasks (budgeting, planning, organizing, staffing, and problem solving). In short, solving the *crisis of the day* sometimes seems more important than letting others solve that crisis and instead focusing on leading.

7. Be visible to faculty, students, and other potential supporters (Hotchkiss, 2002).
8. Be a good listener and encourage open communications (Estepa, 1997; Hotchkiss, 2002). Estepa warns that initial successes may lead to overconfidence and to becoming less sensitive to complaints and criticism.
9. Be effective with structural or bureaucratic issues (Estepa, 1997).
10. Promote key values and foster shared perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, especially about the institution, mission, and goals (Estepa, 1997).
11. Be able to develop and implement important strategies (Estepa, 1997).
12. Be able to quickly adapt strategies to environmental changes (Estepa, 1997).
13. Be effective with human resource issues (Estepa, 1997).
14. Build a means for collective action, consensus building, and teamwork (Estepa, 1997).
15. Be effective politically (Estepa, 1997). Develop, maintain, and improve relationships with internal and external stakeholders (Shaw, 2002).
16. Be effective at identifying and resolving conflicts (Estepa, 1997). Better yet, be effective at foreseeing and addressing potential conflicts before they become major issues.
17. Be an effective fund raiser (Wiseman, 1991).
18. Hire effective subordinates (Albert, 2002; Wiseman, 1991). Albert opines that “no process can shape the quality of instructional program more than the recruitment and hiring process, . . . [especially] when it comes to hiring higher-level administrators and managers—deans and division and department chairs” (p. 16).
19. Identify and develop talented staff (Albert, 2002).

20. Delegate authority to appropriate staff (Hotchkiss, 2002). The executive must rely on subordinates to implement desired changes.
21. Manage the institution effectively in times of crisis (e.g., declining enrollments) (after Bregman & Moffett, 1961) and environmental change (Lick, 2002).
22. Limit failures. Shaw (2002) acknowledges that mistakes are inevitable, but suggests that successes should greatly exceed failures. “Too risky a plan, even though it may bring benefits, is doomed” (p. 396).
23. Involve others, especially key faculty and administrators, in governance, creating an atmosphere of shared responsibility and success (Shaw, 2002, p. 397). Albert (2002) extends this to creation of partnerships among disparate parts within the institution and among external entities (e.g., K-12 schools).
24. Encourage quality learning through program evaluation and outcomes assessment (Albert, 2002). Such evaluations and assessments help improve the institution by creating an environment that values and supports employees and students.

The above all require competent executives. Estepa (1997) notes that faculty tend to lose confidence in authoritarian or incompetent leaders and that, even if the board continues to support the executive, if the president cannot work constructively with the faculty, then board support will wane (pp. 24-25).

### *Middle Managers*

Hotchkiss (2002) notes that deans play important roles in supporting the institutional vision. “Without the support of the dean, the odds favoring change decrease dramatically for it will be difficult to win over the most important constituency of the community, its faculty”

(p. 407). Hotchkiss also notes that unless deans openly share and support the vision with students and advocate the changes, failure might also occur.

Leaming (2002) suggests that deans must have basic leadership skills and “find ways to create leaders, not followers” (p. 438). Deans must be able to communicate the institutional vision, understanding and interacting with others in order to build consensus and foster collaboration. These activities require deans to understand the history, needs, desires, and politics of the units and people within their realm of responsibility. Just as executives must be able to listen to constituents, so must deans. However, deans must also voice the desires and opinions of subordinates to higher-level decision makers.

Wheeler (2002) suggests that department chairs need to know the focus of the institution. Wheeler believes that chairs need to understand how to get things done, focusing more on management than leadership. However, Wheeler notes that chairs need to empower faculty and staff and present a clear vision for the department’s future. Chairs need to help develop staff, maintain one’s own scholarly focus, and model integrity and good working habits. Chairs also must work effectively with higher-level administrators and effectively participate in the institution’s shared governance activities. In this day of rapid change, chairs need to be aware of technological advances and explore potential applications within the department.

At this level, two significant shifts appear. First, as noted above, tasks seem to focus on managing and doing (or assuring that things get done) instead of leading. But Wheeler (2002) also expresses a fundamental shift in attitude away from the goals of the institution to self preservation and self interest. For example, he cautions that chairs should not necessarily pay much heed to “an up-and-coming president or chancellor” who might leave in a few years. He also recommends that chairs build their own support systems, comprised of peers, higher-level

administrators, senior faculty, and the institution's support units. These comments suggest a fairly clear us versus them mentality—a dividing line at which divided loyalties to profession and institution become prominent. Baldrige, Curtis, Ecker, and Riley (1977) indicate that professionals often have divided loyalties and that strong tensions tend to arise between professional values and bureaucratic expectations. These tensions become explicit in discussing the role of those supervised by chairs—the faculty.

### *Faculty*

In the 1960s, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), American Council on Education (ACE), and Association of Governing Boards (AGP) met to discuss a proposed joint statement on university governance. The statement, issued by AAUP in 1967, was not endorsed by either ACE or AGP, but has become a cornerstone for governance structures at many universities (Birnbaum, 2003; Burgan, 2004). In essence the statement declares that faculty “has primary responsibility for . . . curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process” (p. xii). This assertion is based on the assumption that such decisions should be made only by persons having knowledge in each specific educational field and aligns with prevailing professional demands autonomy, freedom from supervision, and evaluation only by peers (Baldrige et al., 1977). The AAUP asserts that allowing non-specialists to make such decisions potentially introduces censorship. Burgan notes that the AAUP position has led to delegation of most department-level, hiring, peer-review, promotional, and tenure responsibilities to academicians.

Thus faculties in private non-profit universities are generally responsible for subject-matter knowledge and educational practice. [Faculty in some for-profit institutions, such as

University of Phoenix, may be required to strictly adhere to pre-developed content.] Faculty usually are the principal points of contact with student-customers. Not only must faculty know the subject matter in their own field, but they should be adept at conveying that knowledge to others in ways that facilitate learning. Because of their contact with student-customers, faculty also receive feedback regarding student needs and desires. This provides faculty with information, some of which ideally should be transmitted to higher management or specific service units.

In addition to maintaining and improving specialized knowledge and teaching expertise, faculty need to focus on developing and maintaining good relations with student-customers, peers, supervisors, and support staff. In addition, faculty ideally should participate in available shared governance activities. This is addressed in the next section.

#### Governance Structures

Birnbaum (2003) describes two types of governance structures—one based on legal authority awards power to the board and administrators, while the other justifies the role of faculty based on professional authority. The latter was first explicitly described by the previously mentioned AAUP *Statement on Shared Governance* (1967/1978). As noted earlier, AAUP declared that faculty should have primary responsibility for curriculum, faculty status, and educational processes. AAUP also states that collaboration with governing boards and administrators is desirable when there are major changes in the student body or shifts in emphasis between teaching and research. AAUP views appear to be widely held as Burgan (2004) notes that when managers overrule decisions on tenure decisions, promotions, or other AAUP-recommended practices, “major institutional uproar” is likely (pp. xii-xiii).

AAUP (1978) also advocates involvement of faculty in the development of long-range plans, budgets, and assessment of facility needs, acknowledging that the governing board and management have lead roles. Finally, AAUP asserts that faculty should have a major voice in selection of the university's chief executive and that the executive should seek advice from faculty when appointing deans and other officials.

Many institutions use a faculty senate model to provide an official vehicle for faculty to voice their desires. In smaller institutions, such as Patten University, all full-time faculty typically comprise the senate. In larger institutions, faculty elect or otherwise select representatives to serve on the senate. Faculty senates typically create committees to research and recommend action on various educational matters.

#### Political Framework of Governance

A quick review of the previous mechanical framework section reveals that a core requirement is that each party or group should get along well with superiors and subordinates. To that requirement, one can add that they also should relate well to their peers, especially when collaboration and negotiation are required. Kezar (2004) notes that “structures and processes are not the heart of organizations—people and relationships are” (p. 39, after Wheatley, 1996). Thus relationships are key to success. The board must work well with the executive who must work well with the board and his or her subordinates. Mid-level managers must work well with the executive, their own immediate supervisors, their own staffs, and peers. Faculty and staff must relate well to their superiors, students, and peers.

While formal organizational charts and duty statements suggest that more power is wielded by those at the top than at the bottom, this may not be the case. Kaplan (2004) notes that power may derive from social position (e.g., access to employment opportunities, ability to raise

funds, professional expertise). Furthermore, written decision-making rules may differ from reality, being subject to complex internal and external political processes. Changes in board membership, administrative staff, or even in interests of individual trustees and administrators may shift with time and affect the decision-making process. However, these all still assume a power-from-the-top perspective. What of the AAUP perspective that faculty should have power over key educational matters? Might power flow up from the bottom and, if so, how?

Several examples exist that suggest that power does, indeed, flow upwards, at least in some cases. Joyce (2000) notes that although the faculty senate is symbolically important and might be instrumentally important, faculty are not always satisfied with the arrangement. Some faculty become focused on research, preoccupied with teaching, or too narrowly focused on departmental governance issues and ignore institutional governance. Kaplan (2004) even suggests that faculty power is difficult to assess because “most faculty members remain uninterested in the powers that have been delegated to them under the rules of governance on campus and reserve their authority merely for cases in which they feel the administration or board overstepped their bounds” (p. 170). Unionization similarly appears to establish an adversarial relationship designed to give faculty (and/or staff) veto power over salary, benefits, and working conditions. In essence these examples illustrate the importance and method by which faculty give or take away their consent to be governed and seek enfranchisement and representation.

If Kaplan (2004) is correct, then a silent majority may hold the greatest power. The difficulty is in determining what this silent majority wants and will support. Although some faculty complain of decisions that are made in haste and without consulting faculty, the real reason that many faculty raise objections might be caused by “conflicting ideologies and

differences in belief about what a university should be” (Birnbaum, 2003, p. 6). Birnbaum suggests that market-driven institutions such as University of Phoenix lack any compelling reason for adopting shared governance because governing bodies are happy with profits, faculty are happy with income, and students are happy with rapidly earned degrees. He asserts that in such institutions, “faculty are transmitters of training material, not autonomous scholars; students are consumers purchasing products, not learners being educated” (p. 8).

Most non-profit universities hold core values (e.g., academic freedom, creativity, and critical discourse) and a culture that is viewed as diametrically opposed to profit-driven motives. Yet most faculty would agree that each institution needs to focus enough on fiscal matters to sustain itself. Hence, here is another potential source for divided loyalty. When administrators or boards push to eliminate outdated degree programs, reallocate resources to meet demand, or create new programs, especially if the leaders express a willingness to use their legal authority, faculty sometimes push back based on ideological and cultural norms and personal desires. For example, in 1998, Baylor’s president (Robert Sloan) created a new center to research intelligent design and appointed proponent Bill Dembski as the center’s head (Heeren, 2000). Faculty expressed outrage, forced Dembski’s removal, and, by 2003, had three times given Sloan a vote of no confidence. Sloan stepped down from his post in 2004 (Aronauer, 2005). McCormack (2005) notes that such votes are not common at elite universities, but lists five such incidents since 1996. Of those five, three (in addition to the Sloan incident) involved grievances such as “behaving like a dictator” (p. A8), changing programs and filling a dean position without consulting faculty, authoritarian management style, and refusing to work with a proposed faculty union.

Such ideological and methodological differences clearly can divide the university and prevent collaboration. While the board and administration hold the legal authority, faculty have the power to individually choose not to implement administrative directives and halt or slow institutional production. Birnbaum (2003) reports that (a) attempts to modify governance in non-profit institutions have generally failed and (b) attempts to shift power from faculty to administrators “inevitably fail” (p. 12). This is not surprising, given Cohen and March’s (1974) assertion that a university is an organized anarchy wherein each individual makes autonomous decisions:

Teachers decide if, when, and what to teach. Students decide if, when, and what to learn. Legislators and donors decide if, when, and what to support. Neither coordination nor control [is] practiced. Resources are allocated by whatever process emerges but without explicit accommodation and without explicit reference to some superordinate goal. The “decisions” of the system are a consequence produced by the system but intended by no one and decisively controlled by no one. (pp. 33-34)

Furthermore, Cohen and March believed that presidents were relatively weak, typically a catalyst or facilitator of ongoing activities who channels activities through subtlety and negotiation rather than by command. They assert that organized anarchy breaks through traditional formality that often surrounds decision making and challenges existing conceptions (p. 8). Real decisions occur as a result of power plays and political conflicts that involve few people; people move in and out of engagement, leaving decisions to be made by those who persist (p. 14). When resources are ample, conflicts are few. Conflicts increase as resources diminish. Pressure groups can place severe restrictions on formal authority and strongly influence the process. While decisions

usually involve rational thought, the confused real power structure of the university often undermines the rational process (p. 15).

Birnbaum (2003) suggests that if governance shifts to become less shared and more rational, the institution will become less academic. Also, as that shift occurs and faculty roles diminish, trust among faculty may diminish. Finally, as institutions become more businesslike, they also might lose their core values and abandon their original identities. For these reasons, Birnbaum suggests that governance structure and the nature (values, identities, etc.) of the institution are loosely coupled.

Interestingly, as church-sponsored colleges (such as Harvard) shifted to participatory governance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, those institutions also abandoned their original core values and identities. While Birnbaum (2003) tries to argue that shared governance should be valued in part because it is linked to academic values, perhaps both of these changes are reflections of the evolution of society. As society became more focused on science, technology, and business, universities (and their governance structures) transitioned from theological and, sometimes, dogmatic frames of governance to more objective frames. The present-day pressure for colleges to evolve into more businesslike modes of governance probably reflects society's evolution to one that values efficiency and effectiveness.

Claerbaut (2004) argues that the academic mainstream attempts to assemble all members of the community into the prevailing paradigm and that, "in many cases, the assimilation is forced to the extent that one resists it at one's own peril" (p. 77). If, for example, an institution chooses to not follow AAUP's recommended governance or tenure procedures, then AAUP typically censures the institution (Academe, 2005; Fogg, 2004). In essence such actions warn potential faculty and, as a result, hinder recruitment. On a more personal level, if one does not fit

the community's mold, then one probably will not be hired, retained, or receive tenure. Adams (2004) describes a faculty-imposed tyranny at one institution where hiring panels base decisions on religion, lifestyle, and political affiliation, suggesting that academic freedom is only available to those whose espouse views that align with the majority of faculty in the institution. This also suggests that participatory governance can, at times, empower a few who adopt and enforce an extremism that threatens important core values and the historical identity of the institution. For these reasons, it appears that Birnbaum's loose coupling thesis should be modified to reflect that *any shift in power* may threaten core values and institutional identity. Such shifts may include shifts towards or away from participatory governance or even major shifts in ideology among the governing participants.

#### Additional Sources of Governance Problems

Benjamin and Carroll (1998) surveyed California universities and concluded that governance structures, management assumptions, and practices are key impediments to improving quality and efficiency. Departments are autonomous and make decisions that lack a holistic university-wide view. Deans and other administrators allocate resources and make management decisions within narrow chains of command, "largely ignorant of what those in other parts of the institution are doing" (§ 42).

Benjamin and Carroll assert that universities need to reexamine missions and streamline service using system-wide processes for reallocating resources. Such tasks require a broad perspective that will lead to specific operational and programmatic questions about comparative advantage. The current, most commonly used governance structure hinders asking those questions. Also, universities will need data about costs and benefits of specific programs—data they now generally lack. But elimination of programs is unlikely considering Wilson's (1989)

observation that government programs are seldom discontinued or radically changed but simply added to. In many cases, only when a leader persuades affected staff that the changes are peripheral and threaten no core interests are they implemented (pp. 225-226). Thus, a specific course or degree major is not likely to be eliminated unless a higher authority (the board or chief executive) directs faculty to do so.

McDonald (2004) describes the results of a 1980 mandate that all California State universities and colleges adopt a new general education program with a critical thinking component. Prior to issuance of the executive order, each state university's general education requirement "reflected, more often than not, the traditional staffing patterns of the prevailing disciplinary emphasis of the campus" (p. iv). The order represented an erosion of local autonomy and of the academic freedoms claimed by faculty. Tension between the CSU Chancellor's office and local campuses increased and brought long-standing internal conflicts to the forefront (pp. 186-187). On the Sonoma State campus, the campus President simultaneously moved to eliminate several majors with declining enrollment and create a new computer science degree program—the very types of actions that Benjamin and Carroll advocated 18 years later. Conflicts arose on Sonoma State and Fresno State campuses when traditional general education departments sensed that other departments were staking a claim as providers of general education. Several tenured faculty were laid off at Sonoma. Fresno faculty skillfully accommodated most of the mandated general education content within existing courses but refused to create a discrete course in critical thinking (p. 198).

Policy makers in the Chancellor's office failed to recognize that the additional general education requirements would require reduction of engineering and nursing classes units—potentially including some courses that aid students in passing licensing examinations—and

complicate transfer of students already enrolled in community colleges with whom CSU had articulation agreements. In addition, because faculty determine through self-controlled methods whether or not learning objectives are met, there is no uniform basis for determining whether the general education reforms are successfully implemented.

The layoffs and programmatic changes at Sonoma State split faculty into two camps and eventually led to removal of the President and his administration. On the other campus, the president managed to implement the order in consultation with the faculty; there, although a few relationships were strained and debates weathered, the administrators succeeded in implementing change and keeping their jobs.

Although the above example involves a multi-campus public university system, the same sort of scenario could very easily occur in a large private, non-profit university. Edicts from the top are sometimes made without a thorough analysis of the impacts on the needs of and realities experienced by those at the bottom.

#### The Chaotic Dimension of Governance

One might consider the university as a chaos model. It appears externally stable in that surrounding entities recognize it as a university, but its direction may shift slightly due to external forces (accrediting dictates or societal needs, for example). Overall one may be able to track turnover of staff and students and predict with reasonable accuracy how many will leave each year, but one probably cannot predict which specific individuals will leave the institution.

To illustrate this chaos, consider Kezar's (2004) observation that leadership appears to be more important than governance structures:

New structures were only as successful as the leaders that emerged on campuses.

Structures alone could not facilitate effective decisions and policymaking. Campuses that

had poor leadership around governance failed, while dedicated leaders (or groups of leaders) made the new structures work. Leadership facilitated effectiveness . . . . People involved in governance noted that you can have the right individuals involved and the correct type and size of teams, but without a person to drive the process, policymaking will stall or be misdirected by minutiae. (p. 41)

The loss of a leader anywhere in the institution may throw that unit into chaos. If an effective chair (or dean, executive officer, or board member) resigns, retires, or dies, the loss may not be limited to the amount of work that the individual performed. The true value of the individual may have been in the internal and external relationships that enabled him or her to inspire, motivate, support, or collaborate with others. The loss of that individual may require realignment of work units, reassignment of responsibilities, and development of new relationships which may be more or less effective and efficient. That individual's replacement brings new ideas, perspectives, and values that will future impact the institution in slight to great ways. Multiply those sorts of changes and impact throughout the institution and one has a clear chaos model.

### Discussion

It is evident that there are two conflicting models of governance—a bureaucratic model and a shared governance model. Floyd (1985) suggests that rather than one shared governance model, there actually are three: (a) separate jurisdictions, (b) shared authority, and (c) joint participation.

The separate jurisdictions perspective suggests that faculty and administrators have separate areas of responsibility, but that some issues obviously involve both areas. The basic mode of operation for this model is that each operates independent of the other and collaborates

only when there is a need for coordinated action (Floyd, 1985). Carried to extreme, this model might suggest that each department or each instructor would operate independently and would collaborate only when a need arises. The model suggests that the whole is nothing more than the sum of the parts. This model is likely to produce many uncoordinated actions, some of which may even act in opposition to others, and, therefore, seems inefficient.

The shared authority perspective generally follows the AAUP (1967/1978) model. It argues that each part may have greater expertise in specific areas and, therefore, merits greater weight, but that some issues obviously involve all parties. For example, faculty may design science or athletic programs that require specialized facilities. Administrators, having expertise at fund raising, may be able to assess the likelihood that sufficient funds could be raised to advance the project. Therefore, both parties may need to collaborate to jointly discuss, design, limit, expand, or even abandon the effort—the educational needs must align with fiscal reality. Floyd (1985) believes that shared authority models ignore adversarial situations that might arise in such discussions or in collective bargaining by unions.

According to Floyd (1958), in a true joint participation model, both parties are guaranteed substantive roles, share information openly, have opportunity to influence decisions, and are responsible for developing a broad perspective instead of a parochial view. A joint participation gives faculty a greater say in budget and financial decisions and empowers administrators to actively participate in educational matters. This approach conceivably empowers both parties to jointly develop and implement strategies that effectively advance common goals and that require resources from both areas. The joint participation model “focuses less on the specifics of how authority is shared and more on approaches for encouraging the joint participation . . . over the broad range of institutional decisions” (p. 17). It avoids narrowly codified processes. Floyd

notes, however, that faculty tend to be less comfortable with this model because laws and traditional organizational paradigms explicitly require organizational hierarchies.

The concept of an academic senate also is not a single model. Floyd (1985) indicates that the town meeting model (where all faculty participate) does not work well in large institutions. Size and complexity of the meeting hinders decision making, and it is too easy to generate hostility between factions or for a small minority to manipulate the larger group. Thus larger institutions tend to adopt a representative model (a senate comprised of representatives elected by faculty). Although the senate provides a means for faculty to voice desires, it also sometimes becomes a means to organize opposition to administrative actions. Thus, senates sometimes devolve into adversarial relationships or us versus them mentalities. Furthermore, faculty senates do not always reach consensus. Voting sometimes yields imperfect solutions as narrow majorities can leave substantial minorities who can craft ways to thwart the majority's will. Finally, collective bargaining potentially adds yet another dimension as union members may not always agree with the senate or the administration.

One must recognize that chaos rightly is superimposed on both models. One simply cannot predict who will or will not be involved in governance over the long term. Leaders may leave, events may occur that causes some silent constituency to become alarmed and active, and new parties will arrive with new values and desires. Laws and societal expectations and norms will evolve and require changes to be made.

#### A Model for Success

While the preceding discussions appear full of gloom and doom and suggest that there might be no way out of the academic governance morass, some non-profit institutions appear, in fact, to be well governed and successful. What are some of the keys to these successes?

Raughton (1997) described the transformation of the Colorado community college system. One major obstacle involved convincing faculty that resources would be available and that “growth and initiative would be rewarded” (¶ 17). Rice and Miller (2001) examined proposals to increase use of information technology and found that objections were overcome when faculty were involved in planning the changes, realized the advantages that would result, and were convinced that they would receive adequate support during the transition.

Martin (2004) describes a college that faced declining enrollments and questions from accrediting entities about learning outcomes and institutional direction. These threats led to use of continuous quality improvement techniques and leadership strategies. Key stakeholders were involved in open and frank discussions and sharing of all pertinent information. Processes were examined and redesigned. All staff received training and allocated time to participate in the process. The multi-year effort resulted in improved trust, improved understanding by the governing board, a balanced budget, new committee structures, and increased enrollment.

These three examples suggest that shared governance can work given ample resources, open and honest communication; a collegial environment; training; and an understanding of benefits that will result. Based on information presented earlier, one also needs a competent board, competent leader, competent middle managers, and competent faculty and staff. A clear vision, strategies that succeed, and stakeholders that share that vision, believe that the strategies can and will succeed, and take ownership of their role in that achieving that success also are key. Ample examples exist to suggest that when these visions and strategies are not shared throughout the organization, gridlock, failure, or lesser successes typically result.

The potential for gridlock and disruption suggests that alignment might be the key factor. If a vision or strategy is espoused by the governing board and not shared by the executive, either

the vision will not be implemented or the executive will depart. If the executive endorses the vision or strategy, but the middle managers resist, impasse or institutional turmoil will result. If middle managers endorse the vision or strategy but faculty do not, a work stoppage or other punitive action (e.g., vote of no confidence) will usually result. And, if the faculty endorses the vision but students do not agree, then student-customers will flee. Thus, to maximize the potential for success, the vision and strategy must be ones that are accepted (and ideally owned) by all parties in the institution. In existing institutions, this typically requires involving faculty and staff in creating the vision. In new institutions, or for new hires in existing institutions, this involves hiring only those who willingly endorse the vision and strategy. In essence, this is akin to selecting the proper initial conditions—an element of applied chaos theory which, although it does not assure long-term success, probably aids in achieving short-term successes.

While chaos can be described in terms of what can go wrong and evoke a sense of helplessness, the concept of chaos theory presents an opportunity to discover underlying patterns and methods of transforming chaos into success, transforming disorder into order, and discovering patterns within the disorder. A university, or any internal unit, can isolate itself and perish, or it can emerge from behind its walls and interact to create successful partnerships. Through such methods, the institution can learn, grow, and transform itself. If the institution chooses, it may turn the effort into an opportunity to learn by doing and can equip others to undergo similar journeys and transformations. Such journeys require trust among leaders and followers, followers who are willing to lead or learn to follow, employing their expertise, observations, insights, time, and effort to move the organization and themselves ever forward.

Recognizing the tendency of some faculty to not participate in governance and to later voice objections and organize counter-movements requires diligence on the part of leaders.

Floyd indicates that individual faculty often express a desire to participate but assign it a low priority. Frankly, institutional rewards for participation typically are low. Committee work and other governance activities are not regarded as scholarly and often are not valued in tenure or promotion reviews. Kezar (2004) suggests that leaders should set the tone for the types of relationships that will develop. Perhaps the key is not only for administrators to improve communication with faculty and staff but to recognize substantive participation and relationship building as scholarly service to the community. Perhaps such participation might even be identified as an opportunity for faculty to adopt institutional governance as a topic for focused research, yield case studies in many fields, and help make sense out of chaos while helping to move the institution closer to its goals.

### Conclusion

There may be no one model of governance that guarantees success. Demand exists for new methods and technologies that facilitate sense- and decision-making in a world of rapid change. Organizational charts suggest that university departments might be similar to small companies that band together to create and deliver products (e.g., degrees, general education courses, financial support services, marketing) and must coordinate activities to enable each company to grow, achieve its own goals, and (ideally) achieve common goals and missions. However, some evidence suggests that leadership is key to success and that a good leader may be able to overcome or compensate for a flawed structure. Mossberg declares that “leadership has always been about a farsighted ability to identify and evoke as yet unrecognized potential in individuals and entities. A leader’s optimistic vision can sustain people’s belief in the institution’s capacity to transform, reform, and move forward” (p. 206). The organization is

dynamic, continuously changing in response to external and internal forces, but leaders and organizations cannot thrive in an environment comprised of fear, divisiveness, and lack of trust.

Within any institution, significant changes occur almost continuously. While every employee will one day leave, the time and manner of the departure may be impossible to predict. The ramifications of each loss will vary from almost insignificant (affecting a few people perhaps greatly) to very significant (affecting many people in slight to substantial ways). Institutions need to develop ways to assure that key relationships between work units are maintained in spite of the loss, that replacements are familiar with and can easily assume, continue, evolve, and improve those relationships.

Universities need to find ways to assure that staff recognize the value of good leaders, aspire to become good leaders themselves, and are properly rewarded for efforts to participate in and improve governance activities and leadership capabilities. Devoting resources to recording, reflecting on, and reporting of the institution's efforts to improve governance should be one way to recognize value, encourage participation, research, and distribute knowledge about effective and efficient governance, thereby enhancing academic governance and related scholarship.

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