V. Lynn Meek
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Editors

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HIGHER EDUCATION DYNAMICS 33

The Changing Dynamics of Higher Education Middle Management

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The Changing Dynamics of Higher Education Middle Management

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The Changing Dynamics of Higher Education Middle Management

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Preface

The high-level Douro seminars are now a well-established tradition in the annual activities promoted by *Hedda*, a European consortium of nine centres and institutes devoted to research on higher education, and CIPES, its Portuguese associated centre.

At the seminars, each member of a small group of invited researchers presents and discusses an original research-based paper that is revised afterwards taking into account the comments of the participating colleagues. The revised papers form the basis for the annual thematic book published by Springer in the book series called Higher Education Dynamics. Paying tribute to the regularity of the seminars, it was decided that the volumes originating from the initiative would be collected in a 'series in the series' called the Douro Series.

Previous seminars were dedicated to in-depth analyses of different aspects of higher education systems and institutions, including institutional governance, the emergence of managerialism, markets as instruments of public policy, cost-sharing and accessibility of students to higher education, developments in quality assurance and the changing nature of European universities as a consequence of European integration efforts.

The theme of the present volume is the dynamics of the role of academic middle managers (deans, heads of schools/departments, heads of research centres, etc.) in the transition (or otherwise) from collegial to managerial control in higher education institutions. The Douro seminar at which this theme was considered by the contributors to this book was entitled 'The Manager-Academic: Corporate Lackey or Academe's Champion?'

The title of the seminar may convey the impression that middle-level academic managers are caught in the invidious position of merely occupying the no-man's land between implementing the edicts of their executive managers and protecting the interests of their academic colleagues and placating their demands. To an extent, this is true – but only to an extent. The middle-level academic manager appears to be a much more robust and independent species of academe than what is often assumed, being never entirely, if at all, a lackey for any particular academic interest group or managerial enclave.

To continue the biological metaphor a bit further, there is clear evidence that the middle-level academic manager as a species is evolving. While in some pre-historic

past age of academe, heads of departments, deans and the like were more or less ill-defined, casual positions with nominal influence; today, middle-level academic managers occupy well-defined positions with clear duty statements; they are invested with considerable amounts of power and attract high expectations from their constitutions, both within and external to the institution. However, as in biology, environmental circumstances are of paramount importance. The nature and characteristics of the role of middle-level academic managers vary considerably from country to country and from institution to institution within the same jurisdiction.

The study of middle-level academic managers is of interest in its own right. But an understanding of the role of this group of managers is even more important in relation to an overall appreciation of how higher education institutions work. Increasingly, it is becoming recognised that the ability of organisations to achieve their missions in an efficient and effective manner is largely dependent on the ability and dedication of middle managers. Past studies of organisational dynamics have largely been preoccupied with the executive level of management. But current research is pointing in the direction of recognising that effective management is a very dynamic, complex process, involving multiple roles and criss-crossing lines of authority – a complex web of institutional functioning largely maintained by the actions, ideologies and predilections of middle managers.

The present volume goes some way in increasing our understanding of the importance and complexity of the role played by higher education middle managers. They are a species recognisable to themselves and others, but, like swans, they certainly are not all of the same colour. There is probably no organisation as complex and difficult to understand as the modern higher education institution, which is itself both recognisable across nations and distinctly different according to jurisdiction. The analysis of managerial complexity at the middle level, combined with that of higher education institutions and systems in the different countries considered by the contributors to this volume, produces a rich tapestry of change and continuity in terms of the functioning of higher education institutions.

We are grateful to all who have made the seventh Douro seminar and book possible, particularly Amélia Veiga and her colleagues at CIPES. We are also grateful to Di Davies for her editorial work and we have appreciated the diligence of all our colleagues who have contributed to this book with their papers, comments and editorial suggestions.

We want to acknowledge the financial support from *Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia*, of the Portuguese Ministry for Science, Technology and Higher Education, making the organisation of this Douro seminar possible. And last, but not least, we register once more the superb environment provided by the management of the Vintage House Hotel on the banks of the Douro River.

Matosinhos — Alberto Amaral
Oslo — Peter Maassen
May 2010

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Introduction

V. Lynn Meek, Leo Goedegebuure, Rui Santiago, and Teresa Carvalho

Whether we call it 'managerialism' (soft or hard), 'new managerialism' or 'New Public Management' (NPM), the management narrative in both rhetoric and practice has penetrated higher education systems and institutions nearly everywhere. With its roots in a neo-liberal ideology, higher education management reform is part of a global trend where market ideology and market or quasi-market modes of regulation are fused with a set of management practices drawn from the corporate sector: privatisation, downsizing and outsourcing, budget diversification, benchmarking, performance appraisal, quality assurance and so on. Through such means as mission articulation, strategic planning, evaluation and commercial marketing, higher education managers are to ensure that their institutions become more entrepreneurial, adaptive and commercially responsive.

One of the most important groups of academic managers impacted by the managerialist push is the one charged with the stewardship of the basic academic units: departments/schools, faculties and, in some cases, research centres/institutes. These organisational entities are at the operational base of higher education institutions, closest to the action with respect to teaching and research, and best placed for implementing institutional policies and strategies. The roles of middle-level academic managers in charge of these units are changing in response to political and institutional pressures to adopt more 'professional' management approaches and attitudes: being able to define missions, objectives and strategies; having the capacity to manage financial and human resources; and to assume strong leadership – in contrast to traditional academic styles of negotiation and consensus building. In short, under the new 'managerialist' pressure, performance in academic leadership roles based upon research reputation and to a lesser extent on teaching and scholarship appears to give way to performance based upon management capabilities.

In recent years, there has been considerable expansion of the management responsibilities of deans of faculty, heads of departments/schools and other equivalent middle-level academic management positions. As part of the so-called process

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of ‘centralised devolution’, universities have devolved many academic and financial responsibilities to faculties and departments/schools, treating them as separate cost centres. This has placed middle-level academic managers in a pivotal role between central management predilections and academic values and control. In many institutions, the deanship and headship have changed from short-term elected positions to appointed positions with clear job specifications to provide strong academic and administrative leadership. Enhanced expectations and greater role definition of the middle-level academic manager are in clear contrast to earlier times when the position was perhaps considered a ‘good citizen’ chore. This book examines from an international comparative perspective the dynamics of the part played by middle-level academic managers in the transformation (or otherwise) of university governance and management. Some basic themes the book addresses include the following:

- To what extent internationally have middle-level academic management positions moved from elected, collegial positions to appointed executive ones?
- Are those who hold these positions academics or managers (or both)?
- Has there been a re-norming of the values and expectations of middle-level academic managers?
- How do the new expectations placed on middle-level academic managers impact on the academic profession as a whole?
- What networks, internal and external, are available to middle-level academic managers to influence the shape of their respective higher education institutions and systems?
- Are such positions as dean and head of department/school a distinct ‘class’ of academic manager or are they divided along traditional disciplinary lines? Has this changed in recent years?
- Are there similarities between higher education institutions and other professional bureaucracies, for example, research hospitals, with respect to changes in role expectations for middle-level management?
- For whom do middle-level academic managers speak?

This introductory chapter sets the scene for the more detailed examination of the role of middle-level academic managers in the higher education systems of ten countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. The book rests on the assumption that an understanding of the role of the ‘modern’ dean and head of department/school must be embedded in the dynamics of wide-scale system change. The next section of this chapter outlines some of the broad changes in higher education systems that have helped shape and reshape the role of middle-level academic managers. This section is intentionally quite general for, as many of the subsequent chapters demonstrate, authority and control within individual institutions vary substantially according to the history and context of particular countries.

This is followed by a more specific discussion of NPM which has penetrated higher education from a number of different angles. Next, a brief review is provided

of the main conceptual and empirical issues of concern to middle-level academic management that helped frame the country-specific analyses of the subsequent chapters. The final section of this introductory chapter provides an overview of the book's contents.

As much as is possible when dealing with contributions from a number of distinct cultural, political and educational systems, the book attempts to adopt a common interpretation, if not definition, of what is meant by middle-level academic management. First, the term middle-level academic manager is used to distinguish between these managers – institutional chief executive officers at the top of the organisational structure – and other types of academic managers, such as course coordinators at the bottom of the structure. Second, the term is used in a broad generic sense so as to accommodate like positions in different national contexts. Nonetheless, in most instances, it is deans of faculty, heads of departments/schools and research directors who are being referred to. Of course, it is also recognised that there may be a hierarchy amongst the middle-level academic managers themselves. Generally, for example, deans have more power and authority than heads of departments – although some of the chapters in this book suggest that the roles of heads of departments/schools and research directors are becoming more like that of the dean, to whom they traditionally have been subordinate. Finally, it is recognised that both within and across systems, there is variability in these positions, depending on institutional size and other factors. What might be labelled a head of school position in an institution with 40,000+ students, could well be comparable to a dean's position in a much smaller institution.

1 The Changing Management Context

In analysing the national contexts in which higher education reforms are occurring, most of the chapters in this book refer to two key factors which are crucial for an understanding of the way in which higher education governance and management have been framed: the re-conceptualisation and reconfiguration of the state steering of higher education systems and the introduction of private management models and approaches to higher education institutions. These two factors coincide in a change dynamic having a strong neo-liberal ideological underpinning. As Meek, Goedegebuure and De Boer point out in their contribution to this book, the roots of higher education restructuring are, to a great extent, based on a set of neo-liberal principles that aim to promote changes in the way in which public entities operate. The contributors to this book, taken as a whole, identify a number of trends influencing the management focus of most higher education institutions:

- an articulation between self-governance and market competition promoting institutional 'corporate culture' and entrepreneurship as the main drivers of efficiency;
- competition among autonomous higher education institutions, and the relationships they establish with other 'stakeholders', as crucial factors in the

diversification of financial resources and the emergence of new forms of institutional control;
- the pursuit of organisational efficiency to the detriment of traditional forms of academic decision making and professional cooperative interests; and
- the avoidance of conflict that slows decision making through the unification of internal governance and management structures and concentration of power at the top of an administrative hierarchy.

While in many jurisdictions, the state has moved away from direct control of higher education to steering from a distance, deregulation has been accompanied by the dual pressures of enhanced management performance and accountability. Governments appear distrustful that deregulation and enhanced institutional autonomy will by themselves achieve the desired efficiencies and objectives for higher education. In fact, increased institutional autonomy (as opposed to academic or scientific autonomy) has often been accompanied by the limitation of collegial forms of governance in favour of concentrating power and authority at the institutional level in central bodies and executive managers (Shattock, 2006). The tensions that these changes in internal and external forms of control over higher education bring to the fore are apparent in nearly every chapter of the book.

2 New Public Management and New Managerialism

As argued elsewhere (Meek, 2003), any specific discussion of higher education management must be set within the broader context of NPM. NPM and related managerialist concepts have dominated public sector reform over the last two decades as OECD governments respond to declining economic performance, fiscal deficits, changes in the patterns of demand for government services, greater consumer expectations about quality of service and reduced community confidence in the ability of government to deliver services.

One of the main principles behind NPM is that while public actors such as government should maintain core public service values, they should place greater emphasis on achieving the desired results or outcomes of services rather than on the processes and rules of service delivery. It is assumed that efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery will be achieved through the use of private sector management techniques, such as specifying service objectives and competition for customers, performance measurement, decentralisation of decision making and the use of markets to deliver services. Based on public choice theory with its central tenet that all human behaviour is motivated by self-interest (Kamensky, 1996), NPM assumes that market competition rather than centralised bureaucratic regulation will deliver to the public ‘value for money’ from public expenditures.

While NPM has been characterised in a number of ways, Keating and Shand (1998, p. 13) succinctly summarise many of its purported key features:

- a focus on results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, quality of service and whether the intended beneficiaries actually gain;

- a decentralised management environment which better matches authority and responsibility so that decisions on resource allocation and service delivery are made closer to the point of delivery, and provides scope for feedback from clients or other interested groups;
- a greater focus and provision for client choice through the creation of competitive environments within the public sector organisations and non-government competitors;
- the flexibility to explore more cost-effective alternatives to direct public provision or regulation, including the use of market instruments, such as user charging, vouchers and sale of property rights; and
- accountability for results and for establishing due process rather than compliance with a particular set of rules, and a related change from risk avoidance to risk management.

Under NPM the public are clients of government, and administrators should seek to deliver services that satisfy clients. In higher education, too, students are referred to as customers or clients, and in most systems a labyrinth of quality assurance and accountability measures has been put in place to ensure that academic provision meets client needs and expectations. According to Considine (2001, p. 145), higher education institutions are 'being "enterprised" by a powerful logic of managed performance, executive centralisation and a new code of corporate governance'.

Although there is a definite blurring around the edges, it is nonetheless worthwhile to distinguish between the two concepts of 'NPM' and 'new managerialism'. Deem and Brehony (2005) emphasise the ideological differences of the two concepts. Those who believe that public sector reforms are merely technical devices to achieve greater efficiency usually use the term NPM (e.g. Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 1993, 2003). In contrast, those using the term 'new managerialism' stress the ideological component of the phenomenon. For authors such as Clarke and Newman (1997), Deem and Brehony (2005) and Reed (2002), managerialism is far more than a technical activity, but one charged with political and ideological significance. Managerial reforms are ideological in the sense that they are used to serve or 'promote interest and maintain relations of power and domination' (Deem & Brehony, 2005, p. 218). However, new managerialism should not be regarded as a monolithic ideology. It is, in part, based on pragmatism, rather than a humanist ideology of management, where one has to do whatever has to be done in a way that gives the best results with the least resources – the key words are efficiency, diligence, rationality, consistency and justifiability (Gustafsson, 1983). Following Trow's (1994) lead, it is also useful to distinguish between 'soft' and 'hard' managerialism.

Taken as a whole, the chapters in this book demonstrate a diversity in the way in which managerialist trends manifest themselves in different countries. In some countries, such as Australia, the hard version of managerialism seems to prevail amongst many of the middle-level academic managers studied in that country. In comparison, in the Netherlands, a softer approach appears to be the norm. In France and Canada, deans and heads of departments seem more protected against managerial intrusion. Canada is one of the countries where the higher education system

has been more resistant to NPM dictates, maintaining many of the more traditional approaches to academic management. In France, Italy and Norway, the traditional bureaucratic power of the state over higher education institutions has been transferred, in some respects, to institutional-based governing bodies and executives. In the United States, market-based steering of higher education appears to continue. But, nearly everywhere, there seems to be a considerable expansion of the management responsibilities of middle-level academic managers. The form this takes and its consequences, as this book demonstrates, is what is important – the devil indeed is in the detail!

3 Higher Education Reforms and Middle-Level Academic Management

This book is one of the few in the field that examines from an international comparative perspective the dynamics of the part played by middle-level academic managers in the transformation (or otherwise) of university governance and management. While at the systems level much has been written about the new approach to managing higher education institutions, important questions remain. In fact, as research has increased on the topic, so has the realisation that the way in which the academic profession is responding to new managerialist realities is more complex, conflicted and contextualised than initially assumed. Teichler (2003, p. 179), for example, argues that, so far, much of the analysis of the impact of new managerialism has come from those who hold 'high expectations' for its benefits. As a result, he maintains that a number of fundamental research questions are yet to be adequately addressed:

- Is the increase of costs (both human and monetary) incurred by the 'managerial university' a worthwhile investment?
- To what extent do we observe growing resistance, circumvention and deviancy on the part of the academic profession?
- What kind of power structure is likely to emerge in the 'post-managerial' or 'post-entrepreneurial' higher education system?
- What kinds of realignments of the evaluation systems take place?
- Is there a loss of creativity of academics?
- Do we observe a growing interest in deliberate disinformation on the part of all administrative actors in order to raise the institutional position in a competitive environment?

Also, much of the research and analysis of change in management control and characteristics has been carried out at the sector level, the broad institutional level and/or has been concentrated on central leadership positions, such as vice-chancellors, rectors and governing councils. Outside of the United States, remarkably little is known about middle-level academic management in higher education. There is a growing body of literature on the changing nature of the academic

profession (e.g. Altbach, 1996; Coates, Goedegebuure, van der Lee, & Meek, 2008; Enders, 2001; Enders & Teichler, 1997; Goedegebuure, Coates, van der Lee, & Meek, 2009; RIHE, 2008; Trowler, 1998). And there is also a growing body of literature analysing the perceived nature of change in higher education and relating this in general to issues of governance and management (e.g. Amaral, Jones, & Karseth, 2002; Amaral, Meek, & Larsen, 2003; File & Goedegebuure, 2003; Paradeise, Reale, Bleiklie, & Ferlie, 2009). But in-depth empirical studies on the effects of external change on internal institutional management are few and far between. This book adds significantly to the relevant literature through its focus on the attitudes and behaviour of academics occupying key positions of power and authority in basic academic units in a variety of different political and cultural settings.

Much of the recent policy literature has tended to assume that the new management push in higher education is universal, irreversible and irresistible. However, empirical research is emerging that questions the degree to which managerialism has changed all higher education institutions and transformed the roles of academic managers at all organisational levels (Amaral et al., 2002; Currie, Deangelis, De Boer, Huisman, & Lacotte, 2003; Trowler, 1998). At least at the level of the basic academic units, three responses are possible:

1. the managerialist narrative, both in rhetoric and practice, subsumes previous academic norms, values and routines with respect to academic self-governance;
2. the academic profession accommodates the new managerial rhetoric with little or no fundamental change in underlying values and practices; or
3. a hybrid management model emerges that incorporates both new managerial principles and traditional academic governance norms and values.

The chapters presented in this book address these questions from a number of different perspectives, clearly demonstrating that context and history remain powerful determinants of the way in which power is exercised within higher education institutions. But, at the same time, there are many similarities amongst the different countries' institutional models of governance and management. A degree of loss of power by collegial bodies, the emergence of new managerial hierarchies, decentralisation and devolved accountability (performance appraisal, quality assurance, etc.) are common themes in the higher education reforms of the various countries studied in this book.

Yet, we need to be careful how we go about both assessing and interpreting the changes that have been occurring in many higher education systems for quite some time and the effects they are having on what might be called the 'institutional fabric' – the way in which our higher education institutions are held together internally; the way in which the different groups of internal constituents such as executives, academics, administrators and students interact with each other; and the way in which formal and informal authority and decision-making structures play out. As, for example, the recent Eurydice (2008) study shows, in many countries the formal powers of university leaders and managers have increased at the expense of more collegial or participative modes of governance. But such a broad

generalisation fails to capture the nuances embedded in the different European higher education systems, making a Norwegian dean quite different compared to a British dean. Our country analyses to some extent bring these nuances to the fore but, because they approach the questions posed above from different angles and perspectives, the findings and conclusions are not always comparable on a one-to-one basis.

This highlights the need for more rigorous comparative research on higher education middle management and the final chapter in this book argues this in more detail. Middle-management positions in higher education require multiple competencies and skill sets. In this respect, they are no different from middle management in other sectors of industry or service providers. However, they do face some unique challenges that relate to the specific nature of tertiary education organisations, such as multiple missions, unclear technology and a highly specialised and at times fragmented organisation (Birnbaum, 1989; Clark, 1983; Parsons, 1971). But, at the same time, as elsewhere, there is an increased emphasis on the importance of middle-level managers, not only as implementers of directives ‘from above’ but also as strategic actors operating in the thick of organisational life (see e.g. Balogun, 2003; Balogun & Gerry, 2004). The complex set of skills and competencies required of these positions are well documented by Bryman (2007). On the basis of an extensive literature review on leadership effectiveness in Australian, British and US higher education systems, he identifies the behavioural characteristics listed in Table 1.

The characteristics in Table 1 clearly indicate that effective management and leadership at the middle level entail much more than the parodies of managerialism that are often found in the more popular discourses on higher education management. This theme will be returned to in the final chapter of the volume. The concept of multiple roles and skill sets required of middle-level academic managers adds an additional perspective to the analysis of the various country studies.

Table 1 Leadership behaviour associated with leadership effectiveness at the departmental level

Clear sense of direction/strategic vision
Preparing department arrangements to facilitate the direction set
Being considerate
Treating academic staff fairly and with integrity
Being trustworthy and having personal integrity
Allowing the opportunity to participate in key decisions/encouraging open communication
Communicating well about the direction the department is going
Acting as a role model/having credibility
Creating a positive/collegial work atmosphere in the department
Advancing the department’s cause with respect to constituencies internal and external to the university and being proactive in doing so
Providing feedback on performance
Providing resources for and adjusting workloads to stimulate scholarship and research
Making academic appointments that enhance the department’s reputation

Source: Bryman (2007, p. 697).

4 Outline of the Volume

As stated above, the book demonstrates the variety of ways in which different nations have approached higher education reform. And there are similar and divergent threads to the analysis of these reforms – a result of both differences in context and theoretical approach. But what each of the book's chapters has in common is the object of study – the middle-level academic managers who find themselves at the intersection between the traditional academic profession (the academic disciplines and all the baggage that comes with them) and managerial hierarchies and expectations.

The analysis begins with Hans Pechar in the chapter 'Academic Middle Managers Under the New Governance Regime at Austrian Universities' who explores the deregulation of university organisational structures in Austria and discusses the emergent role of the academic middle manager. The discussion is set within the context of the organisational reforms that have occurred since the first seminal reform in the mid-1970s. Resulting issues such as bureaucratic burden, inconsistencies in the governance pattern and incentives for career advancement to middle management are discussed. Past dissatisfaction with the way in which universities were run in Austria led to several waves of organisational reforms that eventually resulted in a pattern of governance which is shaped by the NPM model.

Pechar reflects upon the differentiated impact of the transformative Austrian higher education reforms on the power of rectors and deans, the latter being the least affected. The chapter highlights an issue that is frequently ignored in this research field, that is, the transference to internal institutional relationships of external conflicts that traditionally emerged between the state and higher education institutions.

In the chapter 'The Changing Role of Academic Leadership in Australia and the Netherlands: Who Is the Modern Dean?', Meek, Goedegebuure and De Boer present a comparative study of the deanship in two countries – Australia and the Netherlands. The NPM movement promoting private sector management practices in public sector bureaucracies has impacted higher education institutions in both countries. In Australia and the Netherlands, as elsewhere, universities are being asked to be more entrepreneurial, financially self-sufficient and innovative, while at the same time having their performance assessed and held accountable with respect to a variety of external compliance structures and policies. The focus of this chapter is on the changing role of the academic deanship; it is based on empirical research and attempts to assess to what extent the deanship currently reflects the importation of the rhetoric and management practices of the private sector into higher education. Are today's deans the stereotyped managers that many of our colleagues over coffee and drinks make them out to be? Has managerialism become part and parcel of everyday academic life? Or is the situation far more complex as suggested by the outcomes of some similar studies into this phenomenon? In attempting to answer these questions, the authors examine how far managerial power has the capacity to completely subsume collegial forms of self-governance and traditional academic autonomy.

The chapter by Jef Verhoeven explores facets of managerialism in Flemish policy and institutions of higher education through addressing four questions: (i) What is managerialism and what are its characteristics? (ii) How did the national policy makers make way for managerialism in institutions of higher education? (iii) Are there indicators of managerialism in higher education research of the 1990s? (iv) Do deans, heads of departments and heads of research units perceive the current management of institutions of higher education as having characteristics of managerialism? The empirical research reported in this chapter demonstrates that managerialism is not present in Belgium universities in its extreme forms. A relatively large group of middle managers still prefer a collegial attitude, and they criticise some of the less pleasant consequences of managerialism. Based on a review of the relevant literature and a survey of deans and heads of departments of Belgium higher education institutions, Verhoeven discusses the extent to which deans and heads are open-minded in adopting managerialist principles and if there are identifiable differences between universities and university colleges.

The chapter 'The Roles and Responsibilities of Middle Management (Chairs and Deans) in Canadian Universities' examines the roles and responsibilities of department chairs and faculty deans in Canadian universities to determine whether these academic middle-management positions are changing in terms of mandate, orientation and scope. Lydia Boyko and Glen Jones question if the positions and roles of Canadian deans and heads of departments have changed in response to the influence of NPM. Their chapter is the result of a content analysis of institutional documents and collective bargaining agreements related to appointment processes.

Boyko and Jones' review of institutional policy documents and faculty association collective agreements at 30 public universities across Canada reveals no significant formal shifts in middle-management functions in recent years. The incumbents of both department chair and faculty dean positions are predominantly academics, *primus inter pares*, who are largely concerned with internal management of financial and human resources. The chair's job does not appear to be professionalising. It involves a highly internal recruitment process for a short term of office with modest remuneration. The dean's situation is somewhat less clear; decanal salaries are growing substantively higher than comparable compensation for their senior academic peers. A major factor inhibiting dramatic change in these roles may be faculty unionisation. Collective agreements prescribe selection requirements, specific duties and reporting relationships. An increase in newly created functions at the executive level, with a focus on 'advancement' and 'external relations', including fundraising, may also be a reason for the steady nature of the expectations of the chair and dean. Lack of change appears to be related to the historical maintenance of the traditional power structures in which deans and heads of departments operate within Canadian higher education institutions.

The chapter by Stefano Boffo investigates the changes in the role of Italian middle-level university management in the light of the new managerialist orientations prevailing in most Western countries. Using sociological concepts as his main theoretical tool, Boffo begins his chapter by analysing the recent changes in the Italian higher education system and their impact on middle-level academic

management within institutions. The present role and perspectives of middle-level managers in Italy, and in particular deans, are explored through the lenses of the disciplines, the specialisation of the university and the public or private status of the institution. A brief comparison with France highlights the presence of a growing managerial component in the dean's role in the Italian case in response to reform; and while the deans still have a major reference to academic values and practices, they are pushed to acquire and exert some management capabilities. It seems quite improbable that in the Italian context the weight of academic values, norms and routines will be substantially taken over by new managerial values and practices – rather, a hybrid model is quite likely to emerge.

Stéphanie Mignot-Gérard's contribution is an analysis of the leadership styles of the presidents and deans in French universities. The results she presents in the chapter 'Presidents and Deans in French Universities: A Collective Approach to Academic Leadership' are drawn from a qualitative study in four institutions where 250 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The relations among these academic leaders as well as the respective conceptualisations of their roles are under scrutiny. The study of the discourses and behaviour of the institutional and intermediate academic leaders indicates that academic leadership styles vary intuitively across institutions. The analysis of the data suggests that each style is consistent with the position of power held by the leader in the internal system of relations among the three lines of authority (academic, administrative and deliberative) that form the university governance structure.

Ingvild Larsen in the chapter 'From Democracy to Management-Oriented Leadership? The Manager-Academic in Norwegian Higher Education' develops an in-depth analysis of the role of NPM in Norwegian higher education institutions based on a theoretical framework drawn from political science and incorporating the concepts of representative and participative democracy. The chapter describes recent changes and reforms in the governance and leadership structure in Norwegian higher education. The main questions in the analysis are the following: In what direction has the leadership structure in Norwegian higher education moved? Are we witnessing a development towards a less democratic structure with a subsequent change towards a more management-oriented structure, or is another picture emerging? There are still democratic elements in the middle-management structure in Norwegian higher education, both in formal arrangements and in how the system is carried out in practice. And, even though many democratic elements are no longer mandatory, it is still possible for the institutions to pursue a democratic structure, but not one that is prescribed and predefined by the state authorities. The structure still has some democratic features, even though changes make it difficult to use the label democracy. While it could be argued that representative democracy is under pressure, deliberative democracy seems to have established roots in the leadership style in Norwegian higher education.

The influence of NPM on changes in governmental policies designed to restructure the Portuguese higher education system and its institutions is the subject of the chapter 'New Public Management and "Middle Management": How Do Deans Influence Institutional Policies?' by Teresa Carvalho and Rui Santiago. Based

on a qualitative empirical study and using new institutionalism and institutional archetype theoretical concepts, the authors confront the collegial model of management with NPM in their analysis of decision-making processes. In the Portuguese context, external pressures unduly influence attempts to create a new institutional environment. But the ways in which higher education institutions respond to external pressures are also dependent on internal processes and on actors' actions. Thus, it is important to identify the main characteristics of the actors' institutional power, as well as their capacity to participate in and influence institutional strategies. Among these actors, deans hold a key position. The chapter analyses the position, power and sphere of action of the Portuguese deans in relation to the strategies they develop to cope with increasing state-sponsored managerial pressures. Carvalho and Santiago's qualitative study involved 26 interviews of deans and heads of departments from four Portuguese public higher education institutions.

Paul Trowler in the chapter 'UK Higher Education: Captured by New Managerialist Ideology?' turns our attention to changes in middle-level academic management in the United Kingdom. Drawing on the relevant literature and primary data from two large mixed-method research and evaluation projects based at Lancaster University, as well as the author's other research work (with smaller samples and more qualitative in nature), this chapter (i) identifies new managerialism as fundamentally *ideological* in nature; (ii) positions the very significant role of discourse in articulating and sustaining ideologies; (iii) asks whether new managerialist ideology and discourse have become hegemonic in UK higher education, exploring the reasons for any dominance they have achieved; and (iv) concludes with the observation that UK higher education has not been 'captured' by this ideology despite its apparent prevalence.

The purpose of Jack Schuster's chapter, which is the last of the country-specific empirical studies, is to describe the ongoing transformation of the university and the emergence of perhaps a new – or at least newish – university model or paradigm rather than to attempt to depict the traits of middle managers and what exactly may be different about their tasks in this more aggressively management-oriented climate. To portray this context entails some observations about the transformation of the university itself, as well as a description of the profound changes in the composition, work and careers of the faculty. According to Schuster, understanding this context better should facilitate some insights into the implications for the complex role of academe's middle managers.

The concluding chapter returns to the broad heuristic questions concerning the changing role of middle management in higher education raised in this introduction. Based on the rich data from the variety of national contexts presented by the country paper authors, a few tentative conclusions are stated. First, nearly everywhere, the management of higher education institutions is becoming more professional. The part-time, amateur academic manager is largely a creature of the past. Second, while the manager-academic is becoming more professional, NPM is not sweeping all in its path. Aspects of NPM are readily apparent in all of the countries examined in this volume; but simultaneously core academic values relating to autonomy and scientific freedom prevail. Academe seems more resilient to corporate-style hard

management than is often presumed. Finally, the chapter concludes that this volume raises more questions than it answers about the changing role of middle management in higher education. But, in doing so, a specific agenda for future research emerges and is articulated at the end of the chapter. Central to this agenda is the notion that, similar to many other organisations, middle-management positions require a complex set of competencies and capabilities.

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Academic Middle Managers Under the New Governance Regime at Austrian Universities

Hans Pechar

1 From the Chair System to New Public Management

Over recent decades, major changes in the governance of universities have occurred.[1] The goal of a first seminal reform, the University Organisation Act 1975 (UOG 1975), in the mid-1970s was to give junior faculty and students decision-making power in collegial bodies. Collegial authority in the old-fashioned chair system (*Ordinarienuniversität*) was restricted to the group of full professors. The UOG 1975 established 'shared governance', yet did not crucially undermine the power of full professors. 'Democratisation' of collegial decisions did not mean 'one man/woman (one academic), one vote'; rather, it meant 'differentiated voting power, graded by "ranks", by academic "estate"' (*Kurien*). This resulted in a complex and cumbersome organisational structure[2] that was labelled the 'group university'. Dissatisfaction with this pattern led to a new wave of organisational reforms that eventually led to a pattern of governance which is shaped by the New Public Management (NPM) model.

A first attempt to strengthen the managerial elements at the top university level was made in 1993. The government tried to replace the rector who represented the tradition of 'first among equals' with a president who would not be dependent on collegial bodies and to establish governing bodies which would represent external stakeholders. Due to strong resistance by most academics, the government softened its initial approach. The University Organisation Act of 1993 (UOG 1993) was a compromise between the proponents and the opponents of the reform and only a cautious step towards more institutional autonomy (Pechar & Pellert, 1998).

An important consequence of the new law was that new types of actors emerged in higher education policy networks: the new rectors who – when compared to the former type of rector – had significantly increased power and the deans who became much more powerful than in the past. The emergence of this new group of

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academics, which was small but quite influential, significantly changed the power relations in higher education policy networks. In many respects this group represented horizontal interests and positions in contrast to the usual vertical relationships between government and universities. It was important that the new senior academics became more sensitive to external needs and pressures; they could no longer be regarded as a group representing the internal interests of academe, but increasingly they were viewed as a mediating power block between internal and external pressures.

It was mainly this group that complained that the UOG 1993 was only a first step to efficient management structures. The new rectors wanted full legal entity status for universities and a lump sum budget which would relieve universities accounting to the state (*Kameralistik*). Some members of this group were actively involved in drafting the reform law (Titscher et al., 2000).

In 2002, the new University Act (UG 2002) was passed by parliament (see Sebök, 2002). Universities ceased to be state agencies and were granted full legal entity status. The frequent interpretation by some critics that the new governance model would privatise universities is not correct. Austrian universities remain 'legal persons under public law' (*Körperschaften öffentlichen Rechts*). The federal government retains responsibility for basic funding; however, universities are exempt from the fiscal regulations of the federal budget and instead receive lump sum budgets at their own discretion. The lion's share of the resources is allocated on the basis of a performance agreement (*Leistungsvereinbarung*) between the ministry and university management. Twenty percent of the budget allocation is based on indicators. The internal organisation of universities – previously prescribed by law – is now determined by statutes (*Satzung*), decided by the academic senate. See Table 1 for changes in between 1970 and 2002.

Each university has a governing board (*Universitätsrat*) of between five and nine members, half of them elected by the academic senate and the other half appointed by the minister. The most powerful function of the board is to elect the rector following a proposal made by the academic senate. Moreover, the board must approve all strategic actions by the rector, such as developmental plans, by-laws, the performance contract with the government and the annual financial report. The board is obliged to notify the ministry in the case of a breach of the rules or in the case of financial irregularities.

Table 1 Change in governance patterns, 1970–2002

	Election of rector	Authority of rector	Public funding	Private funding
Before 1975	Academic senate	Figure head	Line budget	Tuition fees (until 1971)
UOG 1975	Academic senate	Figure head	Line budget	No fees
UOG 1993	Ministry	Executive (restricted)	Line budget (modified)	No fees
UG 2002	External board	Executive	Lump sum budget	Tuition fees (since 2001)

The position of the rector is strengthened against power struggles within the university. The rectorship is the most independent of all the collegial academic bodies, but is more dependent on the boards. The rector has exhaustive managerial power except in cases that are specified by law. Most notably, the rector is responsible for:

- preparing drafts for developmental plans, by-laws, the performance contract with the government (to be approved by the board);
- appointing heads for all organisational units of the university;
- concluding target agreements with the heads of all organisational units;
- allocating the budget to all organisational units; and
- preparing an annual efficiency report, a statement of account and an intellectual capital statement.

The importance and power of collegial bodies are significantly lower than was previously the case. For the most part, they are no longer governing bodies but rather are restricted to an advisory function. The new universities are the employers of all academic and non-academic staff. Academics are no longer civil servants, but are employed by private contract. It is fair to say that the pattern of governance is now quite similar to that of North American public universities.

The new governance regime in Austria has attracted a lot of international attention, in particular from Germany. A recent international comparison on governance patterns attests to a 'rapid breakthrough' in the Austrian reform (Lanzendorf, 2006). However, the study concludes that the severe change in the legal structure has not yet strengthened the competitive pressure on Austrian universities.[3] This is remarkable, because increased competition – as a means to increase performance – is the ultimate rationale of the NPM model.

In the later sections of this chapter, I will try to explain this ambiguity of the Austrian version of NPM. At this stage, it is sufficient to point to the inherent problems of any rapid change: it is almost inevitable that such a process goes through a period of transition in which parts of the old regime are still in place while the new regime is yet to be fully implemented. Whether this results in serious obstacles to the reform process depends on the extent to which the change is radical. The Austrian change in the governance of university definitely is a very radical step that was – and still is – extremely controversial. Furthermore, it severely affects the higher education system as a whole. Hence, we can expect that in its initial stage the new governance regime faces many contradictions and inconsistencies.

2 New Public Management and Academic Middle Managers

2.1 Academic Management – A New Concept

The UG 2002 is probably the most far-reaching reform since 1849, when Austria embraced the Humboldtian model. Austrian universities have ceased to be state agencies and have acquired a kind of corporate autonomy unparalleled in the last

400 years. This dramatic change has made a deep impact on the academic culture of Austrian universities. The idea and practices of academic collegiality are challenged by new developments, mainly by the emergence of a new group of academic 'superiors'.

While the university was a state agency, the government was the employer of academic and non-academic staff. The status of civil service not only guaranteed lifelong job security for academics but also provided the framework for academic self-governance and gave collegial bodies a huge amount of discretion. Only formal aspects of personnel management which could be executed by bureaucratic procedures were handled by the ministry, which was the 'principal' in the legal sense. All aspects of personnel management related to academic work were delegated to collegial decision making in self-governing bodies of the university.

Collegial bodies are based on the assumption of equality of its members (of each status group). As a consequence, they emphasise equal treatment of all staff and equal distribution of resources. In other words, the equal treatment of academics by the ministry which was inherent in their status as civil servants (no merit pay, advancement based on seniority) was paralleled by collegial bodies which in many respects acted like faculty unions.

The new university with full legal status is the employer of all academic and non-academic staff. Now, the university is an autonomous, self-governed organisation which is responsible for the guidance and monitoring of academic work. Even in large and complex universities, institutional management is much closer to the basic academic units and their work than the bureaucracy of the government, closer in terms of space, professional competence and shared academic values. This means that the 'principal' comes closer to the 'agent', possibly close enough to effectively influence the work of academics.

Not surprisingly, there is a lot of suspicion among academics of the organisational change and the corresponding decision-making structures. Rectors were regarded as *primus inter pares*, now they are 'bosses', 'superiors'; this is at odds with the traditional concept of academic autonomy which means no subordination, no formal responsibilities, in particular for the members of the guild, the chairholders. Many academics think that the new legislation has imposed the decision-making structures of the corporate world onto universities. They fear and expect a steep hierarchy which could be at odds with academic freedom, an authoritarian mode of leadership which will not allow appropriate faculty influence.

These tensions are aggravated by an interesting side effect of the new relationship between the government and higher education institutions. Formerly, the ministry served as an external adversary that absorbed many of the frustrations of academics. Now, many conflicts which formerly were fought between the university and the ministry are internalised. The loosely united community of scholars has lost, at least partly, a powerful external enemy. Some issues which were treated previously as conflict between the government and academia now re-emerge as conflict between the rector (management) and the academic staff. Such a 're-labelling' most frequently occurs (on the occasion of internal distribution) with budgetary issues. In general, competition among academics and among different academic units has

increased. Some academics fear that this could adversely affect the cohesion and productivity of the organisation.

Only since this new governance regime has been established does it make sense to apply the term 'management' to universities. The notion of 'academic management' was completely alien to the previous culture of academic self-governance in Austria (and in large parts of Europe);[4] leading academics would have been opposed to being called managers.

2.2 *Who Are the Academic Middle Managers at Austrian Universities?*

The concept of academic management is still very controversial. However, there is a growing awareness that the complexity of a mass higher education system requires a layer of decision-making power which transcends the authority structure of collegial bodies. Prior to the NPM model, this power – ultimately linked to funding decisions – was in the hands of the government. Under the new governance model, parts of this power have been handed over to leading academics who now function as managers.

The management concept is by and large confined to the top management of the institution (rector and vice-rectors).[5] Below that level, the traditional academic concepts more or less prevail. Deans or heads of institutes/departments are rarely referred to as managers. In fact, the actual work of middle managers is much less affected by the new governance model; the formal status at the middle level has changed less than that of the top management.[6] And yet, middle managers are part of the new governance structure. They are no longer elected by the respective collegial bodies but appointed by the rector (UG 2002, §20). One can observe practices which aim to involve middle management in the overall objectives of the institution. Notably, all heads of organisational units sign an 'agreement on objectives' (*Zielvereinbarung*) with upper-level management. This is a requirement of the UG 2002 (§22.6) and is supposed to ensure that the agreement on performance between the university and the ministry can be put into practice. In order to support this process, academic managers at all levels must regularly conduct appraisal interviews with those employees for whom they are responsible.

There is no clear-cut definition of academic middle managers at Austrian universities. This ambiguity is partly a result of the organisational reform. Previous to that reform, the basic functions and organisational structure of public universities were defined by federal law and thus were homogeneous throughout Austrian higher education. The UG 2002 has deregulated the organisational structure. Each university has the autonomy to define its own statute (*Satzung*) which, among other things, defines the organisational structure. This has resulted in a high degree of organisational variety. Some universities have abolished faculties altogether and instead have established very large departments. Others adhere to the traditional faculty structure and have pooled some of their units and created an organisation which approximates

the American departmental structure. Still others perpetuate the tradition of very small organisational units.

This diversity makes it difficult to define who exactly belongs to the group of academic middle managers. It is hardly possible to give a general description of the role of the dean in the new governance regime. At universities that have abolished the faculty structure, the function of the dean does not exist. At some universities, the main responsibility of deans is the provision and evaluation of teaching; at others, they have no particular responsibility for teaching. In some cases, deans are regarded as part of the top management and have regular joint sessions with the rector and vice-rectors.

2.3 Is There a Decrease or Increase of Bureaucratic Overload?

The one goal of the reform upon which policy makers and academics could easily agree is the reduction of bureaucratic overload. Even those who supported the 'group university' had to admit that the heavy state regulation of this governance pattern had turned the university into an extremely cumbersome organisation. The promise of a 'lean' decision-making structure was one of the most attractive features of the governmental reform proposal. Did the new governance mode deliver this promise? More precisely, and from the perspective of the academic middle manager, is the leadership function of heads of organisational units and deans now relieved of the 'red tape' that previously constrained their work?

Undoubtedly, there is now less interference from the ministry. Many aspects of academic life which were previously micro-managed by government bureaucrats are now autonomously handled by academic managers. As a consequence, enhanced opportunities for entrepreneurial initiatives at the institutional level can be observed.[7] Some – by far not all – of the legal restrictions which formerly narrowed the opportunity to develop creative solutions for teaching functions at the first degree level – either BA or the 'pre-Bologna' type of studies – were removed.

It is mainly the top management that benefited from the reduction of governmental interference. But since the old style micro-management of the ministry extended to middle management as well, some relief was also felt at this level. Academic middle managers, however, are meanwhile burdened by a new type of bureaucratic overload. A significant bureaucratic layer did emerge at the top management level. This was predictable and – to a certain extent – unavoidable. After all, universities are complex organisations which have to deal with up to 60,000 students and 7,000 employees (in the case of the University of Vienna).

One area of special concern is the transition from partial legal status (*Teilrechtsfähigkeit*) to full legal status. In the old regime, universities were state agencies with respect to their basic functions (teaching at the degree level and research funded by general university funds), but they had the liberty to engage in entrepreneurial activities in restricted areas (continuing education, consulting, research funded by third-party funds). This pattern allowed for a surprising variety of activities under the official umbrella of a highly regulated state agency. Some

organisational units and/or individuals took advantage of partial legal status and developed entrepreneurial activities in their own areas of responsibility. Under the old governance regime, heads of organisational units could employ additional research or teaching personnel within the realm of this partial legal status. These staff members were in ambiguous positions as they were not employees of the university,[8] but of an organisational unit within it. This organisational unit had to bear all legal and financial obligations and responsibilities resulting from this occupational contract.

Under the new regime of full legal status, the organisational units have lost this right. Now, all their entrepreneurial activities take place under the legal umbrella of the university as a whole with the top management being responsible. Each university has responded in its own way to this change in the legal framework. As a general rule, however, the rectors have – understandably – developed internal procedures that match their increased responsibility. Before academic units can sign a contract with a sponsor of research or a client of services, they have to go through a rigorous procedure of legal checks and financial calculations prescribed by the central administration of the university. As a consequence, some of the entrepreneurial units now face more difficulties than before.

If the main goal of the reform was to enhance entrepreneurial activities at universities, it has so far (sometimes) resulted in counterproductive consequences. A cynical conclusion would be that with respect to bureaucratic overload the reform was a zero sum game: the relief of pressure from the ministry was compensated for by a new type of bureaucrat located inside the institution. Pessimists even would claim that the new bureaucrats are worse than the old ones. Such cynicism – widespread as it is among academics – is an overstatement. This is a period of transition with an unknown outcome – but from an optimistic point of view these problems can be considered ‘growing pains’.

3 Inconsistencies in the New Governance Pattern

So far, I have considered many improvements introduced by the new governance regime – accompanied by some instances of overload and pressure. However, universities also face fundamental problems which are caused by inconsistencies in the present regime and which require a major revision of the legal foundations of Austrian higher education.

One problem is the contradiction between some continuing legal regulations that restrict the ability of universities to act and a rising culture of performance measurement. Increasingly, universities are held accountable for outcomes over which they have little influence. The most striking example is the open access policy which is imposed on universities by federal law. This policy restricts the capacity of universities to provide beneficial study conditions. They are exposed to growing student demand without being able to match demand and supply of study places. And yet parts of their budgets rely on indicators that measure drop-out and completion rates. In addition, universities are faced with rankings that are based on the satisfaction of

students with their study conditions. It is predominately academic middle managers who are faced with these incompatible demands.

A second fundamental problem is the adherence to an outdated hierarchy among academics that handicaps universities to tap the full potential of its human resources. The UG 2002 has modernised the governance structure, but at the same time it has adhered to a model of academic personnel that is at odds with the concept of NPM. Austrian academics are divided into separate 'academic estates'. This results in career patterns that frustrate and alienate junior academics from their institutions. Universities, however, depend on the voluntary commitment of junior staff, in particular at the level of middle academic management.

3.1 Contradictions Between Open Access and the New Focus on Output Indicators

Austria prides itself on its 'open access' policy contrary to the *numerus clausus* system which operates in most European countries or the selective admission procedures in place at Anglo-Saxon universities. All students who have completed the elite track of secondary school (i.e. who hold a *Matura* – the Austrian equivalent of the German *Abitur*) are entitled to enrol at any Austrian university.[9]

To explain the peculiarities of the open access system to an international readership requires some consideration of the interface between school and higher education. There are two aspects which deserve comment. First, how do the various national systems of higher education identify the group of students which is able to enrol at a university? In a simplified manner we can distinguish between 'entrance selection' and 'entitlement systems':

- Where *entrance selection* predominates, universities actively admit students from a pool of applicants on the basis of specified admission criteria. Universities usually have the power to define these criteria, which in most instances refer to the achievement during secondary education, sometimes combined with the results of entrance tests, interviews, etc. All Anglo-Saxon countries have entrance selection, even if there are important differences in the details of how universities admit students.
- *Entitlement systems* compel universities to passively accept students who have a legally well-founded right to enrol due to their achievement in secondary schools. This rests on the premise of a rather selective school system. Decisions whether students are able to study at a university are to a large extent already made at the secondary level. Selection takes place at an early age; in some countries (e.g. Austria, Germany) the most important bifurcation of educational careers already occurs at the end of elementary school (at age 10). The relatively small number of students who survive this highly selective school system is considered to be able to study any subject at any university in their country. Universities are obliged by national or state law to accept them. Entitlement systems are deeply rooted in the educational history of the European continent. However, in recent

years, governments in some European countries have challenged the entry entitlements of secondary graduates by granting universities increasing rights to select students.

The second aspect which deserves consideration is the way in which national systems of higher education match the demand and supply of study places. In countries with entrance selection this decision is made at the institutional level: each university – and each field of study – has a limited capacity of study places (however this capacity is defined). A university will accept as many students as it can, but no more. In entitlement systems, this problem is more complicated. After all, it is the government that grants the entitlement to secondary graduates and that limits the room for decision making at the institutional level. How does a university deal with the not unlikely situation where enrolment in a particular discipline at a particular university drastically exceeds the number of study places? Common sense requires governments in such cases to allow for an emergency break in the automatic application of the entitlement system. They usually introduce a *numerus clausus* in those fields of study where the number of applicants is permanently and significantly higher than the number of study places policy makers are willing to fund. At least in medicine, all European countries – with the exception of Austria – have introduced a *numerus clausus*, but many countries have restricted access in many more fields of study.

The Austrian open access system is unique within the OECD because it (a) uncompromisingly adheres to the entitlement system without giving universities any right to set their own admission criteria; and (b) grants students unrestricted access to any field of study without allowing any measures to curtail access when enrolments dramatically exceed the capacities of a university. Austrian authorities simply do not specify the number of study places they are ready to fund. Politicians repeatedly have declared that a precise definition of the capacity of a university – which implies the possibility that capacities are exceeded – is neither useful nor ‘practicable’ at the level of university education. This makes it easy for the government to adhere to an open access policy without feeling too much of an obligation to suffer the financial consequences.

No policy maker would deny that university budgets must somehow depend on the size of a university. But they would strongly resist committing themselves to precise numbers. It is immediately clear why policy makers cannot do that. Under open access conditions, a specific budget formula would deprive them of any discretion in shaping the system according to political priorities. It would ultimately result in an ‘open budget’ system which the treasury understandably did not even accept during the heydays of Austro-Keynesianism. It is totally at odds with an age in which European governments have to comply with Maastricht criteria. Furthermore, it would oblige ministers to allocate budgets according to enrolment patterns (student demand) without having any discretion to set priorities.

Educational expansion has undermined the stable foundations on which the entitlement system has been based, when only a small fraction of the population was

eligible for higher education. Today, about 40% of the age group complete secondary education with a *Matura*, and about 30% continue at the tertiary level. Under the conditions of open access, this has resulted in an intolerable situation in many of the 'mass disciplines'.[10] Since neither the government nor the universities have any appropriate means of control, the number of enrolled students in some fields of study does not match available resources (rooms, academic staff). As a consequence, cynicism spreads at all levels.

A further aspect is the right to unrestricted length of study. It is up to students to take an exam at the end of the course or to delay this decision to a later semester – potentially, an open-ended process. The high degree of liberty allows students to determine the pace of their studies and not all of them opt for vigorous learning. At first glance, this seems to be an incredible privilege for students. However, this liberty is a double-edged sword. Since the university does not monitor the progress of students, it is very easy for academics not to care about student needs. The laissez-faire conditions for students are matched by laissez-faire conditions for and attitudes by academics. Neither side has formal obligations vis-à-vis the other as occurs in some other higher education systems, mainly in the Anglo-Saxon world. In a sense, this is the core of the Humboldtian ideal of a university. The question of whether this remains a proper approach to mass higher education has never been addressed in Austria.

No other educational sector in Austria is subject to such strange regulations. In schools and all other sectors of the tertiary system, institutions can admit students according to available resources. It is rarely discussed why universities depart from this rule. Partly, it is the heritage of a small elite system when universities were able to manage changing student numbers with informal rules. In addition, the symbolic dimension of open access to the most prestigious level of education is probably an important aspect. While such 'trivial matters' as teacher training[11] or training at technical schools could be made conditional on available study places, the top of the educational and cultural hierarchy should be – in principle – open to everyone. Mass disciplines prove that policy makers did not succeed in matching principles with reality.

Until recently, Austrian higher education policy was dominated by an egalitarian approach. The new governance structure has changed this. Policy makers opened up the opportunity to build distinct institutional profiles. Universities not only have the opportunity, but also are increasingly faced with the expectation to develop a special profile intended to attract students. They are assessed by rankings that are to a large extent based on student judgments.[12] Students, who have been required to pay fees since 2001, increasingly act as 'customers' who demand 'value for money', even if their financial contribution (€726 per year) accounts for less than 10% of the average expenditure per student. In some cases, students have sued their institution, claiming unsatisfactory conditions. In addition, the 'formula budget', that accounts for 20% of the total public expenditure for universities, is based on some indicators that reflect conditions of study – such as drop-out and time to completion rates.

To summarise, universities are increasingly held accountable for the outcomes of teaching. Yet, due to the open access policy, they do not have sufficient control

over the input. This policy makes universities unmanageable and necessarily leads to institutional paralysis in a mass system. Is it feasible to strengthen the service and 'consumer orientation' if a university is not able to admit students on its own terms? Policy makers avoid this question. Universities increasingly request the right to admit their students.

3.2 The Awkward Situation of Junior Faculty

The new governance structure has abolished former privileges of academics – in particular, the lifetime security of civil servant status – without reinforcing the attractiveness of other aspects. An urgent problem is the dependence of young academics. Table 2 summarises the modifications in the academic workplace – including the status of junior academics – triggered by the change in governance during the last decades.

The core of the matter is the perpetuation of an outdated guild system that is at odds with mass higher education in general and with the NPM governance structure in particular. Professors belong to a fundamentally different 'estate' of academics than junior staff (*Mittelbau*). Historically, they were defined as 'chairholders', and this definition resulted in an inherent limitation of their numbers. In the course of the expansion of higher education, the notion of a 'chair' has lost its original significance (although it never vanished completely). What remains is a strict limitation of professorial posts. Hence, a regularised promotion of junior faculty to full professorship (as a result of individual academic success) is not possible. Junior faculty members – regardless of their qualifications – are stuck in the 'lower estate' until a position in the professorial estate becomes vacant. In such a system, the collective chances of young academics for promotion to full professorship depend mainly on the quantitative relationship between these two groups of academic positions.[13]

The differentiation in estates is legitimised by the logic and time needed to earn professional qualifications. Austria belongs to the group of countries that has an exceptionally long training period for academics. As a rule, requirements for gaining full professorship include not only the conclusion of a doctoral dissertation, but in addition a *Habilitation*, a kind of second thesis. A typical academic career is as follows: talented and ambitious students attract the attention of their teachers. When a position for a junior academic is available, they have a good chance to get it. In this

Table 2 Changing conditions for academics, 1970–2002

	General features	Employment contracts	Appointment of professors	Influence of junior academics
Before 1975	Chair system	Public	Minister	Small
UOG 1975	Group university	Public	Minister	Big
UOG 1993	Transition	Public	Rector	Decreasing
UG 2002	Managerial	Private	Rector	Small

position, they complete their doctoral degree, complete their basic research training and proceed with their *Habilitation*. They can be labelled 'assistant professor' – but this position has a very different meaning when compared to the US tenure track system. The very name of this position carries the implication that they should assist another person. Assistants are not used in every instance for service tasks by the professoriate, but a certain amount of support is expected. One can assume that in many cases professors have little interest in accelerating a career step which would grant much more independence to their protégés and deprive them of 'helpful hands'.

On average, junior academics finish their second thesis at the age of about 40. They then receive full teaching authorisation and thus achieve a high degree of professional autonomy, but even then they remain assistants. The next career step would be the appointment to full professor. However, the completion of the *Habilitation* by no means guarantees promotion to professorship. Usually they can only proceed if they apply for a position at another institution, because at this stage the taboo of internal appointment (*Hausberufung*) takes effect.[14]

In all academic systems, reputation, authority, privileges, etc. are distributed unevenly among different ranks. Hence, conflict between those groups is quite natural. However, it makes a big difference whether the status of academic rank is linked to governance issues. Academic self-governance in the traditional European system requires a strict limitation of persons with voting power in collegial bodies. It is unlikely that under such circumstances a common professional identity could emerge. Since they are divided by conflicting interests, academics do not develop a self-image of an 'academic profession' comprising all status groups; rather, they cultivate their identity within their own group. It is a necessary prerequisite of such a system to restrict promotion to the highest rank to a relatively small number of academics. If all academics who performed satisfactorily gained full professorial status in the course of their career, full governance power would be just a matter of seniority.[15]

The American university provides an interesting contrast to the traditional European model. Academic self-governance plays a different – and minor – role in the United States compared to that in Europe. Throughout the history of American higher education, academics never had the same power of self-governance as their European counterparts. From the very beginning, there was a distinct level of authority – presidents/principals on the one hand, governing boards on the other – which set strict limits on the capacity of academics to govern their institutions. As a consequence, the sense of a common professional identity was much stronger in the United States than in Europe.[16]

When academic rank is not connected to the authority of institutional self-governance, academic promotion plays a different role to that in the typical European model. One could say that promotion is 'relieved' from one dimension of intense power struggle. This is not to say that academic promotion is not a matter for conflict in such a system. Different academic ranks have nevertheless different reputations, authority and privileges. And yet, one important – and probably the most divisive – matter for conflict is 'externalised': most issues of institutional governance are then not conflicts among different academic standings but between

academics as a whole and the 'external' authority layer of presidents and boards. One could say that presidents and boards constitute a kind of 'external opponent' that serves to unify all academics regardless of rank and standing. Under such conditions, academics may develop a stronger sense of unity, a self-image of a comprehensive profession, not divided in different 'estates' with conflicting interests. Of course, conflict is still present, but it plays a minor role compared to that in a system where authority to govern the institution is attached to academic rank.

When the Austrian government replaced self-governance by collegial bodies with NPM, it would have been logical to abolish the division in academic estates on this occasion. Instead, the government explicitly reinforced this division. The UG 2002 (§94) differentiates between the group of full professors and residual academics. The UG 2002 (§98) specifies procedures for the appointment of full professors that excludes the establishment of a tenure track system. To summarise, the government has adopted the 'American style' of governance (strong management position, external boards, limited power of collegial bodies), but perpetuated the European guild structure. From an academic point of view, it adopted the disadvantage of the American model (restricted self-governance) without providing for its advantage (tenure track). Hence, there is an odd combination of a 'modernised' NPM governance with a medieval guild structure. Austrian universities still have different estates with the strict limitation of posts in the higher estates (full professors); for those who want to move up, it is not only (and in many cases not predominantly) a matter of professional success to be promoted, but rather a question of vacancy in the higher estate.

It is hard to understand why Austria adopted a governance structure that displays similarities to the American public universities, but did not include the tenure track. The consequences, however, are harmful. Many talented young academics leave the Austrian system because they are frustrated by the long phase of dependence and the difficulties of promotion. A crucial issue in our context is the incentives for junior academics to engage in middle management activities. In the 'group university' with its practice of shared governance, a small group of junior academics specialised in representing the 'lower estate' at collegial bodies, a function that usually included a number of middle management activities. Those people often neglected their academic careers. They had low academic esteem and in many cases acted like union representatives. The mixture of union matters with academic middle management functions was hardly beneficial. But the new pattern (NPM plus division of academic estates) provides even fewer incentives for talented junior staff interested in the advancement of their career to take over service functions. To make things worse, the UG 2002 (§20) has made it more complicated for junior academics to fill middle management positions.

Notes

1. For an overview of higher education reform in Austria, see Pechar (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2005, 2006, 2007).
2. Manfried Welan (1995, p. 115), a former rector and professor of public law, described the group university as 'Austria's most complicated organisation'.

3. The study specifies competitive pressure arising from three factors: (a) diversified funding base with reduced state funding; (b) introduction of evaluation and quality assessment; and (c) search for best talent beyond existing borders (Kehm & Lanzendorf, 2006, p. 194). Austria lags behind in all these factors.
4. In the United States, leading academics have been regarded as 'managers' since the early twentieth century. The term 'managerialism' refers in this context to the alleged or real intrusion of business practices into academic management, not – as in Europe – to the appearance of this term in the academic world. This difference in the academic culture and its self-description is paralleled by the term 'industry'. While higher education in the United States is frequently referred to as an 'academic industry', this term would be regarded as completely inappropriate in most European countries.
5. Sometimes external boards (*Universitätsrat*) would be included in the group of managers; technically this is not correct, because the external board has a supervisory, not a management, function. It indicates, however, that boards, just like the new type of rector, are alien to traditional academic values and notions.
6. Rectors get a special contract of employment and a substantially higher salary. Leading academics below this level are in some cases released from parts of their academic obligations, but their employment contract does not change.
7. These opportunities are de facto restricted to small- and medium-sized universities – the big ones are trapped in their institutional complexities.
8. The university could not employ any personnel; academic and non-academic staff of the university were employed by the federal government.
9. Due to a recent decision by the European Court, the open access system is now under strong pressure. Austria applied different rules to foreign students than to domestic citizens to determine whether foreign students had a study place in their own country. This requirement was implemented to protect Austria from students from other EU member states which did not have an open access policy resulting in secondary school leavers not being able to enrol in the study field of their first choice. In 2005, the European Court ruled that this requirement violated European law. Austria must apply the same conditions to all citizens of the European Union. As a consequence of this decision, the Austrian government has introduced a *numerus clausus* in some of the subjects where *numerus clausus* applies in Germany. This new legislation is clearly tailored to fend off the threatening onslaught of German *numerus clausus* refugees. All politicians emphasise that they still support the open access policy.
10. Ratios between academic staff and students vary dramatically – in one of the worst cases, one professor teaches 415 students. Involuntary waiting time for students due to lack of resources (e.g. queues for laboratories or supervisors) contributes substantially to the long duration of studies – on average, 7 years to the first degree – and to a drop-out rate of about 50%.
11. In Austria, teachers at compulsory schools are not trained at universities. Until recently, they were trained in 'academies' (*Pädagogische Akademien*) that were not regarded as part of higher education. Now, they are trained at special higher education institutions (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*) that still lack the status of universities. Only teachers at the secondary elite track (*Gymnasium*) receive a university education.
12. Notably, the CHE university ranking (one of the ranking initiatives of the Centre for Higher Education Development) that was recently extended to Austrian universities weighs student satisfaction highly. Nobody can be surprised that Austrian 'mass disciplines' score badly in this ranking. For example, in the 2007 edition, psychology at all Austrian universities was ranked in the bottom group.
13. If the number of junior academics increases while the number of professors remains stable, the chance of promotion decreases. In 2001, 1,672 assistants with *Habilitation* were older than 45 years. They have the formal qualifications for promotion to a professorship, but no such positions are available. This group of 'potential professors' is almost as big as the group of real professors (1850).
14. There are very good reasons to restrict internal appointment; however, at what age and to which career this taboo applies is crucial. In the United States, PhD graduates usually do

not look for jobs at their own university – at least not within the context of tenure track. They apply for such jobs at other universities, with the symbolic implication that they cut the cord from their academic mentors at a very early stage in their career. From that point, they are evaluated regularly and, if they prove to be successful, they are promoted and eventually access full professorship without being forced to apply again for a position in a different academic estate.

15. To a certain extent, this was indeed the case in small elite systems which were characterised by a low growth rate or almost stable conditions. Under such circumstances, the majority of junior faculty had reasonable prospects to be promoted to full professorial status. Hence, there was a lesser degree of conflict between the different academic ranks and a stronger sense of professional unity. Yet, in systems with a high degree of academic self-governance, it was always of highest importance to draw a clear line between the different ranks of academics.
16. Metzger (1987, p. 168) writes about the early (1915) initiatives of the 'American Association of University Professors': 'In Great Britain and Germany at the same time, the major thrust to an all-faculty organisation came not from the academic stars but from the lowly junior professors and assistants who banded together to demand a living wage and some small voice in running their universities. The fact that this initiative was assumed by the academic elite in this country [the USA] points to the special context in which the call for professional unity arose. Here professors were not members of autonomous guilds or of a high and privileged stratum of the civil service; they were employees of lay governing boards in private and public institutions'.

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The Changing Role of Academic Leadership in Australia and the Netherlands: Who Is the Modern Dean?

V. Lynn Meek, Leo Goedegebuure, and Harry De Boer

1 Introduction

To a large extent, the success of all organisations, including universities, rests on effective leadership. For a number of reasons, the significance of leadership in higher education institutions is now more clearly recognised than what it was previously. The New Public Management (NPM) movement promoting private sector management practices in public sector bureaucracies has impacted higher education institutions in many countries, including Australia and the Netherlands (Meek, 2003; Reed, 2002). In these two countries, as elsewhere, universities are being asked to be more entrepreneurial, financially self-sufficient and innovative, while at the same time having their performance assessed and being held accountable with respect to a variety of external compliance structures and policies. The external environment in which universities operate has become increasingly complex and is often perceived as hostile, while universities themselves have significantly expanded in size and complexity. All of this requires quality leadership and professional management of the nations' universities. 'The challenges facing HEIs are becoming bigger and more complex and require a continuous pipeline of leaders who can bring about the changes needed for sustained performance' (Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, 2008, p. 1). But how this is to be accomplished is a matter of considerable debate.

Over the past decade, there have been many attempts in nearly all public sectors to alter the modes of coordination, the location of governance and the styles of governance throughout the Western world (Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004). Under the flag of 'NPM' or 'managerialism', the public sector has been swamped with a new management ideology, clearly having neo-liberal roots. The reforms have tried to introduce what is seen as 'good governance' into public organisations.

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Management concepts from the private sector were brought into the public domain. Government was 'reinvented' (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992) and public organisations such as universities were supposed to become entrepreneurial, adaptive, responsive and service-oriented. Performance measurement, customer orientation, deregulation, outsourcing, benchmarking, to mention just a few, are now commonplace buzzwords in higher education institutions worldwide.

Of course, this new management ideology has attracted much criticism in general (see e.g. Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Hood, 1995), as well as with respect to specific public sectors (for higher education see e.g. Amaral, Jones, & Karseth, 2002; Amaral, Meek, & Larsen, 2003). Particularly, academics in general fear a further infringement of strong leadership on traditional academic self-governance. But, whether one opposes or advocates this new management ideology, it is obvious that shifts in governance have occurred at the supranational, national and institutional levels. Generally, however, the consequences of these shifts are largely unknown, especially at the shop-floor level. In order to add to the understanding of the changing nature of academic leadership and the role of the 'manager-academic' (Deem, 2007), we conducted a comparative study in Australia and the Netherlands to explore the consequences of recent changes in the internal governance structures of universities. These two countries were selected for it is arguable that their higher education systems have experienced more rapid and profound management and governance reorientation than most nations. And, although it is clear that the formal position of middle managers such as deans has changed over the past decade, the way in which they execute their (new) authority in a changed institutional setting remains largely unknown for the moment. More insights are wished for as it is widely believed that middle managers play a pivotal role in the success of 'modern' universities.

The focus of the study is on the role of the academic deanship in both countries. The study attempts to assess to what extent the deanship currently reflects the importation of the rhetoric and management practices of the private sector into higher education. Are today's deans the stereotyped managers that many of our colleagues over coffee and drinks make them out to be? Has managerialism become part and parcel of everyday academic life? Or is the situation far more nuanced as suggested by the outcomes of some similar studies into this phenomenon (see Deem, 2007; Fulton, 2003; Reed, 2002; Trowler, 1998)?

The chapter begins with a broad overview of the Australian and Dutch higher education systems. The purpose of these background sections is not to present a comprehensive history of the development of higher education in the two countries, but to highlight how recent reforms of the systems impact on questions of governance and management. The next section examines the impact on higher education of the introduction of corporate approaches to management and governance, NPM in particular. This is followed by a brief overview of academic leadership and the deanship and by notes from the literature on how the role of the dean has been identified. The penultimate section presents the empirical findings of the study of the role of deans in Australia and the Netherlands. The chapter concludes with a few suggestions for future research.

2 The Australian Higher Education Sector

The higher education sector in Australia consists of 37 public and two private universities and a range of small, non-university institutions providing higher education courses. These universities currently enrol around one million students, about 25% of whom are full fee-paying overseas students. Some of the universities are very large, enrolling more than 40,000 students, while the majority of institutions range between 10,000 and 20,000 students.

Since the early 1990s, the Australian higher education sector has experienced profound change, driven by, amongst other things, massification – the rapid increase in student numbers that accelerated throughout the 1980s and 1990s. One of government's key strategies to cope with the rapid expansion of higher education is to encourage institutions to diversify their funding base and to adopt market-like behaviour. Australia is possibly the quintessential example of marketisation and internationalisation of higher education – two processes which have had a profound impact on how its universities are governed and managed. Presently, the government provides only about 40% of the cost of higher education and says itself that it no longer funds but subsidises higher education. The other main sources of funding are domestic and international student fees, followed by research grants, consultancies, investments, etc.

In almost all OECD countries, while private expenditure on higher education has risen more rapidly than public expenditure, public expenditure has expanded as well. Australia appears to be the exception (OECD, 1996). Funding of Australian higher education increased during the period 1996–2005 (1996 was the year the former Liberal coalition government gained power) with respect to all sources of revenue. However, direct public funding from the Commonwealth government declined, as is illustrated in Fig. 1. The Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) – tuition fees for Australian students collected through the tax system – was introduced in 1990.

In the late 1980s, the then Labour government which initiated the reforms explicitly stated that it was not prepared to fund growth entirely from the public purse. The former Liberal coalition government had gone even further in demanding that an increasing proportion of the financing of higher education should come from sources other than the public weal. In Australia, as elsewhere, the past two decades have seen the development of a quite different approach to higher education steering from what prevailed previously, an approach characterised by:

- reductions in public expenditure;
- increased emphasis on efficiency of resource utilisation;
- increased emphasis on performance measurement, particularly in terms of outcomes;
- increased emphasis on demonstrable contribution to the economy of the nation; and
- the strengthening of institutional management and of the policy and planning role of individual institutions.

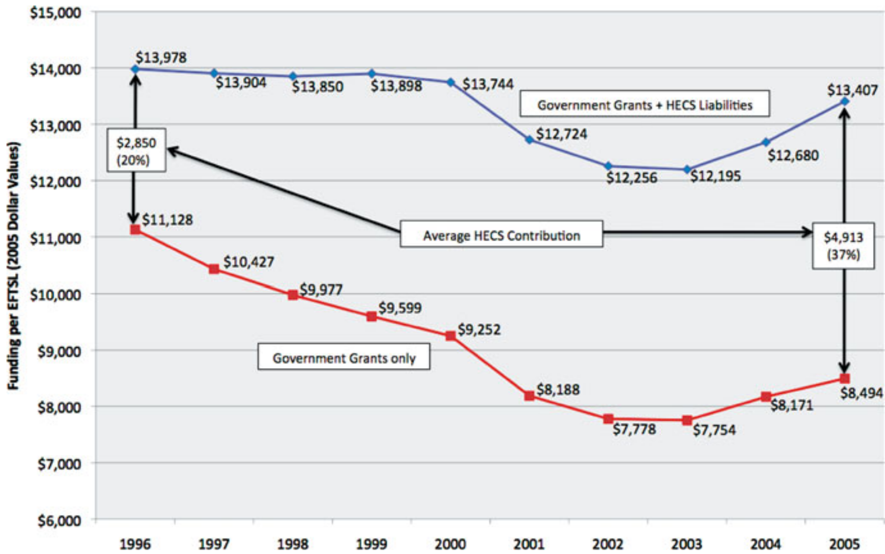

Fig. 1 Funding per government-supported university student (Source: Kniest, 2007, p. 27)

Considerable pressure has been placed on Australian academic staff to become more productive and accountable, while simultaneously being more entrepreneurial and innovative. While many, if not most, have risen to the challenge, their status in society has declined. As Melleuish (ABC Radio National, 2004) comments, 'What's happened over the last 20 years or so is that comparatively academic salaries have dropped, people no longer listen to academics or have as much respect for them perhaps as they once had in the past'. A clear indication of this decline is indicated by studies into the ranking of academic salaries relative to that of other professional groups. Horsley, Martin, and Woodburne (2005, p. 8), for example, demonstrate that:

> A professor's salary . . . was 3.17 times greater than average earnings in 1977 but in 2002, it was only 2.39 times greater. A senior lecturer's salary was 2.35 times greater than average earnings in 1977 but only 1.77 times greater in 2002. A lecturer's salary was 1.48 times greater than average earnings in 1977 but only 1.26 times greater in 2002. Finally, an associate lecturer's salary was 1.03 times greater than average earnings in 1977 but had fallen below average earnings in 2002.

Market steering of higher education supposedly requires strong corporate-style management at the institutional level. And in Australia, as elsewhere, in recent years there has been a substantial shift towards a more managerial approach to running universities, deliberately encouraged by government policy. The push to diversify the funding base has been one of the primary factors making university management so difficult and complex:

> With . . . a third of university revenue [i.e. excluding HECS] on average dependent on 'earned income' that is hard to win, that can be volatile and uncertain, that costs funds

> to earn and when earned may be available for use only in designated activities, with little discretion for the university at large, the tasks of university management become more complex and require new skills, systems and cultures. (Gallagher, 2000, p. 23)

Within the changed policy context, many responsibilities have been devolved to individual universities. But, at the same time, institutions are held more directly accountable for the effective and efficient use of the funding and other freedoms they enjoy. Moreover, institutions are now placed in a much more highly competitive environment, and considerable pressure has been placed on universities to strengthen management, to become more entrepreneurial and corporate like. The large universities with more than 40,000 students and annual budgets that run to billions of dollars, rival in size and complexity many private corporations. Institutions must respond quickly and decisively in order to take advantage of market opportunities.

There can be little doubt that the sheer size and complexity of Australian higher education demands strong and expert administration at the institutional level. But there is evidence to suggest that the emphasis on what some have termed 'hard managerialism' is creating significant tension between rank and file academic staff and the executive. A survey conducted by Meek and Wood (1997) of executive officers (vice-chancellors, deputy vice-chancellors, pro vice-chancellors), deans of faculty and heads of departments/schools in all Australian universities confirmed that in Australia as elsewhere the perception is that corporate-style management practices are replacing more traditional methods of collegial decision making. There was a clear indication that executive management priorities and practices take precedent over collegial decision making. A significant majority of respondents agreed that the trend towards central management is at the expense of collegial processes; that the values of staff and management goals are in conflict; and that executive management takes precedence over collegial decision making in their institutions. A substantial majority of heads also indicated that this should not be the case, while the majority of executive officers seemed more supportive of these shifts in management style.

Since the early 1990s, pressure has been placed on Australian universities to institute strong managerial modes of operation, with vice-chancellors being called, and assuming the role of, chief executive officers, and councils becoming boards of governors. Deans of faculties are no longer elected collegial leaders but appointed positions and part of line-management. Heads of departments have direct supervisory responsibilities for academic staff, and staff, in turn, are starting to be treated more like employees rather than autonomous professionals. Changes in the governance and management of Australian higher education directly concern the re-norming of the academic profession and possibly fundamental transformation of the idea of the university itself (Meek, 2003).

While Australian higher education has gone further down the managerial road than many countries, academic managers have yet to be entirely transformed. Harman (2002), using the data from two questionnaires submitted to directors of Australian basic academic units, on two occasions separated by 20 years (1977 and 1997), concludes that, despite their increasing management responsibilities, deans

and heads see their involvement in administration and in committees as the less rewarding component of their work (interest even declined from 1977 to 1997). At the same time, they find their work more interesting when compared with the work of traditional professors (Harman, 2002) because of their involvement in consultancy and entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, Kogan, Bauer, Bleiklie, and Henkel (2000) consider that the strong presence of the managerialist rhetoric in higher education reforms in Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom did not influence the behaviour of academics to the extent of bringing about radical changes in their social practices. How true this is of Australian and Dutch deans is explored later in the chapter.

3 The Dutch Higher Education Sector

The Dutch higher education system is organised along binary lines with 14 universities and just over 40 institutions of higher professional education (HBO institutions or *hogescholen*). The two sectors have different historical roots, which continue to be reflected today in differences between the sectors in their internal and external governance structures. Goals for the two sectors are stated in the Higher Education and Research Act of 1993. Whereas the goals for *hogescholen* relate mainly to the application and transfer of knowledge with respect to specific professions, the goals for universities include a reference to the autonomous undertaking of scientific research and to a responsibility for providing a number of services to society. In both sectors of higher education, the numbers of students have grown in the past decade: from 178,000 (1995) to 206,000 (2005) in the university sector and from 271,000 (1995) to 357,000 (2005) in the *hogeschool* sector. As the numbers show, in student volume, the HBO sector is the larger of the two.

The universities receive their income from both public and private sources. Although the public grant (known as the first money flow) has steadily grown in absolute terms, the relevance of the first flow of funds has diminished in recent years. The first flow covers around two-thirds of the university budget; universities have the autonomy to make their own budget decisions. In cost per student, public expenditure for higher education (universities and *hogescholen*) has declined by 4% in the period 2000–2005 due to growing student numbers and limited growth of the government's grant. In contrast to primary and secondary education, higher education has not been identified by the government as a high political priority (if public expenditure is taken as an indicator).

Another source of income concerns the second flow of money, mainly research council funding. This indirect government funding – distribution of research grants by the research councils on the basis of competition – represents around 5% of total university revenues (and 7–8% of the universities' total research income). Institutional management has, contrary to the first flow of funds, no distributive powers with respect to this second flow: it is earmarked. The contribution of the second flow of funds to the university budget has by and large been stable over the past

few years. There have been several initiatives to increase the ‘competition-based’ money flows, but these have failed until now.

The third funding source for universities concerns contract activities in research and teaching, carried out for government organisations (especially ministries), non-profit organisations, private companies, charities and (increasingly) the European Community. This source of university income has grown since the early 1980s. It currently represents around 25% of the universities’ income. In financial terms, the volume of contract activities has grown substantially: in 1992 it was €548 million and by 2003 it had more than doubled to €1,257 million (CBS Statline, 2005). The government’s proportion of the third flow of funds was 25% in 1999 and has declined since. Apart from the three flows, universities generate further income through tuition fees, which account for about 6% of universities’ total resources.

Dutch universities became legally independent in 1960. Prior to that time, they were effectively a branch of the national government. Even so, they enjoyed a great deal of substantive autonomy, with the professoriate (i.e. the disciplinary-based chairs) having a vast amount of freedom to decide on matters related to teaching and research.

The relationship between universities and the state began to change from 1960 onwards (De Boer, 2003a). These were years of enormous growth in student numbers, with consequential effects on government budgets. Governments progressively intensified efforts to guide universities in directions consistent with national policies and new funding circumstances, resulting in a spate of reforms.

Until the mid-1980s, there were two quite separate sources of authority at play in the management of universities. One of these was the Ministry of Education and Science, which regulated all manner of issues related to personnel, finances and infrastructure. The other was the professoriate, which determined all matters related to teaching and research. In this respect, the Dutch university sector was typical of the continental European model of higher education, as described by Clark (1983), in that state bureaucrats and disciplinary-based chairs together ran the system. Within universities, central institutional management was relatively weak. There was also relatively little competitive spirit between any of the institutions in the sector, and stratification by and large was absent.

In 1985, the ministry published a white paper entitled *Higher Education: Autonomy and Quality* (Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1985). This policy statement heralded a new governance approach, characterised as ‘steering from a distance’. Within this approach, the ministry became less directly involved in the regulation of universities’ operations and concentrated more on determining their longer-term orientation. In return for their increased autonomy, the institutions were required to demonstrate being able to handle this autonomy in a responsible manner. Professionalisation of its leadership and management was seen as a prerequisite for doing so, but this was easier said than done. One of the reasons for this was that at that time Dutch universities were ‘representative democracies’ that more often then not were facing problems of taking strategic decisions. A major step in this incremental process to effectively increase institutional autonomy was the introduction of a new governance and management structure for universities

in 1997. This change in university governance (known in Dutch as the 'MUB', Modernisation of University Governance), based on the one hand on bad experiences with 'university democracy' and on the other encouraged by NPM ideologies, initiated the strengthening of executive positions at the expense of the position of the representative councils at both the university and faculty levels (see e.g. De Boer, 2003a). Key aspects of the 1997 university governance structure, implemented in a rather short period of time and with relative ease given its complexity, were concentration of powers, hierarchy, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness. The new authority distribution within the universities should, according to the minister, facilitate universities to behave as 'public entrepreneurs': highly autonomous organisations that are 'fast on their feet' in responding to societal needs.

At face value, many involved in higher education feared that, within the 1997 governance constellation, 'full' participation would become a hollow phrase. However, based on the outcomes of a representative study in the Netherlands (De Boer, Goedegebuure, Huisman, Beerkens, & Deen, 2005; Huisman, De Boer, & Goedegebuure, 2006), the situation needs to be judged somewhat differently:

> The 'decline of collegialism' or the 'death of participatory decision-making' through non-approachable executives with limited knowledge and commitment as regards the actual teaching and research processes is not a reality. Just as the MUB's predecessor could (and should) be questioned in terms of its 'democratic content', the MUB should be carefully assessed in terms of its 'executive content'. It is misleading to suggest time and again that strong management is all wrong. There is no doubt that the Dutch executives have gained a more prominent role in university decision-making, but as the national evaluation study shows this does neither mean that 'others' are excluded from the game nor that the 'others' are automatically dissatisfied with the 'professionalised' governing structure of the university. (Huisman et al., 2006, p. 238)

The 2005 national evaluation study of the 1997 university governance structure does not portray situations of an almighty central executive management accompanied by very powerful deans who manage a university or faculty without any deliberation. At the same time, critics are partly right in the sense that there are problematic issues, particularly when it comes to participation.

One of the consequences of the shifts in system governance, leading to new realities, is that the university as a corporate actor has come to the fore. De Boer, Enders, and Leisyte (2007, p. 43) conclude that:

> The wholesale redistribution of authority throughout the system over the last 20 years has, undoubtedly, led to a re-engineering of the university as a more 'complete' organization and strengthened the position of the university as a 'corporate actor'.

This transformation of the university into a more complete organisation refers to processes to construct their own identity, to create hierarchies and to rationalise internal processes. Over the past decade, Dutch universities have more explicitly addressed their own profile and identity. They want to be 'special' in order to market themselves; they try to control their own boundaries (student selection, strategic partnerships) and increasingly try to control their resources (e.g. hiring and firing of staff). Although state regulation that limits the possibilities to fully create

a ‘distinguished profile’ still exists, Dutch universities, and particularly their management, have increased possibilities to develop new identities. The construction of more hierarchical universities is readily observable. Decision making within Dutch universities has become more centralised, with a more outspoken role of management, although, as we indicated above, at the same time the shop-floor level still has a strong impact on many decisions. Finally, it is clear that rationalisation has invaded Dutch universities. The setting of strategic objectives and particularly the strong focus on measuring outcomes and performances, using techniques borrowed from the private sector, have become common practice. These changes are occurring, however, alongside more traditional patterns of organising, such as academic self-regulation. To conclude, in general, Dutch universities are moving towards a ‘managed professional public organisation model’ (Hinings, Greenwood, & Cooper, 1999), within which traditional values are still observable. As we argue later in this chapter, this is also apparent in the way in which deans perceive their role. However, before going into the details of our empirical study, we briefly address the concepts of governance and NPM.

4 Corporate Governance, New Public Management and University Governance Structures

Corporations place considerable emphasis on the importance of formal leadership recruitment and the identification of quality leaders, as is evidenced by the high salaries of many chief executive officers (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). But, as Bisbee and Miller (2006, p. 4) point out, there are considerable differences between the culture of corporations and that of higher education institutions that must be taken into account when considering leadership and management issues:

> One notable difference is found in the perception of the value of leaders in academe versus business. In business, talented, high producers are often identified early in their career and started on a career ladder that leads to leadership positions (Byham et al. 2002). Business succession plans help to develop these leaders within a more formal corporate structure. Higher education culture, on the other hand, values discipline excellence, not administrative skills. Academic leaders for higher education have historically been filled by people whose training tends to be in research and teaching, without the leadership development found in business (Gmelch 2004). Those who fill leadership roles often consider that they are just taking a short detour in their faculty career to serve in administration (Carroll and Wolverton 2004) . . .

Universities have been categorised as professional bureaucracies or loosely coupled systems, with flat organisational structures and an emphasis on bottom-up decision making (Clark, 1983). As discussed above, the degree to which this classical categorisation of the university organisation has fundamentally changed remains the subject of much research and debate. Nonetheless, what is expected of the modern academic leader has changed and this needs to be well understood in assessing the internal dynamics of present day higher education institutions. Higher education

institutions have not been immune to global initiatives in management reforms, such as the NPM drive.

NPM's guiding principle states that while public actors such as government should maintain core public service values, they should place greater emphasis on achieving the desired results or outcomes of services than on the processes and rules of service delivery (Meek, 2003, p. 8). Thus, process-orientation is being replaced by outcome-orientation, and is taking place within the framework of private sector management techniques and market competition. Yet, as argued elsewhere (Meek, 2003, p. 8) 'much of NPM is more a set of ideological assumptions about how public institutions *should* be run, than a well-thought through strategy for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of how they are actually managed . . .'. More and more, questions are being raised whether NPM is actually delivering what it claims, and the search for alternatives appears underway.

From the perspective of higher education policy research there is little doubt that, in many OECD countries, the NPM ethos can be found in governments' attitude towards the higher education sector. The degree of adherence to the philosophical underpinnings may differ – actual implementation strategies obviously vary, as do budgetary situations in relation to emphasis on efficiency. But there is little argument over the fact that NPM has touched higher education. And certainly this has been the case in the two countries under examination in this chapter (De Boer, 2003b).

But there are national differences as well. Australia, as stated above, has gone further down the heavy-handed managerial road compared to many other countries (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Meek, 2003; Meek & Wood, 1997). The Netherlands has adopted a somewhat softer version of NPM and has done so more recently (De Boer, 2003b). The market as the principal coordination mechanism is much more visible in Australia, with the two most obvious results being the importance of full fee-paying foreign students and less reliance on public funding – as one of the respondents to our study observed, 'Australia has moved to a situation in which universities no longer are public institutions but publicly assisted institutions'. Clearly, this is not yet the situation in the Netherlands where the overall budget of even the most entrepreneurial university is 65% dependent on public funding. For many of the Australian universities, this would be less than 40%; for some, far less.

Another difference relates to the governing structure of universities. In Australia, in line with the Anglo-Saxon tradition, universities are chartered institutions that, in principle, can decide on their own internal structures. In the Netherlands, in contrast, the internal governance structure, to a substantial extent, is determined by national legislation covering – and governing – the higher education sector. As mentioned earlier, a relatively recent change in this legislation (1997) introduced concepts that without a doubt can be typified as NPM: abolition of co-determination powers of university and faculty councils and replacement with advisory roles; the introduction of integral management responsibilities; and vertical-hierarchical decision-making structures resulting, amongst other things, in appointed deans rather than elected deans.[1] As we demonstrate in the following sections of the chapter, a good deal of variety exists in both countries in the actual governance structure of the institutions.

But there is sufficient similarity in the 'environmental trends' to warrant a comparative study of the effects of these external developments on the internal management processes, personified by the changing nature of the deanship.

5 Academic Leadership and the Changing Nature of the Deanship

It is now recognised that the identification and promotion of human talent are fundamental to the success of every organisation. Universities have always been good at this task when it comes to identifying and promoting talent for teaching and research purposes, and have evolved an elaborate system of peer review to select and promote the best performers, particularly with respect to research. But universities have been less adroit at identifying, nurturing and promoting managers and leaders from within their own ranks. This appears particularly true of manager-academics – deans of faculty and heads of departments/schools in particular – but may also include senior executive academic managers.

Traditionally, universities have been characterised by a dual management structure: an academic authority structure supported by an administrative bureaucracy. Supposedly, the bureaucracy existed to support the academics. That has changed, at least somewhat. Academic administration itself has become more professional in recent years, with its own specialisations and professional associations.

An important aspect of the new managerialism in higher education is the professionalisation of university administration and administrators. Gornitzka, Kyvik, and Larsen (1998, p. 47) argue that 'the character of university administration has been changed significantly by the introduction of a corps of administrators, consisting largely of degree-holding officers and managers with their own professional associations and standards of administrative practice'. The Australian Association for Tertiary Education Management (2002, p. 4) wishes to accord administrators the same institutional status as academics and claims that university staff, administrators and academics alike, 'need to be managed, recognised and rewarded on the basis of how well they contribute to the goals of a university . . .'. But, as with manager-academics, 'university administrators are in general not in a settled and "comfortable" position. Their functions and roles seem to be continuously negotiated and defined' (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004, p. 469).

While there may have been some blurring between academic roles and those of professional administrators within higher education organisations, they have not totally merged. In fact, it can be argued that leadership and leadership recruitment are far more crucial for manager-academics than for the routine administrator, for it is manager-academics who are ultimately responsible for the core business of the enterprise: teaching and research.

Clearly, the role of manager-academics has become increasingly complex, multifaceted and stressful, and it requires skills and experience that many of the

incumbents lack, at least, initially. According to Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, and Nies (2001, p. 15):

> Over the past thirty to forty years, as universities grew in size and complexity, the deanship became decidedly more managerial in nature. Presidents began shifting external duties, such as alumni relations and fundraising, in part to deans. Academic deans, although still charged with the intellectual leadership of their colleges, were also expected to be fiscal experts, fundraisers, politicians, and diplomats.

In reviewing the literature on the subject, Bisbee and Miller (2006, pp. 5–6) write that:

> Department chairs, associate deans, and deans fill key positions in higher education and have different challenges, roles, and expectations placed on them. Most department chairs, associate deans, and deans were under-prepared for their jobs when they assumed them (Gmelch 2004; Wolverton et al. 2001). Some of the stresses identified for these mid-level academic leaders came from under-prepared people placed in positions that demanded skills, knowledge, and expectations above their capacity to deliver (Gmelch 2004) . . .
>
> Hecht, Higgerson, Gmelch and Tucker (1999) identified four characteristics of department chairs: they are drawn from faculty ranks, lack preparation for what is a major change in their professional roles, they receive limited financial rewards, and they serve for an average of six years. Carroll and Wolverton (2004) found new department chairs have not necessarily been leaders before, for the most part have no formal training in a leadership or managerial role, and they have a four out of five chance of never serving in a leadership role again.

There can be little argument that, in recent years, there has been considerable expansion of the management responsibilities of deans of faculty, heads of departments/schools and other equivalent middle-level academic management positions. As part of the so-called process of 'centralised devolution', universities have devolved many academic and financial responsibilities to faculties and departments/schools, treating faculties as separate cost centres. This has placed middle-level academic managers in a pivotal role between central management predilections and academic values and control. Enhanced expectations and greater role definition of manager-academics are in clear contrast to earlier times when the position was perhaps considered a 'good citizen' chore.

But, as already indicated, many scholars argue that academic leaders are not and cannot be mere managers. The evidence suggests that academic leaders must themselves be first and foremost respected academics in their discipline or area of specialisation. Leaders must have the respect of followers, an assertion that we examine in more detail when we turn our attention to the attitudes and role perceptions of deans in Australia and the Netherlands.

In one of the most comprehensive overviews of the academic deanship in the United States, Wolverton et al. (2001) analyse the way in which the deanship has evolved over time. Noting that it never has been a standardised position since it was first established some 200 years ago, they nevertheless construct the following chronology. Traditionally, the academic dean's focus was on the student. With the emergence of the registrar's office, attention shifted to the supervision of curricula, faculty and budgets. In the wake of the massification of the US system and the ensuing increasingly external role of the university presidents, the dean's internal

duties more and more became part of the job, which subsequently broadened, and included full budget responsibility, faculty promotion and selection. The original scholar-dean made way for the manager-dean who is a full-time administrator with a highly complex but also powerful job, liaising between central administration and faculty, interacting with the president and those close to that position, running the faculty, taking care of personnel, students and external stakeholders, and so on. It is in this vein that observers speak of 'a transition in the deanship from chief academic officer to chief executive officer' (Creswell & England, 1994; Tucker & Bryan, 1988 cited in Wolverton et al., 2001).

Not only has the nature of the job changed, but the position has as well. For the 'traditional' scholar-dean, identification was relatively straightforward: it was with the students and the academics in the faculty. The 'modern' manager-dean, however, is faced with a much more complex constituency. As part of the management of the institution, the dean is expected to act with and on behalf of the institution, that is, the president. But similar expectations come from the faculty where the perception is that the dean is their representative to and guardian from the powers that be. Described alternatively as 'the meat in the sandwich', 'between a rock and a hard place', 'role conflict and ambiguity' and 'dean stress', the position has evolved as one of great complexity with lack of clarity. This, in some way, explains in the American context the large number of 'How To Be an Effective Dean' type of books that nevertheless also contain quite astute observations:

> The days of the imperial dean whose policies were viewed as Hammurabi's laws are gone. There are in American universities frequent examples of decanal dictatorships, but in almost every instance these are short-lived arrangements. And a dean's work is not done in one or two years; in most instances it takes five years before the results of any efforts are clearly visible. (Tucker & Bryan, 1988, p. 25)

The available literature demonstrates a rather nuanced picture of the nature of university middle management in times that indeed are changing. The following constructed quote taken from the Deem project sums this up nicely:

> . . . in universities 'New Managerialism' has developed within existing organisational units and without significant recruitment of manager-academics from outside education . . . The mechanisms manager-academics use to get academics and support staff to perform at the required level are subtle rather than crude . . . Nor had the manager-academics we interviewed easily absorbed 'New Managerialism' . . . persuasion (or 'herding cats') is widely thought to be the most workable approach . . . The research data suggests that whilst 'New Managerialism' has permeated UK universities, it has . . . done so because of external pressures . . . and policy changes . . . university staff not occupying management roles maintained that universities were awash with managerialism. The picture that research data reveal is indeed a complex one which supports a view that old, established forms of university management . . . have been joined by newer elements . . . resulting in hybridised forms of New Managerialism . . . we noted that the manager-academics interviewed did not necessarily explicitly identify with New Managerialism, even when some of their reported practices appeared to demonstrate that managerialist features were present . . . self-government was often preferred to more overt line-management. (Deem, 2007, pp. 5–8)

On the basis of the literature and knowledge of the respective higher education systems, this study of the deanship in Australia and the Netherlands commenced with the following assumptions:

- Given the changes in the external environments of the universities in Australia and the Netherlands, the role perceptions and attitudes of deans in the two countries would clearly reflect elements of NPM.
- Given that Australia has gone down the road of NPM earlier in time and in a more fully-fledged manner than the Netherlands, Australian deans in general will be more managerial than Dutch deans.
- Given the particular nature of the university as a professional organisation with a serious history and culture, the academic deanship in both countries will be characterised by hybrid forms of 'managerialism'.

It must be stressed that these are loosely formulated assumptions that are part of an exploratory research design. Ideally, one would compare the deanship in 2004 with the way in which the role was carried out in, say, 1985. But obviously this cannot be done since the data from such a 'zero measurement' do not exist. And also, ideally, the concepts of managerialism, role perceptions and attitudes of deans would be explicated and operationalised in discrete instruments. But life is not that simple. As Meek (2003, p. 11) has observed:

> . . . it is worthwhile for analytical purposes to draw the distinction between management as a set of good or best practices in running an organisation and 'managerialism' as a set of ideological principles and values that one group of actors imposes on another to control their behaviour . . . Of course, management is never totally benign, and it behoves the researcher to discover the relationship with managerialism in day-to-day administrative practices. Nonetheless, unless we can distinguish between management as practice and management as ideology, there is no relationship to discover.

It is in this respect that we examine the notion of managerialism and the attitude and role perceptions of deans, acknowledging at the same time that the role of the dean is multifaceted.

6 The Roles and Activities of Academic Deans

It is questionable whether one can learn to be a dean from a book. And many of the authors of those 'How To . . .' books appear to agree, given their prefaces or epilogues.[2] But these books provide a good insight into the multitude of activities and associated roles that academic deans today are required to undertake and fulfil. According to Bright and Richards (2001), an academic dean has to deal with the following: planning, budgets and resources, faculty development, academic programmes, students and legal issues. In terms of relationships, this is supplemented by interaction with the provost, other deans, directors of service departments, colleague deans in other institutions, alumni, parents, councils and the

media. Krahenbuhl (2004) appears to agree with this, though he adds university–industry liaison, and facilities and space, though one can argue that the latter belongs to resources. A similar list is found in Tucker and Bryan (1988) though they place a little more emphasis on dealing with institutional support staff. But, overall, despite the fact that in some of the literature we find that a dean has to be everything to everyone, there appears to be a fair degree of consensus for the following categorisation for the core activities of academic deans:

- Strategic management, including participation in setting institutional strategies and responsibilities for faculty strategy;
- Operational management, including resource allocation and support services;
- Human resource management, including evaluations;
- Academic management, including overseeing teaching and research programmes and student relationships; and
- External relationship management or stakeholder relationship management.

To meet these core expectations, according to Tucker and Bryan (1988), an effective academic dean must be able to play the roles of dove, dragon and diplomat. Some 15 years later, Krahenbuhl (2004) specifies this further. He identifies the following roles for an academic dean: chief administrative officer, chief academic officer, chief development officer, chief communication officer, chief adjudicator of differences, chief morale officer, principal steward, lead mentor and master of ceremonies. If we combine core activities and roles, the following matrix emerges that, on the basis of existing US-based work on the deanship, would reflect the complexities of the job in a strongly market-driven system with mass access.

Figure 2 will be used to chart the results of the interviews with the Australian and Dutch deans, as well as to guide the analysis of the three behavioural assumptions outlined previously.

7 Australian and Dutch Deans Speaking for Themselves

7.1 The Research Project

The research project on which this chapter is based was funded by the Australian Research Council. It consisted, in part, of the application of a common interview schedule for discussions with deans in Australia and the Netherlands on how they perceived their institutional roles. In all, 47 deans were interviewed – 24 in Australia and 23 in the Netherlands. The study included six Australian universities and five Dutch universities, selected so as to represent the diversity of type of institution in the respective systems. As far as possible, all faculties were represented in the selected universities. The interviews were conducted between April and June 2004. In addition to the interviews, other data were collected, including the interviewees'

CVs, faculty by-laws and other information on the institutional context, as well as various relevant policy statements and instruments at the national levels. Summary results arising from the interviews are reported below in accord with the three initial assumptions stated above.

7.2 Between Country Differences

Do the interviews collected in the course of this study support the initial 'assumption' that Australian universities are further down the road in terms of professional management than the Dutch? Overall, the findings seem to support this assumption, though, as elaborated below, the picture is quite varied. If we define professional management in terms of relatively sophisticated planning methodologies, working on the basis of a clear set of goals and objectives, having working management information systems, taking personnel reviews seriously and having performance-based contracts for deans, yes: Australian institutions *on average* appear to be more professionally managed than Dutch universities. This does not have so much to do with the formal powers relating to the dean's position as it does to the way in which these powers are used. For, in theory, Dutch deans can wield vast powers vis-à-vis the faculty. On the basis of the provisions stated in the national law (MUB Act), the deans are responsible for:

- the design of the faculty's governance and management structure;
- the design and organisation of the teaching and research programmes of the faculty;
- cooperating with the central executive board, among other things with respect to the preparation of the budget and the university's strategic plan;
- setting the faculty's ordinances or 'charter';
- setting, assessing and supervising the teaching and examination procedures;
- setting the general guidelines for research;
- determining the yearly research programme of the faculty;
- appointing the teaching programme director(s);
- informing the faculty council on important matters; and
- being accountable to the central executive board and providing the information demanded.

Though local differences exist, Australian deans would find many of the same powers and responsibilities in their job description. Thus, in both countries, deans are primarily responsible for the functioning of the faculty. This holds true for the dimensions of strategic planning, operational planning, human resource and academic management as set out in terms of the responsibilities for the teaching and research programmes of the faculty. External relations management is not defined as a task and/or responsibility in Dutch law, but obviously is part and parcel of the dean's job in Australia. Most of the Australian respondents indicate that they spend roughly between 15 and 30% of their time on external relations. For those faculties

that have a substantive overseas enrolment, much of this time is spent on maintaining good relationships with their strategic partner institutions abroad. For most of the Dutch deans, a more internal focus applies – external constituents appear to play a smaller role.

But, despite the fact that nominal similarity exists in the formal powers and responsibilities, the realities in the two countries are not the same. On average, the Australian deanship is a full-time function, while many of the Dutch deans still attempt to engage in teaching and research. Although some Australian deans still hang on to the illusion that they are active academics, the harsh reality is that the late evening or the weekend is the last resort for an attempt at academic work. In this aspect, the Australian situation appears to be in line with the American, the difference being that American deans who still have an academic ambition fulfil that by writing about their work experiences as a dean, while the rare full-time Australian dean who has academic ambitions attempts to realise these in his or her original discipline. A second, readily observable difference between Dutch and Australian deans is the naming of the position. In most Australian institutions, the term 'executive dean' is the familiar one, while we did not come across that title in the Netherlands.[3] A third indicator is the size of the faculty. Overall, deans in Australia are in charge of substantively larger faculties than Dutch deans. One would be hard pressed to find a Dutch faculty of 7,000 students, while in Australia this is not uncommon. A fourth indicator would be that in Australia performance-based salaries for deans exist whilst in the Netherlands there is merely a salary loading on top of the professorial salary for the dean – something more common in Australia with respect to heads of departments/schools than deans. And, in some cases, there is an overt dislike and disapproval of such a performance-based system in the Netherlands: 'I am opposed to it, but the executive board wants to move this way. I get extra salary for being a dean and that is more than enough – I work for the faculty and not for myself'. And, finally, it is more common in Australia that a dean comes to the position from the outside, be it from another faculty in the same university or (more common) from another university. In the Netherlands, on average, deans are appointed by the executive board from within the faculty.[4]

To some extent, these differences are reflected in the professional attitude of the deans in the two countries, even though we have to be very careful not to overstate the differences. The Australian deans interviewed in this study more easily identified themselves with a role as manager than did the Dutch deans, as some of the following quotes show: 'I am a line manager, but I am driven by the question what is or should be a faculty of arts'; 'I became an academic so that I would not have to wear a tie or balance the budget – here I am wearing a tie and worrying about money!'; 'I am a managerial dean; I am paid to set the strategic directions'; and 'It is the dean's role to seize strategic opportunities and act quickly'.

7.3 Within Country Differences

Though differences between the countries exist, there are also variations in response from the deans within countries. It would be a serious mistake to typify Australia's

university system as one in which only executive deans and hard-nosed managers head-up faculties. We turn to the issue of management styles below, but here it suffices to state that Australia has some faculties that are quite professionally managed and others that are less so. And certainly there are cases in Australia where the dean is not the one who says 'And the buck stops with me'. Likewise, it would be equally wrong to see the Netherlands' university system as one in which good management is not an issue, where decisions are made on the basis of collegial consensus and where all institutions are the same. Diversity exists here as well, and there are institutions with the traditional large number of small, disciplinary faculties run by part-time deans as well as institutions with large faculties managed by deans who themselves would be pretty much at ease in an Australian setting. Therefore, the first conclusion is that, with respect to the second assumption formulated above, yes: Australian deans indeed appear more managerial than Dutch deans, but the picture is not clear-cut or uniform.

7.4 Across Country Similarities

What became abundantly clear during the interviews is that there are a large number of similarities to be found in terms of the deanship in the two countries. The first common theme is that in almost all cases the deans are there 'to make a difference', as one interviewee put it. They are not in the position to 'mind the shop' but have every intention of achieving something with the faculty, to instigate change and improve academic life, both in terms of prestige or quality and in terms of work environment. As two of the respondents formulated it: 'What I like about the job is the opportunity to do my best for this great faculty'; and 'What I enjoy most about the job is my impact and influence on the lives of staff'. A majority of respondents indicated that the best part of the job was to achieve success with their faculty and thus to have an impact as dean. Similarly, despite the fact that to some 'the job of dean is a thankless one', most of the interviewees were very outspoken about liking their job. This is not to say that it is an easy job, but the issues of role conflict and ambiguity apparent in the existing literature on the deanship (e.g. Bright & Richards, 2001) are not voiced by the deans in this study. They have a high degree of autonomy in their work, are neither academic servants nor executive lackeys and – perhaps somewhat stronger in Australia than in the Netherlands – find their role well defined. It is clearly accepted that there are mutual allegiances with the institutional executives and with 'their' academic staff, although the fact that this makes the job difficult is recognised as well: 'The deanship is a schizoid position. From the faculty's perspective the dean is working with the forces of Mordor; but at the same time he/she is expected to be the protector of the Shire'.

Another common theme that is apparent in both Australia and the Netherlands is that there has been substantial change in the roles and responsibilities of the dean. In this respect, and not surprisingly, the deans conform to the first part of the first assumption, namely, that indeed the changes in the external environments of universities have been substantive: 'During the 8 years I have been dean, the

external world has increasingly become unstable'. But does this also mean that NPM is clearly reflected in the roles and attitudes of deans? Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that the scope of executive dimensions that we indicated earlier is part and parcel of the deanship in the two countries, though more explicitly in Australia than in the Netherlands: 'I am a managerial dean; I am paid to set the strategic directions'. But, no, in the sense that the deans have wholeheartedly embraced the rhetoric, ideology and practice of managerialism.

If one thing became clear during the interviews, it is the fact that the picture of the aloof, professional manager who directs his/her unit in a hierarchical manner, driven by data and production sheets, acting out the orders from the top management, is the antithesis of the modern academic dean. The deans interviewed in this study are uniformly of the opinion that an academic is needed to fill the position of the deanship, not an outside manager from industry: 'You could not be a non-academic dean and get away with it', though some disagree with this unequivocal statement, arguing that perhaps it would be possible for a faculty in a professional field to have a manager from industry as dean (e.g. law or business) – but they also indicated strong reservations about putting this proposition to the test. The bottom line is that deans are convinced that in order to effectively carry out the job they need the respect of their faculty, and that respect is only given to those who can demonstrate serious academic achievements.

Associated with this are their views on the effective levers that can be used to achieve something of significance in the faculty. A command mode of operation is not one of these. Negotiation and moral persuasion are, and are considered significant management tools by the deans. This does not mean that deans shy away from their responsibilities or from tough decisions: 'It is a requirement of the dean to test people's comfort zones', nor that collegiality is the answer to all problems: 'The job cannot be done in the traditional collegial democratic way'. However, estranging faculty members from the faculty's mission and objectives, from the decision-making processes and from the academic debate is seen as very counterproductive. As one dean phrased it: 'Communication is very important in keeping the faculty on side'. Or, as another one put it: 'What I like about being a dean is swimming in a sea of IQ' – typifying the respect that all deans interviewed appear to have for good academics, and the effects of this on their actions: 'There is a difference between good management and managerialism'; 'Plans are useless; planning is essential'.

This directly leads us to the third assumption, namely that of hybrid forms of managerialism. As our English colleagues have found in their study on the management of UK universities (Deem, 2007; Reed, 2002), the results reported here also indicate this mixed mode. Taking into account earlier remarks on the between, and within, country differences, the bulk of the interview data points in the direction of faculties that are seriously managed, for which strategies are developed and translated into actions and budgets, and faculties that are very much aware of the fact that there is an outside world they cannot and should not ignore. At the same time, there is uniform recognition of the fact that faculties are a part of universities, that universities and faculties have academic traditions, that they are very

Core roles	*Core activities*				
	Strategic management	*Operational management*	*HRM development*	*Academic management*	*External relations management*
Chief administrative officer					
Chief academic officer					
Chief development officer					
Chief communication officer					
Chief adjudicator of differences					
Chief morale officer					
Principal steward					
Lead mentor					
Master of ceremonies					

Fig. 2 The scope of the academic deanship (Source: Based on Bright & Richards, 2001; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Tucker & Bryan, 1988)

much professional bureaucracies and that they are populated with highly intelligent human beings. It appears that the essence of the modern dean is both managerial and collegial – it involves as much being an *academic* dean as an *executive* dean. And, referring back to Fig. 2, the quintessential academic dean is also one who is indeed chief administrative officer,[5] chief academic officer,[6] chief development officer,[7] chief communication officer, chief adjudicator of differences,[8] chief morale officer,[9] principal steward,[10] lead mentor[11] and master of ceremonies. The last one is a role the vast majority of deans seriously enjoy!

8 Conclusion

This study suggests that, while the role of the dean in Australian and Dutch universities has changed dramatically over the past couple of decades, deans nonetheless must respect many persistent, deep-seated academic norms and values in order to provide effective leadership. But, for most, this appears to be more than acceptance – they too embrace the key canons of academe along with their faculty colleagues. But, simultaneously, this in no way abrogates their responsibility to provide effective and efficient management and leadership.

The extent to which managerialism has changed all higher education institutions and transformed the roles of academic managers at all organisational levels is often exaggerated. There is a tendency in some of the higher education literature to assume that 'traditional' collegial approaches to academic management are

being replaced everywhere by private sector oriented management practices. The evidence, however, suggests a much more complex and diverse picture. The progress from the 'collegial' to the 'managerial' in higher education is not as complete as often assumed. While, clearly, the identification and promotion of strong leadership are crucial for university survival, they are nonetheless bounded by the norms and values of academe. As Santiago, Carvalho, Amaral, and Meek (2006, p. 245) have argued elsewhere, 'possibly, universities are doomed (or blessed) to engage in a perpetual re-examination of how to mange their affairs based on a "natural" tension between the collegial and the managerial, with neither ever obtaining a permanent ascendancy over the other'.

The present study is largely exploratory and has only scratched the surface of a thorough analysis of higher education management issues. Future research needs to pay more attention to such issues as difference in management practice and expectations according to type of institution (research university, non-research intensive university, polytechnic, etc.). Also, more work needs to be done on the impact of government policy on institutional management for the policy context itself appears to be in a state of constant flux. But this chapter will have served one of its primary purposes if it encourages more research into the ongoing evolution of the manager-academic, for, clearly, management issues will loom large on the higher education landscape for the foreseeable future.

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Notes

1. For an extensive overview, see De Boer (2003a); for a discussion on the preliminary effects, see De Boer and Goedegebuure (2002).
2. For example, 'Nothing that appears in this book should be taken as a prescription. This is not a "how to do it" book . . . It is meant to help deans imagine the possibilities in ways that normally come only with years of experience' (Krahenbuhl, 2004, pp. 5–6); 'This book aims to provide a more current picture of the deanship while discussing both the challenges and rewards of the job. We hope it will give an aspiring dean the basis for an informed assessment of the job as a career option, provide a newly appointed dean with practical advice on beginning the job . . .' (Bright & Richards, 2001, p. xiv).
3. Of course, language plays a role here and some of the Dutch 'cluster deans' (meaning responsible for recently merged faculties) can easily be equated with executive deans. But, still, they are a minority in the Dutch sample.
4. Though this situation appears to be changing somewhat, recent dean appointments in a number of Dutch universities have been from the outside. In our sample, however, the vast majority were from the inside.
5. Here we note a wide variety in the professional support a dean receives in the faculties and institutions in our sample.
6. This role has strong devolution of authority to heads of departments and professors.
7. This is probably one of the aspects in which the deans in the two countries differ most.

8. This role is hated the most by almost all the deans: 'The worst part of the job is dealing with difficult professors'; 'Over the years I have become less tolerant of other people's madness'.
9. This role would appear to be quite dependent on the psyche of the dean – the interviews suggest quite some diversity in this respect.
10. Most of the deans interviewed for this study would agree with this.
11. Whereby who the dean is mentoring very much appears to be dependent on the size of the faculty, suggesting that the dean is the mentor to his vice-deans/pro-deans and heads of departments in the larger faculties, and to 'academic' staff in the smaller ones.

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Academic Middle Managers and Management in University Colleges and Universities in Belgium

Jef C. Verhoeven

1 Introduction

Some years ago, Shattock (1999, p. 279) wrote with regard to the situation in the British universities: 'under the present requirements of institutional accountability and financial constraint a university's central authorities whether led by governing bodies or by vice-chancellors and other university offices are bound to act in a more managerialist and interventionist mode'. *Mutatis mutandis*, it is reasonable to assume that higher education in Belgium is facing similar problems. Indeed, this development is often seen as a consequence of neo-liberalism in society (Codd, 2005, p. 200), and Belgium, lying in the heart of the European Union, is certainly not immune from the pressure of international ideas.

Until 1991, the universities were governed by the laws enacted in the 1970s, which had opened them to more democratic participation of all their internal stakeholders (De Wit & Verhoeven, 2000). The Law of 1994 was very important for the university colleges for it moved in the direction of their recognition as institutions of higher education. So that these university colleges could be large enough to attain the new objectives, they were compelled to merge. At that time there were 163 colleges; that number has been reduced to only 22.

The question is whether the Flemish government through the laws of 1991 and 1994 had created a structure in which neo-liberalism (Apple, 2001) could be applied and managerialism could develop. Although the government spoke about a radical extension of autonomy and responsibility in the educational sector, it did not withdraw entirely. The government wanted to stress some minimal goals (Van Heffen, Verhoeven, & De Wit, 1999). In the 1990s, we conducted a number of case studies of universities and university colleges (De Wit & Verhoeven, 1999) concerning the relationship between higher education policy and the economy. To a certain extent, they applied more and more of the principles of managerialism, but the principles of a collegial organisation were nourished as well.

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Recently, other actions have been taken by the government to create a better climate for managerialism. The principle of management by objectives is clearly supported. For instance, the institutions can obtain more support from the government when they present an 'educational development programme' and also when they establish 'innovation projects', though they have to be accepted by the government. Moreover, at present, the government is preparing a new system of financing higher education, in which a very important principle is that the institutions will be financed according to research output and the number of students (or, more specifically, the number of credits earned by the students). The more credits students earn, the higher the allocation for the institution. Thus, it is reasonable to take as a hypothesis that managerialism might well be part of the current management approach in higher education in Flanders in Belgium, not only among vice-chancellors and general directors, but also among the academic middle managers. Moreover, it could be assumed that, because of these new political steps, middle managers would be aware of the change in management style and apply the same principles. But before answering these questions I want to describe how managerialism is conceptualised in this chapter.

2 In Search of Managerialism

Although the idea of increasing managerialism in institutions of higher education is widespread, it is not easy to describe clearly. The problem is that managerialism has many meanings. Before going into detail about the definition of managerialism, however, I want to reconstruct the basis of my choice. The picture of managerialism that emerged from some 15 papers and books was blurred. Two examples may give an idea of the conformity and the confusion in the literature concerning this concept but also of what might belong to managerialism. As a starting point, I take the book *The Higher Education Managerial Revolution*? (edited by Amaral, Meek, & Larsen, 2003). In the introduction to the book, Meek (2003, p. 8) links the concept of managerialism immediately with the concept of 'New Public Management' (NPM) (see also Salminen, 2003, pp. 55–56; Mok, 1999, p. 118). Therefore, he refers to Keating (2001, pp. 145–146) who links NPM to an economic logic and characterises this phenomenon as follows: (i) results should be obtained efficiently and the service should be of high quality; (ii) management should be decentralised in order to bring decision making closer to the point of delivery of the services; (iii) competition between the public and the private sector to better serve the clients should be enhanced; (iv) the focus should be on cost-effective alternatives in a market system; and (v) accountability for results should be paramount. Nevertheless, these principles were not used by the editors to force all of the contributors to the book into the same conceptual straitjacket. At the end of the book, Amaral, Fulton, and Larsen (2003) conclude that most of the contributors accepted some common characteristics but did not agree on all of them. The following are mentioned: accountability based on performance, target setting, funding based on

results, collegial leadership and decision making replaced by individual leadership and decision making, marketisation, commercialisation, bureaucratisation, appointment of business leaders and more external members to the central governing body and a loss of professional autonomy for the academics and their accompanying deprofessionalisation. Still, they recognised the presence of characteristics linked to the old collegial type of governance.

Turning now to the first characteristic of managerialism, we note that it is clear that both definitions stress the interest of managerialist thinking in the performance of the organisation and of the managers. Managerialists want a task to be fulfilled *efficiently* and want to know whether the activity reaches a level of *effectiveness* prescribed by the actors. These ideas are shared by several other researchers (Mok, 1999; Saunderson, 2002, p. 380). Deem and Brehony (2005, p. 224), for instance, consider the 'efficiency model' as one of the four models British universities have gone through. The central idea is that the universities have to 'do more with less'. Meek (2003, p. 8) contends that 'efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery will be achieved through the use of private sector management techniques, such as specifying service objectives and competition for customers, performance measurement, decentralisation of decision making and the use of markets to deliver services'. This means that, in such an organisation, collegiality is less important than it was and that the members of the organisation give much more attention to mission statements, output, appraisal, auditing and the like.

In addition to their concern for the efficiency and performance effectiveness of the organisation, managerialists are interested in the protection of the roads that have to be followed by the members of the organisation in order to attain their prescribed targets. Therefore, they ask that special consideration be given to the process of *quality assurance*, a second characteristic of managerialism.

Codd (2005, p. 201) distinguishes between quality control and quality assurance. Quality assurance is defined by Winch (1996, pp. 10–11) as being 'concerned with ensuring that the production processes are such that defective products are not made in the first place, so that the need for extensive quality control mechanisms at the end point of the production is not pressing'. In other words, quality assurance wants to prevent the output of education from being what was not targeted, that is, to prevent the learning outcomes of the students from being less than what was planned. Therefore, many authors (Deem & Brehony, 2005; Fulton, 2003; Gleeson & Shain, 1999; Meek, 2003; Mok, 1999; Santiago, Carvalho, Amaral, & Meek, 2006; Simkins, 2000) consider quality assurance to be an important instrument for effectively attaining institutional targets.

Quality assurance is not purposeless. Biesta (2004, p. 236) puts it this way: 'accountability and its corollary quality assurance are the main instruments of the new managerialism'. Quality assurance not only serves the providers of education but also guarantees for all stakeholders that the education offered meets the standards. Managers of the institutions of higher education have to demonstrate that the money and instruments provided to offer education are being well used. In our present neo-liberal society, they have to be accountable (Codd, 2005; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Fulton, 2003; Gleeson & Shain, 1999; Meek, 2003; Santiago et al.,

2006; Saunderson, 2002). This is the third characteristic of managerialism that was the subject of this research.

Like many other concepts, *accountability* appears in different forms. Vidovich and Slee (2001, p. 432) cite the characteristics presented by Corbett (1992) and Ball, Vincent, and Radnor (1997). Corbett (1992) defines *upward* accountability as the accountability of public servants imposed by law and constitutions and also by the courts and administrative tribunals; *outward* accountability involves respect for client groups and other community stakeholders; *downward* accountability is provided by a manager to his subordinates; and *inward* accountability is the accountability of a person to his personal conscience. Ball et al. (1997) mention market and managerial accountability and political accountability – the former is when actors justify what they do to their consumers; the latter is when a person has to answer for what he or she has done to an electorate.

With regard to the British educational system, Ranson (2003) distinguishes between professional accountability (late 1970s) and four other kinds arising from the neo-liberal era (commencing in the 1980s in the United Kingdom and later on the Continent). *Professional accountability* concerns the professional because of his or her specialist knowledge and is the subject of internal reports. Neo-liberalism provides four forms of accountability: first, *consumer accountability* requires that the responsible actors take market competition and the choices of consumers into account; second, *contract accountability* requires that schools are accountable for their costs and efficiency and that assessments are governed by technical efficiency and cost criteria; third, *performative accountability* requires schools to achieve national standards and targets as assessed by test scores and league tables (see also Tight, 2000); and, fourth, *corporate accountability* makes schools accountable to a private person or corporation (such as a public–private partnership) that uses profit to measure policy success. Most of these different forms of accountability are considered in this chapter (see below).

Finally, there is the concept of *decentralisation*. Keating (2001) stresses that decision making in NPM is brought closer to the consumers. Units closer to the consumers are given the right (or duty) to decide about the production of the services. The advantage is that this would enable the responses of the consumers to reach the production managers more easily than would otherwise be the case. Amaral, Fulton et al., (2003) speak in this context about the 'individual leadership and decision making' that is replacing traditional collegial forms of decision making in institutions of higher education. For many scholars, decentralisation is an element of the higher education policy in their country. This is the case, for instance, in Finland (Salminen, 2003, p. 64), Norway (De Boer, 2003, p. 104; Larsen, 2003, p. 76), Portugal (Santiago et al., 2006, p. 221) and the United Kingdom (Fulton, 2003, p. 160), although this does not mean that their institutions of higher education are governed by pure managerialism.

Although decentralisation is seen by many scholars to be part of managerialism, the principle as such is seen by Meek (2003, p. 9) as being opposed to the rationalisation principle in NPM. Indeed, if an organisation wants to attain its targets, it may well be necessary to have a decision-making unit that can oversee all the steps taken by the lower-level units. Nevertheless, many believe that decentralisation

with power and authority given to the subordinate units can diminish bureaucracy and hence improve production. Moreover, granting responsibility to the lower units might make them more accountable. Whether these principles really contribute to higher performance levels still needs to be confirmed.

Many descriptions of managerialism allude to the pejorative aspects of this phenomenon, although many practices labelled 'managerialism' could also be considered as good management. Therefore the label 'managerialism' seems to be used to refer to extreme forms of self-determination, quality assurance or other symptoms of managerialism. Nevertheless, the literature does not offer guidance on how to draw a clear line between good management and managerialism.

3 Do Middle Managers of Institutions of Higher Education Recognise Characteristics of Managerialism?

3.1 Presentation of the Questions and Research Design

Some characteristics of managerialism in institutions of higher education were already present in the 1990s (De Wit & Verhoeven, 1999). The question to be answered here is: Can similar characteristics be identified among middle managers at present? The definition I use is this: managerialism is a style of management that is focused on efficiency, effectiveness, quality assurance, decentralisation of decision making and accountability. Whether middle managers actually adhere to these principles would best be determined by observation, but this would have been impossible within the time limit set for this chapter; so I opted for a web-based survey. Therefore, this report is not about behaviour but rather about the descriptions of some aspects of managerialism as presented by middle managers in the questionnaire.

The dependent variable of this project was the opinions of these middle managers on efficiency, quality assurance, decentralisation and accountability of management. We also hoped to be able to form an idea of the efficiency of management as it was experienced by these managers, the quality assurance of the institutions of higher education, the accountability and decentralisation of decision making. This aspect of the study offers a picture of some managerialist characteristics as experienced by the middle managers. All of the items were analysed using principal component analysis in order to discern communality among the items. Where appropriate, a Likert scale was developed.

Items were generated based on previous research. In order to capture something of the aversion towards the extreme forms of managerialism, some items requested comparisons between forms of managerialism and good management at odds with managerialism. Some examples: 'I find satisfaction of students more important than an efficient organisation' (Table 3); 'I think we should spend more time on offering good teaching than on organising quality assurance' (Table 4). The downside of this approach is that items did not always fit into a scale.

The independent variables were taken to be the age of the respondents, their diplomas, the field of study in which the diplomas were earned, the fields they managed, the position of the manager, the experience as a manager, the time spent managing, the size of the institution, the specific unit managed, the management training of the manager and the style of decision making in the organisation.

This chapter concentrates on the opinions of the middle managers and whether there is a difference in these opinions in terms of position and institutional affiliation: whether the manager was associated with a university or a university college.

Who participated in the web-based questionnaire and on the basis of which criteria were they chosen? Both universities and university colleges were investigated. The largest four of the six universities were selected. They accounted for 59,940 students out of 62,314. From the 22 university colleges, 11 were selected on the basis of information provided by previous research (Devos, Verhoeven, Maes, & Vanpee, 2001; Verhoeven, Devos, Smolders, Cools, & Velghe, 2002). The selection of the colleges was based on one important criterion: the legal basis of the colleges, which determines the mode of governance of the colleges. University colleges in Flanders may be established by the government (public colleges), private bodies (private colleges) and the provinces (provincial colleges). The largest group of the three are the private colleges. In the sample, three public colleges, two provincial and six private colleges were selected. At the time, they accounted for 60,787 of the 106,014 students enrolled in university colleges in Flanders.

We defined the population in the university colleges as all the heads of departments and all the programme coordinators. A head of a department runs a department in which more than one programme may be organised; the programme coordinator manages a programme. In general, it may be said that the head of a department manages larger units than a coordinator. Almost 60% of the coordinators have no staff to support them, while all heads of departments have support staff. While 72% of the heads of departments spend more than 75% of their time on management, the coordinators devote only 18% to it. In the universities, the population was composed of all the deans, heads of departments, programme coordinators and directors of research of most of the faculties.[1] Although the title of dean is different from the head of department of a university college, there are many similarities between them. Like the head of department in a university college, a dean is responsible in a university faculty for the organisation of teaching and research. Unlike the heads of college departments, however, only one out of the 19 deans spent more than 75% of their time on management. They devoted much time to teaching and research. In most of the universities, a faculty, led by a dean, is composed of different departments or *vakgroepen* (sections), and these two bodies are often split up into several research units. Because the members of departments or sections not only do research but also teach, in the four universities special organisational units are provided for the organisation of teaching. All of them were invited to respond to the web-based questionnaire. The collection of data occurred during the period 1–21 March 2007. Compared with other research, the response rate was good (see Table 1).

Table 1 Response percentages

	Number of managers receiving a questionnaire	Number of answers	Response (%)
University colleges	349	247	71
Universities	584	362	62
Total	933	609	65

The comparison of percentages for each of the 15 institutions responding to the questionnaire and the percentage of each institution in the sample yielded no substantial deviances ($\chi^2 = 6.7$; df = 14; $p = 0.946$). Only one institution had a deviation of more than 1%.

3.2 Vision on Some Aspects of Managerialism

One of the characteristics of managerialism is decentralisation: middle managers want the right to decide important parts of decision making themselves (Amaral, Fulton et al., 2003). This right certainly was highly appreciated among academic middle managers. On a scale of one to five on most of the indicators (see Table 2), these managers scored almost 4. It is also interesting to note that most of the managers were convinced that they needed the support of their colleagues in order to achieve their targets (score 4.39). Only one indicator scored lower: they were not sure whether the content of a programme should be determined independently by the provider. Deliberation was considered important in the construction of a programme.

Since the universities and university colleges differed in their development and traditions, it might be expected that decision making among their managers would also differ. However, in both the universities and university colleges, we see that the

Table 2 Preference for personal decision making by managers

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Individual decision making[a]	598	3.98	0.85	1	5
1. 'I find it important that a researcher be able to choose his research himself'	590	3.95	0.88	1	5
2. 'I find it important that the lecturer himself be able to choose what he wants to teach'	595	3.02	1.11	1	5
3. 'I find it important that decisions be supported by those who have to fulfil them'	596	4.39	0.72	1	5

[a]Individual decision making or autonomy constitutes a variable composed of four items. For example, 'I find it important to decide as much as possible about spending the budget of my unit'. Three similar items were presented: one concerning human resource management, one concerning the content of research and one concerning the content of teaching (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$).

middle managers preferred individual decision making just as much (4.0 and 3.9, respectively) and are equally convinced that it is important that decisions be supported by those who have to implement them (4.4 and 4.4, respectively). But there are differences. The middle managers in the universities (score 4.2) supported much more the idea that researchers should be able to choose their research topics than did their colleagues in the university colleges (score 3.6) (t (588) = –7.5; $p < 0.0001$). Moreover, not only did the middle managers not want to give the lecturers total freedom to determine the content of their courses, but also this stance was stronger in the university colleges (score 2.7) than it was in universities (score 3.3) (t (593) = –6.9; $p < 0.0001$).

Since the positions of middle managers in the university colleges and universities differ, it could be expected that different positions would have different expectations as far as independence of decision making about the spending of the budget for research and teaching are concerned. Using variance analysis, we expected to see the differences among the scores on the scale of autonomy and three other items. However, in the university colleges, the scores on the four variables in Table 2 for the heads of departments, the programme coordinators and other middle managers are almost the same.

This picture is different for the universities. The different managers do not share the same opinion about individual-based decision making (F (4,336) = 4.51; p = 0.002). The scores are between 3.76 and 4.27. The Tukey test shows that the heads of departments (score 3.77) are less keen on individual autonomy in decision making than the research directors (score 4.19). The data also show that the middle managers in the universities have a different opinion about the thesis that teachers should have the right to decide for themselves about the content of their teaching (F (4,332) = 2.68; $p = 0.03$), but the differences are rather small.

Let us turn now to the second characteristic of managerialism: the efficiency of the functioning of an organisation. An efficient organisation is considered to be very important for attaining targets. In order to know whether this was an important issue for middle managers, we asked them four questions. These four questions could not be used to construct a scale. The mean scores show that efficiency is not the most important goal for middle managers. Does this mean that these managers are reluctant to be efficient? I think this is uncertain. Each item asked the respondent to make a comparison between efficiency and the feeling of satisfaction among students or lecturers. The answers show that these managers were still very sensitive to the attitudes of the students and lecturers. Therefore, it is reasonable to think that efficiency was assigned a rather low score. Only one item scored higher then three on a five-point scale. On all other items, efficiency was scored less than the middle of the continuum.

The fourth item in Table 3 is also interesting: the middle managers seem to be confused about their choice of a collegial or a professional relationship with the members of their unit. In the university colleges, 38% of the managers chose a professional relationship, but in the universities only 28% chose it. The managers of the university colleges (score 3.1 out of 5) preferred a significantly more professional relationship than did the managers of the universities (score 2.9) (t (589) =

Table 3 Attitude towards the efficiency of the organisation

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
1. 'I find satisfaction of students more important than an efficient organisation'[a]	596	2.75	0.95	1	5
2. 'I find the satisfaction of lecturers more important than achieving the targets of our organisation'[a]	597	3.26	0.91	1	5
3. 'I prefer a delay in achieving some targets of our organisation above unsatisfactory lecturers'[a]	595	2.19	0.83	1	5
4. 'For myself, I find a professional relation with the lecturers more important than a collegial relationship'	591	2.98	1.01	1	5

[a]When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.

2.53; $p = 0.012$). It could be suggested that the merging of the university colleges widened the distance between the managers and teachers compared with that in the universities. The three other items in Table 3 do not present significant differences between the scores of the university managers and those of the university college managers. Even the scores of the different types of decision makers in the universities and university colleges are not significantly different for the first three items in Table 3. Only item 4 shows a different opinion among the different types of decision makers in the university colleges (F (2,233) = 3.53; $p = 0.03$). The heads of departments (score 3.53) preferred more professional relations over collegial relations than did the programme coordinators (score 2.98). This preference of the heads of departments for a professional relationship with the lecturers may be a consequence of the large groups of lecturers in the departments and of the merging of the departments.

Managerialism is also characterised by the concern shown to quality assurance. This certainly became part of the management attitude of the decision makers in the universities and university colleges. Item 2 in Table 4 gives a score of 4.15 out of 5. However, quality assurance did not receive an absolute value, which is illustrated by item 3 in Table 4. The score expressing an option for quality assurance if the manager has to choose between quality assurance and other things is only 3.27 out of 5. When we asked managers to choose between quality assurance and preparing good teaching, the score in favour of quality assurance is even less (score 2.3). Moreover, these managers seemed to believe that quality assurance was not commensurate with the amount of effort of all those involved in achieving it. Of course, these critical reflections contributed to the lower general score for quality assurance (score 3.1).

Quality assurance was appreciated more in the university colleges (score 3.3 of 5) than in the universities (score 3) (t (600) = 4.339; $p < 0.0001$). The different categories of the decision makers in the universities had no different appreciation of quality assurance (F (4,337) = 1.5; $p = 0.20$). For the university colleges, the

Table 4 Attitude towards quality assurance

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
1. 'I think we should spend more time on offering good teaching than on organising quality assurance'[a]	597	2.30	1.06	1	5
2. 'I find it important to pay constant attention to the assurance of the quality of the work of this unit'	598	4.15	0.77	1	5
3. 'If I have to choose among my obligations, I surely will choose to assure the quality'	592	3.27	0.94	1	5
4. 'The organisation of quality assurance demands more of the members of this organisation than it yields benefits'[a]	593	2.70	1.12	1	5
Total quality assurance (four items; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.67$)[b]	602	3.10	0.71	1	4.75

[a]When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.
[b]When some of the items in a scale were not answered by some respondents, the score of the scale was calculated using all answered items (with a minimum of two).

situation is different ($F\ (2,238) = 5.22$, $p = 0.006$). The heads of departments (score 3.49 out of 5) were more in favour of quality assurance than the programme coordinators (score 3.15).

Accountability can take on different forms (see above). To measure the attitude towards accountability, we used three items (see Table 5). Principal component analysis did not show evidence of a relationship between the three items. However, the scores in Table 5 show that the managers were relatively eager to be informed about the work of their colleagues (score 3.8) and they also agreed that they had to show they were doing their jobs properly (score 3.91). However, they also realised that accountability might be an instrument only for obtaining information about such things as teaching behaviour. If this is the case, they valued much

Table 5 Attitude towards accountability

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
1. 'Good cooperation between lecturers is more important than a good system for lecturers to give account of their work (e.g. SET)'[a]	597	2.21	0.96	1	5
2. 'A lecturer has to account for his or her work at all times'	596	3.80	0.98	1	5
3. 'Each manager has to account for his or her work to his or her colleagues'	598	3.91	0.87	1	5

[a]When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.

more collaboration between the lecturers than they valued systems of assessment (score 2.21).

The attitude towards accountability among middle managers in the universities and in the university colleges was almost the same. On only one item did the opinions differ. In the university colleges (score 3.91) more than in the universities (score 3.72) ($t(594) = 2.37$; $p = 0.018$), the managers stressed that the lecturer must be able to account for his or her work at any time (item 2 in Table 5).

Measured by using the three items in Table 5, the different managerial positions in the universities seem to share the same attitude towards accountability, except for item 2 in Table 5 ($F(4,334) = 2.61$; $p = 0.04$), but the differences are small. In the university colleges, there were different opinions concerning item 1 in Table 5 among the different positions ($F(2,237) = 4.47$; $p = 0.013$). The residual category[2] (score 2.6 out of 5) scored higher than the course coordinators' (score 2.1). As far as the other items are concerned, there is no significant difference between the opinions of the different decision makers in the university colleges.

One item that was not discussed in one of the previous instruments is the item referring to students as clients. Asked to give their opinion about the statement: 'I find it important that students be seen as clients', middle managers of university colleges scored 3.84 out of 5, whereas their colleagues in the universities scored 2.89 ($t(594) = 9.04$; $p < 0.0001$) (see also Biesta, 2004, p. 235; Gleeson & Shain, 1999, p. 467; Simkins, 2000, p. 321). The university colleges seem to be more open to managerialist terminology than are the universities. Nevertheless, this opinion is not shared by the different decision makers by position ($F(2,236) = 3.54$; $p = 0.03$). Heads of departments (score 4 out of 5) and programme coordinators (score 3.9) are more apt to use this terminology than the residual category (score 3.3). In the universities, the pattern is different ($F(4,333) = 2.31$; $p = 0.06$). No significant differences between the positions became visible.

Summary

Academic middle managers are pretty positive towards decentralisation, quality assurance and accountability. Although they scored low on the scale of efficiency, we doubt that this score expresses their attitude towards management efficiency. Indeed, efficiency was in each item compared with other valuable principles. Middle managers of universities and university colleges appreciate three characteristics (individual decision making, efficiency and accountability) almost equally, but differ in opinion about quality assurance. This could be the consequence of the different history and time of the establishment of quality assurance systems in universities and university colleges. Sometimes different opinions of the four characteristics of managerialism are expressed by those belonging to the different management positions (e.g. in universities: individual decision making; in university colleges: efficiency, quality assurance). But, sometimes, opinions are shared amongst the different management positions (e.g. in university colleges: individual decision making; in universities: quality assurance).

3.3 Some Forms of Managerialist Performance

Apart from the study of the attitude of middle managers towards some characteristics of managerialism, it is interesting to examine the perception of the fulfilment of these characteristics of managerialism by the different middle managers. I now provide an overview of the perception of managerial performance by the middle managers. The following characteristics are discussed in turn: (i) decentralisation of decision making; (ii) efficiency of management; (iii) quality assurance; and (iv) accountability.

3.3.1 Decentralisation of Decision Making

It was noted above that middle managers in both universities and university colleges are eager to make decisions themselves and that they also believe in the usefulness of decision making being carried out as close as possible to the person who has to perform the task. The question now is whether middle managers felt that they could decide many issues by themselves.

To get a picture of the decision-making process, the following questions were asked:

1. In your institution, what authorities are in your opinion the most important *for making policy proposals* for the financial and material policy of your unit (e.g. the budget)?
2. Apart from the board, the general council or the academic council, what authorities in your institution have in your opinion a *significant influence on the decisions* made in relation to the financial and material policy of your unit (e.g. the budget)?
3. What authorities in your institution are in your opinion the most important for *monitoring the execution of the decisions* concerning the financial and material policy of your unit (e.g. the budget)?

The same questions were asked concerning education policy, human resource management and research policy. The respondents could give the following answers: (i) a higher council than the council I am chairing or a higher authority; (ii) myself; (iii) the council of my unit; (iv) lower situated councils or authorities; (v) I don't know; and (vi) not applicable. Based on this information, 16 scales were constructed. Each scale expresses the intensity of the involvement of a particular authority in the chain of decision making. For instance, the scale of SelfEduc (see Table 6) offers a score between 0 and 3. The mean score for SelfEduc is 0.76, which means that, according to the respondents, their personal influence on decision making concerning education policy is low. The majority of the respondents believed that the decision-making process for education policy can be found in councils or authorities situated higher than themselves (HighEduc = 1.5). For the other variables see Table 6.

Table 6 Opinion about the involvement in the decision-making process of the different levels of management (score from 0 to 3) ($N = 609$)

	Mean	Std dev
HighEduc:[1] decisions about education policy in the hands of a higher authority (a)	1.50	1.14
HighFin: decisions about financial and material policy in the hands of a higher authority (b)	1.75	1.11
HighPers: decisions about HRM in the hands of a higher authority (c)	1.75	1.14
HighRes: decisions about research policy in the hands of a higher authority	0.97	1.12
SameEduc:[2] decisions about education policy in the hands of council of respondent	1.41	1.17
SameFin: decisions about financial and material policy in the hands of council of respondent	0.97	1.07
SamePers: decisions about HRM in the hands of council of respondent	1.03	1.14
SameRes: decisions about research policy in the hands of council of respondent	1.22	1.25
SelfEduc:[3] decisions about education policy in the hands of respondent (a)	0.76	1.07
SelfFin: decisions about financial and material policy in the hands of respondent (b)	0.75	1.04
SelfPers: decisions about HRM in the hands of respondent (c)	0.81	1.11
SelfRes: decisions about research policy in the hands of respondent	0.89	1.18
LowEduc: decisions about education policy in the hands of a lower authority[4]	0.21	0.61
LowFin: decisions about financial and material policy in the hands of a lower authority	0.11	0.40
LowPers: decisions about HRM in the hands of a lower authority	0.10	0.42
LowRes: decisions about research policy in the hands of a lower authority	0.30	0.80

The scores of the scales marked a, b and c differ significantly ($p < 0.001$) from each other.
[1]Cronbach's alphas for the 4 High scales are: 0.65, 0.63, 0.68 and 0.73, respectively.
[2]Cronbach's alphas for the 4 Same scales are: 0.69, 0.65, 0.73 and 0.81, respectively.
[3]Cronbach's alphas for the Self scales are: 0.77, 0.73, 0.79 and 0.83, respectively.
[4]Cronbach's alphas for the Low scales are: 0.72, 0.51, 0.77 and 0.87, respectively.

Table 6 shows that middle managers in higher education institutions experienced a hierarchical structure. The lower authorities were rarely mentioned as significant authorities in the decision-making process. The general pattern is that the higher the authority, the more decision-making power it has. There is one exception: as far as decision making about research policy is concerned, we find the highest score (1.22) in the council of the respondent and not in the hands of the respondent herself or himself or a higher authority. Moreover, higher authorities (score 0.97) do not score significantly higher than the respondent (score 0.89) (t (608) = 1.12; $p = 0.63$). I will return to this issue later.

When the results from university college respondents and university respondents are compared, a similar pattern emerges. Hierarchy is clearly present in both types of institutions. Self-determination is generally weaker than the determination by the

council chaired by the respondent or by a higher authority. Nevertheless, there are two exceptions. First, in university colleges, the score for HighEduc (1.25) is not remarkably higher than the score of SelfEduc (1.15) (t (246) = 0.994; $p = 0.321$), but both scores are less then the score of SameEduc (1.84). Concerning education policy, the university college middle managers seem to position decision making more in the councils they chair. In the next step of this analysis, it is shown which council is important for the decision-making process. Second, in the universities, research policy was more determined by the respondent (score 1.01) and even more by his or her own council (score 1.26) than by higher authorities (score 0.75) (t (361) = –3.59; $p = 0.002$). In the university colleges, the scores for decision making about research policy are 0.71, 1.17 and 1.29, respectively. These scores refer to a widely spread principle that research is centrally organised in university colleges.

In relation to decision making in financial and material policy, the scores for SelfFin (UC = 0.72; U = 0.77) and for SameFin (UC = 1.00; U = 0.95) are very close. Decision making about financial and material policy seems to occur more by higher authorities in the university colleges (score 1.92) than in the universities (score 1.63) (t (607) = 3.194; $p = 0.002$).

The last question we want to answer is whether the different positions in the university colleges and in the universities have different perceptions of the authorities involved in decision making with respect to different types of institutional policy. The heads of departments, programme coordinators and the residual category of the *university colleges* shared a similar opinion about their significance in relation to education policy ($p = 0.20$) and research policy ($p = 0.392$) but had different opinions about their position in relation to financial and material policy ($p < 0.0001$) and human resource management ($p < 0.0001$). Financial and material policy was perceived by the heads of departments (score 1.57) and the residual category (score 1.23) more as a domain where they made the decisions themselves in comparison with the programme coordinators (score 0.40). Human resource management is also seen much more by the heads of the departments (score 1.57) to be their domain than by the programme coordinators (score is 0.78).

The heads of departments, programme coordinators and the others have almost the same opinion about the significance of their own councils for research policy in the university colleges, but they have different opinions about the significance of the councils of their units in relation to education policy ($p = 0.003$), human resource management ($p < 0.0001$) and material and financial policy ($p < 0.0001$). The heads of departments (score 2.24) perceived education policy to be more the domain of the departmental council than did the programme coordinators (score 1.66). The data show the same relationship for financial and material policy (the scores are, respectively, 1.75 and 0.73) and for human resource management (1.86 and 0.74, respectively).

Looking at the data of those who thought that a higher authority made the decisions, the figures show that the heads of departments were convinced that decisions are taken by themselves or by the department council while the coordinators (HighEduc = 1.47; HighFin = 2.21; HighPers = 2.07; HighRes = 1.42) placed the

authority for decision making concerning the four domains in the hands of a higher authority.

Variance analysis suggests that the five different positions in the *universities* produce different opinions about the impact on decision making in the four domains. Close analysis of the data revealed significant differences with regard to financial and material policy and research policy. The research directors (score 0.96) perceived that they had a greater impact than did programme coordinators (score 0.28) in financial and material policy ($F(4,339) = 3.99$; $p = 0.004$). The same phenomenon is apparent in the realm of research policy ($F(4,339) = 6.37$; $p < 0.001$); the scores being 1.4 for the research directors, 0.5 for the deans, 0.8 for the department heads and 0.7 for the programme coordinators.

A similar pattern was found in relation to the opinion of the impact of the related councils of the different decision makers on decision making. In relation to education policy, the related council of the respondent scored significantly lower among the research directors (score 0.76) than among the deans (score 1.79), heads of departments (score 1.4) or programme coordinators (score 1.6). The scores have almost a similar pattern for financial and material policy (0.75, 1.47 and 1.25, respectively) and human resource management (0.76, 1.63 and 1.41, respectively). This is not the case for research policy. The research directors (score 1.21) scored lower only than the heads of departments or sections (score 1.81).

Higher authorities have a different impact on the education policy and research policy according to the different decision makers in universities. These middle managers share their opinion about the impact of higher authorities on financial and material policy and human resource management. The faculty and/or department councils have an important impact according to the heads of departments (score 1.73) and the research directors (score 1.86) on education policy. Both of these scores are significantly higher than the score given by the deans (score 0.95) to higher councils. In relation to research policy, the deans (score 1.37) gave importance to higher authorities. Their score is much higher than that of research directors (score 0.6) and programme coordinators (score 0.56). It is possible that the deans, because of their central position, pay more attention to university research policy while the lower ranks devise their research policy themselves.

Summary

In university colleges and universities, middle managers experience a hierarchical structure. The higher the authority, the more decision-making power it has. This is not so for decision making about research: the council of the respondent is the most important decision maker. In spite of some differences, this pattern of decision making is found equally in universities and university colleges, but it might be different depending on the subject of decision making. For instance, decision making about research in universities is mainly the prerogative of the council of the respondent, but in university colleges this is more the field of a higher authority. The opinions of the different actors in universities and university colleges with respect to most of the influential decision makers varied according to area of decision making.

3.3.2 Efficient Management

Managerialism includes efficient behaviour by the members of an organisation. Eight items were used to find a common indicator for efficient behaviour. Principal component analysis showed that only two items could measure the same dimension (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$) and, although principal component analysis suggested that items 2, 4, 5 and 6 in Table 7 could give an indicator for efficient behaviour, Cronbach's α was too small (0.51) to use it as such. Thus, I discuss the items separately.

The first variable refers to deliberation and decision making and is founded on two items. The first one expresses the conviction of the respondent that deliberation is efficient in his or her unit; the second item refers to the opinion of the respondent that the members in his or her unit arrive efficiently at a common decision. Most of the middle managers think that decision making in their unit happens quite efficiently (score 4.02), but this conviction is more visible in the universities (score 4.11) than in the university colleges (score 3.90) ($t(593) = -3.302$; $p = 0.001$). Among the middle managers in the universities and university colleges, the opinion about efficient deliberation and decision making was no different. The deans, heads of departments, etc. seem to be equally convinced about the efficiency of these processes.

Less positive is the self-assessment of the efficiency of management action as shown in Table 7. The scores do not rise above 3.78 out of 5, and the lowest score is 2.36, which indicates that human resource management is a problem for quite a few of the academic middle managers. In the university colleges, 57% admitted that this was a problem, and at the universities 55% of the managers shared this opinion. In this questionnaire, the respondents were not asked about the reason for their responses, but it is generally recognised that universities and university colleges complain about a shortage of personnel (Verhoeven, Van Petegem, & Dom, 2000).

Table 7 Self-assessment of the efficiency of managerial action

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
1. 'In my unit, quality assurance is not efficiently organised'[a]	579	3.69	0.88	1	5
2. 'In my unit, we don't have the instruments to manage the human resources efficiently'[a]	569	2.36	1.14	1	5
3. 'In my unit, we can apply a financial policy efficiently'	563	3.09	1.13	1	5
4. 'In my unit we can organise education efficiently'	579	3.78	0.92	1	5
5. 'In my unit we can't organise research efficiently'[a]	561	3.47	1.13	1	5
6. 'In my unit we can organise social services efficiently'	563	3.40	1.00	1	5

[a]When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.

The managers of universities and university colleges shared almost the same opinion concerning items 1, 2 and 4 in Table 7 but not for items 3, 5 and 6. The score of the university managers (score 3.2) on item 3 is significantly higher than the score of managers of university colleges (score 2.96) ($t(561) = -2.061$; $p = 0.04$). This confirms the constantly recurring complaints of the university colleges that their funding is insufficient. The figures for item 5 in Table 7 also confirm that there was more doubt among the managers of the university colleges (score 3.04) than of those in the universities (score 3.75) ($t(559) = -7.527$; $p < 0.0001$) concerning the organisation of scientific research. The same critical standpoint is more pronounced with regard to the delivery of social services: the managers of the university colleges scored lower (score 3.27 out of 5) on this item than did those of the universities (score 3.55) ($t(561) = -3.297$; $p = 0.001$).

It could be expected that the different positions occupied by the managers in the two kinds of institutions would be the determinant of different opinions about the efficiency of their respective units. This was not so in the universities, but opinions in the university colleges concerning some of the items in Table 7 did differ. The reactions to item 2 in Table 7 depended on the position of the respondent ($F(2,228) = 11.9$; $p < 0.0001$). The programme coordinators (score 2.16) were more concerned with the instruments for efficiently managing human resources than were the heads of departments (score 2.92) and the residual category (score 2.9). Opinions also differed about the possibility of having an efficient financial policy (item 3 in Table 7) ($F(2,212) = 11.94$; $p < 0.0001$). The heads of departments (score 3.33) and the residual category (score 3.7) had more confidence in the possibility of having an efficient financial policy than did the programme coordinators (score 2.72). The last item that shows different opinions among the different positions in the university colleges is item 5 ($F(2,208) = 4.47$; $p = 0.013$). Research has not been an important target of the university colleges. Recently, the government pushed them more in that direction,[3] but a large group of these managers think that they do not have the instruments to organise research efficiently. This is more the case among the programme coordinators (score 2.88) than among the residual category (score 3.55). The opinion of the heads of departments did not differ significantly from the opinion of the programme coordinators or from that of the residual category.

Summary

Middle managers believe that decision making is rather efficient and this belief is stronger in universities than in university colleges. They complain the most about instruments to manage human resources efficiently and this is equally so in universities and university colleges. These managers are more positive about the efficiency of the organisation of quality assurance and education, an opinion shared in universities and university colleges alike. They are more critical about the efficiency of financial policy, the organisation of research and social services. Managers of university colleges are less positive concerning the three last fields of policy than those of universities. In universities, deans, chairpersons of departments and others

share the same opinion about efficiency. In university colleges, actors evaluate the efficiency differently depending on the field of policy.

3.3.3 Quality Assurance

Although quality assurance has long been an obligatory part of university and college management, it is not highly appreciated by the middle managers, at least if we let the managers chose between quality assurance and other important purposes. However, when we asked them whether they found it important to pay constant attention to quality assurance of their units, the score is quite high (4.15 out of 5). Thus, quality assurance was an important issue for these middle managers. Not only is there a positive attitude towards quality assurance but also there are indicators that it should be very well organised and that the different parts of the organisation positively evaluated. In the web-based questionnaire, nine questions concerning the organisation of quality assurance and organisational evaluation were asked. Principal component analysis detected two dimensions. In Table 8, we can see that the respondents considered that the functioning of quality assurance is well organised (score 3.67), but they were more reserved with respect to the consequences of the current quality assurance system (score 3.21).

In the university colleges, the middle managers (score 3.74) identified more actions that protect quality than did their colleagues in the universities (score 3.62) (t (585) = 1.861; $p = 0.06$). But two items of the quality assurance functioning index are very interesting in this respect. About 85% of the middle managers of university

Table 8 Assessment of quality assurance functioning and of the consequences of quality assurance

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Quality assurance functioning[a]	587	3.67	0.73	1.00	5
Quality assurance consequences[a]	585	3.21	0.67	1.33	5

Quality assurance (QA) functioning (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$) is composed of four items: 1. In my unit, QA is well organised; 2. Every member of my unit is involved in QA; 3. In my unit, action is regularly taken to assure quality; 4. In my unit, attention is paid to the measurements of QA. QA consequences (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.63$) are composed of five items: 1. The QA of my unit puts a lot of pressure on some members;* 2. The QA of my unit needs revision;* 3. The QA of my unit is insufficient to assure the quality of teaching;* 4. The QA assures sufficiently the quality of research of my unit; 5. The QA of my unit is too demanding on the members of my unit in comparison with the benefits of QA.* The number of respondents who responded to these five items was rather low. QA might be organised on the level of the faculty, the department or a smaller unit. A number of respondents thought that these questions were not applicable to their situation. Because research does not belong to the tradition of the university colleges, about 19% of the middle managers of these colleges considered item 4 as not being applicable to their situation.

[a]When some of the items in a scale were not answered by some respondents, the score of the scale was calculated using all answered items (with a minimum of two).

*When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.

colleges agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that steps are regularly taken in their units to assure quality. In the universities, this figure is only 61%. Paying attention to the measurements of quality assurance functioning, item 4 is supported in the university colleges by about 70% of middle managers, while the figure is only 59% in the universities.

The consequences of quality assurance were appreciated more positively by university middle managers (score 3.29) than by those in the university colleges (score 3.10) (t (583) = –3.415; $p = 0.0007$). Two items show a big difference between the opinion of the middle managers in the universities and of those in the university colleges. About 57% of middle managers in the university colleges agree or strongly agree that quality assurance generates a great deal of pressure for some of their unit members (item 1), while this figure is 44% in the universities. In the universities, about 64% of middle managers believe that the current quality assurance is satisfactory for guaranteeing the quality of research; in the university colleges the figure is no more than 33%. The latter figure is a consequence of the growing interest in research in the university colleges.

In the university colleges the heads of departments, programme coordinators and the residual category obviously share similar views on the application of quality assurance (F (2,237) = 2.44; $p = 0.09$). This is not the case as far as the consequences are concerned (F (2,236) = 7.57; $p = 0.0007$). The heads of departments (score 3.29) and the residual category (score 3.44) were more positive towards the consequences of quality assurance than were the programme coordinators (score 2.99). In universities, research directors (score 3.51) believe less in the good functioning of quality assurance than programme coordinators do (score 3.92) (F (4,323) = 3.66; $p = 0.006$).

Summary

Although the functioning of quality assurance got a positive score, academic middle managers believe that quality assurance can be improved, and this opinion is stronger in university colleges than in universities.

3.3.4 Accountability

In Section 2, it was stressed that accountability could be linked to different stakeholders. Therefore, we presented to the respondents 10 items in which different stakeholders had a function. Principal component analysis generated three dimensions (see Table 9).

Referring to the different stakeholders, the middle managers seem to have been reasonably satisfied about the volume of information on policy accountability (SatInfoAccount = 3.70). The majority stated that they wanted to keep that level because they very clearly expected lecturers and researchers to be accountable for their work (ExpectAccount = 4.28). Moreover, they stressed that they really cared that lecturers and researchers should be accountable for the money made available and for research policy (ConcernAccount = 4.23). Accountability seems to belong

Table 9 Assessment of the instruments to measure accountability, expectations towards lecturers concerning accountability, and concerns about the accountability of the unit

	N	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
SatInfoAccount[a,b]	587	3.70	0.72	1.20	5
ExpectAccount[c]	481	4.28	0.72	1.00	5
ConcernAccount[d]	471	4.23	0.67	1.50	5

[a]SatInfoAccount (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$) is composed of six items: 1. My unit has sufficient information to account for its policy to the academic authorities; 2. My unit does not have sufficient information to account for its policy to a higher level;* 3. My unit has sufficient information to account for its policy to its clients; 4. My unit does not have sufficient information to account for its policy to the members of this unit;* 5. I do not have enough time to account for my policy acts;* 6. I do not have enough information to account for the education policy acts.* This index suffered from a high proportion of respondents who answered 'not applicable'. For instance, 20% of the university managers responded to item 3 with 'not applicable'.
[b]When some of the items in a scale were not answered by some respondents, the score of the scale was calculated using all answered items (with a minimum of two).
[c]ExpectAccount (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.81$) is composed of two items: 1. I expect each lecturer to be accountable for his or her teaching; 2. I expect each researcher to be accountable for his or her research. This index also suffered from a high proportion of respondents who answered 'not applicable'. For instance, 23% of the university college managers responded to item 1 with 'not applicable' and to item 2, 27%. For reasons for this, see above.
[d]ConcernAccount (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.61$) is composed of two items: 1. It is my job to see to it that my unit can account for the spending of the available money; 2. It is my job to see to it that my unit can account for the research policy acts. For the same reasons as before, about 23% of the college managers responded 'not applicable' to item 2.
*When an item in the questionnaire was negatively phrased, the scores changed. The mean score in the table is the expression of the new scale going from one to five, where five expresses the highest valuation of efficiency.

to the culture of the institutions of higher education, but it should not be forgotten that research policy is seen by many middle managers in the university colleges as not part of their task.

There is no significant difference between the opinions of the middle managers in the universities (SatInfoAccount = 3.72) and the opinions of those in the university colleges (SatInfoAccount = 3.72) as far as the appreciation of the volume of information to support accountability is concerned (t (585) = 0.4; $p = 0.69$). But the expectations of the middle managers concerning the accountability of lecturers were significantly higher in the university colleges (ExpectAccount = 4.42) than in the universities (ExpectAccount = 4.19) (t (479) = 3.41; $p = 0.0007$). For example, 91% of the middle managers of university colleges agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that each lecturer should be held accountable for his or her teaching. In the universities, only 78% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. On the other hand, the middle managers in universities (ConcernAccount = 4.31) seem to promote the impression that they cared more about accountability than did their colleagues in the university colleges (ConcernAccount = 4.06) (t (469) = –3.78; $p =$ 0.0002).

In the university colleges, the heads of departments (ExpectAccount = 4.43) and the programme coordinators (ExpectAccount = 4.41) shared almost the same expectations as far as accountability is concerned (F (2,177) = 0.16; $p = 0.85$), but they had different opinions about the volume of information required for accounting for their management (F (2,234) = 8.79; $p = 0.0002$) and different concerns about the application of accountability (F (2,148) = 7.24; $p = 0.001$). The heads of departments (4.06) scored a little higher than did the programme coordinators (3.95) on the scale SatInfoAccount and on the scale ConcernAccount (3.91 and 3.68, respectively).

As far as the satisfaction about the amount of information required to account for management in universities is concerned, the opinions of the various middle managers are rather similar (F (4,326) = 1.33; $p = 0.26$). This is also the case for the concerns they have about being accountable for the spending of money and for research policy (F (4,301) = 1.76; $p = 0.14$). Nevertheless, the expectations of the middle managers towards the researcher being accountable for his or her research and the lecturer being accountable for his or her teaching differed (ExpectAccount). The difference between the managers is most striking, between, on the one hand, the programme coordinators (ExpectAccount = 4.58) and, on the other hand, between the heads of departments (ExpectAccount = 4.12) and the research directors (ExpectAccount = 4.13) (F (4,283) = 2.41; $p = 0.049$). Although the two items of ExpectAccount concern teaching and research, close analysis of the data shows that the programme coordinators (score 4.55) actually expected more accountability from lecturers and researchers than did the research directors (score 4.12). The reason for this difference in attitude has yet to be determined.

Summary

Middle managers seem to be relatively satisfied about the available information necessary to inform the different stakeholders. On the other hand, their expectations towards lecturers and researchers are significantly higher, as are their feelings concerning the accountability they expect from others. These middle managers see themselves as bearing a lot of responsibility. In universities and university colleges, satisfaction with available information is the same. The expectations of lecturers and researchers and the concern about being responsible, though, are higher in university colleges. Middle managers in university colleges seem to worry more than their colleagues in universities about being accountable.

4 Has the Situation Changed?

Comparison of these perceptions with earlier research would have been interesting, but the data of previous (qualitative) research did not allow this. To resolve this problem, another method was chosen. Five questions were asked (see Table 10), and the respondent could answer whether a phenomenon was less, equally or more present than 5 years ago. Although not everybody answered these questions, most of the

Table 10 Changes in management according to the middle managers (score from 1 to 3)

	N	Mean	Std dev
1. In comparison with 5 years ago, do the managers pay more or less attention to the efficiency of the management of your institution?	532	2.75	0.53
2. In comparison with 5 years ago, do the managers of your institution pay more or less attention to the achievement of the targets?	547	2.77	0.49
3. In comparison with 5 years ago, does your institution pay more or less attention to assuring the quality of teaching?	561	2.80	0.46
4. In comparison with 5 years ago, are the managers of your institution more or less willing to delegate some of their tasks?	474	2.28	0.74
5. In comparison with 5 years ago, do managers have to account more or less for their management?	511	2.48	0.68
Assessment of change (composed of items 1–5; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.69$)	422	2.62	0.40

respondents did, indeed, recognise much change, mostly concerning management efficiency (item 1), target setting (item 2) and quality assurance (item 3). Delegation of tasks and accountability had changed but not as much as the three other elements.

Because the university colleges had to adapt to new rules (merger), it could be expected that they changed much more than did the universities. Indeed, the middle managers in the university colleges scored significantly higher than their colleagues in the universities on three items: target setting, delegation and accountability. No differences emerged as far as efficiency and quality assurance are concerned.

5 Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this chapter was expressed in terms of three questions. First, it was important to obtain a clear idea of managerialism as the literature about managerialism is vast and not univocal. Based on the study of these sources, we defined managerialism as a management style that is focused on efficiency, effectiveness, quality assurance, decentralisation and accountability. Tasks in a managerial climate are supposed to be fulfilled efficiently (inter alia Amaral, Fulton et al., 2003; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Keating, 2001; Meek, 2003). Moreover, the actors should try to achieve the targets of the organisation with a certain level of effectiveness. Therefore, the organisation needs a quality assurance system that focuses on the production of the educational products that meet certain standards (inter alia Biesta, 2004; Codd, 2005; Keating, 2001; Meek, 2003; Santiago et al., 2006; Simkins, 2000). Engagement in these activities is not merely of interest to the manager – as many of the stakeholders as possible should also be convinced that the managers have made the right decisions and steered the organisation in this direction. In other words, managers have to be accountable to the stakeholders (inter alia Biesta, 2004; Keating, 2001; Meek, 2003; Vidovich & Slee, 2001). Whether this can be achieved by decentralisation is a point of discussion (Fulton, 2003; Meek, 2003).

Nevertheless, many authors hold that the results will be attained more effectively if the decision-making process is as close as possible to the person who has to perform the action (inter alia Amaral, Fulton et al., 2003; Keating, 2001). Possibly, individual decision making is replacing traditional collegial decision making.

The second question we asked was whether academic middle managers of the universities and university colleges thought and acted according to management principles. A web-based questionnaire was sent to them with the purpose of obtaining a description of their perception of some managerialist indicators observable at that time in the universities and university colleges. Third, we were interested in change or continuity of opinions about managerialism.

As far as the managerial values were concerned, this survey delivered the following conclusions. First, individual decision making was relatively highly valued (3.99 out of 5) (Amaral, Fulton et al., 2003) in the universities and university colleges alike. Efficient management was certainly one of the targets. Quality assurance was considered part and parcel of daily life for most middle managers (score 4.15 out of 5), and more so for middle managers in the university colleges than in the universities. They also expected the lecturers and other colleagues (score 3.91 out of 5) to be accountable for their work, but not at all times.

The next question we asked was whether these middle managers acted according to managerialist principles. First, although the middle managers stated that decision making should take place as close as possible to the person who has to perform the task, they did not apply this principle in practice. Actually, the middle managers experienced a hierarchical structure (see also Santiago et al., 2006, p. 221). Second, as stated above, the middle managers in these institutions were relatively strongly convinced (score 4.02 out of 5) that decisions in their organisation were efficiently made and supported by general opinion. These ideas were expressed more by respondents in the universities than by those in the university colleges. Third, although the middle managers considered quality assurance to be a very important part of their task, they were less optimistic about the application of quality assurance systems. Fourth, accountability was highly valued (Biesta, 2004). The middle managers expected researchers and lecturers to be accountable and cared strongly about accounting for budget expenditure and for research policy implementation, but were not so satisfied about the quality of information available to account for different forms of policy development and implementation.

It is clear that academic middle managers have an open mind with respect to managerial principles but not at the expense of academic values in general. Most of them are certainly not supporters of extreme managerial thinking. Asked to express their attitude towards efficiency of the organisation in comparison with other values, they make clear that they prefer more the satisfaction of students above an efficient organisation, a delay in achieving some targets above unsatisfactory teaching, and a collegial relationship above a professional relationship. Moreover, they think that they should spend more time on offering good teaching than on organising quality assurance and they are afraid that the organisation of quality assurance unduly demands more of the staff compared with the results. They also think that good cooperation between lecturers is more important than a good system for lecturers

to account for their work. Middle managers do not locate decision making in their own hands but more in the hands of the council they chair or a higher authority. Collegial negotiation is part and parcel of their role. They have the feeling that they do not have the instruments to effectively manage human resources and have doubts about the possibility of achieving efficiently in the management of financial policy. Quite a lot of these middle managers complain about some dysfunctions of quality assurance. For instance, they fear that quality assurance puts a lot of pressure on some staff and about one-third of these managers think that quality assurance is too demanding on the staff relative to the benefits. More than one-third fear that they do not have enough time to account for their policy-related duties.

Universities and university colleges have different histories, attract different types of students, hire different types of teachers and researchers and offer them different career paths, have different missions, etc. Hence, it was reasonable to hypothesise that middle managers in the different types of institutions would have different opinions about the principles of management and would accordingly act differently. The data from the survey confirm some aspects of this hypothesis, but not others. Take, for example, management approaches to research. According to recent new regulations, university colleges are more than before supposed to invest in research (academisation, see Verhoeven, 2008). Nonetheless, the data show that there is still a difference between universities and university colleges. On several items concerning the management of research, middle managers of university colleges answer that these questions are not applicable or they simply do not answer. More than one-quarter of the middle managers of university colleges told us that they are not accountable for research in their unit. Indeed, programme coordinators are responsible for the coordination of teaching, not for research. The equivalent response in universities is about 6%. Whatever the position of a middle manager in a university, they are supposed to do research. Other issues also are approached totally differently in universities than in university colleges. For instance, only 14% of the middle managers of university colleges find it very important that the researcher himself or herself chooses the field of research, whereas in universities this figure is 38%. In university colleges, 37% of the respondents think that research is efficiently organised, while in universities about 67% have this opinion. About one-third of the middle managers of university colleges believe that the quality assurance system is sufficient to secure the quality of research; in universities this figure is about 64%.

Although it was fruitful to work with the hypothesis that differences in managerialist thinking and action could be explained by the type of institution to which the middle manager belongs or by his or her position in the institutional hierarchy, it is not a totally satisfactory explanation. First, the proportion of the variance in the different forms of managerialism explained by type of institution or position of the manager is very small. Second, no check for spurious relations was done. Future analysis might show that the relations are vulnerable. Moreover, a provisional check of other independent variables (gender, age, qualification, etc.) only explains a small proportion of the variance. A first glimpse of the results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis confirms the rather weak impact of these independent variables. More variance could be explained by attitudes towards some aspects of managerialism or some managerial practices. This brings us to the hypothesis

that managerialism is more determined by the organisational culture of an institution and less by position, experience, qualification, age, gender or other similar variables.

To conclude, I want to remind the reader that the purpose of this chapter was to describe whether some characteristics of managerialism could be identified in the universities and university colleges. The answer is in the affirmative and, according to the middle managers themselves, this has increased during the past 5 years. However, this research also demonstrates that managerialism is not present in its extreme forms as defined at the beginning of this chapter. A relatively large group of middle managers of these institutions still prefer a collegial approach, and they criticise some of the less pleasant consequences of managerialism. Moreover, the analysis also shows that middle managers think and act differently depending on the field of decision making. Respondents express different attitudes towards management issues concerning research, teaching and finance. In spite of this qualification, it is also clear that taking into account future changes in the funding of these institutions, together with the positive appreciation of managerial principles expressed by the middle managers, development of a stronger managerial orientation is likely.[4]

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Notes

1. The following study areas were excluded from this research: social and political sciences, social health sciences, medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, applied sciences (engineering) and applied biological sciences (bio-engineering).
2. This category is composed of the managers who did not fit in one of the two other categories (heads of departments or programme coordinators). They may be assistant heads of departments, quality assurance officers and the like.
3. About 12% of the managers of the university colleges did not answer this question.
4. Nevertheless, it recently became clear that all management principles will not be accepted unconditionally by the staff. After a negative assessment of the managerial capacities of the rector of a big university at the end of his first term of office by a special assessment committee, this rector had to resign. Immediately, professors, students and other members of the university started a petition. They stressed that the evaluation of a rector cannot be passed to a special assessment committee, but is the right of the university community.

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The Roles and Responsibilities of Middle Management (Chairs and Deans) in Canadian Universities

Lydia Boyko and Glen A. Jones

1 Introduction

Major shifts have taken place in the relationship between Canada's universities and the state over the last decade. Interest is growing in policy approaches that stimulate market-like competition within the university sector (Jones & Young, 2004), and substantial changes in research support encourage private sector partnerships, recognise institutional overhead costs and invest in human resources and research infrastructure. Canadian universities are increasingly subjected to new government accountability requirements, and there are rising public expectations related to the universities' contributions to regional and national economic development. Given this environment, one may assume that the management of Canadian universities has become more demanding and complex, especially at the level of middle management. Academic middle managers face the challenge of functioning at the interface between the universities' central administration and the faculties and departments where the rubber of the new marketised and strategic research environment meets the road of daily academic life. Are the roles of middle managers in Canadian universities changing?

Our objective in this chapter is to examine the roles and responsibilities of middle management in Canadian universities, specifically, the department 'chair' (also referred to as 'head') and the faculty 'dean', in order to ascertain whether these functions have changed – in rhetoric or in fact – as a function of a 'new public management' or 'new managerialist' paradigm that seems to be penetrating higher education systems and institutions worldwide. Our objective is to understand how Canadian universities describe and define these positions through an analysis of institutional documents and collective agreements with respect to the appointment process, terms of office, depiction of duties and other conditions of employment.

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We begin the chapter by describing the Canadian university sector, including its institutional governance and administrative structures. We provide a brief retrospective on the development of the position of the chair and the office of the dean and then present the findings of our empirical study of current arrangements.

2 Canadian Universities: Organisation and Governance

Canada is a federation of 10 provinces and three territories. The responsibility for education is constitutionally assigned to the provinces. There is no national ministry of education or higher education. The federal government provides indirect support to postsecondary education through fiscal transfers to the provinces and territories, and direct support in policy areas such as research and development and student financial assistance (Fisher et al., 2006).

The vast majority of university students attend publicly supported institutions; a small number are enrolled in a handful of small private institutions established in recent years. The more traditional public university sector comprises 45 institutions that offer primarily undergraduate programmes, 15 universities classified as comprehensive, and another 15 identified as medical/research (Jones, 2006).[1]

Canada's public universities are legally chartered as private not-for-profit corporations. With a few exceptions, each of these universities has been established by a unique legislative charter with substantial differences among them in the structure, composition, powers and responsibilities of their respective governing bodies (Jones, 2002). Universities are largely self-governing, with considerable flexibility in the management of their financial affairs and programme offerings. Most Canadian universities have a bicameral system of governance specified under their corporate charter involving an administrative board of governors and an academic senate. Boards are assigned responsibility under the charter for financial and administrative policy. Senates are responsible for academic policy, including approving programmes of study, courses and curricula, and admission requirements. The boards are superior to the senates in the nature and scope of their authority.

At most Canadian universities, a chancellor is the titular head of the institution in a largely ceremonial role. The senior executive officer of the university is the president (also referred to as 'principal' or 'rector') who is appointed by the board on the recommendation of a search committee. The president is appointed for a finite time period, subject to renewal and reports to and can potentially be dismissed by the board. While the administrative structures vary among universities, typically, two vice-presidents play a leading executive management role in each institution: an academic vice-president (sometimes called a 'provost') responsible for academic policy; and an administrative vice-president focusing on financial and operational policy issues (Jones, 2002). Other vice-president-level positions may also be created for specialised areas such as human resources, external relations, research and technological innovation. As a rule, universities are organised into faculties, led by a dean, and departments, headed by a chair.

The vast majority of the 34,000 full-time faculty members at the public universities (CAUT, 2007) are members of unionised faculty associations. Collective agreements are negotiated locally between the central administration of the university, on behalf of the corporate board and the institution-level faculty union. These agreements deal with a wide range of faculty human resource issues, including specifying the specific procedures for academic appointments, tenure and promotion. These agreements have important implications for the work of chairs and deans since the agreements describe the responsibilities of these academic administrators in these important processes. In addition to faculty, chairs and deans may also be directly involved in day-to-day management issues of workers represented by other unions, including, for example, support staff, part-time faculty, sessional instructors and teaching assistants.

2.1 Chairs and Deans: Change Over Time

In Canada, department chairs and faculty deans have received little attention in the research literature of higher education, and there are surprisingly few references to these positions in works focusing on the history of higher education in this country. The earliest references to chairs and deans, distinct from the professoriate, appear as isolated references in compendia chronicling the expansive and fragmented evolution of Canada's higher education network of structures, systems and governance models – a reflection of the heterogeneity in the establishment of our postsecondary institutions, most of which have grown organically over the span of close to 175 years. By and large, university chairs have been profiled as 'faculty', specifically, members of teaching and research staff of a unit. University deans have been characterised as 'senior management' and discussed in the company of senior academic administrators such as the vice-president (academic) and research, and directors of schools and divisions.

Given that most institutions were extremely small during the mid-to-late 1800s, the university president usually fulfilled the functions that we would now associate with a dean (Harris, 1976). A department often consisted of a single instructor specialising in a given subject. By 1860, at the University of Toronto, four new departments had been established with associate chairs: for math and natural philosophy, chemistry, natural history and mineralogy and geology. Effectively, the title of chair mattered little as the scientist in charge of each area had been generally, not specifically, trained. The Faculty of Arts, which also embraced adult education and graduate instruction and included professors with cross-appointments to the Faculties of Theology and Engineering, was dominated by the president (Harris, 1976). Indeed, the president's power and influence over his institution appeared pervasive in certain universities into the 1930s. Chairs and deans were considered senior faculty and expected to support all executive policies; those who dared to question any related decisions could be threatened with termination (Horn, 1999). During the Depression, for cost-saving reasons, only deans who had teaching

responsibilities were typically kept on; other deans were let go due to the extremely difficult economic conditions at some institutions. This unfortunate circumstance led to a trend of university boards assuming increasing decision-making authority on staff-associated matters, particularly in recruitment and retention. Job security and tenure were not part of common parlance and seemed severed from the academic concept of 'freedom' until the emergence of representative faculty associations and the movement towards unionisation in the 1960s and 1970s.

Before the period of rapid university expansion in the 1960s, the roles of the chair and the dean appeared rather straightforward, with a focus on academic affairs, notably, maintaining relationships with faculty and students. Administration was hierarchical but relatively flat. Department chairs reported to deans, who had only vice-presidents and the president above them (Tudiver, 1999). Deans were appointed by the president without formal input from members of the teaching staff and usually came from inside the university. The dean, often in consultation with the vice-president, to whom he or she reported, recommended salary amounts and benefits, developed budgets, put forward candidates for promotion, hired new faculty, ruled on requests for sabbaticals, arranged workload and implemented disciplinary procedures.

Accountability and the 'more scholar for the dollar' dictum of the 1970s came with more stringent demands by governments to show evidence of efficiency and cost-effectiveness as they reduced monies flowing to the institutions (Vickers, 1979), increasing scepticism within the broader public community over the role and relevance of the 'ivory tower', concomitant with concerns over barriers to accessibility. Senior academics-turned-amateur-administrators are said to have earned ulcers or heart attacks as a reward for their service, and at the price of academic career progress (Macdonald, 1979).

The academy was being described as a big university business (Macdonald, 1966). The student population more than tripled between the early 1950s and 1960s, from 63,000 to 200,000 students in the postsecondary system, accommodating post-World War II veterans, immigrants and the beginning of the baby-boom bulge. The responsibilities of the university administration were becoming more complex as the 'multiversity' took shape. The 'head' was compared to 'a foreman in industry' (Brann, 1972 quoted in Watson, 1979, p. 21), at the lowest rung of the university's structure (Watson, 1979), at times experiencing 'severe cost pressures' if department colleagues and higher administrators held different expectations of the head's position responsibilities. The work was described as an 'unrewarding experience' (Watson, 1979, p. 21).

Departments were expanding, and the power structure and relations among faculty were shifting in favour of more participatory decision-making arrangements. Many junior faculty were hired before they had completed their doctorate, and they struggled to secure both higher education degrees and a say in decision making (Watson, 1979). The thrust towards democratisation required a redefinition of the role of the department; the change in title from 'head' to 'chairman' is said to have indicated the different status of a department's academic administrators in more democratic institutions (Moses & Roe, 1990).

In a study conducted in 1984 at one university in Western Canada, Watson (1986) found that some department members believed the primary role of a department administrator was to provide academic leadership and wanted a 'head' who would hold office long enough 'to make an impression' (p. 18) with sufficient freedom to do so. However, the majority of respondents approved of chairs who operated within a broadly participatory form of administration; they wanted a chair who would coordinate the affairs of the department and represent the department in institutional decision-making structures. In particular, Watson (1986) noted that faculty saw the functions of a chair in narrow terms such as preparing and administering annual budgets, seeking funds for the area, course scheduling, allocating space and securing other facilities. Authority over academic policies, programmes and standards; faculty selection, tenure, promotion and re-appointment; and student admission and graduate assistantship assignments were all considered to be rightfully within the purview of the entire department – either through an elected committee or a department council including all faculty members. Decisions pertaining to research funding were deemed to be an individual faculty member's responsibility. Fundamentally, the chair was, first and foremost, viewed as a 'coordinator/administrator'; 'academic leadership' scored low on the priority scale (Watson, 1986, p. 21).

These perceptions were in line with the changes in university administration in Canada that had been taking place since the mid-1960s, notably, the decentralisation of decision making and the increase in faculty influence on academic policy. Universities had been growing rapidly in number and enrolment. For some faculty, institutional growth led to new administrative structures and arrangements that felt increasingly bureaucratic, and there was a sense of alienation in the face of what some perceived to be 'hard-nosed administrative responses to faculty concerns' (Penner, 1978, p. 72). In response to faculty and student pressure, institutional governance structures were reformed to become more transparent and democratic. Faculty unionisation became not only a mechanism to increase job security in the context of stable or declining government grants in the 1970s, but it also served to shift the power relationships within the university in order to limit administrative discretion by creating detailed procedures for academic tenure and promotion decisions and formalising the contractual conditions of academic work. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) provided a national forum for the exchange of information among faculty associations and developed model policies and contract language to support institution-level bargaining.

This direct faculty involvement in administrative matters marked a dramatic change in the university's power structure and fostered a more democratic administration, as the longstanding dominance of deans' councils and the 'old boys' network', where senior professors and administrators served as power brokers for their own interest, was significantly weakened (Penner, 1978, p. 82). Faculty and administrators 'met as legal equals at the bargaining table, no longer as beggars and supplicants' (Savage, 1994, p. 58). At the same time, collective agreements weakened the role and influence of senates (Penner, 1994), limited administrative discretion, were time-consuming to negotiate and administer, and

reinforced the division between management and non-management staff. Even faculty associations that did not seek union status entered into university agreements focusing on personnel issues such as job security, grievances, professional development and the procedures for determining salaries and benefits (Anderson & Jones, 1998).

In the 1970s, a study was conducted to gather baseline data about deans in Canadian universities, with a focus on their background, career patterns, role characteristics and professional development needs (Konrad, 1978). The majority of deans were found to be male, middle-aged, tenured faculty members. Three-quarters of the surveyed population held a doctoral degree, half of which were earned in the United States. Appointment terms varied slightly across faculties, averaging 5 years. Power and leadership activities were viewed as priority responsibilities; staff development, planning and external relations were ranked lowest. Pre-service and in-service administrative training and development were determined to be inadequate. Greater interaction of deans across faculties and institutions was recommended.

The findings of a comparative study of academic decision making in eight major Canadian and British universities (Lawless, 1981) conducted in the early 1980s advanced the notion of department heads in Canada being ‘clearly identified as administrators’ (p. 6), with limited power and direct access to the executive level that included the university principal or president. Based on input from department faculty members, Canadian heads were frequently selected through a formal process for a limited term of about 5 years. These appointments did not necessarily go to the senior professor in the department. In Britain, heads appeared to hold more power, with guaranteed direct access to the vice-chancellor. The study also determined that the Canadian dean was ‘clearly an administrator with considerable power’ (p. 5), enjoying a substantive budget. Canadian deans were selected through a highly formalised process for a minimum 5-year term, with the possibility of renewal. They were found to exercise ‘considerable influence both within their faculty and the university community’ (p. 5). Lawless argued that an insistence on the democratic process in Canadian universities skewed the selection of department heads towards outspoken individuals who were ‘popular’ and, therefore, ‘more readily identifiable by other academics’ or ‘less resistant or reluctant to accept the position’ (p. 27). Fears that there had been an increase in ‘bureaucratized academic administration, or the so-called corporate model of government’ (p. 26), were not substantiated in the study. Participants viewed ‘bureaucratisation’ as providing ‘continuity and direction in times of difficulty’ (p. 26), as long as appropriate checks were in place, notably, performance reviews and service renewal ceilings.

While academic administration had not evolved to become entirely corporate in orientation, Canadian universities had clearly advanced into complex, frequently large, organisations. They were administratively intricate, autonomous institutions that were self-governing and self-administering. Collective bargaining had concretised the division between management and labour. In the early stages of collective bargaining, some university administrations had sought to exclude department

chairs from the bargaining unit on the grounds that these were management positions, while faculty associations argued that chairs were 'academic team leaders' and proposed that deans also be included in the bargaining unit for the same reasons. This issue was eventually resolved through labour board decisions across the country, which positioned department chairs inside the faculty bargaining units (Penner, 1978). Under current collective agreements, department chairs are typically defined as members of the bargaining unit, while faculty deans are viewed as management and are excluded from the union.

The notions of chairs as team leaders allied closely with faculty, and deans as administrators allied closely with senior management – reinforced by collective agreements – have given credence to the traditional view of two fronts within the academy. Brown (2001) cites studies conducted in North America and Australia showing that chairs in particular find personnel problems the most difficult to handle and their succession planning needs to be improved. Most chairs see themselves as peers with fellow faculty members and are reluctant to go into the role, which they do not view as being part of their university career paths. For example, at the University of Saskatchewan, the Department Head Leadership Program was instituted several years ago to address concerns expressed and demonstrated by its chairs and to foster 'creative change' (Brown, 2001, p. 313). Chairs have been encouraged to use personal experience and expertise to nurture their colleagues and to maintain their units' effectiveness and cost-efficiency. Evidence of this model for chair leadership is not documented widely, although leadership development initiatives as part of broader organisational learning and development are increasingly common. For example, the University of Manitoba has in place a Leadership and Supervisory Support network of staff programmes such as coaching and best practices assessment, recognising that individuals in both academic and administrative functions who lead work units and teams are often in leadership roles because of their excellence in the technical area of focus, not necessarily for their management experience or skills (University of Manitoba, 2007). Manitoba's academic management programmes are available across Canada and can be custom-tailored to the needs of specific institutions. Conferences featuring subjects such as the challenges facing department chairs and women administrators in the academy are also organised. McGill University offers a wide array of leadership courses as part of an institution-wide staff development programme, anchored in skills and techniques such as delegating and empowering others, coaching, time and project management, supervisory roles and accountability (McGill University, 2007). The University of Ottawa runs a Centre for Academic Leadership to support deans, chairs and other individuals in their role as managers, aiming to 'capture the interest of future academic leaders and prepare the next generation' (University of Ottawa, 2007). Through a series of structured job-related professional development programmes, other learning resources and mentoring initiatives, the Centre aims to facilitate networking among colleagues holding academic unit management positions and offers to all professors the opportunity to explore alternative career paths (University of Ottawa, 2007).

3 Institutional Policies on Chairs and Deans

In the preceding section, we discussed the development of the role of chairs and deans in Canadian universities. In this section, we review the results of a study[2] of current institutional documents that illuminate the nature of these positions. We selected a representative sample of 30 of the 76 degree-granting public universities in Canada[3] on the basis of their size, institutional classification, programmes, language and geographic location. In the Canadian context, 'public' universities are defined as institutions that receive government operating support. Our study excluded private, denominational and other special-interest institutions. Universities from all 10 provinces are represented. The sample included universities that are English, French and bilingual; small, mid-sized and large. The sample also represented a balance of universities categorised as comprehensive, medical/research and primarily undergraduate, based on the emerging Statistics Canada classification system (Orton, 2003).

We explored the website of each selected university (and faculty association) to obtain relevant policy documents that describe the positions of chair and dean,[4] including appointment policies, memoranda of understanding and collective agreements. We also looked at position descriptions in advertisements for chairs and deans and any other institutional documents or resources that would help us understand the role and work of these academic administrators. Finally, in order to determine how these administrators are remunerated, we obtained customised national salary data from Statistics Canada that allowed us to compare the salaries of full professors, chairs and deans by analysing data from a representative sample of 50 universities.

Of the 30 universities included in our web-based sample, 26 have faculty unions representing full-time faculty. In the four remaining institutions, a memorandum of agreement between the board and the faculty association is in place, which specifies policies and procedures related to academic appointments, promotion and other conditions of faculty work.

Our emphasis in this study was on how these positions are constructed within university policy. An important limitation of the study is that we did not secure data from individuals holding these positions. The present study, anchored in content and text analysis, serves as a baseline for further empirical research on how these positions are actually perceived and understood by academic chairs, deans and others within the organisation, and how they are played out in day-to-day operations.

3.1 Findings

For most of the institutions in the sample, the primary documents for our analysis included the collective agreement complemented by institutional policy documents that describe the role and appointment of chairs and deans. Eight of the 30 universities examined have updated their internal human resource policy

manuals, guidelines and/or procedures since 2002. One university is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of its human resource policies. The majority (14) of the other 21 universities last amended their respective policies in the mid-1990s.

3.1.1 Department Chairs

Chairs are academics – that is, they are professors, typically tenured, with teaching and research backgrounds in a university setting – who temporarily step into this administrative role. At 26 institutions where the reporting structure is specified in either the institutional policy documents or the collective agreements, chairs all report to the dean. In all 16 collective agreements where this issue is explicitly addressed, chairs are members of the bargaining unit.

Terms of Office

Three-to-five-year appointment terms are the norm at 23 of the 25 universities that specify term length for appointments. The other two universities stipulate a 2-year and a 7-year term maximum, respectively. More than 75% (19 of the 25) of the universities allow the incumbent to seek re-appointment for a second term of the same length or less.

Initial Appointment Process

Our analysis of institutional documents suggests that chairs are appointed through one of three processes:

1. Direct faculty election (one person, one vote). This is the process used at 7 of the 30 universities.
2. Decision by a department committee elected by the faculty. This is the process at more than half (16) of the 30 universities.
3. Decision by a dean following consultation with the faculty. This is the situation at 3 of the 30 universities.

While no direct relationship appears to exist between institutional size and appointment process, it is our sense that smaller, primarily undergraduate universities are more likely to use department elections as a mechanism for selecting a chair, while larger institutions utilise department committees. However, it is important to note that there are substantive variations in procedures even within each of these three broad groups, perhaps reflecting what are clearly unique institutional histories and organisational arrangements. Several examples illustrate the immense variability:

1. At one small undergraduate university in Eastern Canada, the vice-president (academic) determines whether the search will be internal, external or both. On internal searches, the dean calls for nominations, holds an election among department members and casts the deciding vote on a tie. When the search is open to

both internal and external candidates (inside and outside the university), a majority vote within the department is required. Without a majority, the dean convenes and chairs a search committee comprised of two department professors elected by the department; a professor from another department in the faculty selected by that other department; 'a person distinguished in the discipline from another institution' chosen by the dean and the other committee members; and a senior or graduate student elected by the student council. Short-listed candidates present a public lecture and meet faculty members, whose preferences are given full consideration and are forwarded to the vice-president (academic).
2. At another small maritime university, the process is simpler and more centralised. The selection committee consists of the department's incumbent chair, the dean, all department faculty members, including those on leave at the time of the election, and student representatives. The president and vice-presidents are not members. The registrar conducts the secret ballot vote. The president can veto the committee's recommendation.
3. At one large university in Western Canada, the president convenes an advisory committee because of the large diversity in size and complexity among academic units. The committee's size and composition are at the president's discretion.
4. At another large university in Western Canada, chairs are appointed through an Academic Appointment Review Committee comprised of the provost and vice-president (academic) as chair, four tenured faculty (one from outside the faculty, all selected by a faculty council), two provost-appointed members, one non-voting faculty association-chosen member, one non-voting student and one relevant external professional.

Generally speaking, department chairs are constructed as internal appointments involving the selection of an individual from within the department or other areas of the university, although procedures also allow for the possibility that the university will move towards an external search where no internal candidate can be identified. Procedures for publicising open positions internally and externally are usually noted in the faculty association collective agreements and/or university policy statements. Of the 30 universities we reviewed, about a quarter of the institutions have explicit statements on how positions should be advertised.

Re-appointment

Chairs can seek a second term of office, although the process for re-appointment is usually not described in the same detail as initial appointments. In two cases, the policies stipulate that renewal requires input of the selection committee (i.e. the same mechanism set up for initial appointments) and a faculty ratification vote.

Position Descriptors/Titles

The most frequently used position descriptor – at more than three-quarters of the universities where we found explicit descriptors (14 of 17) – refers to providing

and/or demonstrating 'leadership', with a third of the total specifically indicating 'academic leadership'. 'Research' is the next most prevalent descriptor, followed by 'initiative', which are both referenced by four institutions. Representation and communication – that is, serving as the 'voice' for the department – are also common to four of the institutions. 'Scholar' is referenced in three cases. The position itself is most commonly referred to as 'the CEO of the area' (3 of 22) and 'a first among equals' (3 of 22). One university highlights the chair as 'a model for other faculty' and two specify an overriding goal of fostering an atmosphere where teaching, research and service can thrive.

The general tenor of the title is that of a senior officer, responsible for leading and administering the human resource and financial aspects of a department within a faculty, facilitating research and teaching and representing the department and its interests within the institution.

Position Responsibilities

The vast majority (23) of the 30 universities reviewed provide some form of detail about position responsibilities in their respective human resource policies and/or faculty association memoranda/agreements on chair duties.

Management of staff (recruitment, workload assignments and teaching allocations, career development, performance reviews, tenure and promotion recommendations) and a focus on scholarly activity and budget preparation are common to all 23 of the 30 universities with job descriptions for chairs.

Administration of university policies is the next most prevalent feature of a chair's job (7 of 23), followed by programme development and curriculum planning (5 of 23) and liaison with students (4 of 23). In one case, coordination of web page and external publication content in university documents is mentioned among priority functions.

Relationships (Internal and External Networks)

The position is usually described in terms of internal (inside the university) responsibilities and relationships. These internal relationships include references to participating in academic unit search committees for other chairs and deans (5 of the 30 universities), review committees for promotion and tenure of faculty (three institutions), 'councils of chairs' for review of institutional policies and procedures (2 of the 30) and for review of programmes and courses (1 of the 30). Four other universities note a general, unspecified involvement with institutional 'bodies'. The majority, 53% (16 of the 30), are silent on this aspect of the role and responsibilities of a chair.

An external role for the chair in the community outside the institution is mentioned by only four universities reviewed, in terms of liaison with inter-university committees within the respective disciplines, granting and licensing agencies, professional organisations and research institutes. One university, for the health sciences area chair in particular, mentions the work of a department chair

as ‘supporting applications for industry research contracts’. None of the policy documents or position descriptions makes any explicit reference to fundraising or revenue generation from external sources.

Remuneration

The most common approach for remunerating the chairs is to provide an administrative stipend, above the academic salary. Amounts between $1,200 and $7,500[5] per annum appear to be the norm based on provisions in collective agreements/memoranda of understanding and from federal government academic compensation data. In some cases, the level of stipend depends on the size of the department (in terms of students or faculty).

3.1.2 Faculty Deans

Deans are commonly referred to as ‘senior officers’ of the university and participate as members of executive standing committees reporting to the board on matters of programme and academic planning and implementation but do not typically appear on the executive team organisation charts and do not report directly to the president. At 24 institutions where the reporting relationship is specified, the dean reports to the vice-president (academic), the vice-president (academic and research) and/or the provost. Where faculty unions exist, deans are explicitly excluded from the bargaining unit but are permitted entry/re-entry into the bargaining unit upon completion of their term of office as dean (some with a conditional salary review).[6]

Deans are presumed to be academics, although the emphasis on and requirement for scholarship as a criterion for the position during the selection process is not clearly prescribed in all the university documentation we reviewed. Recruitment from within the immediate university appears to be given priority over external hires based on the wording in the majority of policy documents accessed and the amount of detail provided on internal procedures. However, most universities appear to advertise for both internal and external candidates as part of the search process, and the use of external consultants in the search process is not unusual.

Terms of Office

In the vast majority of universities (19 of the 21 universities where there is an explicit statement), the term of office for a dean is 5–6 years. One university describes a 5- to 7-year term of office, and one other indicates a 7-year maximum. Deans can be re-appointed at least once following their initial term. One university stipulates that the second term must be no less than 3 years to an 8-year maximum.

Initial Appointment Process

In comparison with the chair appointment process, selecting a dean involves greater involvement by the senior administration, such as the vice-president (academic) and

the president,[7] and always requires final ratification by the board. The faculty dean is selected in one of four ways:

1. A search committee comprised of both elected and named members, reflecting faculty consultation for the committee membership. This approach is followed at more than half (17) of the 30 universities we surveyed that specify the process in policy documentation.
2. Same as the first but, at 2 of the 30 universities, faculty also evaluate and provide input on recommended candidates.
3. Direct elections among tenured faculty and full-time administrative staff for the preferred candidates. This is the case at 3 of the 30 universities.
4. Directly by the president with faculty input. This is the process at 3 of the 30 universities.

At each of the 25 universities that have an explicit process, the vice-president to whom the dean reports (typically the vice-president (academic)) convenes and chairs the search committee. The competition for the dean's position is open to both internal and external candidates. Similar to the situation with chairs, the actual procedures differ by institution, generally irrespective of institutional characteristics. The following examples illustrate some of the specific procedures described in institutional policy documents:

1. At one mid-sized medical/research university in Central Canada, the vice-president (academic) and provost convenes and chairs a nominating committee, the membership of which is mandated to maintain 'a reasonable gender balance' and the majority of which is made up of seven of the immediate faculty's 'regular faculty members'; one senior faculty member from another faculty, selected by the committee chair; and one graduate student from the faculty appointed by the graduate student association. The list of candidates is sent to the faculty's eligible members for input and secret ballot voting. In the event of a tie or a non-conclusive outcome, the committee selects and recommends a candidate to the president. This appears to be a highly democratic process, with extensive faculty input.
2. At one small, primarily undergraduate university in Eastern Canada, faculty consultation is strong, with direct influence on the final choice. The vice-president (academic) convenes and chairs a search committee comprised of one dean who is appointed by the president and represents another part of the university; one department chair chosen by the chairs of the immediate faculty; one full professor and one associate or assistant professor chosen by the immediate faculty's professoriate; one student chosen by the student council; one president-appointed member of the senior academic support staff; and two board-appointed board members. The committee draws up a short list of at least two candidates, who present a public lecture and meet the faculty, students and senior administrators from the faculty. Faculty members from the immediate faculty are asked to submit confidential written opinions on the candidates. The committee submits this information to the president with a recommendation.

3. At one large research university in Central Canada, the president directs the selection process, placing notices, naming the advisory committee chair and inviting input of faculty members for questions to be posed to candidates, either in confidence or in open meetings. The president, who can appoint him/herself as committee chair, has sole discretion on the committee size. Specific titles and types of representation on the committee (i.e. as to job or community constituency such as students, faculty, alumni and others) are not indicated in the documentation at our disposal. However, the requirements for ranks and disciplines are provided, in addition to the provisos that the majority of members must be from the immediate faculty and from departments and faculties that are closely related (e.g. medicine, psychiatry) and a specific number of female faculty must be members.

Re-appointment

The process for re-appointment of a dean is generally not described in the same detail as initial appointments. At one institution, if the incumbent wants to serve another term, the vice-president (academic) and research obtains a confidential assessment of the incumbent's performance from faculty and chairs in the immediate faculty, other deans and administrative personnel and discusses the findings with the president. At another institution, the review committee established for the initial appointment re-convenes and consults with faculty members in the immediate faculty, other deans and senior administrative officers about the individual's performance in this role to date. Findings and conclusions are forwarded to the board, the senate steering committee, the president and the incumbent. The board makes the final decision. In the event a search is required, the review committee becomes the search committee.

Position Descriptors/Titles

At two-thirds of the universities (13 of 19) that describe the position of dean, the word 'leadership' is the prevalent position descriptor. The qualifier 'academic' appears five times, while each of 'professional', 'intellectual' and 'administrative' appears three times. Other individual descriptors include 'visionary', 'dynamic', 'collaborative' and 'distinguished scholar'. The most common titles are 'senior administrative and academic officer' (6 of 19) and 'CEO of the faculty' (4 of 19).

Position Responsibilities

While the form and extent of involvement vary, at all 24 (of 30) universities where we have obtained job descriptions, the dean is responsible for making recommendations to senior management and the board on a wide array of human resource decisions (hiring, promotion, tenure, disciplinary, dismissal and compensation matters), planning and control of finances and budget administration within the faculty.

Strategic planning for the faculty, in the context of the university's overall plan, and implementation of university policies are mentioned by a third of the universities reviewed (8 of 24).

Relationships (Internal and External Networks)

About a third (7 of 24) mention ex-officio membership in all faculty committees and the faculty council and representation on university-wide committees. Liaison with professional and educational bodies outside the institution and serving as spokesperson to raise its profile (in addition to his/her immediate faculty) are noted as key responsibilities at close to half (11) of the 24 universities reviewed. A priority at two institutions is establishing partnerships within and outside the university to promote its educational, research and innovation agenda; and to contribute to the immediate community and region. Reference to fundraising is specifically highlighted in the position descriptions at two universities. One university also specifies the importance of developing innovative solutions to maximise revenue generation and new distinctive programmes to meet professional needs in various disciplines. Fundraising activity for a dean of arts is implied at one university in the hiring of an individual on the strength of her revenue generation success in another institution and knowledge of international economies. At one university, the reference to securing 'necessary resources' through external sources is explicit for the dean of business.

Serving as a 'communication channel' and demonstrating commitment to 'academic excellence', 'teaching', 'programme development' and 'research' are also indicated by a third (8 of 24) of the universities canvassed. Attention to students – notably, faculty allocation to graduate students, student counselling, review of student course evaluations, fellowships and scholarship decisions – is specified by just less than a quarter (5 of 24) of the universities. 'Consensus building' within the faculty is noted by one institution. One explicitly states 'no teaching requirements' for the dean as an academic while in this administrative role. 'Teaching' responsibility is not noted directly in any of the documents we reviewed; reference to 'teaching abilities' is mentioned twice.

Remuneration

Based on the analysis of 2004–2005 salary data from a sample of 50 universities (Statistics Canada, 2007),[8] deans are paid substantially more than full professors or department chairs. These data indicate that the dean's salary is markedly higher in each category of university than the salary of the chair and the full professor who has no administrative responsibilities. The average salary difference, in the aggregate, between a dean and a chair is close to \$34,000, or about 24%. The greatest difference is in the primarily undergraduate category, where the difference is closer to \$38,000, or 30%. The highest salaries for deans (as well as chairs and full professors) where these data are reported are in the medical/research universities, while the lowest are in the primarily undergraduate institutions.

4 Analysis and Conclusions

Canadian universities are established as independent, autonomous corporations. Most are created by distinct acts of incorporation. Given this legal foundation, it should come as no surprise that there are substantive variations in the decisions that individual institutions have made in terms of their governance and administrative structures. They have unique administrative structures and budget and planning processes, and different institution-specific collective agreements that govern the conditions of employment of university faculty. It is clear from this study, however, that there are common elements in terms of how universities have constructed the positions of chair and dean within institutional policy documents and agreements.

Most notable, from the data collected, is our conclusion that the formal roles and responsibilities of chairs and deans have not changed dramatically in recent years. Most universities have policy documents that describe these positions and the appointment process, and, while most universities in our sample revised these documents during the last decade, there is little evidence of any substantive changes in the nature of these positions or the mechanisms for appointment. Both positions focus on the internal management of financial and human resources – in particular, concern with the development and administration of budgets and with staff matters such as hiring, promotion and tenure, career development and compensation decisions.

Activities related to the establishment, monitoring and modification of programmes and curricula, and student affairs, are also key preoccupations of chairs and deans. This does not necessarily mean that deans and chairs are not experiencing changes in the nature of their work, but it does suggest that universities are not racing to reform or to reconstruct these positions.

Whether by way of a search committee or directly, the selection of chairs is not moving away from democratic collegial elections towards appointed executive functions. This shift, which has received some attention in studies of other jurisdictions, is not supported by our study for Canada. Chairs continue to be selected locally and to be positioned as members of faculty unions. However, the selection of deans is less grassroots oriented, with greater input and control by senior management and the board in the final decision.

There is little evidence to suggest the position of chair is becoming professionalised. These are largely internal appointments for short terms of office, and the assumption continues that, at the conclusion of the appointment, the department chair will return to his/her role as a faculty member. The level of remuneration for chairs is quite modest. There is no sense of the department chair as a distinct career track. In fact, while re-appointment is possible, institutional policy assumes that chairs should not be permanent appointments.

The situation of the dean is somewhat less clear. There is little indication that there have been major changes to the formal role of these positions as described in institutional policy, but then again deans have long been regarded as senior executive positions and central administrators have long played a key role in these appointments. Decanal searches are generally broader in scope, and universities frequently

employ professional consultants in the search process. Decanal salaries are now substantively higher than their senior academic peers. These salary levels imply more authority/responsibility relative to a senior professor who has been willing to take on a few additional administrative chores. At the same time, universities continue to establish limits on the appointment terms of deans based on the assumption that it is not in the best interests of the university for these positions to be held on a continuous or permanent basis.

Does this mean the market mind-set and mechanisms are less prevalent in middle-management ranks in Canada's public universities than in other jurisdictions? Ten years ago, Slaughter and Leslie (1997) argued that Canada had not yet caught up with the profit-motive movement, relative to Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. More recent studies have indicated a growth in competition and market-like activity within Canadian higher education (Fisher et al., 2006; Jones & Young, 2004; Shanahan & Jones, 2007), and there is every reason to believe deans and chairs are experiencing mounting pressure to become increasingly entrepreneurial and to seek out new sources of revenue while restraining costs. At the same time, it is interesting to note that these objectives have not become part of the vocabulary used to describe these positions and their roles within the universities. A small number of universities describe an 'external' role for chairs and deans, and there are few references to position objectives that might somehow correspond to fundraising, generating new resources or commercialisation activity. Once again, these activities may well form a developing component of the work of chairs and deans, but these roles have not been incorporated into institutional policy documents.

One key factor that may be playing a role in discouraging large-scale change in the roles of chairs and deans in Canadian universities is faculty unionisation. Academic human resource decisions are, perhaps, the most important decisions universities make, and, in the Canadian context, the procedures utilised to make these decisions are frequently prescribed by collective agreements. University administrators cannot unilaterally change these procedures, and the roles of chairs and deans in key faculty personnel decisions are largely defined within these contracts. In the agreements we reviewed for this study, the chair is generally described as a faculty member who is a union member, while the dean is termed 'a first among equals' and presumed to come from faculty ranks but who is outside the association during the term of office.

We have also observed recruitment notices for newly created functions at the executive level, with titles such as 'vice-president, advancement' and 'vice-president, external relations', for the specific jobs of seeking out potential money-making ventures and sources, and building the institutions' profile in Canada and abroad, with students, business interests and government bodies. Are these positions, which generally do not require academic experience, responding to market forces in a way that is not possible for chairs and deans, given their faculty affiliations?

At the same time, there seems to be an increasing sense of a need to provide chairs and deans with specialised professional development given the increasing

complexity of their working environment and the growing skill set required of these positions. A number of universities have recently initiated new professional development programmes. Further studies may also look at the level of institutional support provided to these positions within the university. Has the level of administrative support for these positions increased – notably, in terms of financial, planning and fundraising expertise?

Ultimately, in a broad business sense, based on our analysis, the dean could be considered the strategist and the conduit between his/her faculty and other faculties within and outside the university; and between the president/executive management and external constituents (professional and licensing bodies, community groups, potential donors and research partners) as a spokesperson to generate goodwill and to attract monies for his/her faculty and the university as a whole. The chair could be called the tactician and the conduit between faculty and the dean. Whether the work of the strategist and the tactician is increasingly a function of market motives and embedded in a 'new managerialist' paradigm is not substantiated by our study and merits further research. Nonetheless, the policy documentation and collective agreements/memoranda of understanding vary among institutions, and many formal statements and contract provisions are silent on specifics of roles and responsibilities, leaving the door open to possible flexibility in the execution of duties, latitude of decision making and scope of relationships within and outside the academy. Further research to determine whether the findings in this study are borne out in the daily practice of chairs and deans, in different disciplines, is the next critical step to inform our understanding of and insights into middle management in Canada's universities.

Notes

1. There is some ambiguity over the classification of universities in Canada since they are counted in different ways by different organisations. For example, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) specifies 91 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree-level colleges within its membership, including affiliates of institutions. In the AUCC records, the University of Toronto is listed separately from three colleges that are commonly regarded as constituent components of the federated university: University of Trinity College, Victoria University and University of St Michael's College. The number reflected in this chapter follows the recent Statistics Canada approach to classification (Orton, 2003), where affiliates are not considered individually.
2. The study was conducted over the period December 2006–April 2007.
3. This number aligns with Statistics Canada classification information (Orton, 2003).
4. We focused on the chair as the head of an academic unit. This study excludes endowed research chairs, librarians and directors of continuing education departments. At some institutions, modest distinctions are made in the roles of chairs and deans of professional schools (e.g. law, medicine, business), and we note these differences where relevant. At many Canadian universities, the Faculty of Graduate Studies coordinates graduate programming across the institution, and the position of dean of this unit is often described differently to other deans.
5. All dollar amounts are expressed in Canadian currency.
6. Some collective agreements note that deans are permitted to continue paying union dues during the time they are not part of the bargaining unit. They may be managers, but they are managers who might voluntarily pay union dues.

7. The vast majority of deans (at 22 of 28 universities providing this information) report to the vice-president (academic) and/or provost. At one university, the dean reports directly to the president.
8. We began by attempting to analyse salary data from our initial sample of 30 institutions but decided to expand to 50 since relevant data were missing from some institutions, and the respondent populations in chair/dean categories were statistically insignificant at smaller institutions.

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Middle-Level University Managers in Italy: An Ambiguous Transition

Stefano Boffo

1 Introduction

Changes in the higher education systems of many Western countries have found it difficult to penetrate the Italian scene. The history and context of the Italian higher education system, with its traditional roots in the Napoleonic mode and the prevailing social academic climate, did not allow, until recently, a 'managerialist' approach to Italian higher education. It has been through the prolonged reform period experienced by Italian universities over the last 20 years and, more specifically, through the implementation of the Bologna process since the end of the 1990s that multiple aspects of rationalisation of the system's governance and some aspects of managerialist culture have been introduced.

It might be useful to recall here the two different concepts (hard and soft) of new managerialism pointed out by Trow (1994). *Hard managerialism* is characterised by quite radical changes in both the structure and governing processes of universities. In the Italian context it implies, at the institutional level, a general trend towards a centralisation of decisions, a more prominent leadership role by the *Rettore*, a new equilibrium between the academic senate and board of directors (more favourable to the latter) and a reconfiguration of the board through a wider representation of external stakeholders. *Soft managerialism* leaves unchanged both the structure and governing processes, but renews the academic culture, introducing positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and managerial concepts and a stronger orientation towards efficiency, 'clients' and administrative rationality. If we look at the Italian higher education system in this light, it is possible to state that the case shows quite a hybrid profile. A few elements comprising hard managerialism (a relatively slight trend towards centralisation and the *Rettore*'s leadership, a limited inclusion of external stakeholders in governing bodies) tend to mix with the cultural aspects underlying soft managerialism (mostly the managerial rhetoric), but none is actually fully adopted by Italian higher education institutions and even less by the Italian professoriate.

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It is therefore necessary to reconsider the changes in the role and functions of middle-level university management, locating it in the wider context of the higher education reforms introduced at the end of the last millennium. For this reason, the chapter first provides a general sketch of present trends in the Italian higher education system, including changes in governance and the roles of actors at the institutional level. It is only on this basis, and in a largely hypothetical way, that the role and perspectives of middle-level university management are discussed and a brief attempt at comparison with the French situation is made.

Finally, it is important to add that, given the fact that in the last 20 years hardly any studies or research has directly addressed the subject of middle-level university management in Italian universities, most of the analysis in this chapter originates from the personal experience of the author, both as participant observer and as researcher conducting surveys on related matters.

2 Reform and Governance

The creation of the Ministry for University and Scientific Research in 1989 began an important period of reform in the Italian higher education system. Up to that point, the Italian higher education system was typified by a few main characteristics: it was centralised, being mostly public and state funded, with a single study cycle leading to a degree, integrated with specialisation and finishing courses (doctoral studies were added only in 1980) and hindered by a very low level of productivity (a high rate of drop-outs and a great amount of time taken by the majority of students to graduate).

Since its beginning 20 years ago the overall scope of this prolonged period of reform has concentrated on three basic issues: (i) effective institutional autonomy; (ii) an extensive introduction of evaluation practices in both research and teaching; and (iii) a profound reform of the curricula (Moscati, 2001, p. 174).

Up to this period, the right of self-government for every single university was never implemented, although it was expressly included in the Italian constitution. The central authority traditionally controlled all organisational aspects of universities, not only by means of law and various ministerial tools (decrees, circulars and statements) but also through detailed budget mechanisms. In 1993, the ministry was entitled to give a lump sum every year to each university according to some established parameters. Consequently, from then on, the universities were relatively free to decide how to use the financial resources allocated by the state and they became responsible for their own choices. This measure represented the first real step towards university autonomy. Other initiatives followed, such as the autonomous recruitment of academic staff, where local competitions initiated by individual institutions replaced the national competition controlled by the ministry.

The improvement of university productivity is one of the basic reasons for the introduction of evaluation and quality control programmes. These measures were established by law through both internal (self) evaluation of each university through compulsory structures of evaluation (*nuclei di valutazione*) and external

(system) evaluation through a national committee for evaluation. This represented a real revolution in the traditional approach based on *ex ante* accounting checks and has therefore raised strong resistance among academic staff and non-academic personnel (Moscati, 2004, pp. 55–56).

A general reform of university curricula was adopted in 1997. Its goal was to enable the system – whose structures still corresponded to that of the elite university – to fulfil its new functions, brought about by mass higher education and the new demands of the external world. A first objective was to overcome the negative situation emerging from the transformation of the Italian higher education system due to massification: this required both a differentiation of degrees, in order to meet different needs, and a student-centred teaching emphasis, in order to lower the number of drop-outs and students *fuori corso* and to have a graduation age comparable to that in the rest of Europe (Luzzatto & Moscati, 2005).

Thus, there were clear political goals to be achieved: more flexible programmes and curricula and an increased autonomy of universities as a necessary condition to achieve flexibility.

University degrees and programmes were organised around three cycles based on a credit system, to be defined according to the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System); and a compulsory general framework to determine the new curricula was offered to higher education institutions.

The prolonged reform activity did not directly affect the governance model. Italian universities were traditionally based on chairs and institutes (*Istituti*). The Italian academe's interpretation of academic freedom led the system to organise research and teaching around individual chairs. More and less prestigious professors organised teaching and research within their own discipline, without interference from either outside or inside the university – as a sort of 'private property'. To each chair corresponded a specific research unit named *Istituto*, with its own research, teaching and administrative staff depending on individual academics. In the famous *baroni* system investigated by Clark (1977), *Istituti* played a central role and were a sort of independent monarchy, where the chairholder had wide powers on both academic and personnel matters, appointing assistants, defining teaching and research programmes and so on. The collegial level was the faculty, where chairholders discussed and shared problems and decisions on prospective new appointments. The power distribution in each individual base unit was the result of the specific balance of power between chairholders' and the professoriate's collegial authority (Capano, 1998, p. 27).

It was only in 1980, with the Law n. 382 mainly devoted to academic staff and the establishment of doctoral studies, that the situation partially changed and universities were organised into departments and faculties. Departments were basically responsible for research, and faculties for teaching. In Italian universities, departments and faculties represent autonomous interlocutors of central institutional government bodies (the *Rettore*, academic senate and board of directors). It is a matrix structure, which increases the complexity of governing the institution. Faculties mainly deal with decisions on future developments and organisation/control of teaching. Departments deal with research, involving one or more disciplines in

some homogeneous way (the degree of homogeneity varies from case to case), often including different faculties and always different programmes. Departments were (and still are) autonomous in terms of administration and expenditure; they have quite a large budget and a large administrative and technical support staff. Comparatively, faculties have more limited autonomy, in terms of both budget and discretion over expenditure, but they have autonomy of decision making in crucial matters such as teaching and academic employment. Faculties decide on new tenured positions and their distribution among different disciplines, on the proportion of full- and part-time academic positions and on the outsourcing of teaching activities. It is only in the hard sciences that departments have quite similar functions.

A main point has to be stressed with respect to the distribution of powers and the decision-making processes. Being elected by different academic staff (teaching and research staff always belong to a faculty *and* a department or *istituto*), the dean/head of department is a *primus inter pares* and is seen as a colleague by the members of the faculty/department. In principle, the department and faculty organisation is quite more collegial than the one based on chairs and *istituti* insofar as it allows a wider sharing of responsibilities and power among a larger number of persons (Clark, 1983, p. 46). Moreover, deans and directors of departments, due to the fact that they are well aware that their charge is under scrutiny by their own electorate, are presumably quite interested in a collegial style of governing. This places a serious limit on a really effective use of power by the dean/head of department and the root of the reason why the *baroni* culture of universities as private property is difficult to erase. In fact, the chair influence is still strong and, as stressed by Paletta (2004), the present relatively limited role of faculties and dean/director is highly historically dependent upon the previous management culture of the *Istituti*/chair system. It is therefore not surprising that 20 years after the Law n. 382 there were still more institutes than departments and it is only with the new millennium that the situation has begun to change substantially, with a clearer move towards departments.

In Italy, as in many other countries in continental Europe, the overall system of institutional governance is traditionally characterised by a democratic flavour, reinforced by the rise of the mass university. In some ways, the traditional idea of a democratic-academic governance was partially transformed in the 1990s into a democratic-participative one, meaning that academics – still the prevailing component of voters – partially had to share power with other constituents (students, and especially non-teaching staff and their unions). In part, this led to the creation of a parliamentary style of governance. In contrast to other countries where the chief executive is appointed by a ‘legislative body’ of one form or another (the academic senate, the board of directors, councils or equivalent bodies), in Italy the chief executive (the *Rettore*) is elected by the constituent components of the university – professors, technical-administrative staff and students. These constituents also elect the legislative body and in both cases the professoriate carries more weight since it is the only constituent having one vote per member.

Recently, change has been brought about by the reduction of public funding and the opening up of higher education institutions to the external world, resulting in

the demise of the traditional ivory tower and partial confrontation with the market. As a consequence, higher education institutions have been pushed into rethinking their own functioning and in particular their decision-making mechanisms and governance models. In many European countries, the prevailing governance dynamics show a trend towards reinforcing academic leadership (primarily the top managers, like *Rettori* and *Présidents*) and a relative weakening of representative bodies. This trend can also be defined as a transition towards a presidential governance model, observed in some institutions of the Napoleonic mode of governance, both in France and in Italy (Boffo, Dubois, & Moscati, 2006). This fact does not immediately or automatically mean a reinforcement of middle-level university management – the trend is neither linear nor without serious contradictions. The tendency to reinforce executive leadership finds resistance particularly in continental Europe where, due to the tradition of democratic-participative influence in governance building, the centralised power within institutions is traditionally rather weak.

Most of the observed Italian institutional frameworks thus show fragmented and conflicting governance systems. As Moscati stated (2004, p. 54):

> Quite often, the shift of the ability to take decisions [towards the executive level] leaves the legislative bodies unsatisfied insofar as diminished in their own ability to determine the main coordinates of university life. At the same time, this shift might raise the protest of academic components against the executive bodies, even more if the latter are composed of external stakeholders using an actual power.

Moreover, academe has been reluctant in agreeing to concentrate executive leadership in the single person of the *Rettore*. A reinforcement of the collective dimension of governance is therefore needed, through both the creation of a solid, loyal and influential 'presidential' staff and coherent work at the legislative and faculty levels. At the same time, it is difficult to find a stable point of equilibrium among the different leadership components, a difficulty increased by the reaction of excluded university constituents. This aspect is not specifically Italian: in France, for instance, the different alliances among *président*, *vice-président*, *conséils*, *secrétaire general*, *directeurs de UFR* and so on show that governance is in itself a relational system having different forms and equilibrium in each institution (Boffo & Dubois, 2004; Mignot-Gérard & Musselin, 2000). Finally, there are many and various limitations to a satisfactory span of action for academic leadership in the new framework: (i) difficulty on the part of academics in deeply understanding the long-term consequences of the present transformation of higher education institutions; (ii) a sort of radical approach, poor in mediation in both the positive and negative sense, that academics assume towards the concept of leadership and managerialism; and (iii) the limited importance given to adequate management training for both academics and administrative staff (Middlehurst, 1995).

The Italian university is today undergoing change comparable to that of other European higher education systems. It is a reform process mainly addressed to curricular change resulting from the Bologna process, but also fostered by a higher degree of institutional autonomy, a pressure for diversifying funding and reducing its public component, the need for strengthening relations with the external world and

stakeholders, and the need to accept multiple forms of evaluation and accreditation, both from outside and inside the institution. There should be a close relationship between the governance model and improvement of quality of university services and products, which should be the main aim of enhanced institutional autonomy. Despite this fact, in Italy, the new frameworks and rules of the game do not coincide with appropriate change in institutional organisation, in allocation of powers and in the governance structure. On the one hand, in a limited number of cases, the trend towards strengthening leadership and a subsequent reduction of the importance of representative bodies (what we have called a trend to a presidential mode of governance) can be observed. On the other hand, this push finds it difficult to penetrate the lower levels of power, for example, faculty or department. The reason is that the distribution of power and the making of decisions still mainly follow the traditional continental model, based on chairholders and on the coordination function of both legislative and executive bodies. What is lacking here is the technical and *super partes* function which governing bodies have in the Anglo-Saxon systems and the consequent respect individual professors have for collegial decisions and common rules (Boffo et al., 2006). In systems such as the Italian one, disciplines and chairholders always have supremacy in a number of ways. Within the context of attempting to strengthen institutional leadership (note that the *Rettore* has to be elected and to bargain votes with disciplinary potentates), disciplines tend to maintain their old privileges. As a result, it can frequently happen that representative bodies, instead of the disciplines, have their decision-making power dissipated.

It is not at all clear if and how the middle-level university management role might benefit from the current situation. Rather, what emerges is a tendency towards the establishment of a leading group around the *Rettore* more than a real reinforcement of the middle-level university management role. From a broader point of view, it has to be recalled that many studies stress that change and reform at central institutional levels do not automatically generate actual change in the relationships, behaviours and decision-making processes within the institutions as a whole (Henkel & Little, 1999; Kogan, Bauer, Bleiklie, & Henkel, 2000; Kogan & Hanney, 2000). It is mostly a matter of coherent political choice in the governance model made by the leadership. Within this context, the way in which middle-level university managers are chosen (elected) seems to restrict their alignment with the top leadership group. The culture of Italian academics treats managerialism as an abstract concept limited to top university managers, and certainly not shared by the majority of the professoriate who form the electoral base of academic managers and representative bodies.

It should not be forgotten that in Italy (and not only there) the prevailing organisational shape of universities can still be principally referred to in terms of the old model of an organised anarchy (Cohen & March, 1986), which asks for consensus gathering from all internal components, including the lower levels of the whole university community.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to sketch the changing role of middle-level university management without reference to the fact that Italian universities have two quite different, if not dichotomous, institutional missions. These might be briefly summarised as: (i) the *cultural mission*, based on the traditional idealistic view of the

university where it is thought that both research and teaching are better developed over the long term without the pressure of external factors, like higher education policies or the market; and (ii) a new (for Italy) *utilitarian mission*, within which the processes of knowledge production are determined by public policies or by the market and social and economic interests which impose a short-term horizon to both research and teaching (Braun & Merrien, 1999). Embedded within both missions are values and basic assumptions which orient the thinking and behaviour of managers and of the professoriate as a whole.

As Moscati (2004) suggests, it is quite likely that one of the main sources of the problems in transforming university governance can be attributed to both the inadequate awareness of the new missions of the university and the unconvincing combination of the new with traditional missions, which for most academics still remain at the core of what a university is and, in any case, are not easily dismissed.

Some information derived from recent research on the curricular reform process at the institutional level (Moscati et al., 2006) shows that at the bottom level there are multiple points of resistance to change and that the professoriate's motivation to approve the reform contents has to be strongly and repeatedly fostered by the central institutional level. It is a matter of creating a new culture through a slow process of persuasion based on experience and checks and balances – a process which needs the creation of a favourable atmosphere towards incremental change and the acceptance of new models and styles which necessarily combine traditional and new components and present a challenge to the strong resistance of the *baroni* system.

Recently, a wide debate on the transformation of the decision-making process at the institutional level led to some proposals which are still on the table. The opinion is quite pervasive that in the present organisation of this process in Italian higher education institutions there are an overwhelming number of sequential steps and one discussion after another, which negatively affect institutional effectiveness. Duplication of decision making overloads the overall mechanism and thus the governance process. It also reduces the degree of institutional accountability just at the time when the opening up of universities to the external world makes accountability a crucial aspect of competition with other higher education institutions (Boffo et al., 2006). As for the proposals, two have to be mentioned here, the first by Fondazione Treelle (2003) and the second by the Conference of Italian University Rectors consultancy group on university governance (CRUI, 2004), led by the rector, Egidi. Both have the intention of 'verticalising' the decision-making processes through reinforcing the *Rettore*'s authority and giving a determinant role to external stakeholders. The proposals conform to a presidential model of governance that creates a solid management group around the rector and reduces the relevance of disciplines and other internal guilds. One proposal raises the possibility of appointing the *Rettore*. It is interesting to note that little or no attention is devoted to middle-level university management, except in one of the proposed alternatives in the CRUI proposal, where a key passage establishes the possibility for the *Rettore* to appoint the heads of both teaching and research structures as a means of enhancing the presidential model. The proposals attempt to move the Italian higher education

system towards the mainstream of European higher education, through providing an increase in institutional autonomy, an effective monitoring and evaluation system, the possibility for rewarding virtuous practices, a general framework reinforcing the *Rettore*'s role and strengthening the central institutional decision-making processes and their effectiveness – in one word, the achievement of a presidential model of governance.

There are still many and important difficulties for Italian higher education institutions in actually implementing the proposals, such as those suggested by Fondazione Treelle (2003) and CRUI (2004). On the one hand, there is clear resistance to losing power at both the individual chairholder and discipline levels. On the other hand, there are still many difficulties in establishing effective cooperation with the external world, due not only to the internal resistance of university constituents, but also to the lack of understanding of university traditions and procedures by external actors. The consequence is that it is quite difficult to find competent non-academic members of the board of administrators or appropriate candidates for institutional general management positions.

3 Middle-Level University Managers

In taking into consideration more specifically the present role and perspectives of middle-level university management, it must be kept in mind that in the Italian context it is difficult to propose general statements on governance and middle-level university management. In considering middle-level university management, three factors in particular must be taken into account:

(a) The *disciplines*. Some surveys (Boffo et al., 2006; Dubois, 1998) demonstrate that faculty governance in the hard sciences and in engineering is more oriented to managerial values and practices than in the other disciplines. Moreover, in these faculties the heads of departments have a role comparable to (and sometimes higher than) a dean's role. Both cases are mainly due to the relevance of non-government research funding and the role of external stakeholders who influence a preference for presidential governance and managerial styles.

(b) The *specialisation* of the university, that is, generalist versus specialised higher education institutions. Again, the governance orientation of more specialised higher education institutions (e.g. *Politecnici*, in Italy meaning institutions with only engineering and architecture faculties) is generally much more in favour of managerial values and practices than is the case in generalist higher education institutions. Even more than in the previous case, and for the same reasons, in these institutions too the heads of departments have a wider role than in other universities.

(c) The *public* or *private status* of the higher education institution. In 2007, out of 82 universities (not including the so-called telematic universities) 68 are

state-owned and their governance framework is relatively similar insofar as it is regulated through ministerial appointment. The remaining 14 universities, absorbing less than 7% of overall student enrolments, are called *free universities* as their governance is fully autonomously decided by the institutional owners. The free universities show a strong orientation towards a separation between academic and managerial responsibilities; they often have an appointed *Rettore* and, in cases where the latter is elected, always have an appointed president who is a direct representative of the university proprietors and other non-academic stakeholders.

A second caveat is that, in the following discussion, only deans, and not heads of departments, will be primarily taken into consideration. Given that we refer to the impact of curricular reform on middle-level university management and that faculties are in charge of teaching matters (where most departments are only in charge of research), our discussion on middle-level university management will mainly refer to deans, unless otherwise indicated, although it will take into account lower-level managers as well. If we look at the middle-level university management situation through the curricular reform 'prism', the differences between deans and lower-level managers (programme coordinators, i.e. *Presidenti di corso di studio*) are less than might be supposed. The reason is that both were (and are) deeply involved in the long and often protracted negotiation process which has been the basis for the implementation of reform and for the establishment of the new didactical offerings initiated by the reform. Insofar as it has been based on autonomous (or, better, relatively autonomous) curricular choices of each institution, the actual application of the reform has provided, in principle, an opportunity for middle-level university management to share a part of the new leadership-based governance. The reform foresaw that the new curricula had to be defined at institutional level, but this meant in fact at faculty level, where most curricular and didactical choices are made. The programme coordinators had a frontline role in this process, due to the fact that the definition and construction of new courses rested primarily on their shoulders. Only after this initial and basic negotiation process would further negotiations be made at faculty and senate levels. On the other hand, it is quite clear that there are differences if we take into consideration action constraints and the value orientations of deans and course coordinators. Bearing in mind what was previously stated about the effect of Italian academic culture on management matters, it is interesting to note that course coordinators mainly are members of the professoriate and oriented to their respective disciplines, having relatively limited interest in responding to institutional worries about accountability and economic matters. The deans, on the contrary, have a role leading to a double loyalty. As already described, they are elected and therefore have a strong – and frequently prevailing – closeness to their respective electorates, that is, the professoriate and disciplines which form the basis of power at faculty level. This situation is reinforced by the actual implementation of curricular reform and the consequent need to make choices that provide something to each discipline and recognise each chairholder's requests. On the other hand, all deans form part of the academic senate, traditionally the most

powerful body, together with the *Rettore*, of Italian higher education institutions. Despite representing disciplines/chairholders, deans cannot support them as much as course coordinators can; nor can they ignore the multiple, normative and economic constraints coming from both institutional top management and the ministry. A quite clear example might illustrate this point. Shortly after the curricular reform, the CNVSU (*Comitato Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Universitario*) – the ministerial body for higher education institutional and system evaluation – introduced a new funding regulation which combined the number of permanent academic staff with the new first- and second-cycle curricular offerings. The new regulation created for deans, even more than for faculties, a dilemma involving different orientations: the logic of disciplines, on the one hand, tending to offer curricular expansion and the highest possible satisfaction of chairholders' demands; the managerial logic, on the other hand, which asked for the reduction of the curricular offerings based on the need to be coherent with CNVSU rules and therefore fully funded. This situation put deans in the position of a divided self, being strongly connected with the professoriate (which elected them) and, at the same time, necessarily furthering central institutional policies as members of a highly influential governing body like the senate. It would be difficult to state that at present this divided self is unconditionally tending towards the managerial side. Rather, the strong relationship with an academic base and with disciplines suggests that the weight is still more on the academic and collegial side – a point which can be illustrated by another example: most deans still prefer not to publicly use (e.g. in faculty meetings) information gathered on the teaching quality of individual professors through the compulsory evaluation of teaching activities that takes place every year. It is a pity, because such a public discussion might potentially give space to the redirection and amendments of the overall functioning of the faculty. In most (but not all) cases, there is a weak one-to-one use of this information and a clear refusal to use it in the way evaluation and managerial logics might suggest.

It might be worthwhile to make a comparison with the situation in another country where the higher education system is based on the Napoleonic model, France. The dean's role under the Italian reform process is quite different from the role of the *directeur de UFR* (Mignot-Gérard, 2003; Mignot-Gérard & Musselin, 2000). A not meaningless, but relatively superficial, similarity might be found in the negotiation process at the programme level, with respect to the choice of new didactical offerings in Italy and for the repartition of teaching duties in France. In both cases, the prolonged negotiation process demonstrates that the professoriate's influence is still very strong and that in a Napoleonic mode the governance 'philosophy' at faculty level is still mostly based on academe's power and can hardly be said to being redirected towards managerial values. Nonetheless, the similarity stops there, insofar as in the French case the negotiation process is limited to programme level and excludes the dean, while in Italy it is characteristic of both programme and faculty levels; and, despite including programme coordinators, it widely involves the dean's role. On the other hand, both *directeurs de UFR* and Italian deans are in charge of controlling the quality of teaching and support activities and both seem to have limited ability to perform this role, due to the present democratic-participative basis of

the faculty 'climate'. Broadly speaking, the main difference involves their role in the decision-making process. According to the results of the studies mentioned above, the French dean compared to his/her Italian counterpart plays quite less of an important role and is excluded from the central institutional decision-making process. In some ways, as Mignot-Gérard and Musselin (2000) noted, French middle-level university management expresses some malaise, being in between injunctions coming from top managers and the resistance of the academic 'base'. Moreover,

> presidents and deans not only have difficulties in cooperating in the university management, but they also have divergent opinions and representations in many fields of university management. (Mignot-Gérard, 2003, p. 82)

Italian deans, as previously stressed, have quite a more ambiguous identity and role. Being part of the top management as members of the highly influential academic senate and, at the same time, being elected by (and therefore an expression of) their own discipline and academic electorate, a dean's action is always dependent on a double loyalty. In the concrete implementation of curricular reform, we have stressed that this 'self' is not really equally divided – the inclination is more towards the academic than managerial values and practices. But, still, flowing from reform needs and demands, it is difficult to deny the presence of a growing managerial component of the dean's role and this aspect seems to mark the main difference from the French case. As stated previously, the actual behaviour of deans varies very much according to discipline, institutional specialisation and type of institution (public/private). Due to the specific and strong relationship with market demand and external stakeholders, a dean of a scientific faculty is generally much more oriented to managerial values and institutional loyalty than, for example, a dean of a liberal arts or philosophy faculty. For the same reasons, and in a deeper way, the deans of engineering and architecture faculties in the *Politecnici* have quite a managerial style of governance and the prevailing model in those institutions is presidential (Boffo et al., 2006; Dubois, 1998).

The case of private institutions is even more peculiar. In these institutions, the CdA (*Consiglio di Amministrazione*, the board of directors) is a direct expression of the interests of the owners and is normally situated at the top level (sometimes it is replaced by an external body, a foundation or similar, which appoints the CdA). These bodies seriously limit the functional autonomy of the *Rettore*, who is appointed and not elected. The similarity with a 'normal' CdA of a firm is quite evident and 'inspires' the whole cultural climate of the private higher education institution. It is this situation and this entrepreneurial cultural climate which mainly influence the deans and their behaviour. In some cases, the deans too are appointed. But even when they are elected, for the reasons specified above, their role is less autonomous and in fact more restricted than in the case of public universities and therefore these deans are rather (if not always fully) oriented towards managerial values. In case of conflict between top management and academe, they rarely can refer, as their public colleagues do, to their academic base. Moreover, seldom is there conflict between deans and the professoriate in that the latter knows and accepts the rules of the game (Boffo et al., 2006). Entering an academic job in a

private institution generally means in Italy a full acceptance of the cultural climate and norms dominating the institution. Quite obviously, there are particular cases and exceptions, but the overall climate is as described.

4 Conclusions

The lack of Italian studies devoted to middle-level university management narrows the discussion and makes it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions. Therefore, only some very provisional final observations will be provided below.

A first general question arising from the Italian case refers to the core differences between middle- and lower-level managers. In principle, lower-level managers, the embodiment of the professoriate, mostly share academic values and practices. Due to their ‘pivotal role between central management predilections and academic values and control’, middle-level university managers are placed in an ambiguous situation: ‘the performance of these levels, traditionally based upon research reputation, gives way to management capacities’ (see the Introduction, this volume). Is this verified in Italian universities? As we tried to show, it is difficult to deny that, in the framework of rationalisation brought about by curricular reform and because they are members of the academic senate, deans are pressured to acquire and exert some management capabilities. Nevertheless – and with the remarkable exception of private institutions – deans still have, culturally and operationally, a major orientation to academic values and practices. The fact that the present governance model foresees for deans elections and not appointments is the crucial matter. It is obviously difficult and often contradictory to use managerial tools – like evaluation, reward and punishment – towards those who, in a more or less short span of time, will have the dean’s mandate in their hands. Moreover, as the deans are part and parcel of academe, it is mostly their education and culture which pose difficulties in accepting a shift from a reputation based upon research to another based upon managerial abilities. The recalibration of deans’ values and expectations introduced by the curricular reform has been quite limited even if not entirely absent. Despite the fact that the next foreshadowed strengthening of assessment and accreditation activities might bring some changes, up to now the challenge between the academic and managerial sides of deans has an undisputable winner – a fact which is confirmed by the absolutely scarce managerial skills of those in charge of governing faculties and also (as *Rettori* and senate members) the whole institution. Not only is competence often lacking, but also completely lacking are institutional plans for educating deans and top academic managers. Looking at the situation from this perspective, it is evident that academic traditions and the way in which academic managers are elected work as powerful brakes on present and future managerial prominence of the dean’s role. Is there any evidence that this situation will change? As we have previously seen, the Italian higher education scene is still dominated by a democratic-participative

(and very often corporative) perspective of governance, a stance hardly accepting of external actors in institutional governance. The academic component dominates while other groups both internal (students and administrative staff) and external (parents, social and economic stakeholders) are quite marginal. Under these conditions, it is difficult to see how the *Rettore* will ever have the power to appoint middle-level university managers. Not by chance, only one of the proposals summarised above (Fondazione Treelle, 2003; CRUI, 2004) opts for an appointed dean and director of department, a clear demonstration of the domination of traditional Italian academic culture's approach to governance and management.

A second point relates to the other component of middle-level university management, the head of department. In principle, in the Italian higher education system, faculties are responsible for teaching, and departments for research, and department directors are not subordinate to deans. Moreover, the department, not the faculty, is the real cost centre and has a wider remit for autonomous action and thus should potentially play a crucial role in the process of 'centralised devolution' (which, among other contradictions, is taking place in Italy as well). Nevertheless, in recent years, a significant decline in the role of the head of department has been observed, coupled with the reform implementation. As already noted, this decline is due to the fact that the reform mainly involved teaching in the faculties, and that, up to now, funding changes involved quality assessments in the teaching area much more so than in research. In addition, only some representatives of the heads of departments (and not in all institutions) sit on the academic senate, while all deans do so. This fact weakens the role of heads of departments and differentiates them from deans. In the near future, the funding formula for universities will also take into account research performance as evaluated by ANVUR (*Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca*) – the rising national university and research evaluation agency. This is likely to lead to an increase in the role of the heads of departments. As previously stressed, this sketch mostly refers to the main core of the Italian higher education system, that is, to faculties other than the hard sciences and engineering in generalist universities. In the latter, the heads of departments' role is still quite relevant, for they are often responsible for both research and (at least in part) teaching. The changes foreshadowed will obviously confirm their role and reinforce their power.

A final point refers to the governance model, if any, pushed forward by the overall curricular reform process experienced by the Italian higher education system. The Introduction to this volume proposes three 'ideal types' with respect to academic governance: a full incorporation in the managerialist narrative of previous academic norms, values and routines; an accommodation of the new managerial rhetoric, with little or no change in underlying values and practices; and a hybrid model which incorporates new managerial trends with traditional academic principles. Due to all of the reasoning so far noted, the first ideal type is evidently to be excluded. Rather, it can be said that the present Italian higher education situation fits better into the second ideal type (an accommodation of the new rhetoric with old values

and practices), but there are already explicit elements pushing the system towards the third (the hybrid management model). Even if it is unlikely that the present situation will remain unchanged vis-à-vis the universal expansion of a new management push in higher education, it seems quite improbable that in the Italian context the weight of academic values, norms and routines will be substantially usurped by new managerial values and practices. Rather, a hybrid model is quite likely to take form: it is hard to say what the equilibrium point will be between traditional academic and new managerial approaches and much will depend on the policy choices made at the central level by the national government in terms of funding, evaluation and quality assessment.

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Presidents and Deans in French Universities: A Collective Approach to Academic Leadership

Stéphanie Mignot-Gérard

1 Introduction

The exercise of leadership within universities has always retained the attention of scholars in higher education studies. Earlier studies on universities aimed to characterise the nature of the decision-making processes within academic organisations. The 'collegial' (Goodman, 1962), 'bureaucratic' (Blau, 1973) and 'political' (Baldridge, 1971) models and the 'organised anarchy' (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972) were alternative constructions of the organisation of universities. The emphasis on the specificities of these organisations has led scholars to investigate the role of leadership in universities. Cohen and March (1974) began to explore this line of inquiry with a study of the presidents of American universities. They developed the idea that the characteristics of the organised anarchy seriously restrict any leaders' scope of action. Research in the 1980s continued to emphasise the weakness of university leadership: in their study on French and German universities, Friedberg and Musselin (1989) draw the conclusion that academic leaders behave as *primus inter pares* rather than *managers*; Birnbaum (1989) argues that universities are 'cybernetic systems' capable of self-regulation and thus do not need any authority to define and implement specific rules of functioning.

The radical changes marking the university environment in the 1990s (restrictions on public spending, significant increases in enrolment, differentiation in the student population, globalisation and commodification of higher education, growing involvement of economic players in the internal running of universities) have raised new questions such as the ability of academic leaders to transform their institutions into more responsive corporate actors (Bayenet, Feola, & Tavernier, 2000; Clark, 1998; Dill & Sporn, 1995). At the same time, many European countries have experienced reforms of their higher education systems. Lately, a growing body of research has focused on the impact of these reforms on the internal governance of universities: some investigate the shifts of roles experienced by the academic

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leaders (De Boer, Goedegebuure, & Meek, 2004; Henkel, 2000; Rasmussen, 2002; Smith, Scott, Bocock, & Bargh, 1999) while others scrutinise how academic leaders translate, interpret or resist these reforms (Bleiklie, 1996; Frolich, 2005; Larsen & Gornitzka, 1995; Stensaker, 2004).

So far, academic leadership has thus been studied in two complementary perspectives that may be summarised in two questions: To what extent does the organisational context of universities influence the possibilities of action by academic leaders? How do academic leaders respond to the changes that occur in their external environment? Such approaches have resulted in important insights into the complexity of academic leadership. In particular, they outline the tensions that exist between managerial and collegial behaviour; they also highlight that changes in the institutional environment do not necessarily lead to organisational isomorphism (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) but, rather, to various practices and strategies of leadership at the university level. However, the feature common to all this research is that it tackles the issue of university leadership from the standpoint of the leader and pays little attention to the relations between academic leaders and other components of university governance.

It is suggested here that a more collective approach to leadership may shed a different light on academic leaders. Such an approach was chosen for my doctoral research on the governance of French universities at the end of the 1990s (Mignot-Gérard, 2006). The analytical method used was based on the definition of university governance as the interplay between three lines of authority: (i) the 'academic hierarchy' that involves the academics elected to leadership functions at the university and faculty levels (the president and deans); (ii) the 'administrative hierarchy', which includes the main administrative officers (the registrar and chief accountant) for the university and the administrative heads of the faculties; and (iii) the university 'deliberative bodies' (the senate, and the academic and research boards).

This contribution will focus on the relations that take place within (and among) the academic and administrative hierarchies. We will show indeed that the interplay of these lines of authority has specific effects on the leadership styles adopted by both the university president and the deans.

The empirical data presented here were collected through two large fieldwork projects, both dedicated to the investigation of the internal governance of French universities. In 1998, a qualitative study based on 150 interviews was carried out in three universities. This study relied on both documentary analysis (4-year contracts established by universities, meeting reports of university councils) and semi-directive interviews with actors involved in the university governance (members of presidential teams, deans, department heads, members of the university decision-making bodies, administrative officers) and also with faculty members and administrative staff. A comparative report was written (Mignot-Gérard & Musselin, 1999). Drawing on the results of this first study, a questionnaire was built and sent to 37 universities in 1999. We received 1,660 answers (of 5,000 questionnaires sent), about 1,100 from academics and 560 from members of the administrative staff. A second report was written in 2000 (Mignot-Gérard & Musselin, 2002).

For these fieldwork projects, the data were collected and analysed through the concepts and methods of organisational sociology, as defined by Crozier and Friedberg (1977). Our research was thus based on an inductive approach. Our standpoint was the actor and his/her interactions. We started the fieldwork with the qualitative study, in order to grasp the subjective vision of the leaders. The interviews were focused on the following issues: the conceptualisation of their roles, their participation in the main collective decisions made at the university level (such as the allocation of budgets and positions, the decisions upon the new curricular offerings or the research projects elaborated by faculty members), the projects of change they launched in their units, and their relations with other members of the university (faculty members, administrative staff, members of university councils, other academic leaders). The objective of the interviews was to pick up the narratives of academic leaders about their concrete practices, as well as their relations of cooperation and conflict with other members of the institutions.

We conducted the interviews in three universities chosen for their diversity – contrasting their size, disciplinary structure and geographical location (see Table 1).

Table 1 Universities studied

University	Location	Size (number of students)	Main academic programmes
East	Northeast	18,330	Sciences
South	Southeast	14,657	Comprehensive University
West	Northwest	20,000	Humanities and Social Sciences

As for the quantitative study, the questionnaire was not built upon a priori hypothesis, but from the conclusions drawn by the qualitative study. This study pursued three objectives: (i) to gather information from a large sample of individuals about the organisation and governance of French universities; (ii) to obtain the opinions of academic and administrative staff about the roles played by the president, vice-presidents (VPs), administrative heads, deans and deliberative bodies in decision making; and (iii) to elaborate a typology of university governance in France.

This chapter is organised into two main parts. First, the general features of academic leadership in French universities are described: a discrepancy between the presidents and the deans will be outlined and explained. In the second part, we will examine and analyse the relations between the university president, the deans and the main officers of the central administration within the three universities of our qualitative study.

2 A Stronger Leadership at the University Level than at the Faculty Level

The growing influence of New Public Management (NPM) on higher education in Europe has led researchers to investigate to what extent NPM has permeated the

internal governance of universities (De Boer et al., 2004; Fulton, 2003; Henkel, 2000; Rasmussen, 2002; Reed, 2002). Whether comparative or conducted in a single country, these investigations have come to convergent conclusions. All of them outline the 'managerialisation' of academic leadership, at both the corporate and intermediate levels: the administrative and managerial tasks have gained importance in the leaders' activities; the academic leaders feel growing pressure from their institutional environment to implement changes in their units, to assert their leadership upon their faculty members, develop strategic plans, and assess the quality of the teaching and research activities. These studies also reveal that such an evolution entails tensions for new academic managers: How to be a manager without losing the trust of the academic community? How to show solidarity with the corporate management and defend at the same time one's academic unit? The authors also point out the increasing distance between the faculty and their leaders (Bauer, Askling, Marton, & Marton, 1999; Bleiklie, Høstaker, & Vabø, 2000; Henkel, 2000; Kogan, Bauer, Bleiklie, & Henkel, 2000; Merrien, Buttet, & Anselmo, 1998; Reed, 2002), but do not observe any contracts among the different levels of authority: all the academic leaders, whether presidents, deans or department heads, seem to have experienced a shift in their roles and missions.

The situation is pretty much different in France. As will be developed below, while the leadership of university presidents has moved towards a managerialist style, the shift is less obvious for the deans. We will then provide some explanatory factors for this dichotomy between presidents and deans in French universities.

2.1 Leadership Styles and Opinions About University Governance: Discrepancies Between the Presidents and Deans

Until 1968, the deans were the leading figures in universities: the function of university president had not been created and the faculties were the organisational unit where all the important decisions (budget allocation, curricular organisation, recruitments, etc.) were made (Musselin, 2001; Prost, 1992). In the mid-1980s, despite the reforms launched in 1968 (*Loi Faure*) and 1984 (*Loi Savary*) to increase university governance, Friedberg and Musselin (1989) observed that academic leadership in French universities would remain weak. The data collected in our quantitative and qualitative studies drew a picture of the situation of academic leadership in French universities at the end of the 1990s.

2.1.1 Presidents as Managers, Deans as *Primus Inter Pares*

To begin with, the opinions of university members (whether administrative or faculty) about the president and deans reflect a discrepancy of leadership styles between the two hierarchical levels. There is a widely shared feeling that the influence of presidential teams on university governance has been increased lately (Table 2),

Table 2 Influence of the presidential team

Regarding your university, would you say that the presidential team has gained influence on university governance in the recent period? ($N = 1,620$)	
Yes	66.0%
No	10.9%
I do not know	23.1%

while the influence of the deans on university governance is acknowledged by only 48.7% of the respondents (see Table 3).

The general opinion about the influence of both actors goes hand in hand with the perception of the president as a quite interventionist leader, whereas the dean is considered to be more of a cooperative leader. As shown in Table 4, only 12.6% of individuals who responded to the questionnaire qualified the deans as 'very interventionist', while 29.7% chose this term for the presidents; this percentage rose to 75% of the answers about the president in some universities, while it never rose to more than 28% of the answers about the deans in a single university.

Table 3 Influence of the deans

Do you agree (or disagree) with the following observation: 'The deans have a great deal of influence on university governance' ($N = 1,588$)	
I agree	48.7%
I disagree	42.6%
I do not know	8.6%

Table 4 Leadership style

Would you agree to qualify the leadership style of the following actors as 'very interventionist'?	
Your president	29.7% ($N = 1,365$)
Your dean	12.6% ($N = 1,252$)

The opinions expressed on a large scale by faculty members converge with the descriptions made by the presidents and deans of their respective roles. The former undertake their function with enthusiasm: they strongly express that they have ambitions for their campus, that they intend to implement new projects and expect to bring about changes in their institution.

> We leave a great deal of autonomy to the faculties but I discovered that we could impose a strategy without provoking any resistance. At the moment, we organize the move of a whole school. When I made this decision, I was told it would be impossible! But when you negotiate and explain the rationales of your decisions, everything becomes possible. (University President)

Furthermore, all the presidents who were interviewed noticed a professionalisation of their function. Some even used the term 'manager' to describe their function and compared their position with that of a CEO.

> Everyone expects the university president to take his function as a full time job. I often take the metaphor of business ... I know that I was elected thanks to my previous experience in a big public company. It reflects a shift in the mindsets of academics, a shift that occurred in many French universities ... For a long time, the president was legitimate if he was a distinguished scholar. This is outdated: now, a public manager is needed to run universities. (University President)

The contrast with the deans is striking. Most of the deans – regardless of their academic discipline – indeed, keep interpreting their role as the representation of their faculty members' interests. Internally, moreover, they hesitated to assert their authority over their peers. Unlike the presidents, the great majority of the deans who were interviewed in the qualitative study described their deanship in negative terms.

> Being a dean is a disaster for your academic career. You spend time for things that are useless, the university is too big, there are many administrative tasks without any power, nor financial resources ... and you have enemies. (Dean of Business Administration)

In addition, the deans hesitated to interfere in teaching or research matters and emphasised the difficulties they face when they plan to implement changes in academia. Though formally responsible for the monitoring of research, they hesitate to interfere in lab decisions. Overall, they feel they have a more legitimate right to exert leadership over teaching activities, but still remain cautious and sometimes pessimistic about their ability to initiate changes in this field too.

> The best definition for the dean is the *primus inter pares*. In my faculty, I tried to take initiatives, but it is badly perceived. Most of the time, decisions are collegial. Here, we have strong personalities among the professors: they are, more than me, the real engines when changes have to be set in motion. My job is more to make things work than initiate new projects. (Dean of Social Sciences)
>
> It is difficult to set in motion a change in the faculty. The problem is how to get the opinions from everyone and how to make a single opinion emerge. You hardly know who you have to consult before making a decision. If people disagree, it is a bad starting point ... Introducing a process of concertation and decision making is very slow. It is a heavy process for weak decisions. (Dean of Mathematics)

The concept of *primus inter pares* thus dominates the narratives of the deans in French universities. It is important to note that this concept is consistent with the attempts of their faculty members. The latter, indeed, judge that research and teaching have to be defined by the academic units: the department for teaching, the lab for research. For example, only 19.9% of the faculty who responded to the questionnaire say that it is the role of the dean to interfere in the distribution of teaching duties among academic staff; 53.2% estimate that it is not the role of the dean but of the department chair; and 18.6% say that the faculty must have complete freedom to chose the courses they teach. Moreover, a majority of the staff in faculties expect the deans to represent their local interests at the university level: while 75.4% of academic and administrative staff in faculties say that 'deans should defend their

interests in university strategies', only 45.6% say that 'deans should show solidarity to the president's team'.

To summarise, if the university presidents have developed a proactive vision of their function in the past 15 years, the deans still behave and consider their role as that of a *primus inter pares*, a concept which is convergent with the expectations of their faculty members.

2.1.2 Opinions About University Rationalisation: A Gap Between the University Level and the Grassroots

The differences in leadership styles between the presidents and their deans are actually the tip of the iceberg of a larger discrepancy between the university leadership (the presidential team and central administration) and the faculty level (the deans, department chairs, academic and administrative staff).

This statement is clearly illustrated by the opinions of both groups regarding university management. With the increase in their institutional autonomy, French universities were encouraged to improve their management practices: 'the notion of institutional autonomy was progressively associated with the notion of modernization, management rationalization, university leadership, strategic plans in budgetary matters and curricula offerings ...' (Musselin, 2001, p. 184). Table 5 indicates that the deans and department chairs share similar opinions about university rationalisation while the presidents' conceptualisations are closer to those of the administrative heads'. To put it simply, while the latter fully support rationalisation, the former consider it as inefficient bureaucratisation.

The distance not only concerns academic leaders; there is also a breach within the administration. For instance, administrative staff in faculties and their counterparts at the university level do not have the same expectations about the priorities of university administration (Table 6). Quite surprisingly, the opinions expressed by the former are closer to the faculty members' opinions.

Table 5 Differing opinions on the rationalisation of university management

	Percentage in agreement			
	Presidents ($N = 13$)	Registrars ($N = 27$)	Deans ($N = 90$)	Dept Chairs ($N = 114$)
'The rationalisation of the management of the university is a high priority in the missions of the central administrative units of the university'	84.6%	86.2%	46.7%	48.2%
'The administrative burdens imposed by the university restrict the initiatives of academics'	33.3%	27.6%	60.4%	70.2%

Table 6 Differing opinions about the role of university administration

'The central administration should first . . .'	Administrative staff at the university level ($N = 250$)	Administrative staff in faculties ($N = 284$)	Faculty members ($N = 1,033$)
'. . . relay the difficulties met by the faculties to the ministry'	38.5%	59.8%	57.1%
'. . . centralise the management of the key university resources'	60.4%	32.9%	31.7%

The discrepancy within the administration is not only visible in the opinions but also in the day-to-day work. The interviews with administrative staff in the three universities in the qualitative study led to two main conclusions. First, administrative staff who work in the faculties show more allegiance to their dean than to the registrar, although the latter is their official head. Second, faculty staff criticise the work overload provoked by university modernisation, and dispute the tendency of central administration to produce impersonal rules disconnected from the grassroots reality; they also expect more flexibility and support from university administration. As for the latter, they often deplore the lack of technical skills of their counterparts as well as the unwillingness of the decentralised units to make their management practices transparent. Between the two organisational levels, there is thus more reciprocal distrust than cooperation.

Hence, French universities are characterised by an organisational gap between the university and faculty levels with regards to both the administrative and academic lines of authority.

2.2 *Some Explanatory Factors*

How to account for the particularity of the French case? Three complementary explanations may be offered.

2.2.1 The President as the Only Recipient of University Autonomy: An Overview of the Reforms in France from 1968 to 2007

In most European countries, the recent reforms in higher education have reinforced all levels of authority of university leadership. In the UK, the evaluation tools of academic research and teaching (RAE and TQA) have increased the powers and prerogatives of department chairs (Fulton, 2003; Henkel, 2002). In Sweden, the 1993 Law created governing boards in charge of budgetary strategies at both the institutional and faculty levels (Bauer et al., 1999). In Norway, the Statkonsult report that initiated the 1989 reform advocated decentralisation of authority within universities (Bleiklie et al., 2000).[1]

Unlike these foreign experiences, national reforms of higher education that have been conducted in France since 1968 have exclusively strengthened the position of the university president. Since the nineteenth century, deans were the central actors in French universities: they were at the same time respected and recognised peers within their faculty and privileged partners of the ministry (Musselin, 2001). In the twentieth century, the *Loi Faure* (1968) proclaimed the institutional autonomy of universities and introduced two main changes in the internal structures of universities.

First, the position of the university president was created and two collective bodies were set at the university level (the university council and the academic council). The principle of the election of the president by the majority of the assembly of the elected councils was supposed to give a high degree of legitimacy and a strong capacity of action to the president (Jegouzo, 1984). During the parliamentary debates prior to the law promulgation, the Minister of Education, Edgar Faure, posted his intention to position 'CEOs' at the head of universities (Gimenez, 1999).

Second, the traditional faculties were replaced by cross-disciplinary academic units (the *Unités d'Enseignement et de Recherche*)[2] that aimed to weaken the decisional power of traditional disciplines and their deans (Prost, 1992). The *Loi Savary* (1984) emphasised the evolution initiated by the *Loi Faure* (1968): the text of the law contains a long description dedicated to the president's prerogatives[3] while the description of the dean's tasks is very laconic. Furthermore, the *Loi Savary* is mute about the participation of the deans in university governance (Jegouzo, 1984) and clearly stipulates that researchers are free to determine the content of their research while professors are responsible for the coordination of teaching activities.

Besides these two laws, 4-year contracts between the universities and the ministry were introduced in 1988 to reinforce institutional autonomy for universities. With the contracts, the institutions are entitled to develop their priorities for the next 4 years, analyse their financial and material needs to reach their objectives, and negotiate both the priorities and the amount of financial support with the ministry. For the initiators of this reform, the 'target' was again the university president: the ministerial officers proclaimed that, from now on, their only interlocutor within universities would be the president (Musselin, 2001, p. 132).

With the very recent *loi d'autonomie des universités* set up by the Sarkozy government in July 2007, the will to strengthen the powers of the president is even more explicit and embedded in three concrete measures: (i) before this law, the president could run for a single mandate; now, in order to establish the stability of university management, the president has been given the possibility of being re-elected for a second 5-year mandate; (ii) the numbers of elected members on the university senate were reduced: from a representative assembly of internal constituencies (the faculty, administrative staff and students), the senate is now entitled to become more like a governing board that supports the presidential team; and (iii) the president has been given the ability to oppose a veto to the appointment of new faculty. Thus, besides its clear intention to strengthen the president's authority in several respects, this new bill is again entirely dedicated to the president and makes no mention of the other levels of management.

2.2.2 The Deans' Status

In some countries in Europe, the appointment procedures of deans have evolved. In the Netherlands, deans are not elected by their peers, but appointed by presidential teams or by the governing board of the faculty (De Boer et al., 2004, p. 11); some universities have even started to recruit their deans externally. In the UK, while the nomination methods may not have changed much, some middle-level academic managers in post-1992 institutions have taken an administrative career track (Fulton, 2003).

In France, *a contrario*, the deans are still elected by their peers; as a consequence, they owe a minimum of loyalty to their faculty members – and the latter expect them to protect their interests against those of other disciplines and university policies (for a comparison, see Section 2.1). Moreover, the great majority of deans in France go back to their academic activities after their mandate – more frequently to their original department and research team. Since they will eventually be subordinated to a new dean, they are less likely to endorse the behaviour and discourse of managers.

The status of deans thus does not favour the development of a managerial conceptualisation of their role or their solidarity with the president.

2.2.3 The Unclearness of UFR Frontiers and Prerogatives

When the UERs were created by the *Loi Faure* (1968) to replace the traditional faculties, some universities played the game and tried to build new academic units that would adhere to the principle of cross-disciplinarity advocated by law; however, some disciplines joined according to scientific or political affinities, while others merely reproduced the faculty in its original form. In addition to their heterogeneity of content, the UFRs do not all have the same status. Indeed, the *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* which deliver vocational undergraduate degrees and the medical schools benefit from specific status: they are more autonomous from their university than are the ordinary UFRs for all the decisions regarding the allocation of budgets or academic positions. The notion of UFRs thus encompasses a great diversity of realities across French universities; under these conditions, a convergence of interests among the deans or the emergence of a common conceptualisation of deanship is unlikely to happen.

Besides this diversity, the UFR prerogatives remain unclear. On the one hand, they are supposed to head both research and teaching activities, but the law also states that departments and research teams remain responsible for the production of teaching and research (see above). The role of the UFR is then de facto restricted to administrative coordination and arbitration between the decentralised units for the allocation of resources.

Some early public policies have accelerated the erosion of the UFRs. In the mid-1990s, the universities were instructed by the French Ministry of Research to create interdisciplinary research centres for the purpose of enhancing relationships and cooperation among research teams from different disciplines. The UFRs were therefore dispossessed of the strategic decisions regarding the allocation of research

funds and grants. More recently, the implementation of the Bologna process has destabilised the UFRs even more. Indeed, the new bachelor–master degrees that were created generally do not coincide with the frontiers of the UFRs, and some universities have created new administrative structures to coordinate the curricular offerings at each level; in some cases, these structures are even responsible for the allocation of teaching budgets and the definition of priorities for the recruitment of new faculty members. Even when institutions have not yet transformed their formal organisation, the Bologna process has stimulated widespread discussions about the remaining authority and content of their UFRs (Mignot-Gérard & Musselin, 2005).

To summarise, while the national reforms which led to an increase in the institutional autonomy of universities were focused on the president, the deans' status has not been modified for 50 years; in addition, several recent changes that occurred in the context of higher education in France have contributed to limit the prerogatives of the UFRs. Such evolutions have not hence favoured the emergence of strong leadership at the middle-management level in universities.

3 Governance Coalitions and Academic Leadership in Three Universities

By ignoring the deans, the national reformers do not properly recognise the solid role played by the deans in the governance of universities. The rise of a stronger executive leadership in French universities manifests itself in the construction of presidential teams at the institutional level: the president usually works with a small group of close collaborators, often called the *bureau*. The composition of this group may vary across universities since it is defined by each university's statutes. The president proposes the names of the people he or she would like to appoint as vice-presidents (VPs). Most of the VPs are drawn from academic staff and are responsible for special missions. However, as we will see through the study of the universities in our qualitative sample, the VPs are not the only members of the *bureau*: the registrar (the chief administrative officer) and the deans may also be involved. We will thus investigate the roles and relations of these different players in the three universities studied, and demonstrate that the relations among them present mechanisms for stability.

3.1 Three Universities, Three Governing Coalitions

3.1.1 South University: An Alliance Between the President and the Deans

The collective integration of South University has long suffered from the isolationism of its faculties. Therefore, the president has decided to closely associate the deans with the decisions made at the university level in order to compel them to show a minimum of solidarity with the university strategic plans. Accordingly, the deans are members of the *bureau* and two of the three VPs appointed by the

president were chosen from among the deans. The deans also have a great deal of influence on the matters of teaching, and prepare all the decisions made by the board of studies. The registrar does not participate in the *bureau*: he considers his mission is to implement the decisions made by the academic leaders, and he interprets the influence of the deans as part of the 'culture' of academic organisations.

3.1.2 East University: An Alliance Between the President and the Administration

The presidential team of East University is composed of the president, the VPs and the main administrative officers (the registrar and the accountant). This *bureau* meets once a week to define the institutional strategies in every domain of the university management. There is a strong solidarity within this team. The president's authority is acknowledged by everyone, even by the administrative representatives who pay a great deal of attention to not infringe on the president's decision-making prerogatives. The deans do not participate in the *bureau*; they are merely informed once a month of the decisions made by the presidential team. The VPs have judged that it would be too difficult to reach a consensus if the deans had to join the *bureau* because they are just able to defend their 'own backyard'; they prefer to consider the deans' demands in face-to-face meetings.

3.1.3 West University: An Isolated President and a Powerful Administration

At West University, the president has appointed 13 VPs. The president leaves a substantial degree of autonomy to his VPs to handle their jobs and he seldom organises meetings with the whole team. Regarding his relation with the deans, the president is willing to increase their involvement in the university governance. In 1993, the 21 UFRs of the university were merged into five UFRs with the purpose of decentralising the power of decision making and strengthening the administrative skills of the UFRs. The president thus often calls the faculty members to speak to the deans before consulting the university administration whenever they have a demand or a project. He has also set up a monthly meeting with the deans in order to inform them about university plans. However, these initiatives have not produced the desired effects. The department chairs and faculty members keep on going over the deans' heads: in the domain of teaching, in particular, they directly pursue their projects with the VP of studies without consulting the deans. Moreover, the president is not well informed by his meeting with the deans; according to him, it does not help in relaying university strategies within the academic community.

There is, finally, a conflicting relationship between the president and the administration officers. The president feels that the latter overlap their responsibilities and make decisions in too many fields of university management; as for the registrar and accountant, they justify their pervasiveness by arguing that the president lacks technical and legal expertise, and administrative skills.

Our three universities thus illustrate three distinct governing coalitions. Two presidents have built regular teams, which involve the deans in one case, and the VPs

and administrative chiefs in the other. In the third case, the president has scattered or conflicting relations with the other participants in university governance.

3.2 Governing Coalitions and Academic Leadership

We will now describe the content of the collective projects launched by the three presidents in order to distinguish their respective leadership styles. A brief description of the deans' role in the implementation of the presidential policies will also be provided. Then it will be possible to characterise more precisely the various types of 'academic leadership' that exist across the cases studied.

3.2.1 South University: A Double-Edged Partnership on Both Sides

All the strategic plans conducted by the president derive from the global objective to strengthen the centralisation of decision making at the university level. In the domain of research, teams are merged into interdisciplinary research centres. In the area of management, the president has decided to allocate new administrative positions to central administration at the expense of the faculties. The creation of central offices (for research and purchasing) is another action that reveals the president's priority to centralise decision making as well as the main functions of university management.

If the president is successful in imposing university authority in several domains, his alliance with the *deans* sometimes entails negotiations between university priorities and the faculties' interests. Such trade-offs are particularly obvious in the decisions of resource allocation. For example, decisions regarding budgets are negotiated in order to preserve solidarity between the UFRs. The faculty:student ratio that traditionally guides the allocation of teaching budgets within universities is not applied bureaucratically because it may create conflict between the deans; indeed, for the latter, this ratio favours the sciences versus the humanities and may hurt schools that suffer from declining enrolments. Similarly, for the annual distribution of new academic positions among the UFRs, the search for equity guides the choices made at the *bureau*. The decision-making process is the following: the deans claim new positions in accordance with their needs in teaching and research. But at this point, disagreements generally arise. To decide between the deans' demands, the *bureau* has thus invented an informal rule: for the year N, the UFR that was not given any position since $N - 3$ has the priority, and in $N + 1$, another UFR will be entitled to claim a position.

For the faculty and the deans, the 'political' allocation of resources helps to secure a minimum of cohesion within the university. However, the president is not completely satisfied with this system: he believes that the allocation of resources should reflect the university strategic plans rather than the political struggle between the deans. In this perspective, he tried to create a financial commission composed of administrative experts that would determine the rules of allocation of the annual budget. But the deans have blocked the creation of this financial commission in order

to retain their power on budgetary decisions. Interestingly, 4 years after our fieldwork, this commission had still not been created and the deans were still influential members of the *bureau*.

As for the deans, they hold a strong but awkward position. All of them enjoy being involved in the university *bureau* as well as participating in university policy making.

> The most interesting part of my job is the work done at the *bureau*. We try to consolidate our group, to share our experiences of deanship. (Dean, Faculty of Sciences)
>
> Before the election of our president, our faculty was isolationist, we were 100% independent. Now, we belong to the university: we are very happy to discuss with the other deans. (Dean, Faculty of Law)

Their opinion on the day-to-day dean's job is more ambivalent. On the one hand, in our qualitative sample, they certainly are the most proactive deans in the internal management of their UFR. On the other hand, they regret having to show solidarity on collective choices that can go against their faculty interests.

> It is our job to allocate the new academic positions, but it is the jungle to rank the demands for new positions. Sometimes, when you go back to your faculty, you are given a roasting. (Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy)

At South University then, the president and deans exert significant influence on university management, which goes hand in hand with proactive leadership on both sides; however, this alliance entails compromises for everyone since the negotiations between the collective interests of the university and the individual interests of the faculties are permanent.

3.2.2 East University: Managers at the University Level but Passive Deans

All the presidential team's actions are directed towards the need to improve university management in a context of scarcity of financial resources. The most concerning problem identified by the president is an important decline of resources resulting from the interaction of two factors. First, the number of research contracts (that were said to represent nearly 60% of the university operating budget without salaries) is decreasing. Second, some disciplines suffer from a harsh decrease in student numbers which has a negative impact on the ministerial annual provisions to the university (especially the teaching budget and the creation of new academic positions). In this context, the presidential team tries to implement plans of rationalisation. In the human resources sector, East University was one of the first universities in France to initiate redeployment of academic positions among UFRs. Teaching and research are also monitored centrally: unlike South University, there is no bargaining among the faculties; instead, the VP of studies has defined stabilised criteria to allocate the teaching budgets. In addition, the development of curricula is tightly regulated in a cost control perspective: the VP ensures that new curricula will not need supplementary resources. The university research budget is also under the control of the VP of research: the latter posted the development of new research contracts and the centralisation of their management as an institutional priority in

order to make sure that the overhead (7% of the amount of the contract) would be paid to the university.

The president and his VPs have the same conceptualisation of their roles: they express their wish to introduce ambitious changes in the university management and identify themselves as administrators rather than faculty members. Their discourse reveals a proactive conceptualisation of their function.

> Priorities are defined by the presidential team, then proposals are made to the deliberative bodies. I am involved in every creation of new positions and the team makes the final decision: there is no opposition because the decision is made in conformity with the university strategy. (VP of Human Resources Management)

In the domain of teaching, the deans implement the rationalisation plans decided at the university level with resignation; in the domain of research, they find it illegitimate to interfere, so they prefer to delegate the responsibility of control to the lower level of authority.

> We are experiencing hard times. Since two years, it is very difficult to introduce innovations. Ten years ago, it was easy to obtain funds to create a new curriculum; now, our VP is watchful, with purpose . . . Research labs have an entire freedom to define their orientations. It cannot be the job of the dean to define the research orientations. I am involved in the discussions as a researcher, not as a dean. The labs must be free to set up their policy. (Dean, Faculty of Economics)

In general, the deans are critical about the top-down atmosphere that derives from the governance style adopted by the university administrators.

> After a period of democracy, we are now experiencing an autocratic tendency. This is neither natural nor pleasant! The previous president was also directive, but in a different way. With the current president, the opinions from the grassroots are seldom taken into account. (Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences)

Unlike the members of the presidential team who consider their elected responsibility an exciting challenge, the deans are more reluctant to undertake their mandate. The candidates do not rush for deanship but rather take the responsibility as a compulsory administrative task.

> Being a dean is a burden. The deans who complete their mandates are rare. My colleagues pushed me to take the deanship. I was also wishing to run a particular policy in the UFR . . . But it is true that the difficulties that my research team was experiencing at that period gave me some time to take this position. (Dean, Faculty of Physics)

Excluded from the university board, the deans at East University have adopted quite passive behaviour: either they merely implement the strategic plans defined at the institutional level arguing that they have no other choice, or they oppose these plans by delegating their authority to the academic decentralised units.

3.2.3 West University: Powerful Administration and Reluctant Academic Leaders

Four elements characterise the leadership style of the president at West University. First, he is involved in the representation of his institution's interests within national

governing instances (the Ministry of Education and the National Conference of French Presidents). In his opinion, this mission is a pivotal one, justified by the need to inform the policy makers about the peculiarities of his university. Second, he is the only president of our sample to prefer to assure the follow-up of the changes launched by his predecessor rather than initiate new reforms. Third, he does not interfere in the implementation of university policies, but prefers to delegate this task to the VPs, the deliberative bodies or the deans. Fourth, he continuously recalls that he is not an administrative officer but primarily a faculty.

> My mandate is an adaptation-transition rather than an action ... In the past, this institution was very proactive, willing to make new experiences ... now, we are in a period of evolution rather than revolution: we have problems of management and we need to solve them before starting new projects ... The president is the executive chief. He is elected by the Legislative bodies. He has a political role, he is not a member of the administration. He is a political leader, elected by the academic community. I was candidate for the president election because I believe that the university must be run by a faculty ... The efficiency of a president is the base of the democratic life in the university: you need to let many people express their opinion, let the deliberative bodies discuss ... I do not wish to carry on my career as an administrator, I want to come back to my professorship. (President)

While the president keeps from managing the administrative tasks or implementing the university plans, the registrar tries to assert his leadership over the university management. Not only does he make all the management decisions (such as the allocation of administrative positions among the faculties), but he also tries to extend his territory of influence to financial activities and even academic matters.

> The fields of logistics, human resources and finances are closely related. I also play a role in the management of schooling, I am currently working on the issue of students' admissions. The frontier between 'policy making' and 'policy implementation' is unclear. It is an issue with the president. I am indeed interventionist in the management of administrative staff. The four central administrative offices are under my responsibility: they are headed by VPs, but the leaders are missing ... (Registrar)

The overwhelming authority of the registrar is strongly criticised by faculty members who judge that the president should be more available to prevent an administrative officer making decisions on his behalf. The deans too object to the rise of a bureaucratic burden, the excess of centralisation and the difficulty of negotiating with the registrar.

> Decisions have to be made by faculty elected at leadership functions. It is crucial for the dean to talk to the president rather than to the registrar, it is basic democracy. I do not despise the administration but nothing is more dangerous than to be infeodated to the bureaucracy. The modernization of the university is a pretext for more efficiency, productivity and rationalization ... This economical and technobureaucratic logic is now penetrating but it must not be the only driver of the university. (Dean of Humanities)

Like the president, the deans identify themselves as academics rather than managers: most of them keep on doing research and teaching and consider their deanship as a short-term function, endorsed by solidarity with their peers. These deans are

also reluctant to exert their authority towards their peers and regret the lack of administrative skills and sense of collectivity among the academic community they govern.

> As a dean, you do not have to teach. I chose to keep on teaching. Us, the deans, are faculty members who have accepted to take responsibility for a mandate. Hence, I still take on a full service of teaching and the preparation of my courses is time consuming! (Dean of Humanities)
>
> One problem is to lead people to accept the existence of a level of authority between the departments and the president. The UFR role of administrative control is not very pleasant. Moreover, my colleagues are unaware of the administrative and financial rules, they are not interested in this stuff. Some feign naivety, others just do not know . . . financial matters have not permeated the academic world yet. (Dean, Faculty of Languages)

The deans at West University thus feel both isolated and uneasy in exercising their leadership. On the one hand, they are reluctant to relay the unpopular decisions made by the registrar; on the other, they have to deal with an autonomous academic community, little concerned by management.

Our case studies thus illustrate three 'pure' governing coalitions that go hand in hand with different leadership styles at the president and deans levels.

1. When the president is allied with the deans, he has to secure a proper balance between centralisation and decentralisation and to negotiate the internal allocation of resources in order to prevent the emergence of conflict within his team. The deans appreciate being members of the university board: this strong position in the university governance allows them to maintain their influence over the teaching matters in their UFRs; but the reverse side of the coin is that they are torn between solidarity with their president and the representation of their peers' interests.
2. When the president is associated with the administration, the power over academic matters is more centralised and the allocation of resources more standardised; the president's leadership style is also more managerialist. The deans, who are not members of the *bureau*, simply ratify the university plans but are not strongly committed to their implementation.
3. When the president develops a strong academic identity and involves himself in the external representation of his institution's interests, the registrar may seize power. The deans are then trapped between the bureaucratic order imposed from the top of the university and the persistence of individualism within their academic community. They prefer to minimise their involvement in their deanship and involve themselves in academic activities.

This description thus indicates that the power relations between the president, the deans and the registrar may shape academic leadership exercised at different levels in the university.

3.3 The Stability of Governance Styles

As observed by Hardy (1990) in her study of six universities in Brazil, our case studies indicate that universities develop a certain consistency between leadership orientation and internal power relations: we will call these particular configurations 'governance styles'. For Hardy, there are possible transitions among different configurations of governance. In particular, she suggests that bureaucratic governance can become more decentralised if the professorial community takes power away from the central administration; she also identifies a possible move from the 'organised anarchy' towards the 'political arena' if the rector initiates discussions with the most powerful groups in the university. So, to what extent are the governing styles that we identified in our three French institutions likely to change? Our analysis seems to show that these changes may be more difficult to implement than suggested by Hardy (1990).

3.3.1 The President, the Administration and the Deans: A Zero Sum Game?

In the two institutions where the presidents have achieved building an alliance, the members of the *bureau* are either the deans (South University) or the administration (East University). On the one hand, indeed, the preferences of administrative officers are difficult to take into account in university decisions when the deans participate in university governance. Two reasons may account for this. First, to negotiate with the deans implies to tolerate some degree of autonomy for the faculties so that the central administrative offices are *volens nolens* constrained by the faculties' decisions. At South University, for instance, the offices that were charged with monitoring the expenses in teaching had to adapt to the peculiarities of each UFR taking into account the measures of rationalisation that were decided centrally. Second, cooperation with the deans requires maintaining a flexible system of resource allocation in order to preserve the internal solidarity among faculties. Therefore, centralisation and standardisation are partial or non-existent when the deans govern with the president; as a result, the administrative representatives who generally support these 'precarious values' (Lazéga, 2001) can hardly have a voice in the decisions made at the university level.

Conversely, the case of East University seems to show that it is complicated for the presidential team to cooperate closely with the deans when the administrative heads are members of the *bureau*. Indeed, to set up standard criteria for resource allocation or make internal redistributions, it is more 'rational' to limit the interactions among the deans: as the latter have few occasions to meet, they have few opportunities to develop affinities or feelings of solidarity; they may even ignore the fact that their counterparts have been targeted for measures of rationalisation. In this context, the chance that they collude to oppose university decisions is quite low. The behaviour of the presidential team at East university then makes sense: keeping – consciously or not – the deans out of the *bureau* helps to maintain 'loose horizontal linkages' (Rubin, 1979) and to impose decisions of rationalisation. We may even

hypothesise that the stronger the relations between the president and his administrative partners, the more the former will adhere to the values of standardisation and centralisation and the less likely he will be to negotiate the flexible implementation of policies with the deans.

The non-cooperative governing style identified at West University can also be analysed as a zero sum game. Indeed, the more the registrar increases his authority internally, the more the president is tempted to focus on external activities – as the representative of the university in national arenas – and defend the academic values of autonomy and collegiality. The conflicting relations between the president and the registrar do not help the deans to assert their leadership within their UFRs: instead of relaying the unpopular decisions of the administration, they prefer to maintain a critical distance from the latter, minimising their involvement in their deanship. The omnipresence of the registrar thus goes hand in hand with weak academic leadership.

3.3.2 The Effects of Outsiders' Behaviour on the Governance Coalition

The corollary of this zero sum game is that any coalition that governs the university results in exclusion(s). In all the cases studied here, the 'outsiders' of the governing coalition have developed a specific conceptualisation of their role. Most of the deans who are not members of the presidential team are often reluctant leaders who delegate their authority to the academic units. Instead of behaving as managers, most of them still devote a significant part of their time and energy to academic activities and identify themselves as faculty members rather than managers. As for the administrative members who are not members of the *bureau*, they seem to acknowledge the supremacy of academic leaders in decision making. Why then would the president try to enrol actors in his team who either lack influence or do not show clearly their participation in university governance?

Moreover, it seems that the behaviour of outsiders strengthens the dominant coalition. When deans delegate the implementation of decisions made at the university level, members of the presidential teams have to increase their contacts with lower levels of management to check that their decisions have been enforced. This dispersion of responsibilities may strengthen the administrators' conviction that the university must be run from the top and, at the same time, their trust in the deans' capacity to manage may be weakened. By the same token, when central administration is relegated to routine tasks and/or implements the faculties' orders, the deans will presumably try to increase their autonomy from the university or strengthen their influence over the decisions made at the university level. In brief, by their disengagement, be it conscious or not, outsiders reinforce the oligopolistic tendency of the governing coalition.

3.3.3 Social Exchanges Within Presidential Teams

Another phenomenon that may account for the stability of governing styles is that presidential teams are the locus of exchanges. Even though being a member of a

presidential team may be constraining, the participants receive benefits from this cooperation. The ‘dividends’ are at least social: it is rewarding to be a decision maker, or to share managerial experiences with other university leaders; for the president’s associates, the benefits can even be monetary, as is the case for the deans at South University who are allocated new academic positions as a tacit payback for their loyalty to university policies. Furthermore, the benefits expected through cooperation are not obtained immediately but in the long term; organising deans into governing teams results in their collective involvement in the elaboration of university policies, which, in turn, enhances support from the faculty and, in the end, facilitates the implementation of the strategic plans.

The actors’ self-interests are of course not the only binding elements in these alliances. Two other elements may prevent the partners from defecting. First, cooperation manifests itself in formal devices (regular meetings, for instance) that may be difficult to remove just because partners have developed interdependencies, or initiated common discussions or projects. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the construction of a team goes hand in hand with the development of cooperative values. And, as the leader, the president embodies the values he has instilled within his team: as argued by Bourricaud (1964), in a government based on cooperation with associates, the president first depersonalises his authority but, further, there is a repersonalisation in the sense that the members of the team expect the president to protect them, to maintain group cohesiveness, to bear the responsibility for the decisions built together and to protect the common values of the group. The president’s defection is then least likely to happen. Thus, the relations that take place within the presidential teams may account for the fact that, despite the several constraints they involve, the governing coalitions identified in the cases studied are not all changing.

The emphasis on the resources exchanged within the governing teams and on the correlations between academic and administrative leadership finally leads one to question the possible transition among the different governing styles hypothesised by Hardy (1990). First, Hardy ignores the fact that outsiders may reinterpret their roles: professors who have long suffered from the imposition of an authority perceived as bureaucratic – will they be willing to destabilise the governing coalition or will they keep focusing on their teaching and research missions and stay in the background of university management? Our study rather supports the second scenario, which converges with the one drawn by De Boer (2002) in the aftermath of the weakening of representative bodies in universities in the Netherlands introduced by the MUB reform (University Government Modernisation Act 1997). De Boer notably argues that one consequence of this law will be that professors will lose interest in the university elective governing responsibilities and try to ‘look for other informal ways to influence policies’ (De Boer, 2002, p. 18). Second, Hardy (1990) does not pay attention to the internal exchanges among partners, which leads her to underestimate the hardiness of existing alliances. Third, and finally, unlike Hardy, we believe that the metaphor of the ‘organised anarchy’ is inappropriate to qualify universities where presidential leadership is weak: the case of West University – which is confirmed on a larger scale with a typology of 37 French universities (Mignot-Gérard, 2006) – shows that when a president has difficulties

in managing the internal arena of his or her university, other actors may seize the opportunity to extend their power over the decisions made at the university level.[4] It thus seems reasonable to consider that any university hosts a predominant coalition, so that changing the governing style may mean confrontations with existing powerful coalitions unwilling to relinquish their influence.[5]

If our results and analysis thus draw attention to more organisational inertia than is usually asserted in the literature, the present empirical study remains limited in scope since it has been focused on a single presidential mandate. It would be interesting to test the finding of stability on longer periods of time, in order, for instance, to evaluate the impact of leaders' personalities on the emergence of different governing patterns within universities.

4 Conclusion

The majority of studies of leadership in universities either focus on one position of authority (the president or the dean) or consider *academic leadership* as a rather coherent category. For our study of the governance of French universities, we chose an alternative approach that simultaneously depersonalises and deconstructs the notion of academic leadership (Mignot-Gérard, 2003).

Two main findings that emerge from this approach were emphasised in this contribution. First, we discovered that, in French universities, presidential leadership has experienced a noticeable managerial shift in the past 20 years, while there is the persistence of a rather traditional academic leadership on the shop floor. Indeed, the presidents more than the deans have benefited from the increase in university autonomy that has been enhanced by higher education reforms in France over the past 40 years. These reforms did not allocate the deans any means to assert their leadership (as changes in their appointment procedures or mandates), but they have constructed stronger universities vis-à-vis the faculties and, whether deliberate or not, their elected leaders.

The second finding is the existence of distinct patterns of governance across French universities.[6] On the one hand, in the three institutions studied, the relative influence of the presidents, the deans and the administrative officers on the main decision-making processes differs substantially. On the other hand, the ways the presidents and the deans define their roles vary from place to place and we tried to demonstrate that the local definitions of leadership by academic managers were mutually constructed by the interactions among them and with the administrative officers.

How might this study on French university governance inform further research on academic leadership? In the first place, the study encourages the elaboration of finer definitions and distinctions of the deans' leadership orientations. For the French deans, we observed that the balances between the figures of the *corporate lackey* and *academe's champion* varied across institutions: when associated with the university board, the deans showed solidarity with (some of) the presidents' projects

but, at the same time, kept defending their peers' interests; when the administration was the most influential actor in the university governance, the deans criticised both the authoritative leadership imposed by the administration and the lack of collective involvement of their colleagues in management matters; and, when there was an alliance between the administration and the presidential team, the deans either delegated their authority to the lower level of management or reluctantly implemented the changes decided by the university administrators. It might then be interesting to discover to what extent the specific combinations between corporate lackey and academe's champion found in France are peculiar to this country. But our study also indicates that these 'ideal types' are not necessarily incompatible: the deans at South University (and, to a lesser extent, at East University) can be depicted as both corporate lackeys and academe's champions; besides, none of these types really stick to the deans' behaviour at West University. To better qualify the deans' leadership orientations, it thus seems appropriate to test, challenge and refine the ideal types of *corporate lackey* and *academe's champion*.

The second line of investigation that should be pursued by research is with regard to the determinants of academic leadership. So far, it has been shown that the background and/or professional experience of the leaders (Fulton, 2003), the type (Henkel, 2000) or size (Engwall, Levay, & Lidman, 1999) of the institutions they manage, and the financial contexts (Neumann & Bensimon, 1990) of these institutions, give rise to different leadership styles. In this contribution, we have tried to demonstrate that the internal structure of power has also had an influence on academic leadership and we pointed out the organisational inertia related to the 'governing styles' adopted by universities. The future reflection on academic leadership will thus have to better integrate these different variables (the leaders' individual trajectories, the organisational histories of universities, the external pressures from their environment) and determine what their relative impact is on the emergence of specific university governance patterns.

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Notes

1. Of course, as pointed out by Meek (2003), these translations of NPM may give rise to contradictions at the institutional level: the tension between an efficient central management and decentralisation is among the most obvious.
2. The *Unités d'Enseignement et de Recherche* (UER) became the *Unités de Formation et de Recherche* (UFR) with the *Loi Savary* in 1984.
3. He or she is responsible for the whole administration of the university, his or her authority on the management of administrative staff, on the allocation of buildings, he or she is responsible for the nomination of the exams juries, she or he decides on whether doctorate students are allowed or not to defend their PhD, she or he is responsible for the definition of teaching services' obligations, etc.

4. This is also one of the criticisms that Musselin (1987) addresses regarding the 'organised anarchy' model. Her study of two French and two German universities in the 1980s shows that none of the four institutions concretely functions as an 'organised anarchy', especially because the different actors involved are less passive than the model predicts: instead of just reacting to 'problems' and 'solutions', they also seize the opportunities of organisational constraints to increase their autonomy and influence.
5. The study carried out by Barrier (2005) on the governance of a Parisian university from 1989 to 2005 illustrates this point: between 1989 and 1999, the UFR of Sciences dominated the university governance thanks to its size and strong scientific reputation. In 1999, the new president tried to introduce a more centralised leadership. But Barrier shows that this shift has brought about unprecedented organisational crisis.
6. The differentiation of university governance is not specific to France – it is observed in several national systems of higher education (Amaral, Jones, & Karseth, 2002).

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From Democracy to Management-Oriented Leadership? The Manager-Academic in Norwegian Higher Education

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1 Introduction

As in most Western countries, the leadership structure in Norwegian higher education institutions has undergone transformation. Over many years, there has been a call for stronger academic leadership in higher education institutions – a development that reflects a strong belief in leadership reform as a solution to various problems. Among other things, leadership has been regarded as a necessary and vital tool in order to secure and develop the quality of research and education in universities and university colleges. In this respect, different measures to strengthen the manager-academic role have been discussed. At the beginning of this century, the Ministry of Education and Research proposed to replace elected leaders with appointed leaders for a fixed term. However, the ministry's main tool to strengthen academic leadership was made voluntarily. Nevertheless, since 2003, higher education institutions have had the opportunity to appoint deans and departmental heads for fixed terms.

Leadership comprises the practice of legitimised authority. However, there are different sources of legitimacy in order to be able to practise leadership and it can be separated between elected and appointed heads when it comes to the leader's source of authority. While elected leaders obtain their legitimacy from below and from the electoral college, appointed leaders get it from the level above, from the body that appointed them. However, the Norwegian Act Relating to Universities and University Colleges (2005) prescribes that it is a precondition that the candidates have scholarly legitimacy regardless of how leaders are recruited.

The introduction of appointed leaders is part of the reform which Norwegian higher education has undergone. In 2003, the Quality Reform in higher education put changes into practice that included a new degree structure, new teaching and evaluation methods and a new incentive-based funding system, as well as greater emphasis on internationalisation and changes in the governance and leadership structure. Many of the elements in the Quality Reform are in line with the Bologna

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process in European higher education. Furthermore, a new common Act, which for the first time covered both public and private higher education institutions, was passed in 2005; this Act also included changes in the structure of governance and leadership. Recent changes in the governance and leadership structure encompass both state regulation of the higher education sector and internal structures within the institutions.

This chapter focuses on middle-level academic management in Norwegian higher education and the following questions will be addressed:

1. What is the structural framework and recent reforms with respect to governance and leadership in Norwegian higher education institutions?
2. In what direction has the leadership structure moved? Are we witnessing a transformation from a democratic to a more management-oriented leadership model?

2 New Options in the Hands of the Institutional Board

When looking at the leadership function in Norwegian higher education, it is worth mentioning that academic leaders are not the only actors in the governance and leadership structure. According to the Act on higher education, the institutional board is the most important actor in the governance and leadership structure in the institutions. The board consists of 11 representatives: the chair of the board, three elected from among faculty members, one from among technical and administrative staff, two from among students and four external members appointed by the ministry. The higher education Act preserves the arrangement of elected rectors at the institutional level. However, the Act has opened up the possibility of replacing this structure with that of an appointed rector if two-thirds of the board members agree. If the rector is elected, she/he holds the position of chair of the board, while an appointed rector is the board's secretary and an external board member serves as chair.

According to the 2005 Act, the institutional board is given authority to define the internal organisational structure and the governance and leadership structure at faculty and departmental levels. There are no longer any government requirements with respect to formal arrangements and structure at these levels. The only legally based requirement is that students and employees should have a voice in decision making. Consequently, a leadership structure with appointed leaders is one of the options available to the institutional board. Appointed leaders are regarded by public authorities as an important measure in strengthening academic leadership in Norwegian higher education, but there are others as well. First, the 2005 Act on Relating to Universities and University Colleges makes it possible to strengthen the position of academic leaders at all levels by abolishing the system that separated academic and administrative leaders. Until recently, all administrative personnel at all levels had been regarded as one unit subordinated to the university director. Consequently, the deans and departmental heads have had no formal authority

to instruct administrative leaders and other administrative personnel at faculty and departmental levels. Since the system that separated academic and administrative leadership is no longer mandatory, academic leaders can be given the responsibility for academic as well as administrative tasks. If a unified system is preferred, academic leaders will be superior to administrative staff in their unit. This can be characterised as a development from separated to integrated leadership in the sense that the latter reflects a system where one person holds the decision-making authority with respect to academic as well as administrative matters (one-headed leadership), while separated positions result in the responsibility for administrative and academic matters being detached (dual structure) (Larsen, Maassen, & Stensaker, 2009).

While the former Act (1996) emphasised a clearer division of responsibility between academic and administrative leaders to strengthen academic leadership, abandonment of this dual structure some years later is regarded as a measure to strengthen academic leadership by giving the overall responsibility to the academic leader (who in turn may delegate tasks and responsibilities to the administrative staff). The aim to strengthen academic leadership is constant and longstanding, but the assessment of the best measure to reach that goal has changed.

Consequently, there have been changes affecting both how leaders are recruited and the authority of academic middle managers in Norwegian higher education. Academic managers can be recruited on the basis of either election among faculty or appointment by the higher echelons. Furthermore, academic managers can hold responsibility for either academic affairs or both academic and administrative affairs. These options regarding recruitment and authority are illustrated in Fig. 1.

In the Norwegian context, the method of recruiting the rector is determined by the nature of the decision-making authority's structure. As already mentioned, an elected rector is still the standard solution described in the 2005 Act and reflects separated leadership at the institutional level. On the other hand, if an appointed rector is preferred, integrated leadership is a legally based precondition. If a rector is elected she/he is the chairperson of the institutional board, while the administrative director is the board's secretary with the overall responsibility for administrative affairs and administrative personnel. If a rector is appointed, she/he is the top manager for academic as well as administrative affairs and holds the position of the board's secretary, while a person among the external board members will take the seat as the chair of the board.

Consequently, at the institutional level the board can choose between the solutions 1) or 4) as depicted in Fig. 1. At the lower levels, institutions have the freedom to combine any recruitment method with any authority structure. That means that

Fig. 1 Dimensions in the leadership structure

How leaders are recruited		The leaders' authority	
		Separated	Integrated
	Election	1)	3)
	Appointment	2)	4)

any combination of the four solutions described in the figure is possible at faculty and departmental levels. Thus, at these levels, the universities and university colleges can have elected leaders with the responsibility for both administrative and academic affairs or appointed academic leaders with an administrative leader at the same level. However, it seems that solutions 1 and 4 in the figure are regarded as the most logical, and are preferred at all levels. It is also worth mentioning that, while election in the former Act (1996) was synonymous with election among internal candidates, the 2005 Act opened up the possibility for external as well as internal candidates to be elected or appointed to any academic leadership position.

Increased institutional autonomy can strengthen academic leadership in other ways as well. The 1996 Act required that the institutions should be organised into faculties and as such a two-level governing structure was demanded. The law also allowed the establishment of departments as the third governing level, and many institutions chose a three-level governing structure. Since the internal organisational structure is now in the hands of the institutional board, the board can decide whether the arrangement with boards at faculty and departmental levels should be continued or not, as well as the composition of such boards. Without a governing body at these levels, more autonomy and authority are in the hands of the academic manager. Furthermore, the former council at the institutional level is no longer mandatory, and no institution has continued with this arrangement.

To sum up, the recent reforms have given the institutional board authority to choose how to organise the institution internally, whether academic leaders should be appointed or elected, whether the administrative staff should be under the academic leader's authority, whether there should be governing bodies at the faculty and departmental levels and whether academic leaders as rectors, deans and department heads should be internally or externally recruited. The individual institution can also choose different governance and leadership structures for different parts of the institution since a consistent approach is not demanded. Nevertheless, the 2005 Act emphasises that staff and students should have a say in the decision-making processes. Furthermore, the recent changes and reforms allow for the building of a new hierarchy of academic leaders. Until 2005, the Act regulated both boards and administrative staff at different institutional hierarchical levels according to the principle of delegation. However, elected academic leaders were neither legally superior or subordinate to each other nor superior to administrative leaders at their respective levels. Since the latest reform gave the institutional board authority to abolish boards at faculty and departmental levels, the line of governance with respect to the hierarchically ranked boards and administration can be broken. Because appointed leaders are hired by the executive level, it is possible to establish a hierarchy of academic leaders. Appointed leaders often imply integrated leadership in the sense that the leader has both academic and administrative responsibility and consequently the academic manager has the authority to instruct and direct administrative personnel in her/his unit. As such, appointed leaders make it possible to break the administrative hierarchy.

3 Advocates and Opponents

Reactions to reforms and changes can vary over time and among groups. So too when it comes to reforms in Norwegian higher education. Prior to the actual reforms being implemented, committees have usually been appointed by the ministry to report on challenges the sector faces and to propose changes and other measures. Both academic staff, students and stakeholders have seats on such committees. Despite the fact that committees are not always unitary in their proposals, recent committees in the field of higher education can be seen as advocates for more management-oriented reforms and for the replacement of elected leaders with appointed leaders. Also, the Ministry of Education and Research can be regarded as a promoter for change in the leadership structure since it has launched the latest reforms. However, the reforms have been met with resistance among staff in higher education.

Faculty often oppose reform proposals – a resistance that is particularly strong when it comes to reforms in the governance and leadership structure. Public dispute over these matters is often intense. The fact that an elected rector is still the standard arrangement and the appointment of middle managers is voluntary can be seen as the result of opposition from academic personnel. Since the proposed reform did not receive the necessary support, the ministry opted for more institutional autonomy in these matters.

But even if antagonists among faculty dominate the public debate, the participants in the public debate do not necessarily reflect the general faculty opinion. A survey carried out at the beginning of this century showed that there was no unanimous agreement among faculty with regard to how leaders should be recruited and what their decision-making authority should be (Larsen, 2003, p. 78). At this time, about 40% of faculty members wanted academic leaders with extended authority in line with a management perspective. More than half preferred to continue the arrangement with elected leaders.

A survey carried out in 2005 showed that the majority of academic staff (61%) still wanted to elect academic leaders (Michelsen & Aamodt, 2007, p. 37). As such, faculty prefer a model where the leader represents the electoral group's interests. Nevertheless, almost 70% of faculty is very or relatively satisfied with the leadership structure in their unit regardless of working in a unit with elected or appointed leaders. The majority are satisfied and trust their leader despite the fact that they prefer another leadership model to the one they actually have (p. 38). The immediacy of the leader seems to be decisive for whether or not faculty report that they are satisfied with their leader. Those who experience distance from the leader want to return to an elected leadership model, while those who experience proximity wish to keep the system of an appointed leader. In contrast, academic staff with elected leaders who experience weak influence in decision making prefer an appointed leadership model. There are no signs of discontent and distrust of the leaders among faculty as a consequence of changes in the leadership structure. How the leaders act and

behave seems to be more important than how they are recruited. If leaders do not perform satisfactorily, faculty want to try another way of recruiting leaders.

4 Recent Developments and Tendencies – The End of Elective Leadership?

As demonstrated in the previous sections, many combinations in the governance and leadership structure are possible in Norwegian higher education institutions. Just after the new autonomy on the governance and leadership structure was introduced, the Ministry of Education and Research told institutions to reset their governance and leadership structures and assess the new possibilities. However, the ministry did not promote any specific solution. Accordingly, many higher education institutions have systematically reviewed the new options and have made use of the new autonomy.

Since the institutions initially were given more autonomy at the faculty and departmental levels, most changes first took place at these levels and not at the institutional level (Larsen et al., 2009). The 2005 law reform gave more autonomy to the institutional level as well, but so far there is more leeway at the lower levels.

The dominant pattern is still a system with an elected rector at the institutional level. Among 31 public higher education institutions, only one university and six state university colleges appointed rectors in 2007. Among elected rectors, two have been recruited among external candidates. The picture is much more diversified at the lower levels. More and more, both faculties and departments are making use of the new possibilities and appointing academic leaders, positions that often hold both academic and administrative responsibility and authority. At the executive level, the dominant pattern is that of elected rector as the chairman of the institutional board, while appointed leadership in an integrated structure dominates at both the faculty and departmental levels. Also, more institutions recruit the chairperson of the institutional board internally and the chairperson of the faculty board externally.

In addition, more and more institutions are phasing out the governing bodies at the faculty and departmental levels (Bleiklie, Tjomsland, & Østergren, 2006; Larsen et al., 2009). Particularly in units with appointed integrated leadership, there is a disposition to liquidate governing bodies at these levels. However, there is a tendency that governing bodies are replaced by new advisory bodies. In 2009, the same number of institutions chose to retain governing bodies as those which chose to install advisory bodies. Six institutions have neither a governing board nor an advisory body at faculty level. At the departmental level, very few institutions have governing bodies (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 456).

A combination of appointed leaders at the faculty and departmental levels and governing bodies at these levels can be seen as a contradiction. Appointed leaders are a part of a hierarchy of academic leaders receiving their authority and instructions from academic leaders above. At the same time, they have to implement decisions taken by the governing body at the faculty and departmental levels. As

a result, academic leaders can be caught in a crossfire if decisions from the two authority structures are incompatible. In such a system, it is questionable whether the academic leaders get their mandate from their superior leader at the level above or whether they are delegated authority to act at their level by the governing body.

Consequently, the governance and leadership system in the Norwegian higher education system is a rather mixed and multifaceted one with variation from institution to institution and also variation within single institutions. As a matter of fact, rather different governance and leadership structures exist side by side in Norwegian higher education institutions. Despite the mixed picture, there is a tendency that more and more universities and university colleges are making use of the new options to abolish boards at the faculty and departmental levels and replacing elected academic heads at these levels with appointed leaders with academic as well as administrative responsibilities.

Even though there has been a process of standardisation in the governance and leadership structure in Norwegian higher education in the sense that all higher education institutions, both public and private, are (since 2005) regulated by a common law, the individual institution has at the same time been given greater latitude within the common framework. This autonomy can result in multiple combinations of governance and leadership structures across and within higher education institutions reflecting the history of individual institutions and their unique culture. However, many studies have shown that organisations that have the freedom to choose their own solutions end up with similar structures (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Consequently, a new standard solution may emerge, not as a consequence of state regulations, but as a result of a perception of appropriateness (March & Olsen, 1989). Since the opportunity to choose among different leadership and governance structures is relatively new, more revisions can be expected in the years to come. The questions are whether new standard solutions will emerge, whether any patterns between different types of institutions will appear or whether countless combinations will emerge.

5 A Move from Democracy to a Management-Oriented System in Norwegian Higher Education?

Recent changes and reforms in leadership and governance in Norwegian higher education are described in the previous sections. The main questions in the analysis are: In what direction has the leadership structure in Norwegian higher education moved? Are we witnessing a development towards a less democratic structure with a subsequent change towards a more management-oriented structure, or is another picture emerging?

5.1 A Less Democratic Structure?

Democracy is a label with immediate positive connotations. Those who are able to define and present their views and reform proposals as democratic will have an

advantage because 'more democratic than' often means 'better than' (Midgaard, 2004). Due to this, reforms that are labelled 'undemocratic' can be hard to put into effect. Accordingly, democracy can be used to both demand and avoid reforms (Olsen, 1990). Recent reforms in the governance and leadership structure in Norwegian higher education have often been claimed to undermine internal representative democracy. However, internal representative democracy is not the only understanding of democracy. And democracy in higher education is surely more than the election of representatives. In this part of the chapter, I will give a brief overview of different understandings of democracy and try to answer the question: In what ways do the observed changes in the governance and leadership structure at faculty and departmental levels fit or clash with different definitions of democracy?

March and Olsen (1989) distinguish between aggregative political processes on the one hand and integrative political processes on the other. A more or less parallel and often used distinction in theory is to distinguish between representative democracy and deliberative democracy. Representative democracy rests on an aggregative perspective of decision making where the number of votes is the deciding factor. Consequently, the political direction is based on the majority's preferences (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 118). In a representative democracy, election is vitally important and means that different candidates struggle for positions. This kind of democracy can also be labelled indirect democracy since the constituency governs through representatives.

Deliberative democracy is often associated with Habermas (1984), and is an alternative perspective on democracy based on integrative political processes. According to the integrative interpretation of democracy, the will of the people comes across through deliberation among reasonable participants (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 118). By discussion and argument, it is presumed that it is possible to find reasons that are persuasive for all (Elster, 1998). Deliberation can be seen as a mode of collective decision making with an aim to arrive at a rationally motivated consensus. In a deliberative democracy, the exercise of power that promotes reasoning among equals is essential (Cohen, 1998, p. 193).

The right to participate in decision making is at the core of democracy. When a participatory democracy is taken as a starting point, it is important to differentiate between direct or indirect participation. A combination of direct and indirect participation will often characterise a democratic governance and leadership structure; the question is the balance between the two. While the process of electing representatives to governing bodies is part and parcel of indirect democracy, the scale of direct democracy is more difficult to grasp because it is not always formalised. Nevertheless, it can be of vital importance.

Taking representative democracy as the starting point, the following questions are relevant: Which groups are and should be included in the democracy in Norwegian higher education institutions? Who has the right to vote? In what matters can the entitled use their vote? And, last, to what extent are the decision makers recruited through elections? According to the theory of deliberative democracy on the other hand, decision-making processes are characterised by argument, consultation,

consideration, consensus and dialogue among equals and the question is whether these characteristics typify decision making in Norwegian higher education.

Participation through election is a central element of democracy. The system with elected leaders is often defended because it is perceived as being at the core of democracy in higher education. However, the processes of recruitment do not necessarily mean differences in participation or differences in how leadership is carried out in practice. Elected leaders will often be associated with broad participation in the recruitment process, while it is supposed that fewer people are included in the process when the leader is appointed. From a participation perspective, elected leaders will be associated with democracy, while this will not be the case with appointed leaders. Nevertheless, supporters of appointed leaders have argued that possible candidates should be identified among faculty to secure internal legitimacy. Since low poll results often characterise elections in higher education institutions, it can be questioned whether democracy is working and if elections secure academic leaders' legitimacy. If participation is low, it can be argued that the assessment of different candidates for the leadership position among faculty could involve just as many actors as elections. Thus, the difference between recruitment through election or through appointment can in practice be small when it comes to participation and securing the candidate's internal legitimacy. Exploring a candidate's acceptability among faculty can be understood in terms of deliberative democracy which emphasises consultation in reaching consensus. If the majority of a department's staff are involved in the process it can even be in harmony with direct democracy. Independently of whether academic leaders are elected or appointed, there is no alternative to recruitment through election when it comes to internal representatives on governing bodies in Norwegian higher education institutions. Representatives from academic personnel, technical and administrative personnel and students should be elected from and among their constituencies.

Even though the right to participate is a necessary condition in democracies, it is not a sufficient requirement for the use of the term democracy. If the right to participate is a formality that is rarely acted upon, it is a sign that democracy is not working as intended. In universities and university colleges, the will to participate in decision-making processes can be rather low and traditionally not all elected positions are very attractive and few candidates are nominated for election.

Another aspect of participation is how the leaders involve staff in decision making. A study among elected departmental leaders in Norwegian universities reported that arguing, consulting and probing are the key leadership tools (Larsen, 2003, p. 85). Furthermore, the leaders emphasised the importance of broad and inclusive processes and consensus among staff. As such, elected academic leaders can be seen as defenders of the democratic processes of decision making. A vital question in this respect is whether there are any differences in how leadership is carried out in practice since 2003 when universities and university colleges were given the opportunity to appoint academic leaders. A study carried out in 2005–2006 showed that faculty do not feel they are less influential in decision making with appointed leaders compared to elected leaders (Michelsen & Aamodt, 2007). Furthermore,

dialogue seems to be the most important channel through which to influence decision making regardless of how the leaders are recruited. The majority of academic staff reported that direct communication with the leader is the most common way to try to influence decision making and almost 60% reported that they could influence strategy in their department (p. 37). As such, there seems to be no difference between elected and appointed leaders regarding the extent and way of organising participation in decision-making processes.

The inclusion of faculty in decision making can also be noticed in more recently established activities. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Norwegian universities and university colleges have formulated strategic plans. Studies have shown that strategic processes involve a broad range of participants at all levels in the institutions and that the involvement of the basic units is a fundamental principle of the processes in which the overall strategic plan of the institutions is formulated (Larsen & Langfeldt, 2005, p. 356). As strategic work often involves planned changes, the informants responsible for planning emphasised that it is difficult to implement and obtain change in universities and university colleges if reforms are not owned by staff. Consequently, academic leaders consider broad participation among faculty as a necessity to put change into effect.

In the beginning of the 1990s, result-oriented planning (ROP) was introduced in Norwegian higher education as the Norwegian equivalent of management by objectives (MBO). ROP was introduced in all public institutions in Norway, including universities and university colleges, and as such is an example of a universalistic reform intended to work across sectors. The planning concept was met with resistance by academic staff partly because it was perceived as a management-oriented system and as such a foreign element in academic culture. However, a survey showed that the majority of faculty reported that they were involved in the formulation of these plans for their department (Larsen & Gornitzka, 1995). Thus, ROP can alternatively be interpreted as a programme for participation in contrast to the perception of the reform as a management-oriented steering tool. Consequently, it can be concluded that participation is a central feature in decision making in Norwegian universities regardless of the governance and leadership structure – and a value that has many defenders among leaders at different levels and in different units. This leadership style is in accordance with the law that emphasises that it is a precondition that students and employees should have a voice in the decision-making processes, even if the governing bodies at faculty and departmental levels no longer exist. However, the changes could also cause problems. Universities that have put many of the new governance and leadership options into effect, experience staff complaints about lack of influence and increasing distance between the top and the bottom in the organisation (Hope, Ringkjøb, & Rykkja, 2008).

Judgment of who are the democratic electorate (those eligible for office and have the right to vote) has varied over time in Norwegian universities and university colleges as in other higher education systems. During the past decades, an increasing number of groups have been included. Until the beginning of the 1970s, democracy was synonymous with professors in Norwegian universities. During the 1970s, all internal groups got seats on the governing bodies. Thus, staff at all ranks became

eligible. In addition, students and administrative and technical personnel were given the right to vote and have seats on governing bodies. Twenty years later, external representatives were introduced onto governing bodies in universities and university colleges.

Democratisation is often defined by the inclusion of new groups into the decision-making systems (Bendix & Rokkan, 1962). As such, the inclusion of all internal groups and external groups as well can be seen as a long process of democratisation. The inclusion of different internal groups was justified by democracy, but the argument was not made use of when external stakeholders were introduced onto governing bodies at universities and university colleges. On the contrary, many argued that external representatives were a threat to democracy in higher education. This can be interpreted as a consequence of the changing spirit of the age: while democracy was a dominating value in the 1970s, other values, such as efficiency and effectiveness, were accentuated in the 1990s. This does not necessarily imply that democracy was regarded as less important, but perhaps it was taken for granted. At the same time, the less positive effects of democracy, such as cumbersome decision-making processes and internal struggles because of conflicting interests, came to the surface and could explain the focus on efficiency and effectiveness. However, what expands or narrows democracy depends on the understanding of democracy. Accordingly, the inclusion of external representatives on internal governing bodies can be interpreted as both an expansion and a redefinition of democracy in higher education.

Even though universities and university colleges still are public agencies in a state hierarchical structure, the ministry has taken one step back and steers at a distance. Due to this, external members on governing bodies in higher education institutions can be seen as representatives of civil society, assumed to replace former direct governmental control. Thus, external representatives on governing bodies can be understood as compensation for reduced public steering and influence and seen as an instrument for society to influence public universities and university colleges. Consequently, the introduction of external representatives can be interpreted as an extension of democracy in universities and university colleges and as such point in the direction of further democratisation of higher education. However, this kind of democracy can imply a limitation of the principle of workplace democracy, a version of democracy introduced in many Western countries in the late 1960s and characterised by the involvement of employees in organisational decision making affecting their working lives (Peters, 2001, p. 53). The trade unions have played a vital role in this respect and the process involved democratisation of working life.

The discussion of democracy in higher education is a question of power. The inclusion of new and more actors in decision making implies a change in the distribution of power and authority among different kinds of actors. The change from a situation where full professors held all positions themselves to that where, first, different internal actors and, next, external stakeholders took seats on internal governing bodies, can be seen as a diffusion of power to different kinds of actors. Changes in the distribution of power will often be met with resistance from actors who are forced to share power with new and more actors.

Despite the fact that more groups are included in democracy in Norwegian higher education, there are fewer formal positions for the different groups to fill. First, it is no longer mandatory to have elected academic leaders at the faculty and departmental levels. Second, governing bodies at these levels are no longer a requirement – bodies that give formal rights of participation to relatively many students and staff members, and as such have given substance to democracy in higher education institutions. More and more universities and university colleges have reduced the number of governing bodies at these levels; especially at the departmental level. In units where such boards are sustained, it is also a tendency that they are smaller than before. Hence, there are fewer formal positions and thus fewer formal participants in decision making. The trend towards fewer and smaller governing bodies at faculty and departmental levels surely puts representative democracy under pressure. This tendency is reinforced by the fact that the number of representatives on the governing board at the central level has been reduced. Consequently, it can be argued that representative democracy has been substantially weakened.

However, the tendency to abolish governing bodies at faculty and departmental levels has been followed by a trend to establish advisory bodies as compensation at these levels (Michelsen & Aamodt, 2007, p. 38). If the tendency to establish consultative bodies increases, it can be interpreted as a replacement of the former representative democracy with a deliberative democracy since dialogue and arguing are at the core of how councils are intended to function. However, earlier studies on advisory bodies have shown that they have had difficulties in fulfilling their given role (Larsen, 1999). Nevertheless, the situation is not quite parallel as the former councils were located at the institutional level and operated together with formal governing bodies, while the new councils are located at faculty or departmental levels with no formal governing body sitting alongside.

The establishment of informal but permanent forums is another observed tendency. Despite the fact that deans are no longer ex-officio members of the board and departmental heads are no longer automatically members of faculty boards, rectors still have regular meetings with the deans and the deans with the heads of departments – an arrangement that is regarded as an important element in the governance structure of the institutions even though this forum is not part of the formal decision-making system. Formal leaders create informal bodies that work as a part of the governance structure and in a way replace the former representative system. It can be argued that the arrangement strengthens democracy because it increases the number of participants in decision making. Or does it undermine the formal democracy? Since deans and departmental heads can be both elected and appointed, it can be argued that this kind of informal forum extends democracy if the deans and heads of departments are elected and restricts it if they are appointed. The establishment of management teams at different levels is an example of another new arrangement replacing representative bodies – an arrangement that can soften a potential monolithic structure and as such be a contribution to sustaining democracy.

To sum up, there are still democratic elements within the middle management of Norwegian higher education, in both formal arrangements and how the system is

carried out in practice. And, even though many democratic elements are no longer mandatory, it is still possible for the institutions to pursue a democratic structure, but it is no longer prescribed and predefined by the state authorities. What is legally prescribed is that internal representatives in the institutional governing body should still be elected and that staff and students should have a say in decision making. But, even though the structure still has some democratic features, recent reforms and changes make it difficult to use the label democracy. Furthermore, it can be argued that representative democracy is under pressure, while deliberative democracy seems to have established roots in the leadership style of higher education. However, institutions' increased autonomy does not automatically bring with it a democratic governance and leadership structure. Increased institutional autonomy in a number of matters means that it is in the hands of the board of the single institutions to decide whether or not the governance and leadership structure of that institution should be characterised by democracy.

5.2 A More Management-Oriented Leadership Structure?

Just as there are different versions of democracy, there are different versions of a management-oriented governance and leadership system. A management-oriented system is also a question of degrees, and a distinction is often made between hard and soft managerialism (Trow, 1994). Accordingly, managerialism can be regarded as a continuum where different systems and institutions adopt different versions. A management-oriented model can also be understood as both practice and ideology (Meek, 2003).

A development towards New Public Management (NPM) is an often repeated statement in the literature on management and leadership in higher education. However, the statement is often put forward without any further documentation of what a management-oriented system consists of. Furthermore, comparative studies have demonstrated that different countries have implemented different elements of NPM (Christensen & Lægreid, 2001). Since NPM is a multifaceted concept, a deconstruction of it can demonstrate its many and different elements.

MBO (or ROP as it is labelled in the Norwegian version) is a central element in NPM and includes a shift in focus from input and process to result and outcome, a shift that implies a change from a system where the leaders are responsible for process to a system where they are responsible for output (Hood, 1995, p. 95). The establishment of procedures for evaluation and reporting results is regarded as a necessity in order to make sure that goals are achieved.

Furthermore, greater institutional accountability is part of NPM and is an observed trend in many higher education systems – a trend that has taken place in Norway as well. It can be argued that increased institutional responsibility must be handled through stronger and more responsive leadership. Consequently, a much more extended leadership role than the traditional one can be expected; with leaders accountable for results in their units, results that should be documented and reported. Decentralisation is another building block of vital importance in NPM

(Peters, 2001, p. 34) based on an assumption that decisions made close to the point of delivery promote result-orientation.

A system emphasising results and decentralisation highlights the importance of local leadership and stresses the local leader's responsibility to achieve predefined goals and values such as quality and effectiveness. As such, professionalisation of leadership roles is a central ingredient in NPM. It is expected that leaders are trained in planning, personnel management and finance. The model also encourages more competition and a more market-like allocation of funds through incentives based on performance indicators (Hood, 1995, p. 97). NPM is often regarded as universalistic in the sense that the approach is useful across sectors and institutions. For example, management reforms in health care are expected to be applicable to higher education institutions and vice versa, and managers in one sector are expected to readily occupy a similar position in any kind of institution.

In the following, the different elements of NPM presented above will be used as indicators to discuss whether a development towards a more management-oriented leadership structure has taken place in Norwegian higher education.

Strong leadership functions are undoubtedly important from a management perspective and there is an obvious tendency towards this in Norwegian higher education. Many units in Norwegian universities and university colleges have put the new possibilities into effect and implemented the appointed leadership model. While elected leaders foremost have authority as representing different internal interest groups and function as spokespersons for their units (Larsen, 2002, p. 116), a system with appointed leaders challenges the view of leaders as representative of the electoral body. Appointed leaders are supposed to have loyalty to the top leader and are expected to implement the institution's policy, expectations and demands created at the top level. Consequently, appointed leaders could mean a change from a bottom-up to a top-down steering system (Gulddahl Rasmussen, 2002). As discussed above, there is no unanimous agreement among faculty with regard to the question of whether leaders should be appointed or elected.

The possibility of creating a 'one-headed' leadership position with both academic and administrative responsibility is another measure in Norwegian higher education intended to strengthen academic leadership at different levels. Also, this option is preferred by many at the faculty and departmental levels, and many units have gone from a situation of separated to integrated leadership. If the intention behind such a shift is realised, the effort is in line with a management orientation.

To professionalise the middle-management role in the higher education system, in both management and academic leadership, is another indicator in line with NPM. Training programmes for academic leaders indicate a professionalisation of the role – programmes have been offered in recent years to leaders at all levels in many higher education institutions. The role and function of middle managers also depend on the development of the non-academic management capacity. Corresponding to the call for a more professionalised academic leadership, a development towards a more professionalised administration has taken place in Norwegian universities (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004). The importance of a professionalised administration as a precondition to carry out academic leadership should not be underestimated.

Changes in the role of non-academics and the expertise they represent are thus part of more general changes in the administrative and management capacities of higher education institutions.

As already mentioned, a management perspective includes the possibility of a professional manager holding a position in any type of institution. The Norwegian Act on higher education tries to prevent this as it emphasises that leaders should have not only management legitimacy, but also scholarly legitimacy. Nevertheless, tendencies towards the establishment of a new career path as an academic leader in Norwegian higher education can be observed in the sense that academic leaders as deans and departmental heads are recruited from one institution to work in another. Previously, this career path was only possible within institutions since incumbents were recruited solely from among faculty. The 2005 Act has provided the opportunity for academic leaders to apply for new and better positions in other universities and university colleges.

According to NPM, middle managers in higher education are expected to have far-reaching responsibility for academic, administrative, political and personnel issues. The question is whether deans and departmental heads in Norwegian universities and university colleges hold responsibility for a broad range of matters. A study of departmental leadership showed a degree of transformation of the leadership role (Larsen, 2003, pp. 85–87). When it comes to the leader's responsibility for the unit's research activities, it is obvious that this is a sensitive area even though international evaluations have concluded that several research disciplines in Norwegian universities suffer from lack of academic leadership. Most departmental heads do not consider themselves as research leaders in the sense that they instruct academic personnel in academic matters or want to hold a role in the quality assurance of research. However, staff development, responsibility for external funding and promoting more group-oriented research are all elements that point in the direction of a more extensive leadership role in line with a management model. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that teaching is a task that traditionally has been managed by the departmental leadership and is not a minefield in the same way as managing research. In addition, the analysis demonstrated that departmental leaders carry out the role as spokesperson for their unit. The survey also showed that staff hold expectations that harmonise with the managerial governing model as a large number of staff welcomed a more extended leadership role that includes both quality assurance of academic activities and shaping the department's academic profile.

Strategic work is part of managerialism in higher education. Over the past years, there have been many calls for Norwegian universities and university colleges to institute strategic planning and today most higher education institutions carry out strategic plans (Larsen, 2000; Larsen & Langfeldt, 2005). Since strategic planning takes place at all levels in higher education institutions, formulating strategies is a challenge to academic middle managers as well as to institutional leaders and governing bodies at different levels. Also, faculty see strategic planning as a key function for academic leaders and an acceptance of more strategic leadership seems to occur. A survey from 2002 shows that more than 70% of academic personnel agree that the heads of departments should prioritise strategic issues (Larsen, 2003).

A later study confirmed this tendency and demonstrated that academic leaders themselves regard strategic planning as the most important leadership task (Michelsen & Aamodt, 2007, p. 36). Based on these findings, it is reasonable to conclude that strategic planning as a leadership task is increasingly accepted and appreciated in Norwegian higher education institutions.

Staff career development is another central aspect of a leader's responsibility according to a management model, and an activity that an increasing number of leaders take seriously; as well, it is an activity that is increasingly being accepted by faculty. Traditionally, it was taken for granted that faculty members took care of their professional lives themselves, but now it is more common that academic leaders assume the role of personnel leader. Individual consultations about academic performance and career development between faculty and academic leaders are more formalised and arranged on a regular basis in order to stimulate professional performance and academic development (Larsen, 2003).

Even though new tasks have been added to the academic manager's responsibility and the role as such has been extended, it does not necessarily imply a new style of leadership. What is new is foremost the way in which leaders are recruited – appointed instead of elected; and who is recruited – both external and internal candidates instead of internal only. These trends are associated with more management-oriented steering systems. However, even if middle managers are recruited according to management principles, the importance of open decision-making processes is still emphasised and a new management style cannot be observed so far. However, this can change with time – higher education institutions do not change rapidly (Olsen, 1996). Nevertheless, the manager-academic in Norwegian higher education today must be able to handle a broader range of issues than before, including quality assurance, strategic planning and personnel management. Consequently, there has been an expansion of the responsibilities of academic leaders. In addition, steps have been taken to strengthen local leadership in Norwegian higher education by giving the position more authority, by a professionalisation of the position, and by broadening the range of issues and activities the position encompasses and is responsible for.

6 Conclusion

Numerous and substantial changes have taken place in the governance and leadership system of Norwegian higher education over the past years. During this period, institutions have been given more freedom to choose their own leadership and governance structure. The increased autonomy is relatively new, and it is too early to judge the system. But some trends can be identified – trends that help us to illuminate the question: Do we observe a move from a democratic to a more management-oriented system?

The discussion shows that there are elements of democracy as well as managerialism in the Norwegian higher education leadership structure. When it comes to democracy, there are signs of both representative and deliberative

democracy in the middle management of Norwegian higher education institutions. However, some of the democratic principles in higher education are under pressure and it can be argued that representative democracy is weakening along with the system of elected leaders. But, even though internally elected academic leaders are no longer required, there are still units that have retained the system of elected deans and departmental heads. Consequently, old and new principles of recruiting leaders co-exist, even though the trend points in the direction of more appointed leaders. However, there is no unanimous agreement among faculty in this respect: some want academic managers in line with NPM, others defend the traditional democratic model.

Furthermore, it is no longer mandatory to have a governing body at faculty and departmental levels and the tendency to reduce the number of boards and seats on governing bodies is clear. But, some units still retain boards at faculty and departmental levels and elect internal students and staff representatives. Consequently, representative democracy is not totally abolished, but obviously under pressure.

There are also elements that point in the direction of deliberative democracy in the governance and leadership system in Norwegian higher education institutions. First, middle managers seem to act in accordance with democratic principles in line with deliberative democratic principles. Foremost, dialogue seems to be an important leadership tool and academic staff report that they have access to their leaders. In addition, more informal democratic arrangements have been established to replace former representative democratic structures. So, even though formal democracy is weakened, there are democratic elements in how leadership is carried out in practice. However, informal democracy is not as robust as formal democracy, and consequently easier to phase out. The present system is characterised by few formal requirements for democracy, but democracy is carried out even though it is not legally necessary. The question is whether this democratic practice will continue or not, and whether the present practices illustrate a system in transition from democracy to NPM. On the other hand, insofar as it is rooted in academic culture, democratic values are likely to persist – as we know from other studies, it is difficult to change institutional culture (March & Olsen, 1989).

Despite the democratic features of Norwegian higher education pointed to above, there are also changes and reforms in the leadership structure in Norwegian universities and university colleges that harmonise with NPM. For example, the system where leaders are recruited from among, and elected by, the faculty is being challenged by a system of appointed leaders for a fixed term. In addition, recent leadership training programmes can be seen as a measure to increase the leadership legitimacy of academic managers. However, it is stressed in the 2005 Act that academic leaders should be recruited on the basis of academic competence and authority as well as leadership legitimacy.

The responsibility of academic leaders in Norwegian universities and university colleges has undoubtedly increased. Furthermore, a new leadership ideal is emerging as more and more appreciate strategic leadership. However, leadership practices are not thorough or extensive enough to yet fulfil a managerialist leadership role. Even though the institutional level is not the main focus of this chapter, it is worth

mentioning that NPM plays a more vital role in middle management than in top management of the higher education institutions in Norway since most institutions still elect the rector.

According to the Act, the institutional board alone determines the internal organisation and governance structure at the faculty and departmental levels. As such, the institutional governing board has the power to strengthen or weaken the democratic elements of the system at these levels. Consequently, it is possible to retain internal representative democracy with elected and internally recruited academic leaders. In line with principles in the representative democratic tradition, it is also possible to continue arrangements with internally composed boards at the faculty and departmental levels. If the board creates a hierarchy of appointed academic leaders and abolishes the governing bodies at faculty and departmental levels, the formal structure of Norwegian higher education institutions will be rather monolithic. In such circumstances, the informal elements are of vital importance in moderating and softening the structure. As demonstrated, changes in the formal structure do not necessarily result in commensurate changes in the informal structure.

The analysis of the development of Norwegian higher education is a classical example of how different principles for decision making are organised into the structure and how they are balanced. There are more principles for decision making than those discussed in this chapter, but here we focus on participation and effectiveness. When discussing the balance between democracy and managerialism, attention can be drawn to the question of whether managerialism in some respects can be interpreted as a version of democracy. Managerialism understood as a steering tool for public authorities and society is of particular relevance in this respect. As mentioned, external membership of governing bodies can be seen both as an extension of democracy beneficial to society as a whole and as a threat to democracy in the workplace. A narrowing between external and internal democracy, or democracy in society and democracy in the workplace, can be identified. Nevertheless, the division of power has shifted from academic staff to local academic managers and external representatives, and from the basic unit to the institutional level as the institutional governing body has widened its authority in recent years. However, even if academic staff have weakened their position in decision making, it does not mean that they are without formal participation rights. Furthermore, there is reason to believe that the informal structure favours faculty.

Finally, it can also be questioned whether the distribution of power is a zero-sum game. Since more autonomy is given to individual institutions, there is more power to share within institutions. As more and different kinds of actors are given expanded room to manoeuvre, it does not necessarily mean less power for the original decision makers. It would be an interesting topic for further research to map out who uses the increased autonomy brought about by decentralisation in higher education.

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New Public Management and 'Middle Management': How Do Deans Influence Institutional Policies?

Teresa Carvalho and Rui Santiago

1 Introduction

In many developed countries, pressures brought to bear by the state on higher education institutions have taken on dimensions that combine the political, economic and organisational. At the institutional level, such pressures focus on the organisational structures and decision making in the governance and management aspects of central administration and its sub-units. The competitive environment which the state seeks to impose on the organisation of higher education emphasises unitary decision making, strong executive leadership and a 'corporative style' in the American meaning of the term.

This agenda rests on a series of exaggerated political presumptions that equate the purpose of higher education with 'the market imperative', operationalised around the canons of managerialism and New Public Management (NPM). At the same time, the state is equally engaged in re-aligning the various cultures of the academic profession around a single, unitary model (Miller, 1998; Reed, 2002), less academic and incarcerated in a framework shaped by the managerial and performance culture and values. Thus, external pressures on higher education institutions create a new institutional and organisational environment in which higher education institutions are required to function.

At the macro-level, the theories of new and neo-institutionalism allow a deeper analysis of the outcomes that follow from institutional restructuring and which lie at the centre of this agenda. Restructuring emerges at two levels. It emerges, first, in the political initiatives to reshape the structures, roles and routines of the individual higher education establishment (Zucker, 1991) and its academic cultures. Second, it emerges in the steps taken to legitimate a new cultural-cognitive 'milieu', closely bonded to ideologies of market and managerialism/NPM. Hence, it may be argued that embedding this new milieu ousts its traditional and long-established counterpart. Both, however, rest on a formal dimension of influence –

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law, sanctions, certificates, accreditation – and on an informal dimension – rhetoric and manipulation of incentives, both strategic and financial (Scott, 2001).

However, a theoretical approach which restricts itself to the environmental constrains the dual processes of institutionalisation and de-institutionalisation imposed on higher education institutions and may equally limit the analysis of what and how academics interpret and respond to the pressures of managerialism/NPM at the micro-organisational level. If the strategic responses to external pressures differ for each institution, internal response may also be expected to differ. If these hypotheses are to be taken into account, attention has accordingly to be paid to those structural elements within the 'internal life' of higher education institutions (Trow, 1975) – divergent interests, negotiation, power conflicts, cooperation and consensus – as key items in approaching such diversity. Identifying the main characteristics of the institutional power which actors wield – their concerns, willingness, capacity to participate in and influence the strategy of the higher education institutions under external pressures – has also to be taken into account. As several studies have noted, deans (and/or heads of departments) have a key position in these dynamics. They act as thermostats (Kekäle, 2003), buffers (Sotirakou, 2004) or mediators (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Miller, 1998) in translating external and internal market and managerial pressures for the basic academic units.

This study examines the position, power and sphere of action of Portuguese deans in the development of strategies and policies by higher education institutions to cope with increasing managerial pressures from the state. More specifically, deans' perceptions of their own range of possibilities (Kekäle, 2003) to participate in and influence higher education institutions' responses to such pressures are analysed. Perceptions, however, should not be confused with real practice. Actors' perceptions provide an important dimension to these practices and thus the possibility to situate the institutional behaviour of actors within a specific field of action.

This chapter begins with an overview of the salient concepts of managerialism and NPM and their impact at system and institutional levels. The second part will undertake a brief analysis of the Portuguese context, followed by the methodology employed in the empirical section of this study. The third part presents the data and analysis. Three different dimensions are dealt with: (i) institutional environment; (ii) government and management models; and (iii) institutional responses. Finally, the study concludes by highlighting the main findings and making suggestions for further research in this area.

2 Global Pressures on Higher Education Institutions: The Political, Economic and Organisational Contexts

In almost all developed countries, the traditional model of state control and the regulation of public institutions are changing. From management by hierarchy (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Pollitt, 2003; Pollitt & Boukaert, 2000), states have moved towards models closer to self-regulation and self-governance (Van Vught, 1997), essentially based on management by contract (Hood, 1991, 1995). Bureaucracies

are under strong attack and there are active attempts to cut them back (Clarke & Newman, 1997). This appears to arise mainly because of the weakness in their established structural links – the association of bureaucracies with the specialised knowledge and power of professionals and experts. In this particular logic, various technologies are introduced to redefine and thus redistribute the organisation, roles, structures and procedures of public service agencies, at both the macro- and micro-level. Presented as a new form of rationalisation, managerialism and NPM emerge as the dominant technology for governmental (MacKinnon, 2000) and institutional actors to introduce and legitimate the restructuring of policy and practice.

Managerialism is represented here as a technocratic ideology of management, which imposes itself not only on public but also on private organisations. In public organisations, this ideology has been disseminated through NPM as a set of practices based on competition, decentralisation and efficiency. It also attempts to replace well-tried public sector values and norms with ones closer to the *ethos* of private management (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Currie & Newson, 1998; Deem, 1998, 2001; Meek, 2002; Miller, 1995; Reed, 2002).

Imposing NPM as a new management rationale implies the existence of controls, regulations and their cultures (Reed, 2002) that contend with those of professionals and change the scope of professional work. These 'new cultures' take root in audits, performance assessment, incentives for competition and contracts based on productivity goals. They enshrine the rhetoric of efficacy, efficiency, accountability and transparency (Ferlie, Ashburner, Fitzgerald, & Pettigrew, 1996; Kirkpatrick, Ackroyd, & Walker, 2005; MacKinnon, 2000).

Since the 1980s, external pressures on higher education institutions, especially from government, have assumed an all-encompassing character, drawing from a mix of political, economical and organisational *diktats*.

Political pressures take the form of conceding increasing autonomy and responsibilities to institutions, presented as 'management devolution' to higher education institutions (Ferlie et al., 1996; Pollitt, 2003). This initiative stands in apparent contradiction with the intent to concentrate power within the institution, mentioned before. The contradiction can be resolved when, as several studies have emphasised (Fulton, 2003; Reed, 2002; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Teichler, 2003), granting institutional autonomy goes hand in glove with a higher degree of centralisation of strategic and political power at the governmental level. Teichler (2003, p. 177) underlined this argument further when he noted that: 'reduced procedural controls by government [are] often combined with increased strategic steering by government'. This latter process corresponds, as De Weert (2001) noted, to a more comprehensive strategy to manage systems from a macro-perspective. Another form of corporatisation in political decisions rests on a belief in the need for strong executive leadership and power, as the 'one best way' to assure efficiency and success of restructuring institutions and their undertakings. Higher education institutions' acceptance of the competitive joust of quality, efficiency and productivity between institutions in exchange for autonomy follows as a result of this particular transaction between the state and establishments of higher education (De Weert, 2001).

Economic pressure is another structural dimension in the institutional environment that strongly constrains higher education institutions. It introduces the logic and rationale of economics into higher education, which becomes geared towards short-term, macro-economic and political objectives (De Weert, 2001; Winter, 2004): raising workforce qualifications, linking research to the economy and to the entrepreneurial infrastructure (Meek, 2002, 2003; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Subotzky, 1999). Embedding economic relevance into higher education seems to be accompanied by the progressive and intentional devaluation of social and cultural relevance (Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Santiago, Magalhães, & Carvalho, 2005). Economic pressures – direct and indirect – on higher education institutions bring with them increasing demands for institutions to place a more entrepreneurial and corporate construction on their activities. Outputs become the priority, or, in De Weert's (2001, p. 97) words: '(the end) . . . is to tilt the university toward a more product-oriented professional organisation . . .'.

In the overall process of restructuring higher education, political and economic pressures join with organisational pressures to change the structures of the establishment. Miller (1998), for instance, argued that, in general, governments try to impose on higher education institutions a rigid NPM institutional framework to replace the traditional trust in professionals. Such a framework, most assuredly, introduces principles that undervalue and undermine the traditional culture of higher education institutions and of their professional staff (Miller, 1998); it enhances a culture that is unified, managerial and mercantile (Reed, 2002).

Limitations on collegial power (Adams, Marshal, & Cameron, 1999; Amaral, Magalhães, & Santiago, 2003; Askling, 2001; De Weert, 2001; Dearlove, 2002; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Middlehurst & Elton, 1992; Miller, 1998; Rhoades & Sporn, 2002; Santiago, Carvalho, Amaral, & Meek, 2006; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Schimank, 2005; Teichler, 2003; Winter & Sarros, 2002) and the abolition, in some systems, of elected rectors and deans in favour of their direct appointment (Miller, 1998), saw executive leadership reinforced (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002) and the power of managers to manage, increased (Teichler, 2003). In the opinion of the American policy analyst, Martin Trow (1994), all were signs of the real impact of 'hard managerialism'.

De Weert too detected attempts to integrate the administrative and management systems as a species of symbiosis. He (2001, p. 97) concluded: 'The new governance structure implies a shift from the collegiate model toward an integrated model with deans as professional managers'. Rhoades and Sporn (2002), however, took a more compliant view arguing that corporatisation as justified in political discourses merely stated the need for closer ties between institutional leadership (government) and the executive leadership (institutional management). Yet, the organisational concept which these pressures underlined, dispensed with such organisational metaphors as the political (Baldridge, 1971; Cohen & March, 1986; Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972) and the cybernetic (Birnbaum, 1989, 2000). It approached the market metaphor, being more akin, for instance, with organisational ecology theory (Aldrich, 1979, 1988; Hannan & Freeman, 1989). Higher education institutions were thus under political pressure to convert themselves into

'organic entities' as a way to respond to the market environment with a single voice. Collegial decisions were presented as a source of disturbance. They dissipated power, generated conflicts, gave licence to individual and professional group interests at odds with the state, with other stakeholders and with society in general. From these assumptions, the belief took shape that collegial power ought to be curtailed. Translated into the 'inner life' of the higher education institution, external pressures for managerialism and NPM entail a marked increase in control over basic units and the exercise of managerial authority, grounded in an operational, hierarchical and formalised nexus of relations and responsibilities (Middlehurst & Elton, 1992).

Even so, analysing the impact of managerial pressures on higher education institutions cannot be confined to direct mechanisms of influence alone. In keeping with their internal conditions, or to use Bourdieu's (2006) terms, in keeping with their symbolic, social, cultural and technical capital, the way higher education institutions react to these pressures and the way they translate them to internal structures are diverse, just as strategic responses to the external environment can be equally diverse.

To develop this hypothesis requires a set of questions to locate where this diversity operates. For instance, does the higher education institution's strategic response to external pressures assume a unitary character? Are its responses the single outcome of a process imposed by top administration – rectors or other figures in governance? Or, as another possibility, might it be that internal processes of interaction influence, in different degrees, both the institution's interpretation and strategic response to external pressures?

3 The Impact of New Public Management Pressures on the 'Inner Life' of Higher Education Institutions

Such questions figured prominently in some of the research guided by institutional theories – old, new and neo-institutionalism. Some of the concepts tested provide a useful tool to explore the connection between processes and contents (Scott, 2001) in the overall context of restructuring higher education. They permit the impact of external pressures exerted on higher education institutions to be analysed, as well as the strategic postures higher education institutions take to deal with them. Thus, as was argued earlier, attempts to *institutionalise* the components of NPM go hand in hand with efforts to *de-institutionalise* long-established features of both institutional and professional culture. From this standpoint, a complex picture emerges, created by the intersection of both processes – NPM and the 'traditional' culture of the institution. They are deployed in different directions depending largely on the mechanisms respectively of reproduction and production, generated in the organisational arena.

In the case of the first mechanism – reproduction – new institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Meyer & Rowan, 1991) allows an analysis to be made

of the way higher education institutions select elements from external pressures and the homogeneity this selection provokes in their organisational forms. Analysis of the external impact on higher education institutions has to take into consideration the simultaneous existence of attempts to make structures, roles, routines (Zucker, 1991) and long-established academic cultures illegitimate and, conversely, to make new NPM models legitimate. Such attempts draw upon coercion and inducement (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 2001). The former involves new control and regulatory systems together with the setting out of new professional norms. The latter calls upon incentives to stimulate competition between institutions, in the belief that such competition produces mimetic isomorphism – that is, the more successful higher education institution will be copied by the less successful.

Nevertheless, when focus shifts to the second mechanism – organisational production – the limitations of the homogeneity hypothesis are evident. This hypothesis may be brought into question by both the different responses which higher education institutions make to the external environment as well as by the internal processes generating those responses. Internal processes can be the result of the actors' conflicting influences – conflicts both vertical and horizontal that may well entail the institutional response assuming a negotiatory stance.

The analytical complexity of this phenomenon becomes clearer when the conceptual framework of neo-institutionalism is employed (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993; Greenwood & Lachman, 1996; Zucker, 1991). The specific characteristics of higher education institutions and their professionals as producers of norms, beliefs and patterns of practices underlie their different postures in the face of external pressure. This occurs, specifically, in the organisational principles (Scott, 2001) the state seeks to impose, or induce higher education institutions to take up, as well as in the set of ideological elements, models and practices held to be indispensable once higher education institutions are engaged in competition.

The dual condition of academic actors as both producers and reproducers is better grasped through the two concepts of archetype (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993; Greenwood & Lachman, 1996) and field logic (Scott, 2001). The former allows the way higher education institutions and academic actors identify and select different organisational forms from the institutional environment – effectively, the notion of how to organise and manage. It also allows them to be integrated into an interpretative scheme that emerges as their principal framework for management (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993; Scott, 2001). The latter encompasses: 'the belief systems and related practices that predominate in an organisational field' (Scott, 2001, p. 139). It puts weight on the meanings given to these organisational forms by academic actors and by higher education institutions.

Confronting managerial and collegial models and the different combinations that emerge from them, as the hybridisation thesis suggests (Deem, 1998; Fulton, 2003; Mouwen, 2000; Reed, 2002; Santiago et al., 2006; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004), admits the hypothesis that different archetypes and belief systems co-exist around higher education institutions' governance and management. The model Oliver (1992) developed, which categorised the strategic responses of organisations

to external pressures into five postures – acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance and manipulation, reinforces this hypothesis.

In this setting, diversity in the 'inner life' of higher education institutions is arguably counter-influential with the upshot that, as Rhoades and Sporn (2002) noted, the external expectations of a uniform outcome are not borne out. In a similar logic, Miller (1998) suggested that despite the university's increasing market orientation, despite its culture being infested with managerial rhetoric – by 'hard managerialism' (Trow, 1994) – defence mechanisms, more viable under soft management, spring up in resistance. Kekäle (2003) as well argued that the complexity of higher education institutions, their disciplinary and cultural diversity, do not tolerate a top-down leadership pattern. Kekäle observed that universities are open systems, 'loosely coupled' around self-sustaining units that themselves are loosely connected. Institutional dynamics are *bottom up* (Birnbaum, 1989, 2000; Clark, 1983; Mintzberg, 1990). They rest on autonomous professionals, organised into groups, schools and departments, centred on a disciplinary core (Dearlove, 2002).

How bottom-up dynamics are affected by the impact of NPM on academic culture, as Deem (1998) suggested, are no less important. Although Deem (1998, p. 52) acknowledged that 'control and regulation of academic work seem to have replaced collegiability, trust and professional discretion', she also recognised the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' managerialism. Both pre-suppose different academic cultures. The first wields a discourse and a tactic of rewards and punishment. The second appears not wholly incompatible with collegiality (Deem, 1998).

Such observations seemingly strengthen the hypothesis that the market and the standardising influence of NPM may not necessarily give rise to similar and standardised responses from higher education institutions. Once the logic of determinism is evacuated from this hypothesis, a better grasp of what unifies or fragments institutions in the domain of organising higher education may be had. How are strategic responses built up inside establishments of higher education? What roles do deans perform?

In effect, the role of deans has primarily to do with the basic units of a university. It is articulated around their disciplinary base, the nature of their activities and the way institutional policies and practices have developed *in situ* (Deem, 1998; Kekäle, 2003; Middlehurst & Elton, 1992). As Kekäle (2003, p. 288) noted: 'Since the local and disciplinary context vary, different basic units may develop their own leaderships, cultures and ways of working'.

Even when faced with pressure from 'hard managerialism' (Trow, 1994), basic units can obstruct top-down decisions, cause central administration great discomfort or simply avoid conflict between institutional and departmental objectives. Such abilities depend on the position of each unit in the 'inner life' of higher education institutions and on the opportunities to uphold its specific interests, whether horizontally – across the network of basic units – or vertically, namely, between units, central governance and management structures. In the view of Adams et al. (1999), departmental response to pressure from internal and external management varies – from merely coping, dealing with, through to impotence.

Against this background, the role and specific interests of deans in defining the strategic responses of higher education institutions merit closer scrutiny. The degree to which NPM may be implemented is closely aligned with the power, knowledge and personality of these key figures (Miller, 1998). Different perceptions, interests and arguments which these personalities entertain may subtly influence different local strategies in response to internal pressures whilst, at the same time, influencing future institutional programmes generally.

Different authors (Adams et al., 1999; Gmelch et al., 1999; Miller, 1998; Winter & Sarros, 2002) tend to agree that, under pressure from NPM, deans take on additional and critical roles in mediating both within institutions and with the external environment. Deans would seem to have an ambiguous heritage both from the system and from the higher education institutions' political overhaul. As institutional leaders, their power has increased (Askling, 2001; Kekäle, 2003). But, the increase appears more operational than strategic. Their key position (Ramsden, 1998) suspends them between entrepreneurial values and professional and/or academic values – academic autonomy, professionalism and collegiality, for instance (Winter & Sarros, 2002). Thus, they face conflict at a high level (Sotirakou, 2004); conflict that springs from their lot as academics and as academic managers, a fate made less enviable still by potential conflict between interests present at the institutional and departmental levels (Miller, 1998). As Kekäle's (2003) happy metaphor suggested, deans act as thermostats, adjusting tensions between higher education institutions' central administration and basic units. Alternatively, as in Sotirakou's analogy (2004), they serve as mediators between the forces of conflict that shape the inner way higher education institutions go about organising themselves.

In a setting that has deans increasingly persuaded, or clearly pressed, to assume managerial roles (Miller, 1998), such roles may at one extreme require 'hard managerial' techniques to be applied or, at the other, call for more accommodating postures as 'facilitator of the possible', as Kekäle (2003) observed. Whatever their position along this continuum, inevitably it is ambiguous. Moreover, given the contradictions in the legitimacy from which their authority drives – academic, managerial or both (Kekäle, 2003; Miller, 1998) – the power of the deans is not only ambiguous, but also fragmented.

4 New Public Management in Portuguese Higher Education

Following the approval in 1988 of the Law on University Autonomy (Law no. 108/88) and its counterpart, passed in 1990, for polytechnics (Law no. 54/90), both of which are still in force,[1] Portuguese higher education institutions were given the freedom to draw up their own inner regulation and by-laws, together with scientific, pedagogical, administrative and financial autonomy. For polytechnics, however, the validation of new courses remained under the control of the central ministry. To offset the enlarged scope of higher education institution autonomy, a law on quality assessment for higher education (Law 38/94) was promulgated in 1994. The thrust of this legislation was to create a new institutional environment that would

urge higher education institutions towards efficiency. The political intention was for higher education institutions to become more innovative, aware and responsive to the changing social and economic environment (Amaral et al., 2002).

Despite attempts to institutionalise this new framework, moves towards self-regulation, or towards the supervisory model (Neave & Van Vught, 1994; Van Vught, 1997), were never grounded exclusively in the logic of the market, until, that is, the end of the 1990s. System steering was more a form of political hybridism (Amaral et al., 2003; Magalhães, 2004; Santiago et al., 2005). It combined both institutional control and regulation with market/NPM coordination. By a similar logic, organisational efficiency and effectiveness were never central issues (Amaral et al., 2003; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Santiago et al., 2005) in contrast, for instance, with the Anglo-Saxon world (Fulton, 2003; Meek, 2002, 2003; Reed, 2002).

In Portugal, for historical reasons – namely, the democratic revolution of 1974 – collegial decision making in higher education institutions remained both more prominent and more evident than in other Western countries (Santiago et al., 2006). Thus, for example, in public universities, rectors are directly elected by the university assembly, which is composed of elected members – academics, students and administrative staff – and non-elected, appointed members – external stakeholders. The senate is similarly composed of elected and non-elected members. Deans are elected. The scientific council, where all PhD staff are represented, exercises considerable authority in scientific matters; the pedagogical council, where students and academic staff each enjoy the same number of seats, has only symbolic power over pedagogical matters – counselling, principally.

In the case of public sector polytechnics, the designation of their government and management bodies – general council, director or president and deans of schools – presents some differences. The range of power, formal leadership and membership are broadly similar, the same being true in the case of the scientific and pedagogical councils.

A more evident injection of NPM and market forces was made in Portuguese higher education at the end of the 1990s. Criticism of the collegial model had grown. More recently, some of the main conclusions in the OECD evaluation of the Portuguese higher education system (OECD, 2006) provided a 'new tool' for legitimising arguments that belaboured the 'inefficiency' of collegiality. Changes to the structures of governance and management of higher education, based on those conclusions, are now a priority on the government's political agenda. Amongst the alternatives to the collegial model is the notion of applying corporate governance as the solution to inefficiency in higher education institutions (Santiago et al., 2005). It is a controversial topic in public debate on higher education, linked as it is to financial restrictions and budgetary cuts, imposed by the incoming Socialist government in 2005. Funding higher education is now based on a formula that combines input with output variables.

At the same time as carping at the collegial model in higher education, there have been bids to put vocational and 'product-oriented' ideologies in place as the main template for organising teaching programmes and curricular development.

That higher education institutions ought increasingly to be open to the idea that research is a crucial element in enhancing the knowledge economy became the dominant credo of the hour. Research should be more applied, strategic and commercial to enhance the transfer of knowledge and technology to the sphere of entrepreneur-dom (Amaral et al., 2002; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Santiago et al., 2005).

Applied to the institutional level, this imperative seems to increase organisational control over academic labour, whilst eroding its working conditions (Carvalho & Santiago, 2006). It also hints at embarking on entrepreneurial strategies that drive towards increased external fundraising. Thus, it would appear, by and large, that Portuguese higher education institutions have been switched onto the 'track' where economic pressure and labour market demands predominate (Santiago & Carvalho, 2004). As far as the structures and processes of higher education institutions are concerned, one may observe an increase in the autonomy of basic units. However, as with systems elsewhere, such decentralisation seems to be more operational – managerial and financial – and moves onward alongside bids to concentrate political and strategic power at the apex of the establishments' central administration (Santiago & Carvalho, 2004; Santiago et al., 2005). As Santiago et al. (2006) observed, Portuguese deans are divided between the managerial demands of the establishments' central administration and the local interests of their basic units. Some view the situation as contradictory and as a source of role conflict, if only because the academic side of management still plays an important part in the way deans describe their tasks and responsibilities. Despite these changes, the impact of NPM on Portuguese deans has not been sufficiently evaluated and, where it has, results are not conclusive (Santiago et al., 2006).

Against this backdrop, the power and different ways that deans have of intervening and shaping institutional strategies and processes are analysed. Before beginning this task, the methodology on which the empirical study was based is presented. The organisational structures of the different higher education institutions participating in this project are described, as is the sampling frame.

5 Methodology

The exploratory and conceptual character of this study determined its qualitative methodology, which was based on a content analysis of the actors' discourses (Glaser, 1978; Miles & Huberman, 1984). The empirical instrument employed to register these discourses was an interview, itself based on a guideline of structured questions related to the functions, participation in decision making, changes in academic roles and personal details of deans. On average, each interview lasted 1 hour. All, with one exception, were taped. Data were subjected to content analysis, open and closed processes, which generated a grid of different dimensions and categories. Discourses were analysed according to this grid. Some of the main results are presented in the next section.

Twenty-six heads/deans were interviewed from four public higher education institutions: two universities – X and Y, X being a 'traditional' and Y a new (post-1973) university, plus two polytechnics – Z and W – both created in the early 1980s. In the four higher education institutions, basic units were selected. Their scientific disciplines are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 The deans' academic units

Academic units \ Institutions		Universities		Polytechnics		
		X	Y	Z	W	Total
Science						
	Maths		1			1
	Pharmacy	1				1
Engineering						
	Eng	1		1		2
	Mechanics		1			1
	Civil		1			1
	Electronics		1			1
Social Sciences						
	Education	1	1	1	1	4
	Law	1				1
	Management			1	1	2
	Economics	1				1
Health						
	Nursing		1		1	2
	Medicine	1				1
	Dental Med.	1				1
Architecture		1				1
Arts				1		1
Language		1	1			2
Sports		1				1
Agriculture				1	1	2
Total		10	7	5	4	26

The average age of deans in universities was 51 years, and 47 years in polytechnics. Only three were women, a reflection of the gender inequalities in academia that several national (Amâncio, 2005; Carvalho & Santiago, 2006) and international studies (Brown & Ralph, 1996; Toren, 2001; Winchester, Lorenzo, & Browning, 2006) have noted. The majority of deans have a full professorial post and are at the middle or top echelons of academic rank.

Although deans prefer teaching and research to managerial tasks, as other studies have shown (Bertrand, Foucher, Jacob, Fabi, & Beaulieu, 1994; Harman, 2002; Johnson, 2002), the majority stated they were ready in the future to assume other managerial duties, either at the institutional or basic-unit levels.

Whilst the 'inner' setting of higher education institutions is a relevant 'background' against which to analyse the discourses of the deans, certain aspects of their organisational patterns are also briefly described. As was pointed out, the central structures of governance and management – collegial and executive – are similar for

both universities and polytechnics, being set out in the Laws on Autonomy, though with variations in each sector. The most significant amongst these differences occurs at the level of the basic units.

University X, one of the oldest in the country, has 28,000 students. It is structured into faculties, each endowed with a high level of administrative, financial, pedagogical and scientific autonomy. It is more a ‘federal university’ – an association of faculties – than an institution vertically integrated around a strong and singular organisational identity (Stensaker, 2004). Faculties have similar governance and management structures, based on democratic and collegial practice. The faculty assembly is one of the most important collegial structures. Its members (academics, students and non-academic staff) are elected, as are the deans and the executive council. Some faculties have only an executive council, others an executive council plus executive director. Two other collegial bodies are in place: the scientific and pedagogical councils. The former brings together all lecturers with a PhD. The latter brings together lecturers and students in equal parts.

New University Y, founded after 1973, has 12,000 students. Its structures differ from the previous university. Basic units are organised on a departmental basis. Compared with the faculties in University X, these units possess similar collegial structures and enjoy similar autonomy at the scientific and pedagogical levels. In the specific spheres of administration and finance, however, their financial and administrative autonomy is more restricted. In this university, collegial structures exist in both the departments – scientific and pedagogical commissions – and in the university as a whole in the form of scientific and pedagogical councils.

Polytechnic Z (4,500 students) and Polytechnic W (6,000 students) have the same structures based on schools. Polytechnics are an association of schools, with a level of autonomy similar to faculties – that is to say, administrative, financial, pedagogical and scientific autonomy. Governance and managerial bodies at the basic-unit level – school assembly, executive council, scientific and pedagogical councils – are, as for universities, collegial structures.

Having set out the main features of the four establishments included in this enquiry, the empirical results from analysing the interviews are presented. From the content analysis three dimensions were selected: (i) institutional environment; (ii) governance and management models; and (iii) institutional responses.

6 The Influences on Institutional Responses to the External Environment

6.1 Institutional Environment

This dimension sets out to understand how deans from the four higher education institutions sampled, interpreted the current institutional environment. Did they make a homogeneous selection of elements in the institutional environment? Who did they identify as the main external actors influencing institutional behaviour?

How did deans interpret the role of higher education institutions' central administration? Did they see central administration as exerting some influence over units' organisational behaviour? Did they see such units as part of their organisational environment or were they viewed as akin to 'outsiders'?

Generally speaking, deans made a homogeneous selection of environmental threats. The principal actor whom everyone identified as influencing organisational behaviour was the state. This result was to be expected. Portugal's public universities are heavily dependent on public finance.

Deans identified two main processes used by the state to change organisational behaviour. In the terminology of DiMaggio and Powell (1991), these are mechanisms of coercive and mimetic isomorphism. Coercive mechanisms relate mainly to financial constraints – budget cuts being seen as the main coercive instrument that the state used to control the behaviour of higher education institutions. Deans painted a dramatic picture of the impact that the national budget had on higher education institutions.

> This year the university has less money than in previous years and there are many schools that are below their management capacity. If we were in an open market economy, they could not survive. In this context, all the discussions are about money. As the money transferred from the state budget isn't enough, there are faculties that will not be able to pay salaries at the end of the year. (Dean of Medicine, University X)

In the opinion of the deans, such financial constraints bolstered state power to steer higher education systems in a more hierarchical manner, reducing the margins of higher education institutions for self-governance. This is an explicit objective in applying NPM to higher education (Schimank, 2005). The state uses this mechanism of coercion to force higher education institutions to change in a particular direction, by introducing more entrepreneurial models. Budget constraint impelled institutions to move towards value effectiveness, efficiency and competition despite established values.

Financial constraints appear also to serve as inducements for change. Yet, the impact of financial constraint is such that, at national level, it generates an uncertain and ambiguous environment around policies and strategies for steering higher education. Faced with this situation, higher education institutions often sought to anticipate governmental decisions by introducing changes into their own structures and managerial practices, thought to be what the state wanted. Neave (1996), referring to quality procedures, called this comportment 'the law of anticipated results'. Some deans, faced with governmental policies that stressed an economic rationale and financial constraints, admitted that higher education institutions had difficulty in actively defending the collegial model. Higher education institutions tried to double guess the new model that the state might introduce.

> Sometimes, jokingly, I say that the minister has no courage to implement change. He tries to do it by 'asphyxia'. What I mean is, that he is forcing institutions to change themselves and he doesn't have to promote any change because he has been doing it using financial constraints. (Dean of Languages, University Y)

From the perspective of new institutionalism, higher education institutions' 'anticipatory' behaviour may be an effort to acquire legitimacy and political recognition, which are perceived as a condition of survival (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Meyer & Rowan, 1991). Or, viewed within the setting of resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), institutional autonomy is preserved through compliance with governmental policies. This process reveals a set of anticipatory actions that contribute both to *de-institutionalising* (Scott, 2001; Zucker, 1991) traditional models of governance and management, and to *institutionalising* organisational principles closely akin to market ideologies and NPM.

Alternatively, financial constraints may be interpreted as an instrument of inducement when associated with research policy. In parallel to cuts in the higher education institutions' general budgets, research funding increased. So did competitive tendering. Once again, the objective appeared in line with NPM. By this tactic, the state creates a gladiatorial arena for competition between institutions inside the higher education sector. More than ever before, Portuguese higher education institutions compete for supplementary research funds. Extending out from this, the government hopes to implant a higher level of stratification in the higher education system and, ultimately, to draw a line between research and teaching universities. The former, a minority, will be dedicated to excellence whilst the latter will be wedded to quality in teaching – that is, the remainder of the universities and all of the polytechnics.

Already, these tactics seem to be bringing about appropriate changes in the cultural-cognitive framework of establishments – changes discernable in their internal policies and organisational dynamics. Priorities for research and research productivity became the anguished concern for both higher education institutions and their basic units:

> Another essential objective is to increase scientific research. We are the faculty that . . . has most publications for many years now. But, it is not enough, because we are comparing ourselves with others that have fewer publications. (Dean of Medicine, University X)

System stratification was also pushed forward by valuing one sub-system rather than the other and by assigning priority to different academic disciplines. Deans felt that the policies of government undervalued polytechnics whilst technology, by contrast to humanities and languages, was increasingly cherished.

> In all the political discourses, we just hear people talking about universities. They do not talk about higher education. The polytechnic subsystem remains a second choice, a second option. And I have the feeling of some rejection of polytechnics by this minister. Also, inside polytechnics, he likes more schools such as engineering or technological areas, and has a low opinion about schools in other, different areas. (Dean of Education, Polytechnic Z)

Yet, university deans expressed similar feelings about the undervaluation of humanities and languages in the policies of government.

> The minister assumes an organisation based on a ratio that is unfavourable to the courses that we might define as paper and pencil courses. But, over the last two years, we have a problem. That is, the adoption of a formula which penalises, once again, courses of economics, management and the arts. (Dean of Economics, University X)

Copycat mechanisms tied in with the reports of international agencies, previously mentioned (ENQA, 2006; OECD, 2006). Armed with their recommendations, the state launched into a rhetoric that emphasised the pressing need for strategic change in higher education (Reed, 2002). If Portuguese higher education institutions were to fall in line with developed countries and modern universities, they should press ahead with the social efficiency of teaching, economic efficiency of research and organisational efficiency of their governance and management. Deans viewed the international reports as a form of successful leverage – successful, they felt, precisely because recommendations from the agencies were accepted with little criticism by academics.

> I think everyone has accepted (them) in a peaceful way . . . without great protest. There was a report from OECD, which said several things. Then there was a report from the minister, which also said many different things. We live with such discourse, which has been passed along in a consensual manner or, at least, people do not question them. (Dean of Education, University Y)

From the standpoint of deans, the political agenda for restructuring the Portuguese higher education system – its universities and polytechnics – limited the margin of manoeuvre to draw up their own strategic responses. Furthermore, deans took the view that central administration exerted a similar influence over the organisational behaviour of their own establishment. Faced with the coercion and inducements that the state employed in pressing home change, the response of universities' and polytechnics' central administration was perceived as more passive than active. In short, for deans, the response of higher education institutions preached obedience to the government's urging to set in place an institutional framework that was new, managerial and market friendly.

> I don't know if I need more autonomy to define strategies because, at this moment, if you go to the rector and repeat this interview, what he will say to you is that he also doesn't have enough autonomy. (Dean of Education, University Y)

Still, faced with such conformism, deans took up different positions. Some accepted it as inevitable, given national and international pressures – for instance, implementing the Bologna process. Others hedged their bets. They accepted the inevitable, but only in part. Finally, some battled for central administration to take a more pro-active stance on matters such as the government plans for restructuring higher education.

> Until today I didn't see universities publicly standing up for themselves, as they should do, with courage, based on a well-prepared counter blast to the assault the state has been making. (Dean of Sport, University X)

For deans, the stances taken by their institutions' central administration placed it in a position similar to the state – as an external stakeholder bent on enforcing change in long-established patterns of organisational behaviour.

To sum up, here was a homogeneous institutional environment, generated by government rhetoric and policies, seeking to impose the instrumentality of NPM. Faced with inducement and coercive pressures, deans took up stances which voiced

a certain fatalism about the fate of the autonomy of higher education institutions. For their own part, deans were ready to rally a more active resistance to government pressures and to back a more resolute bargaining position. This did not imply, however, that deans shared a uniform view about how higher education institutions should be organised, governed or managed. The sheer variety of positions taken in the face of the flaccid conformity of higher education institutions' responses ruled out deans having different belief systems. Nevertheless, other questions are raised. How, for example, are apparently homeostatic relations between state and central administration in higher education establishments accepted and interpreted inside those institutions? How far did these ties serve to de-institutionalise the cultural-cognitive framework from which traditional models of higher education draw their roots?

6.2 Governance and Management Models

According to DiMaggio and Powell (1991), and also Meyer and Rowan (1991), organisations have no alternative but to conform to values and beliefs brought to bear on the institutional environment if they are to obtain legitimacy. Greenwood and Hinings (1993) located the value system at the centre of their concept of an archetype. For them, an 'archetype' was '... an interpretative scheme, or a set of beliefs and values, that is embodied in an organization's structures and systems. An archetype is thus a set of structures and systems that consistently embodies a single interpretative scheme' (p. 1055).

The structures and practices of organisations are, at one and the same time, influenced and shaped by deep, underlying values, which are shared by all organisational members. In the main, these values relate to how organisations define their field of action, their principles of governance and their criteria of evaluation. Hence, transformational change in organisations involves replacing one archetype with another (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993). By dint of interpreting changes in the environment, actors generate a set of ideas about the need to change. Through such processes, new notions of good practice emerge. Yet, it is precisely this last assumption that weakens and fragments the legitimacy of the dominant archetype. Thus, new opportunities open up for alternative interpretative frameworks to take shape. However, such opportunities challenge the dominant archetype *only* if they are backed by an active legitimacy – essentially, a new set of beliefs, values and interpretive ideologies.

As the previous section argued, the presence of environmental changes similar across different higher education institutions presented just such an opportunity. How far was change able to modify the dominant representations of higher education institutions? How far have the changes to date brought forth a new interpretive vision and scheme?

The main working assumption here was that the influences of NPM on higher education entail replacing the framework – collegial, normative as well as cultural-cognitive – that moulded higher education (Barnett, 1990). The collegial is ousted by

another, based on concepts of the market, on private sector models of organisation and management. Using Greenwood and Hinings' (1993) typologies, both may be defined as differing archetypes.

Analysis of the data reveals that the need for change was generally acknowledged by deans. Whilst the majority stressed the weakness and limits of the traditional archetype, a minority still emphasised the need to hold out against, or to break away from, the general directions in which environmental pressures were heading. This view was present not only in discourses calling for a halt to the state's withdrawal from its responsibilities and cutting back on investments; it was equally present in discourses upholding the merits of the model in place and the desirability of retaining it.

New ideas for best practices which could be adapted to Portuguese higher education institutions arose from the deans' responses to external change. A tendency to favour the centralisation of power at the upper echelons to better rationalise resource allocation was also in evidence, as were calls to develop efficiency and efficacy; to reduce conflict between collegial bodies; to raise responsibility; and to tighten up organisational identity. All of these statements are in keeping with the external demands of NPM. Yet the deans' views on centralisation were nuanced. One polytechnic dean took a more radical line, proposing to eliminate collegial structures in the basic units, the better to bring the whole establishment under a single president and a single scientific council.

> I have a clear idea for change. First, I think that all the executive boards of schools should be eliminated with all their present structures. In my opinion, institutions with up to 10,000 students are justifying the existence of only a small team working with the president ... (Dean of Arts, Polytechnic Z)

Nevertheless, some contradictions emerge from the deans' views on concentrating power in higher education institutions' central administration. In defending concentration, the deans believed that cutting back on the autonomy of basic units would be necessary. At the same time, they called for a greater marshalling of power around their own positions to be able to manage their units more efficiently.

> This is the chosen model ... Decentralising decision making is something that I, in theoretical terms, agree with, but I think that some centralising is also necessary. (Dean of Management, Polytechnic W)

This situation reflects one of the major paradoxes in NPM. Decentralisation, as a means of enhancing accountability and efficiency, does not mesh with the idea of strong leadership and centralised decision power (Ferlie et al., 1996). This duality is particularly visible in Portuguese higher education institutions, especially in the relationships between top-end and middle management.

Yet some deans rejected the idea that concentration of power around higher education institutions' central administration was indispensable for improved management for several reasons: the defence of each unit's particular interests as against those of the centre; the capacity to take short-term decisions; the responsibilities and accountability of deans – even the public status of schools. The following interview response made this very plain:

> ... the rector thinks that the ideal would be to have a more centralised model. That, for some circumstances, would be better because it could make the university more visible as a whole and not only Faculty A, B or C. But, on the other hand, for schools in a university of our size it is extremely hard for someone, under more centralised management, to make schools identify themselves with central initiatives. (Dean of Economics, University X)

This situation points to the possibility that traditional beliefs, values and ideologies of higher education institutions were still present in the deans' frame of reference. The way deans alluded to the possibility of introducing more management professionals into collegial and executive power appears to back this hypothesis. Whilst some deans saw positive changes in the governance structures of higher education institutions and defended concentrating power at the summit, the majority rejected the notion of deans or rectors as appointed officers.

> I used to be a manager and I have worked in the private sector. I have already managed a business. But, I think that the fact of being an academic and having a teacher's awareness makes me take decisions that would be different from those I would take if decisions resulted from a purely economic logic. I have to think things over and I think this awareness is important. (Dean of Law, University X)

However, some interviewees, whilst agreeing with electing the rector, surprisingly, were not opposed to the appointment of deans which corresponds closely with the tenets of centralisation.

> I do not agree with rectors being appointed. I think it would be a very bad sign. If it would be so, why do we need a law on autonomy? But, in what concerns the appointment of the dean, I am not opposed. (Dean of Law, University X)

In general, stances taken by the deans may be interpreted as maintaining values rooted in traditional academic culture – more specifically, positioned in the ranks of academia, based on expert knowledge and experience that continue to be important in legitimising institutional power.

> I should say that it is not beneficial for the dean to have an academic degree lower than those of other bodies. (Dean of Sport, University X)

The issue that commanded the highest consensuses amongst deans was the professionalisation of management. All, save three, rejected the inclusion of professional managers on governance and management bodies of higher education institutions.

> I don't feel that I lack the skills necessary to accomplish my job ... In what concerns the debates that call for external managers, I'm heartily against that. I think it would result in more damage than benefit to our institution ... all the attempts to manage universities with outsiders is an attempt to depreciate universities. (Dean of Sport, University X)

However, some deans argued in favour of further developing management skills amongst academics by putting on training programmes. Alternatively, they called for higher education institutions to set up either a body or a consultancy programme for management training.

> I, personally, agree more with the idea that the dean should be an active academic, appointed for a fixed period, but I also agree that schools should have a more professional manager, I think almost like an executive. (Dean of Economics, University X)

By contrast, the topic where deans displayed a most marked disagreement with the present models of governance and management in Portugal's higher education system was the representation of different institutional groups on collegial bodies. Two deans alone upheld the principle of representational parity between students, academics and non-academic staff. The overwhelming majority, although not against bringing non-academic staff members onto collegial bodies, dismissed the presence of students. The proposal to centralise institutions' pedagogic duties to students was likewise thrown out summarily.

> The pedagogical council has parity in the number of professors and students and this seems to me a barbarism. I'm not 'polite' but I think that it makes no sense to have students with the same representation as academics in decision-making processes. Students have neither maturity nor knowledge to participate. (Dean of Medicine, University X)

By contrast with Selznick's (1996) argument, institutional influences do not apply in the same manner to all organisational leaders. Put another way, though actors may be faced with the same type of influence and external pressures, their responses were differentiated. There are no common patterns. No patterns could be detected either between deans inside the same institution or between deans from different institutions but within the same academic field. On the contrary, some diversity was evident in the responses from individuals with a similar academic background, as it was from those in the same institution. In other words, and in contradistinction to the findings of DiMaggio and Powell (1991), the state and the professions are not sufficient to promote organisational change.

The main conclusions, which the analysis permits at this point, sustain the argument that whilst the legitimacy of the collegial archetype is breaking up, it has not as yet reached the point that it has become utterly de-institutionalised. Despite the presence of a new set of beliefs, values and their guiding ideology that together constitute a new cultural-cognitive framework in higher education (Scott, 2001), the new appears to be co-existing *en bonne entente* with the traditional construct. This situation confirms the hypothesis of hybridisation that previous studies have already detected (Currie, Deangelis, De Boer, Huisman, & Lacotte, 2003; Deem, 1998; Fulton, 2003; Gumport et al., 2003; Reed, 2002; Santiago et al., 2006; Santiago & Carvalho, 2004). In fact, the next quotation reveals the persistence of a more favourable opinion on traditional models.

> An enterprise is an enterprise, a university is a university and a rock is a rock, they are distinctive things. And the fact that we should do our best to manage a university efficiently does not mean that a university is an enterprise. (Dean of Sport, University X)
>
> . . . talking about improvements, sometimes I'm afraid that because of political inefficiency we can 'throw away the baby with the water', as the proverb says. I think that some care is needed. (Dean of Management, Polytechnic Y)

These findings reinforce the hypothesis, previously left aside by Greenwood and Hinings (1993) and assumed in other studies (Mueller, Harvey, & Howorth, 2003), to wit, the simultaneous co-existence of several different legitimate archetypes.

The co-existence of the two archetypes can just as well be a passing phase in a dynamic that ends by replacing the traditional archetype. The possibility has not escaped us. Even so, the possibility remains that deans will continue to defend the traditional archetype, whilst accepting the legitimacy of *only* those new archetypes, norms, values and ideologies that they consider to be of value in steering higher education institutions.

The simultaneous presence of the two archetypes in higher education institutions, and even the traditional construct itself, appears to depend mainly on the capacity of deans to develop ways to influence institutional policies and strategies.

Several studies have sought to show that, in the public sector, the actions of the state, either by manipulating political variables (Magalhães, 2004) or the initiatives of central administration (Pollitt, 2003), are a determinant in reconfiguring organisational structures and professional cultures. Often, however, such studies leave aside – or play down – the active role and interventionary power of middle managers, as influential elements in setting out political decisions. As we have been stressing in this study, we consider, interchangeably, the existence of bottom-up forces that can influence the organisational arena. It may be assumed in professional bureaucracies, like establishments of higher education (Mintzberg, 1990), that deans have the power and capacity to wield strong influence over top-level decisions and even over institutional policies. The analysis developed below drives in this direction.

6.3 Shaping Institutional Responses

Studies analysing the administration and management of basic units tend to concentrate on the deans' role of mediation (Deem, 1998; Kekäle, 2003; Miller, 1998) and less upon the participation and influence that deans exert over institutions' policies and strategies. One exception is the recent study by Huisman, De Boer and Goedegebuure (2006). The study set out to examine the participation in, and evaluation by, academic staff in the new structures of higher education governance, implemented by the Dutch 1997 Law, itself heavily influenced by the principles of NPM.

The relative paucity of such studies, plus the belief that deans occupy a key position in both the formal and informal 'inner' network of institutional decision making, justified the weight placed on this aspect in the design of the present project. What type and style of relationship did deans maintain with collegial and executive bodies? Such a question made two assumptions. It assumed that drawing up institutional strategies did not follow a unitary logic. It also assumed that the locus of such decisions was not confined to the upper echelons of the establishments' central administration. On the contrary, decisions of this nature mobilise several

systems of beliefs, muster diverse rationalities and generate a varied comportment amongst actors, all of which shape the distinctive character of such decisions. In brief, such decisions engage a diversity of archetypes, are based on a complex intertwining of beliefs and values already extant in higher education. Such a diversity of archetypes together with the different ways deans react to the institutional pressures which NPM brings to bear, are reflected in the different positions they take in their involvement with collegial and executive bodies in the establishment. Differences in the degree of involvement by the deans may be accounted for by referring to their personal preferences, to the level of autonomy in the basic units they manage, to their position in the institution's 'hierarchy' as well as to their individual background, disciplinary culture and, last but not least, to established practices in decision making.

Analysis of the data revealed three distinctive focal points where participation and influence over institutional strategies and policies took place: (i) collegial bodies; (ii) executive commissions (especially committees); and (iii) academic peers.

Scrutiny of the views held about collegial bodies confirmed the tendency amongst deans increasingly to minimise their own importance both in decision making and in their moves to sway institutional policies and strategies. In effect, deans in their majority regarded collegial bodies – both at the upper echelons of administration and in units – as major obstacles to their own initiatives. Likewise, deans believed the hold they exercised over collegial bodies and the influence they exercised within them, to be shrinking. Explanations for this perception are many:

(i) The sheer size of the membership on collegial bodies (senate, unit councils, institutional councils) weighed against and stifled the voices of individual deans:

> . . . the bodies are too big . . . For me being in the senate as a collegial body is a torture. (Dean of Psychology, University X)
>
> In the scientific council, I do not recognise any capacity to analyse, in an efficient way . . . there is always someone in disagreement and they do not understand what is at stake . . . Collegial bodies should have fewer people. (Dean of Arts, University Y)

(ii) The negotiation game, played by different groups, effectively imposed and controlled the political agenda. This left deans with the impression that everything was decided *sub rosa*, wrapped up beforehand and fixed behind the Arras, thereby removing their power effectively to intervene:

> I do not feel that I have the power to really participate in university collegial bodies . . . Whenever there is a strategic decision that can involve everyone . . . we already know who is going to vote on what . . . Things are handled in such a way that everyone votes as a 'herd'. At that level, people do not have any awareness of decision or of participation. (Dean of Education, University Y)

(iii) The conviction that collegial bodies were merely symbolic entities from which efficiency in decision making was absent or kept at arm's length:

> ... this university has a senate that is too large. That's why I went there so few times. It's a body more to perform symbolic roles than anything else. (Dean of Economics, University X)

(iv) The collegial bodies (especially scientific ones) were seen as places where decisions and changes that deans wanted to carry out were blocked:

> There are, inside institutions, bodies where power clashes ... Only scientific councils can propose the opening of staff vacancies, but the person who has the final decision is the director who manages resources and, as such, we have some conflict here. (Dean of Arts, Polytechnic Z)

There was, however, a second group of deans that defended the positive side of collegial bodies in governance and management at both institutional and unit levels. These deans perceived other actors taking part in these bodies – teachers, students and administrative staff – as allies, fellow deciders or even partners in daily management and strategic decision making. This group of deans recognised it could exert some influence on their interlocutors, an influence formal as well informal. It also agreed that influence was reciprocal.

The positive role of collegial bodies related to the part they could play in helping deans influence institutional policies and strategies, first within the basic units and subsequently at institutional level. For these deans, collegial bodies served as a platform where consensus may be forged, but also as places where influencing other actors could be accomplished with greater ease – particularly since deans stood at the top of the academic heap!

Yet the part played by collegial bodies was not limited to this 'instrumental' purpose. Deans also underlined the importance of these bodies as a counterweight to excesses in power that deans might be tempted to indulge in. Collegial bodies exercised an important role by acting as a balance of power

> ... that can restrict my actions. But I think this is not a bad thing because if we had a director he could do whatever he wanted. This body is needed in order to impose some limits. (Dean of Education, Polytechnic Z)

The organisational model of individual establishments seemed to have some impact on the role and importance that deans attributed to collegial bodies. Most criticism came from deans in charge of basic units in universities and, very noticeably, from those universities where the structures of governance and management are inclined towards greater centralisation. In polytechnics, deans tended to take a less critical stance, preferring rather to express confidence in the active part they could play within their establishments. Three different arguments can be adduced to explain the attitude of polytechnic deans. First, polytechnic deans reckoned they faced an increasingly competitive market. Collegial bodies maintain a sense of unity, a condition of institutional survival. Second, strong institutionalisation of the collegial model was itself a product of 'mimetic isomorphism' – that is, taking on structures of governance and practices of management, pioneered by the university sector. Third, polytechnics are federations of autonomous schools and are, therefore, less centralised than new universities.

Whilst the opinions of deans sometimes diverged over the importance of collegial bodies, the same is not true for executive commissions. All deans reported their experience of these committees to be very positive. Here, they felt they exerted a real influence on institutional decision making. It would appear that deans were engaged in establishing an internal hierarchy between collegial models, enlarging the executive dimension and, simultaneously, reducing the political and symbolic aspects.

To recapitulate: in the area of management, deans felt that, with financial responsibility (De Weert, 2001) and the management of 'human resources', they had greater purchase over their mandate and over the task it entailed. But, at the level of basic units, the influence they exerted was constrained by collegial power. In collegial bodies, the managerial power of deans was diluted by the greater weight given to academic values. By contrast, in executive commissions, deans wielded their formal powers more fully, especially in permanent commissions of senates and in the general councils of polytechnics.

> I should say that, at the moment, in my university, the *locus* of power is in the senate's permanent commission because, in the end, it is there that we take the decisions and where we try to make some adjustments between faculties. (Dean of Economics, University X)

To understand better the role that deans fulfilled in defining the establishments' strategies, it is important to examine the perceptions they entertain of the relationship with central administration – in particular, with university rectors and presidents of polytechnics. Given the criticism most deans voiced about the size and power of collegially driven committees, how did they uphold their position in the establishments' higher executive commissions? Did they take the view that their influence counted for more at this level?

The majority of deans acknowledged that, at present, pressures from government have resulted in a greater concentration of decisional power in the upper echelons of higher education institutions. But, internal tensions which such concentration creates, in turn, depend on several factors. Amongst them, the structural dynamics within each higher education institution – the degree of autonomy conferred on each unit, its scientific standing, social prestige and the reputation over time which each unit has accumulated, and finally, though not least, the power, knowledge and personality of the dean (Miller, 1998).

Different perceptions and beliefs emerged from discourses on the differing 'styles' which central administration employed to bring pressure to bear on basic units. In turn, these styles influenced the involvement and perceptions which deans retain of their influence over institutional strategies and policies.

Grosso modo, two different styles may be detected in the relationship that deans established with top-level executive bodies of their establishment. One, grounded in negotiation and consensus, accorded deans greater latitude to intervene and influence. A second, built on consultancy and imposition, constrained that latitude.

The former (negotiation/consensus) entailed a process of diversified decision making, vertical and horizontal, operated by central administration. In this setting, deans had greater opportunity to develop their arguments and bring to bear their

units' symbolic, cultural and technical capital (Bourdieu, 2006). A good illustration of this 'style' in action was the initiative of one of the rectors. He set up university-wide informal meetings for all deans to prepare and carry out key strategic decisions. As one of the interviewees pointed out:

> ... in the model that this university adopted, directors have to sit around the table and somehow, in front of the rector, come to a decision. (Dean of Economics, University X)

A similar institutionalised relationship with deans was to be seen in a polytechnic. There, as one of our informants made plain, presidential 'style' emphasised dialogue, consensus-building and decision making on a collective basis:

> In general ... we have a crucial role in articulating the general policies of resource recruitment in the institution ... we have periodic meetings that are organised by the president with deans, where we establish clear lines of action ... we then try to implement them at the level of the units. (Dean of Technology, Polytechnic Z)

The style of 'negotiation and consensus' did not impart a single way of acting, still less a single agreed view of the type of influence that deans brought to bear on the establishments' central administration. Furthermore, deans had recourse to horizontal networks to make known and to legitimate their positions, persuade allies and prepare their decisions for negotiation with rectors and polytechnic presidents.

> Whenever there is a priority issue for other schools, it is common for their deans to call me, to neutralise me somehow. They try to call my attention to the importance the issue has for them (if only) to stop me voting against it in the meeting. (Dean of Economics, University X)

Even so, the level of influence they could exert over institutional strategies and policies differs, as deans themselves admitted. It was based on:

(i) the historical background, size, and social standing of the units under their responsibility in the overall structure of the establishment:

> ... I think that it is natural that faculties which have a stronger power, due to their size and history can have more influence. Following the emphasis of national debate on technology, this faculty has a strong influence ... it is a faculty with merit ... at the national and international level ... they also have the power of tradition. (Dean of Sport, University X)

(ii) the individual's personal qualities, powers of argument and abilities:

> There are many people in central administration who have more power because of their seniority, experience and knowledge ... also given the kind of issues ... in technical and language questions. (Dean of Mathematics, University Y)

(iii) the backing from internal bodies and fellow academics:

> ... we consult our scientific council, academics and define a set of topics ... to make our ideas acceptable ... we are appointed to defend our positions. We consult with the lower levels and then pass our position on to the management bodies. (Dean of Mathematics, University Y)

From this set of statements, it is reasonable to suggest that the press of 'hard managerialism' (Trow, 1994) on higher education institutions would appear, in some instances, to translate into a soft version, not entirely incompatible with collegial models (Deem, 1998). Opportunities to participate and influence academics on decisions at the institution level seem to be enhanced. Thus, an organic model of decision making that draws on 'bottom-up' initiatives (Dearlove, 2002; Kekäle, 2003), consensual forms and informal styles of influence took shape, primarily, within the deans' network. Hence, in this instance, it could be considered that the institutions' central administration reflected more internal mechanisms of mimetic isomorphism – copycatting – than it did the use of either coercion or normative behaviour in promoting 'unity' between deans.

The second relationship – imposition and consultancy – aligns closer with the tenets of 'hard managerialism' (Miller, 1998). It has more in common with the idea of management by hierarchy (De Weert, 2001; Middlehurst & Elton, 1992). It operates through a top-down dynamic of reciprocal influences, strongly dependent on personal relations, for example, face-to-face negotiation between executive commissions and deans. Ploys of influence become individualised and involve a cross-cutting interplay of reciprocal resistance and deviation that drive more in the direction of informal compromise, hierarchically enforced, than on formal consensus, horizontally negotiated – and reached – within the deans' network. This decisional 'style' appeared to restrain both the participation and influence of deans in institutional strategies and policies. Explicit hierarchical pressures plus unequal access to information constricted such participation.

> When the rector speaks with me he also speaks with others, and he is the only person who has all points of view. I never know if the rector's decision is based on everyone's opinion or if it is only based on the decision he had already taken. (Dean of Languages, University Y)

For some deans, the ways open for them to influence high-level decisions were limited to being consulted or, on occasion, to working together to marshal ideas. One dean confessed to feeling that his participation in decisions occurred only when issues were difficult or troublesome, and central administration needed the support of deans to solve them:

> . . . decisions are previously taken . . . Sometimes there is some participation, specially when decisions are troublesome for the rector's team. In that case, they ask for participation. (Dean of Arts, University Y)

Here the data suggest that some higher education institutions use the deans' personal mediation to influence units. Personal management and individual forms of negotiation are inevitably present in defining an establishment's strategies and policies. Yet there is also a certain variability in the way deans reacted to this second management 'style'. Their reactions ranged across a continuum that ran from a total rejection and breaking off from it, to a strong, personal and sustained engagement in face-to-face negotiation. But, the general impression remained that the margins that deans had to influence institutional strategies and policies were very narrow. Furthermore, central administration set about influencing deans in a mode that was clearly top down.

A content analysis of the interviews leaves no doubt in this instance that the managerial style of central administration is closer to the academic edition of 'hard management'. The autonomy of deans was reduced substantially as were their participation and influence over institutional strategies and over the response the institution may make to external pressures – particularly from government. The second 'style' came closer to a corporate management model (Shattock, 2002). The dominant *locus* of power and decision making was clearly at the top, and this curtailed the deans' capacity to negotiate in their own interests and in those of their units.

Nevertheless, despite central administration's espousal of distinct forms of institutional decision making, deans still preserved the capacity to influence strategic decisions, though at different levels. One aspect may most certainly be confirmed: in systems of governance and management that move closer to the corporate model, the influences exerted over defining and implementing institutional policies took on more personal forms. In short, NPM brought about deep changes in the manner deans participated in, and influenced, the strategies of their institutions.

7 Conclusion

The policies of government to restructure the Portuguese system of higher education and its institutions were defined and influenced by the canons of NPM. Whilst they have conditioned the processes of institutional decision making, the canon has not acquired a deterministic character. The analysis of our data leads to the conclusion that when deans analysed the institutional environment, they singled out the same pressures as the government seeks to exert. In one sense, such similarity in the pressures identified reflects the success of political intention, not to mention political imposition, in the sphere of higher education. Successful as the pressure of external coercion and inducements has been, it has not up to now shown itself capable of generating internal homogeneity. Different values, norms and belief systems regarding the organisational, governance and management models of higher education are still very much present in the minds of those this study interviewed.

In the midst of internal diversity, distinct forms that deans used to influence institutional policies stand forth. In general, deans still had opportunities, in some cases largely verbal, to participate in, and influence, the way their establishment responded strategically to external pressures. These opportunities were diverse and in keeping with the 'internal environment' that attended decision making.

When faced with organisational environments closer to the 'corporate' model of governance, the participation and influence of deans over decision making became more personalised. The *modus operandi* and skills of the dean were re-directed towards more informal networks. The relationship the dean had with the upper echelons of central administration became more direct. In addition, the scope of operation shifted away from 'formal' networks represented by collegial bodies or

by other deans. It would seem that this form of participation and influence is typical of those higher education institutions where power – strategic and political – accumulated at the administrative summit and where basic units could draw upon less autonomy. The congruence between the modification of the dean's activity profile and the tenets of NPM is plain to see.

By contrast, when deans dealt with an organisational environment that kept close proximity to the norms and practices of the collegial *modus operandi*, the deans' participation and influence became more diverse, covered a broader register – less personalised, more collective. Taking part in, and shaping, institutional decisions are not solely functions of 'hierarchy' or of being a 'hierarch'. Nor is decision making itself solely the outcome of direct influence over an establishment's central administration. Lateral 'networks' and indirect influence, backed by other deans, have their part, too. The channels of participation are, simultaneously, formal and informal. In such an organisational setting, issues driven from the 'bottom up' have greater opportunity to be incorporated into, and have an impact on, institutional decision making. The corporate principles of 'hard managerialism', thrust forward from outside, seem – at least in this study – to have mutated internally into 'soft' forms. It would be surprising, indeed, if this were due to the explicit resistance to uniform, outside pressure by the deans. Rather, it appears to be an internal choice in favour of contingent and 'ephemeral' solutions as means of adjusting to patterns of collegiality that have already occupied the terrain, just as it appears to be a move to take account of the established autonomy of basic units.

Generally speaking, all deans were ready to participate and influence institutional strategies and policies. The scope of their action, however, was determined by opportunities themselves determined by the specific internal regulation of the individual establishment and by the cultural-cognitive framework, rooted in the traditional collegial model that preceded NPM. Different belief systems, linked into these diverse patterns, confer a distinct and very particular significance to both participation and influence. The degree of proximity to either the 'archetype' of corporate governance or to the 'archetype' of collegial governance shaped the way deans intervened in the institutionalisation of the former just as it did in the de-institutionalisation of the latter, not to mention the hybridisation of both. The way deans explained their intervention in defining both institutional strategies and policies suggests that they occupied a critical position, one which, depending on the range of options before them (Kekäle, 2003), allowed them to wield appropriate influence on the way higher education institutions and their basic units were structured. Yet, a delicate issue remains. It is this: might not placing greater weight on the managerial remit of deans, whilst playing down their academic remit (Greene, Laughridge, & Wilson, 1996; Harman, 2002; Miller, 1998), undermine both their power and legitimacy in the eyes of their academic peers? How far does the very influence they currently possess, which, incidentally, also defines their status, not make them hostage to, and at the same time dependent on, the goodwill of their academic peers or, at the very least, on their benevolent neutrality? As Kekäle (2003, p. 296) reminds us: 'If the scope of leadership and management is extended too far, the results can prove to be counter-productive'.

Finally, as with any study worth its salt, one question remains: What lines does it open up for research in the future? The burden of this analysis suggests three topics deserve further attention. First, how do deans handle initiatives driven from the 'bottom up'? Second, how do deans articulate and coordinate such initiatives with others, proceeding from the 'top down'? Third, how do deans integrate – or not – the outcomes of such articulation and coordination into their cultural-cognitive framework? Exploring these issues will very certainly extend scholarly knowledge – and that, substantially – of the basic *problematique*, namely, the field of action that sees deans participating in, and influencing, the choice, definition, shaping, promulgation and operationalisation of strategies and policies in their particular university or polytechnic.

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Note

1. The Portuguese parliament has recently revised these laws. The new Higher Education Act will be in force in higher education institutions until the end of 2010.

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UK Higher Education: Captured by New Managerialist Ideology?

Paul Trowler

> *At the heart of ideology is the problem of social relations of domination made intelligible through discourse . . . ideology is understood, perpetuated or challenged through discourse.*
> (Leonardo, 2003, pp. 204, 207)

1 Introduction: Conceptual Groundwork

Drawing on the relevant literature and primary data from two large mixed-method research and evaluation projects based at Lancaster University,[1] as well as my own research work (with smaller samples and more qualitative in nature), this chapter:

- identifies new managerialism as fundamentally ideological in nature;
- positions the very significant role of discourse in articulating and sustaining ideologies;
- asks whether new managerialist ideology and discourse have become hegemonic in UK higher education, exploring the reasons for any dominance they have achieved; and
- concludes with the observation that UK higher education has not been 'captured' by this ideology despite its apparent prevalence.

I want to first very briefly engage in some conceptual groundwork, exploring the UK literature on the nature of managerialism, its causes and effects in relation to the higher education system there. I will briefly summarise the main conceptual points (including areas of agreement and contention) before I move on to looking at the important issues and implications that arise from the research so far.

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2 On the Nature of Managerialism

Perhaps unusually in the social sciences, there is broad agreement on terms and the concepts they embody that are relevant to this discussion. I will outline these first.

Managerialism involves a framework of values and beliefs about social arrangements and the distribution and ordering of resources. This framework provides a guide and justification for practices in work contexts. As such, managerialism can be identified very clearly as an ideology, at least as that term is defined by Hartley (1983, pp. 26–27). These practices are oriented to efficiency and economy, market responsiveness and the control of employee behaviour towards these ends by managers.

'*New* managerialism' (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Clarke, Gewirtz, & McLaughlin, 2000) is a term often used to describe the specific form that this value and belief framework and its associated practices have taken in UK public services since the 1980s. The 'new' or 'neo' distinguishes it from earlier incarnations of managerialism such as Taylorism, sometimes referred to as scientific management (Taylor, 1967 (1911)). In fact, 'new' managerialism is not really that new: it was clearly evident in UK higher education in the early 1980s and even before, as well as elsewhere (Rourke, 1966).

Some of the key values, beliefs and practices of new managerialism in universities relevant to the current discussion include the following (Clarke et al., 2000; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Lucio, 1995; Le Grand & Bartlett, 1993; Power, 1997; Trowler, 2001):

- There is an orientation towards the customer and the 'market' rather than the producer.
- There is an emphasis on individualism and an uncritical approach to existing relations of power and control.
- There is devolution of responsibility and of budgets from the centre to the periphery, but with very careful setting of targets and monitoring by the centre. Self-monitoring by those at the periphery is required.
- Strategic direction setting of change is very significant.
- There is a strong rhetoric of public accountability, reflected in auditing and publication of performance indicators.
- The 'right to manage' is stressed, undermining notions of professional autonomy.
- Knowledge and learning are conceived as being atomistic, mechanistic and explicit in character. Knowledge and learning are commodified.
- In research, there is a movement towards academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997); and the 'knowledge economy' is foregrounded in the context of international competition in knowledge production. Research is pursued in the market (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).
- Organisational structures in universities are frequently amended to facilitate managerialist forms of control (Clark, 1998; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997): senior management teams are strengthened, faculties enlarged, departments merged into schools and interdisciplinary research centres set up.

However, it would be wrong to view new managerialism only in terms of these practices. New managerialism is more than just a ‘generic package of management techniques’ (Randle & Brady, 1997, p. 125). As noted above, it is an *ideological* framework which *gives rise* to certain kinds of practices but is not defined only by them.

There are several variants of new managerialism as well as related concepts, including neo-Taylorism and ‘New Public Management’ (NPM), for example (Ball, 1997; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Hood, 1995; Hood & Scott, 1996; Pollitt, 1993, 1999; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000) (for a fuller list of variants see Trowler, 1998). Deem and Brehony (2005) distinguish NPM from ‘new managerialism’ by pointing to the fact that the former is less frequently considered to be ideological by academic theorists, but rather as the implementation of a particular form of regulatory discourse by governments of different political hues (Hood & Scott, 1996). New managerialism by contrast is usually seen as ideological because it very clearly expresses and justifies a particular set of power relations. Intimately connected to new right thinking, as well as management theory and elsewhere (Fairley & Patterson, 1995; Pollitt, 1993), it reinforces and extends in particular the power of the state and of managers as a group, usually in the name of consumers, at the expense of employees. Thus NPM is seen as a technical phenomenon while new managerialism is above all a political one.

Each of these variants may be articulated in a ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ form (Trow, 1993). Soft managerialism involves acquiring the consent and agreement of staff to address inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the operation of universities. Hard managerialism by contrast involves imposing procedures and discourses, and sanctions and rewards on staff in universities.

3 New Managerialist Discourse

A very significant dimension of the practices associated with new managerialism, both in terms of the literature and in relation to its significance in the social world, is the nature of the production of written and verbal texts in social life. In other words, the discourse associated with new managerialism and the work it does.

The word ‘discourse’ is defined in numerous ways in the literature (see Grant, Keenoy, & Oswick, 1998, for a summary). It is also defined from different perspectives: according to its function, the medium of delivery and its source. The most limited definitions appear to restrict the term to a stretch of spoken or written language or language in use. In its most extended form, it appears to be used synonymously with ‘ideology’, or even ‘culture’; this extended form being denoted by a capital ‘D’ (Gee, Hulland, & Lankshear, 1996, p. 10). In his early work, Fairclough (1989) uses the term ‘discourse’ to mean something between the most limited and most extended forms: more than ‘text’, but less than ‘culture’. This understands discourse to mean *language as a social practice which is both conditioned by and shapes social structures*. This places the emphasis on the structurally conditioned

character of text, using 'structure' to mean properties which lend coherence and relative permanence to social practices (in this case the production of text) in different times and locales (Giddens, 1984), and 'text' to mean the written, spoken or visual product of communicative intent.

There is no text without discourse and no discourse without text: discourse is articulated in text and all text is structurally conditioned. Any discourse has textual concomitants derived from a relatively coherent 'discursive repertoire'. This term refers to the detailed characteristics of textual production, the denotative codes appealed to and the specific systems of representation used (Trowler, 2001). But discursive practices do not just reflect social structures, they affect them. For critical discourse analysis, based on Fairclough's (1989) work and that of others, discursive practices have important implications individually (in terms of identity), socially (in terms of practices, values and attitudes) and politically (in terms of the distribution of power). Foucault (1977, p. 49) argues that discourses are

> practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak . . . Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention.

The power of discourse works partly by denying the language resources needed to be able to think about and describe alternative patterns of social life. What is absent from textual production is as important as what is present, and what is implicit in the text is as important as what is explicit. Moreover, the 'texture' of the discourse, its source, form and organisation, can also be critical in determining how it is received and understood.

The discourse of new managerialism tends to draw on other discursive repertoires, especially financial, commercial and engineering ones. Thus 'clients', 'franchised programmes', 'credit accumulation', 'unique selling point' and 'market niche' are terms often mobilised when discussing the curriculum and its 'delivery' (Trowler, 2001). 'Core skills' which can be 'audited', 'acquired' and 'accumulated' are very significant parts of learning and teaching, and learning generally is about the acquisition and accumulation of sets of 'learning outcomes'. 'Disciplines' become 'subjects' and 'academics' become 'teachers'. This is in contrast to a more personalised, student-centred discourse which positions learning and the learner at the centre of attention.

The Lancaster project on new managerialism collected interview data which illustrate new managerialist discourse in use:

> We talk about this as an educational business and we don't talk about courses in a sense, we talk about products which we have to sell to students and to industry. Now, that's a cultural shift . . . the days when you were just delivering to students and they liked it or not have gone. You're delivering to clients now. And you've got to deliver on time, to quality or walk away. And if they walk away there's no income and if there's no income there's no business. If there's no business, there's no job. (HOD, Applied Science, post-1992 university, quoted in Deem & Brehony, 2005, p. 229)

I also found examples of new managerialist discourse in use in my interviews in a newly merged university in South Africa:

> In my opinion there was a very poor academic standard [on campus X]. The people who were running this were competent in teaching and nothing very much else. When we came to take over . . . the first thing I did was to try and streamline undergraduate studies. Coming together with campus X gave us the opportunity to re-write and regularise what they were doing . . . We had to increase the number of credits for each course because the administration had been hugely out of proportion to the learning outcomes [on small credit courses] . . . It was a nightmare.
>
> We left the most difficult characters out of the negotiations. We decided early on that this really wasn't an ideological battle and I didn't have the time or patience or energy to take those people with me.
>
> Now that we are actually doing it we are finding that it's not easy. On paper it was a lot easier. What we're finding now is that high-point of co-operation is something really of the past. One of the people who was involved is now out of the equation – she was a fantastically good planner and clear strategic thinker. So even though she didn't know too much about the area, some areas, she had very good structural vision . . . And the people that we are left with are a lot more . . . prepared to argue over everything. What we are concerned with now is the lack of communication . . . They don't answer our letters . . . In our planning document we have common outcomes but we don't have a common grading system and have to try to agree on one. (HOD, Media Studies, newly merged South African university)

This new managerialist discourse, if it became dominant, would eventually stabilise a 'regime of truth' in which it would become difficult if not impossible to think and speak outside a framework which saw knowledge as commodified and transmissible as a product, and higher education as about serving the needs of industry and the market in as efficient and effective a way as possible. I argue below, however, that for various reasons this bleak prognosis is not an accurate one.

4 Collegiality (and Contrived Collegiality)

New managerialism is frequently contrasted in a binary way with 'collegiality' (e.g. by Yokoyama, 2006). The title of the 2007 Douro Seminar ('The Manager-Academic: Corporate Lackey or Academe's Champion?') suggests just such a binary opposition: in this case, between middle managers as academic champions or new managerialist lackeys. The literature on the new managerialism is redolent with this kind of opposition, and this binary narrative is often expressed within higher education institutions themselves: managers positioned as rooted in new managerialist ideology and as operating against the interests of collegial professionals, in distinct contrast to prevalent practices in higher education in the past. That past is sometimes situated as a kind of golden age for both students and academic staff. Yet, new managerialist ideology and forms of control are more accurately seen in relation to what was in effect a compromise between the corporate bureaucracy of the university and professional self-government and control by academics between the late 1940s and 1980 (Deem, 2004; Jary & Parker, 1998; Smith & Webster, 1997).

And this past too bears some careful scrutiny. The period of 'collegiality' or 'professional bureaucracy' (Deem, 2004; Parry, 2001) was characterised in this way:

- consultations between academics in committee and peer review systems with little or no external regulation;
- relative autonomy in time management, low teaching loads and time for research;
- academic staff given almost total job security with very limited control of their work;
- relatively generous state funding but a 'hands-off' approach by the state in terms of scrutiny and control;
- research funding provided with minimal attempts to shape research agendas;
- research viewed (at least in the humanities and social sciences) as an individual matter, often dissociated from funding imperatives;
- teaching viewed as predominantly a private and, to many, a low-status activity;
- 'quality assurance' an activity left to academics themselves in both teaching and research, with the limits of scrutiny set at the doors of the institution itself (apart from professional bodies);
- heads of department had autonomy to interpret their task in alternative ways (Startup, 1976); and
- disciplines and their organisational incarnations, university departments, among the most significant structural features of higher education.

We have comparatively little data about the middle-management role in universities in the period before new managerialist practices began to fully take hold in the United Kingdom. That contained in the Jarrett Report (CVCP, 1985) and Middlehurst's work (1993) are the earliest sources of good data available. Fielden and Lockwood (1973) and Moodie and Eustace (1974) provide some information about the pre-managerialist period.

But what we do know is that, in the so-called 'collegial' period, power and control never in fact extended very far. Women and temporary staff were excluded while the grey-bearded professors tended to run the show (Bensimon, 1995). Hargreaves (1992) also shows how this 'collegiality' was in many ways contrived: a rhetoric of democratic control masking a reality which centred on manipulation of agendas and change processes by a powerful few. Hargreaves (1992, p. 83) notes that 'some individuals and groups can realize their values at the expense of others, or have the power and influence to shape others' values in the image of their own ...'. Collegiality and collaboration may involve an infringement of the individuality of lecturers and may move into co-option. There is administrative regulation which can be disempowering for some and 'collaboration' which is in practice inauthentic because it simply involves implementing the mandate of others. Moreover, even when applied more inclusively, a collegial approach can be slow and inefficient. In a turbulent and competitive environment with very large numbers of students and a fast rate of technological change, such an approach, even if desirable, may not in fact be realistic any more.

5 New Managerialism and Its Malcontents

There is of course a considerable critical literature bemoaning and/or attacking the rise of new managerialism in the United Kingdom. Willmott (1995) identifies the trend towards the commodification of academic labour and the increasing managerial control of academic work which result from politico-economic pressures related to the modifying logic and priorities of capitalism. Labour process theorists generally subscribe to the view that 'the real world of material production organized in a capitalist market, articulated with state power and particular political discourses, provides a framework which shapes university cultures and currently supports managerialism, managers, and management projects' (Miller with Meyenn, 1998, p. 45). From a different perspective, drawing on Weber and Foucault rather than Marx, Parker and Jary (1995) critique the 'McUniversity', a neo-Fordist, or even Fordist, product of the general trend towards rationalisation and the McDonaldisation of society generally (Ritzer, 1993).

But we should be careful about making the assumption that (to paraphrase Orwell), 'old collegiality good, new managerialism bad'. And we should not discount the ability of academics to resist, reconstruct or displace the trends such authors identify and vilify.

6 Stimuli and Responses

It is abundantly clear that practices associated with new managerialism have become more prevalent in UK higher education. For the head of department there is increased responsibility for finance because of devolved budgets. In particular, heads of department have to be concerned to ensure the steady and increasing flow of income to the department and have to carefully monitor and control expenditure. But, in addition to this, they also have to balance a number of sometimes conflicting priorities:

> With it being a very, very, competitive university for survival of departments, for getting research funds, keeping up your [student] FTEs, if the department's not run properly then you're all in serious trouble . . . we are very much governed by league tables, by assessment exercises . . . in research or teaching. (HOD Science, pre-1992 university, quoted in Deem, 2004, p. 118)

League tables, assessment exercises of both teaching and research, increasing intervention by the Quality Assurance Agency, an increasingly pervasive audit culture and the rest of the panoply of new managerialist practices and tools are so well known in the United Kingdom as to hardly need describing – to that audience at least. The research assessment exercise and preparations for it, in particular, appear to be having significant effects in terms of new managerialist thinking and practices (Elton, 2000; Jenkins, 1995; McNay, 1997), but the institutional context is significant in moderating or refracting this effect (Yokoyama, 2006).

Meanwhile, the general conditions of higher education in the United Kingdom have become more difficult. Drawing on the Lancaster new managerialism project data, Deem (2004, p. 120) summarises the situation in which many heads of department find themselves:

> The overall picture painted by HOD respondents of the main features of the management of UK universities emphasised audit, rising student numbers, the tensions between teaching and research, high workloads (for all staff), shortage of resources and the challenges of devolved budgets.

There is something of a difference between those heads of department who are 'elected' for a term (usually 3 years), predominantly in the pre-1992 universities, and those who occupy appointed positions, usually in the post-1992 universities. However, Johnson and Deem (2003) found that this difference predominantly affects the degree of investment they have in their roles. There is only a difference in their actual jobs insofar as they are operating in different types of institutions (research intensive versus a teaching institution; or a selecting versus a recruiting institution).

And, as we saw above, discursively there is much evidence of new managerialist discursive repertoires and their underpinning assumptions.

But my question is: How far does new managerialism thinking and its practices represent a hegemonic approach in UK higher education? Recent available data suggest very clearly that middle managers at least are not 'captured' by new managerialist thinking, even if they have to operate its practices. The Lancaster new managerialism project found that most heads of department professed themselves unpersuaded by new managerialist thinking, yet forced to operate its technologies: devolved budgets, sometimes robust staffing and other strategies (Deem, 2004). Meanwhile, the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) evaluation project found that only 9% of individuals at head of department level or equivalent thought of themselves primarily as managers, with roughly half (52%) giving equal weight to their teaching, research and administrative roles. This 'equal weight' view was much more prevalent in the old universities in Scotland than in the new ones, however. Generally, the Scottish survey of middle managers found little evidence of cynicism about the Scottish QEF, with most believing that there were benefits to be had and that quality review was necessary. There were some who were dissatisfied with the Scottish QEF process (particularly in terms of the resources required to fully engage with it), while a minority were 'sleepers' – not knowledgeable about or engaged with it.

As far as discourse is concerned, many authors agree that very few people are really 'captured' by new managerialist discourse. Deem and Brehony (2005) make the point, based on data from the Lancaster new managerialism project, that academic managers become bilingual (Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995) or even trilingual. The concept of bilingualism refers to the situation where two or more sets of values and cultures existing side by side are invoked in appropriate contexts (Deem, 1998, p. 50). Thus, managers draw not only on discursive resources rooted in new managerialist ideology but also on those which flow from their disciplinary background as well as from an earlier humanist, collegial set of understandings of higher education. Interestingly, this is a different take on the data from that project than that

presented by Fulton (2003, p. 174) who argues that 'so far as we could tell, manager-academics either (though unusually) fully embraced the language of business or did not do so at all'.

However, evidence for the Deem and Brehony (2005) interpretation comes from Prichard (2000) who agrees with their analysis, pointing out that many managers can shift between 'stations' discursively and in their thinking – between the 'managerial station' and the 'locale', the latter rooted in localised understandings of what works, how to get things done, what is acceptable, and so on. Localised knowledges both address and draw on professional and academic expertise. Prichard's (2000, p. 90) interview-based study of new managerialism in further and higher education suggests that 'the manager is not a coherent distinct human being, but a multiple of subject positions within various discursive practices, which in this case sit uncomfortably together'.

The manager's professional identity and the discourses he or she draws on are dynamic and protean. He or she will move between the managerial station, drawing on new managerialist discourse – constituting students as 'funding units' and colleagues as 'their staff', for example – and more authentic 'locales', situated in specific contexts of professional practice. These are 'localized cultures of practices which produce other relations to the self – that is individualized identities, which variably resist and subvert managerially individuated identities (stationings)' (Prichard, 2000, p. 41).[2] They are the grounds from which agentic resistance to structural stations is mounted.

So, for example, while senior post-holders devote considerable time and attention to developing and implementing performance review processes, staff members engage in countermoves to resist the intrusion of such reporting and surveillance: they ignore requests and advice, fail to attend meetings or 'lose' important documents. These sorts of struggles between what Prichard (2000) calls 'power blocs' and 'the people' occur not only within groups but, most importantly, 'within' people as they struggle with alternative identity positionings and discourses: 'In other words, we all move in and out of relations which maintain and extend the power bloc into and across our lives and the lives of others' (p. 41). Bleiklie (2002) agrees that both agency and structure operate in real social situations and this is one reason why we should see the pattern of influence as being not only 'top-down' but also 'bottom-up' and 'middle-out' (Trowler, Saunders, & Knight, 2003).

These issues of structure and agency, discourse and text are evident in Johnson's (2001) discussion of heads of departments' responses to the new managerialist environment and its associated discursive repertoires. They are applied too in Trowler and Knight's (2001) discussion of the reception at ground level of a curricular innovation wrapped up in new managerialist discourse and assumptions.

And, of course, as researchers, we know that interview transcripts are rarely homogenous in terms of the discursive repertoires that respondents in the Lancaster new managerialism project draw on (Trowler, 1998).

> The manager-academic interviewees in the four case study institutions present a complex picture of *strategic* and *contingent* management practices, by no means all informed by new managerial discourses and practices, and with varying attention to and awareness of the

> social relations of inclusivity and exclusion. Over half of our interviewees at Dean and HOD level . . . gave accounts of their consultative and people-focused approaches to management and this same pattern was evident amongst those in our four case study institutions. (Deem, 2003, p. 115) (my emphasis)

Deem (2003) notes that the more ‘managed’ staff such as porters, technicians, clerical and secretarial staff tended to feel lack of consultation, rising workloads and little power. However, as far as academics on the ground are concerned, the picture was mixed, with two of the four case study institutions having largely inclusive social relations. In all four universities studied, there were concerns about lack of consultation and communication, with decisions perceived as being made, at least sometimes, by a small elite.

Deem (2003, p. 121) concludes as follows:

> Though there are indications that some aspects of new managerialism . . . have permeated UK universities, this is not a complete permeation. The accounts given by manager-academics, and the organizational forms found in the study reported here, do not bear all the signs noted about new forms of management in other public services . . . However the widespread use of technologies of devolved resources and workload allocation systems seem more consistent with discourses of new managerialism.
>
> Yet, both in the ‘managed’ staff discussions and in the focus group data, respondents referred to the extent of creeping managerialism, and a sense of there being more processes of exclusion than inclusion in their workplace.

Parker and Jary (1995) draw on the work of Merton (1968) to characterise possible categories of individual adaptation to new managerialist higher education: conformity, ritualism and retreatism. Oddly, they forget Merton’s fourth category of adaptation: innovation – probably because their theoretical position does not accommodate it particularly well. Similarly, Miller and Meyenn’s (1998) discussion, based on a large amount of data from Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada, tends to dismiss the general finding that there is considerable variety in terms of the spread of new managerialism because the main author ‘probably remains the only partly reconstructed Marxist realist’ (p. 45) who tends to look for evidence of the products of the workings of the capitalist economy in the higher education system. A reader without this theoretical baggage, looking at the discussion of the data, can only agree with Miller and Meyenn’s (1998, p. 44) comment that:

> There is a significant degree of difference in management style. This is partly personal but also reflects the interaction between current government pressure and market situation with the established cultures of different universities, faculties and departments . . . the different cultures, practices and acceptable language, locate academic managers and managing in different ways vis-à-vis their colleagues, team or subordinates.

7 Conclusions

So, there is little evidence that new managerialist thinking and practices have become hegemonic in the United Kingdom. While the practices may be prevalent, discourse and ways of thinking remain multivocal. As Fulton (2003) concluded, the situation is one of unstable hybridity.

How can this multivocality be explained? First, if new managerialism is an ideology with a particular set of resources both discursive and otherwise, it is not the only ideology available. A wide range of literature about both schools and higher education has shown the existence of multiple ideologies. In reviewing that literature, I have distilled those commonly found down to four, which I have called traditionalism, enterprise, progressivism and social reconstructionism,[3] using names that are versions of the multiple sets of names used to describe the same things that are found in the literature. New managerialism is rooted within the broader 'enterprise' ideology, but is only one of three, albeit a dominant one. The alternative ideologies offer sets of resources, ways of thinking and discursive practices through which new managerialist ideology can be challenged. Parkin (1972) shows how ideologies need structures to sustain them; without social structures, ideologies can fade in the face of powerful opposition. But in academia there are important structures which sustain alternative ideological stances. Alternative conference circuits, journals, books, informal and formal organisations as well as the opportunity for backstage and under-the-stage talk mean that other discourses, other ways of thinking and even other practices can challenge new managerialist ones. Even resources in the media apparently unconnected to higher education and its management can be mobilised to challenge new managerialist thinking, discourse and practices. Thus, a particularly managerialist dean in a new university in England became characterised as 'the fat controller', a character from the children's animation *Thomas the Tank Engine*. This simple name, transmitted and used under the stage in a ubiquitous way, discursively deconstructed his approach. My research in that university (Trowler, 1998) showed how academic staff not only submitted to new managerialist practices in some cases but also developed coping strategies which undermined those practices, as well as, sometimes, completely reconstructing and changing intended policies through the use of the discretion that 'street-level bureaucrats' always have. The space for discretion and the residue of power on the ground must always exist: we know that 'working to rule' is a union tactic to disrupt work, not a new managerialist ideal. Power does not just lie in the hands of a few, but in fact operates in a more Foucauldian way, circulating and being operated on a moment by moment basis. Discourse is a power resource and any account of power, including discursive power, is an account of shifting processual relations, of a 'complex strategical situation in a particular society' (Foucault, 1981, p. 93).

Moreover, thinking in terms of 'managerialists' rather than 'managerialism' is not helpful. For this reason, I now regret adapting the title of one of Michael Apple's articles for one of my own: 'What Managerialists Forget'. People are not always and for all time either 'managerialists' or 'collegialists'. As Deem (2004), Prichard (2000) and others have shown, individuals shift their position according to context, drawing on different sets of resources as circumstances permit and needs require. We should not think of managers as a class, rather, as people who, like the rest of us, draw from alternative sets of resources at different times. As Deem and Brehony (2005, p. 222) say, we should beware of any tendency to homogenise the category of managers with a common set of characteristics and a unique set of interests: 'The interests of managers cannot be simply read off from an all-embracing category'.

So, translation, refraction, subversion and reframing as well as rhetorical compliance all occur; and alternative ideological positions, supported and sustained by social structures, offer alternative positions, ways of thinking and grounds for resistance to the new managerialist ethic and discourse. The process of 'normalisation' is powerful, and there is a danger that new managerialist ideology could become normalised but, in current conditions, this is not likely, particularly where awareness of the danger exists and where other structural forces, perhaps especially including the power of disciplines, offer grounds for resistance and alternatives.

8 Implications

For the future, we can almost certainly expect the continuation of the practices of the past: new managerialist approaches to running universities through, for example, the devolution of budgets and careful auditing and evaluation techniques, increasing regulation, the search for greater efficiency and the ratcheting up of requirements on academic staff and managers.

But, at the same time, we can expect the continuation of challenges, reconstruction, renegotiation and opposition as well as compliance and rhetorical compliance to the demands and approaches of new managerialism. There is no reason to expect that alternative positions will simply die and a new managerialist thinking and discourse will become the new 'regime of truth'. After more than 20 years of sustained attempts to shift universities away from the garbage can model of management, they remain loosely coupled organisations. And, as Willmott (1993) suggests, if they ever did become monocultural they would no longer really be the universities.

We should not, however, expect that to happen automatically. The maintenance of alternative social structures, including discursive resources, is important in maintaining alternative ideological positions to that of new managerialism. Displacement, resistance, reconstruction and the maintenance of alternative habits of mind take work and need resources. Part of the work of academics is to offer alternative ways of seeing as well as shedding theoretical and conceptual light on ways of seeing and habits of mind that threaten to become dominant and therefore exclusionary. Discursive struggle is particularly important in this, and that struggle requires resources to sustain alternative positions. To borrow the final words of one of my earlier papers to conclude this chapter:

> Plurivocality is always immanent: the achievement of semiotic democracy requires engagement, struggle and considerable 'work'. As academics we need to adopt critical theoretical positions which locate discourse in relation to power and resources and identify social inequities in terms of its effects, to do whatever we can to render challengeable any one way of seeing the world. (Trowler, 2001, p. 200)

Notes

1. These were an ESRC-funded project on managerialism in higher education, 1998–2000, and Lancaster's 3-year evaluation of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) applied

by the Scottish funding council to the 19 Scottish higher education institutions. The relevant data from the first include those from focus group discussions and from 137 semi-structured interviews with manager-academics (HOD-VC) in 16 UK universities. Four case study institutions were researched more intensively using a variety of methods. In terms of the Scottish evaluation, the data relevant to this chapter are from two identical questionnaires (2004, 2006) issued to all middle managers in Scotland (achieving response rates of 32 and 45%) and one telephone interview with a sample of 36 heads of department or equivalent.

2. A station is defined as 'both a physical place where the social order is imposed upon the individual and the social positioning of that individual in the system of social relations' (Fiske, 1993, p. 12).
3. Educational ideologies primarily revolve around three axes: the *aim* of higher education (Newmanite or vocational); the important *content* (discipline-based propositional knowledge or general transferable skills) and the important *functions* taking place within it (research or teaching). At their most fundamental level, then, they answer the three essential questions about education: 'What exactly should we do?' 'Why should we do this?' and 'How should we do it?' The literature in this area usually identifies four distinct educational ideologies which can be referred to, in shorthand, as traditionalism, progressivism, enterprise and social reconstructionism. Traditionalism focuses on transmission of the content of the discipline and induction of students into it. Progressivism focuses on the development of thinking and other skills in the student, on their capabilities. Enterprise sees higher education as concerning the world of work and the preparation of students for that. Social reconstructionism foregrounds the critical evaluation of the status quo and the capacity of research and teaching students to effect change.

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The New University: What It Portends for the Academic Profession and Their 'Managers'

Jack H. Schuster

1 Introduction

It is indisputable that higher education is in the midst of rapid, sweeping transformations that are occurring throughout the world, no doubt intensified for now, by the recent global economic downturn. Most observers would agree that this ongoing metamorphosis brings with it a mix of positives and negatives for academic life, enhancing some capabilities and compromising others. Among the widespread changes evident in the academy and its workforce are changes in the practices by which institutions of higher education are administered (to use the quaint, traditional term) or 'managed' (to employ more contemporary terminology). The language of management, so familiar for so long for most other types of organisations, until recently would have been resisted by many academics on the grounds that it was inappropriate – even offensive – to employ such coarse concepts to the art of administering these presumably unique, delicate organisations. While I have indulged in some hyperbole to make a point, the fact is that higher education's transition into twenty-first century realities has entailed new priorities and practices that reflect current approaches to managing the higher education enterprise that are very different from those of earlier, simpler times.

The academic professionals that are pivotal in this process are the academic deans and department chairs; they are positioned as intermediaries between the 'rank-and-file' traditionally semi-autonomous faculty and the campus chief executive officers (and their vice-presidents/vice-chancellors/vice-rectors) whose responsibilities extend organisation-wide.In typical corporate settings, those deans and chairs would be regarded as 'middle management'. The intent of this chapter is to provide a context within which the challenging balancing acts of these middle managers are taking place as they are obliged to respond to the often contrasting pressures emanating from senior administrators (and governing boards) and 'the faculty'. My purpose here is to describe the environment within which middle management must operate. This involves depicting the ongoing transformation of the university

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and the emergence of perhaps a new – or at least newish – university model or paradigm; less attention is paid to the desirable traits of these middle managers and what exactly now may be different about their tasks in this more aggressively management-oriented climate. To portray this context will entail some observations about the transformation of the university itself, as well as a description of the profound changes in the composition, work and careers of the faculty. Comprehending this context better should yield insights into the implications for the increasingly complex role of academe's middle managers.

For the past two decades, my scholarship has concentrated on the American faculty and the changes, of many kinds, that have pervaded the academic profession. In more recent years, these efforts have been funnelled through the Project on the Future of the American Faculty, co-directed with Martin Finkelstein of Seton Hall University. This chapter will focus on observations about the academic profession that have crystallised for me since the publication in 2006 of *The American Faculty* (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006b) that was the principal product of that decade-long project, with the indispensable assistance of others and the support of several major foundations.[1] Prior to the publication of that book, the first two major products from the project emerged in 1998, with Robert Seal as third author: *The New Academic Generation* (Finkelstein, Seal, & Schuster, 1998b), which emphasised, as its subtitle suggests, *A Profession in Transformation*, and *New Entrants to the Full-Time Faculty of Higher Education Institutions* (Finkelstein, Seal, & Schuster, 1998a). Taken together, this line of research depicts an ongoing revolution in who the faculty are and the nature of their work and working conditions. Beyond organising the empirical faculty data – the metrics that measure the trends in academic life – I have tried to understand the bigger picture: What are the longer-term implications of these substantial shifts for academic work and for the careers of faculty?

Do these changes amount merely to differences in *degree*, that is, changes that are merely an essentially natural evolution of a profession? Or, rather, do these changes add up to a more basic transformation, a metamorphosis in the basic nature of the academy and of faculty work? I have tried to understand better, beyond the day's academic headlines and sometimes shrill posturing from the various players, if the widely perceived threats to the faculty are fundamentally, qualitatively different from the normal apprehensions that probably have always been a part of the academic mind-set. In other words, are those who analyse postsecondary education perhaps so transfixed by the lamentations of some faculty about what is occurring to the academy that we fail to comprehend the larger context which, if better understood, *might* ameliorate those concerns? Are we adequately attuned to the underlying reality that today's headlines, jolting though they often are, inevitably subside when viewed within the sweep of historical perspectives?

Or, do the efforts to compel higher education institutions and their faculty to behave differently, more 'responsibly' – more consistently with sound, bottom-line-oriented managerial principles – when viewed in conjunction with the enormous transformations in the society that higher education both serves and is dependent upon, suggest a far bleaker destiny for higher education and the academic profession? The question, in other words, is whether the evident changes are compelling

indicators that the threat to higher education's core values is broad and deep and may well impose harmful changes on the academy and its faculty?

The lens through which I view these issues is essentially the US experience in recent decades and, therefore, is a vantage point of limited perspective. With that caveat established, my observations are divided into four parts.

First, I mention several overarching lessons that serve as a backdrop for contemplating the faculty and their work. Second, I identify, by way of context, a number of trends that are reshaping the world of higher education. Third, I will suggest the emergence of a new paradigm for the university and what that signals for faculty and their work. Finally, I will draw some conclusions about the 'new university' and suggest some implications for faculty work and for the role of academic 'middle management'.

2 Some Key Lessons

What are the salient lessons that I draw from a quarter century of probing the condition of, and prospects for, the academic profession? At the outset, four overarching conclusions about change in higher education appear to be justified.

The first is the accelerating rate of change. Indeed, higher education is changing at a very rapid rate, almost surely at an unprecedented pace. The pace of change is sometimes breathtaking, reflecting enormous transformations in the environment. But the speed is perhaps especially relevant because that environment is pressing on an academic 'industry' that has long been identified with measured, cautious change. (And thus we must strive to understand better what this means for the relationship between academic 'workers' and the institutions that employ them.)

A second conclusion is that this current rate of change exceeds our ability to measure it and to gauge the implications. That is to say, despite the existence of more data and the advent of more sophisticated analytical tools, there remains a significant, even scary, data gulf. Here is the issue: Rapidly occurring changes need to be monitored, of course, but arguably even more carefully than in calmer times. This is because consequential changes often seem to have occurred before analysts and policy makers have an adequate grasp of the facts beyond preliminary or just anecdotal evidence, much less before there has been time to sort through the significance. Relatedly, it is striking, despite the existing sea of data, how much is *not* known about critical developments even by those scholars whose focused research revolves around understanding the academic profession and how academic life is changing. The challenge to being able to chart what has been happening in order to project what is likely to happen (absent intervening policies) is made all the more serious in the USA by the budgetary threats to the US Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics that may undermine systematic, large-scale data collection. If budgets are squeezed, a likely result would be fewer periodic national surveys of sufficient scope and consistency to yield reasonably timely measures of key developments.

To provide one glaring example of a data shortfall, observers are now keenly aware of the deluge, over the past decade and a half, of full-time faculty appointments *off* the tenure track (discussed in more detail in Section 4). But only now are analysts beginning to tease out from the data what this dramatic redistribution in types of faculty appointments means – the consequences – in terms of faculty teaching effort and teaching effectiveness, compensation, faculty satisfaction, *student* satisfaction and so on (Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2006). Much too little is known about these presumably very important effects. And nothing is known about a crucial, but mostly ignored, issue: What does this reconfiguration of the faculty mean for the overall attractiveness to talented individuals who are contemplating making a commitment to pursue an academic career rather than preparing for another profession? In short, much too little is known about vital developments that are redefining faculty work and careers.

The third overarching lesson is that one can derive from the mixed evidence, incomplete though it is, sharply contrasting scenarios. Despite the clashing main motifs, one can find some support for each of the duelling scenarios. No one is arguing that there will not continue to be substantial change; that much is inevitable. But, rather, the competing views revolve around the assumed *extent* of the transformation and whether, on balance, it is likely to be a good thing (and for whom), or, to the contrary, a calamity – for one can find in that mass of data indicators both encouraging and alarming.

Fourth, for perspective, we must recognise that higher education has always been adaptive and amazingly resilient. Through every kind of upheaval over a near-millennium of history – wars, depressions, plagues, revolutions – the universities have not only survived but, in the main, thrived. As Clark Kerr (1982, p. 152) once famously noted, of about 85 institutions of various sorts in the Western world that had been established by 1520 and ‘still exist in recognizable forms, with similar functions and with unbroken histories’, some 70 of them are universities. That is a remarkable record of adaptability and persistence. Accordingly, it might be foolish to posit far-reaching disaster in view of history’s meta-lesson that higher education almost always comes through, albeit modified to be sure, the experience.

3 Context: Ten Game-Changing Trends

The context – the big picture – in which faculty work occurs, places them in a quite different organisational environment from their predecessors and piles additional pressures on them and their ‘managers’. These strands, woven together, tell the story of academic work in transition, academic careers more generally, and prospects for the proximate future. Although the focus here is on the American academic environment, it is likely that most, if not all, of these developments characterise academic realities throughout most developed countries.

The main storyline affords a daunting scenario. It is a scenario, as Burton Clark, the eminent sociologist of higher education, put it succinctly, shaped by ‘a flood of converging demands’. There has now emerged a familiar litany of threats, problems

and challenges, arguably destined to lead to disorder and dislocation and painful compromise, or even abandonment of core academic principles. Following are ten interrelated and powerful trends, succinctly described, that are buffeting higher education and its faculty, transforming the internal and external environments in which faculty and their 'handlers' conduct their activities. They are listed here to identify dimensions of this rapidly changing environment. Although some of these elements do not impinge directly on academic middle managers' areas of responsibility, all of these developments contribute to a different organisational culture with which these middle managers must contend.

3.1 Privatisation

The USA has always had a vigorous independent sector of higher education, accounting for about one-half of all US institutions of higher education and approximately one-fifth of all student enrolments. In American higher education parlance, this independent sector and its nearly 2,000 colleges and universities are referred to as 'private', although they are subject to significant government regulations and are recipients, too, of substantial public funding for student financial aid and, for a subset of private universities, considerable research funding from government sources. This private sector is overwhelmingly not-for-profit, and the colleges and universities are governed by essentially autonomous governing boards that bear the ultimate policy-making authority. A powerful current trend, however, is the increasing privatisation of many functions *within* the campus.

American higher education has always had its privatised elements, but the extent to which so many activities are conducted by providers of services or are sponsored by private/corporate funders who underwrite academic endeavours is now both enormous and unprecedented in scope. These range from widespread, large-scale, expensive ventures that now permeate much of higher education to more modest forms of outsourcing. An example of the former is the substantial extent to which student loans that help finance students' education are funnelled to private, for-profit lenders, a function that in earlier times was funded in-house and/or by government (i.e. public sector) agencies. Another domain is university-based research wherein large numbers of agreements exist between corporations and universities whereby the latter provide to the former special access to research findings in return for funding the research. Witness, for example, the recent agreement between BP (formerly British Petroleum) and the University of California at Berkeley for a staggering $500 million to be paid to the Berkeley campus over a 10-year period. There are numerous other examples of corporate–university contracts, often with pharmaceutical houses that raise complex public interest questions. On a less grand scale, the outsourcing of more mundane service activities is so commonplace as to be normative. Again, outsourcing is nothing new, but the extent to which institutions of higher education are currently joined in partnerships or client relationships – including the provision of food services, student housing, campus security and student health services – has progressed far beyond the extent that such arrangements

existed in the ‘long-ago’ past of, say, the 1980s. To be sure, these often creative arrangements provide an array of benefits to students and cost savings to their institutions. But, in the process, the locus of control for on-campus activities increasingly gets parcelled out.

3.2 The Proprietary Dimension

Apart from, but related to, the gravitation toward privatisation, is the growing presence of *proprietary*, that is, for-profit, higher education. This segment now accounts for about 8% of the headcount enrolment in all US postsecondary education (Ruch, 2001).

Consider that the University of Phoenix is said to be the largest institution of higher education in the USA, as measured by headcount enrolments, notwithstanding the sprawling 23-campus California State University system (Sperling, 2000). And the proprietary phenomenon is still growing; obviously it is responding to a market demand. While the successes of *publicly* traded companies, like the Apollo Group that operates Phoenix, Corinthian Colleges, or other corporations, like Capella University, can be tracked on stock exchanges and must file public financial reports, there is less transparency for the many privately held proprietary institutions. Apart from financial information that must be disclosed according to the US Securities and Exchange Commission rules and other regulators, it is challenging to obtain from the proprietaries what would be more accessible routine data for non-proprietary institutions of higher education.

In a word, the size of the for-profit sector has expanded enormously. This phenomenon becomes especially vexing to higher education traditionalists in instances in which public funds substantially enrich proprietary institutions by making available federally subsidised student loans to enable students’ attendance. Competing values collide. Support via tax dollars certainly helps students (and potential students) by expanding their financial capacity to attend postsecondary education. But so, too, are the financial interests of owners (shareholders) who benefit substantially from such public subsidies. As one extreme illustration, recent litigation brought by the federal government disclosed that the University of Phoenix currently benefits from close to $2 billion annually in federal funds to subsidise student enrolment, highlighting the controversial issue of public funding for profit-making enterprises (Weinstein, 2007, p. A13).

3.3 Marketisation

The marketing of the ‘product’ of higher education is hardly new, but it is likely, in a highly competitive ‘industry’, that a substantially greater share of institutional expenditure is devoted to marketing campaigns than had existed in earlier times (Kirp, 2003). But expensive marketing efforts are now commonplace. ‘Branding’ of institutions and their programmes to heighten visibility is a common,

perhaps universal, practice. In all, higher education has plunged into the practices of advertising and marketing with intensified fervour; the stakes, after all, are enormous.

3.4 Globalisation

Higher education is becoming rapidly more globalised as once formidable national boundaries become more porous. From an American perspective, eminence – even pre-eminence in graduate education – in higher education, firmly secure for decades, is under increasing pressure. For now, globalisation continues to afford an impressive array of opportunities for American institutions to operate abroad as markets expand. And the USA remains an attractive destination for very large numbers of students 'imported' from other countries. Yet there are portents of diminishing American superiority in the future as other nations invest impressively in their higher education systems while US postsecondary growth is much more modest compared to some nations and regions.

The European Union/Bologna process is gaining momentum. From a US perspective, the barriers that have kept European systems largely isolated from one another are giving way to supernational initiatives that in time will create a more formidable higher education region to challenge American dominance. Bologna was late in coming and is still far from realising its objectives, but in time it is likely to provide a significant boost to European higher education and thereby exert considerable pressure on American higher education.

China and India are perhaps the two most astounding examples of global postsecondary developments. One datum will need to suffice for present purposes. In 1990, China enrolled some three million students in higher education, a tiny fraction of China's population. By 2005, those enrolments had rocketed to 23 million – a nearly eightfold increase in a decade and a half. Both India and China have publicly committed to creating first-tier research universities. The end is not in sight.

3.5 Curriculum Realignment

The diminution of liberal learning is a hard reality in much of American higher education. In the face of the preoccupation with career preparation and career-focused curricula, the balance continues to shift. Traditional curricular values are being severely pressured, especially in the public sector, as the political discourse more and more emphasises the priority of being able to compete effectively in the highly competitive global economy. The path to that urgent objective is widely understood to run not through the humanities and most other traditional liberal arts but rather through science, technology, engineering, mathematics and other programmes with direct vocational relevance. That portion of the curriculum can be said to be privileged in the prevailing environment, and there appears to be little prospect for counterbalancing powerful curricular trends.

3.6 Costs and Price

A dramatic development helps to make the point that college-going costs to 'consumers' are soaring: George Washington University in Washington, DC, has taken the lead (so to speak); it cost $50,000 a year to enrol as an undergraduate in 2007–2008. This price tag (which included room, board and other fees) was before tuition discounts. But $50,000 is breathtaking and symbolises the spiralling cost pressures that colleges and universities are experiencing that, in part, are passed on to students through tuition charges and fees. American higher education still features relatively easy access through many low-cost, public sector, 2-year colleges, but the escalating operating costs for all colleges and universities reflect both new initiatives (academic and non-academic) and spiralling market-sensitive compensation necessary to be competitive in some fields. These increased institutional costs build pressure to contain compensation where plausible for most faculty and staff who are not in 'hot' fields or high-demand administrative areas.

3.7 The Public Policy Environment

Higher education has always viewed with caution and anxiety its complex relationship with the public policy arena. There are innumerable areas of intersection. While this is not the forum to explicate current developments in detail, it is easy to see from higher education's vantage point why mutual mistrust and misunderstanding abound. The public policy-making agenda in recent times seems increasingly to emphasise such delicate matters as the importance of measuring learning outcomes (holding colleges and universities *accountable* for demonstrating the *results* for student learning) (CHEA, 2006). Further, the longstanding practices of non-government regional accreditation are being scrutinised as perhaps never before by the federal government as it presses for demonstrable quality assurance. For the past several years, until the change of federal administrations, the federal Commission on the Future of Higher Education (known as the Spellings Commission for its head, then US Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings) had been generating recommendations widely perceived by higher education to emphasise assessment and accountability measures without appreciating the extraordinary diversity of higher education settings and the corresponding dramatically different student needs by type of institution. The jousting continues.

3.8 Faculty Appointments

The dramatic, even radical, realignment of types of faculty appointments has enormous implications for almost every academic aspect of higher education. I will develop this idea more fully, along with the related next point on tenure in Section 4.

3.9 The Vulnerability of Tenure

The palpable threat to tenure, as a function of the redistribution of types of faculty appointments, is changing the basic relationship of faculty members to their institutions. Again, see Section 4.

3.10 Technology

The successive and inexorable waves of technological innovation are at once immensely exciting and empowering – and powerfully destabilising (Green, 2006). May it suffice for now to suggest that technology is remaking the academy, its faculty and their work.

4 A New Paradigm?

There are many ways to assess the impact of these phenomena. The point for present purposes is to suggest an environment for academic work that is wildly volatile compared to the customary norms of change and adaptation in higher education. Previous assumptions about academic work and culture and the reasonable expectations for the faculty are inadequate. Given this flood of demands (in Clark's phrase) that emanates in part from the confluence of powerful trends just described, it is important to ask whether in the aggregate these new realities require fresh ways to think about the higher education system – suggesting perhaps a new paradigm. Relatedly, it is important to assess the extent to which these realities have forced upon middle management a significantly different *modus operandi* – and will, without doubt, continue to drive managerial behaviour.

Perhaps we are witnessing the emergence of a new paradigm to describe higher education's new – or newish – permutation. In any event, the new realities will surely have implications – presumably profound implications – for the world of faculty work, the roles of faculty 'managers', and the effectiveness and quality of academic life.

Much has happened to transform American higher education; both sides of the ledger sheet are crowded with entries – the good and exciting and the not-so-good and threatening – as these rapidly occurring changes permeate postsecondary education. What of this new paradigm that I now posit? As one who teaches seminars on the history of higher education and on 'the new university', I am keenly aware that in some sense there is truly 'nothing new under the sun'. Everything in contemporary higher education has its precedents, sometimes tracing back to medieval origins. Of course, there never was a 'pure' university dedicated to learning and free from the compromising influences of an environment replete with stakeholders.

My interpretation of post-World War II American higher education suggests a succession of models or paradigms in recent decades. I now suggest a melding of

two robust post-war models to yield a variation that is adapting to the characteristics, the priorities, of a society lurching ahead at an unprecedented pace. In this scheme, post-war Model 'A' was the 'multiversity', to use Clark Kerr's evocative term of the early 1960s. This label captured the traditional university augmented – some would say compromised, others would argue enriched and made the more relevant – by having taken on multiple missions to serve an expanding array of 'clients' with their multiple, sometimes conflicting, demands. The university had morphed into what Kerr (1982, p. 6) thought of as the 'really modern university'.

Perhaps the 'multiversity' was not the first new post-war model; so much was happening, starting with the university's partnership with the national government in developing the technology to prosecute the war effort and, then, to absorb the millions of veterans into classrooms via the Veterans Readjustment Act of 1944 (the GI Bill) (see, e.g., Thelin, 2004). But, whether the multiversity was Model A or Model J, Kerr's conceptualisation made an indelible imprint on how we thought about the university's purposes – its *many* 'uses' – in our swiftly evolving society.

In any case, the Model A multiversity appears at some point to have evolved into Model B, the capitalist or entrepreneurial university. In the several decades since Kerr's pronouncement in 1963, the literature has poured forth describing the twists and turns of higher education and its amazing achievements, its numerous shortcomings and its many entanglements. Critiques abound regarding this still newer university. Perhaps none of the analyses and interpretations has captured the convergence and significance of so many phenomena as well as Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades' 2004 book, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*: *Markets, State, and Higher Education*.

The authors, long-time critics of the commercialisation of higher education, describe, in great detail, bolstered by numerous examples, the many ways in which the university has taken on, to its and the public's longer-term detriment, many of the highly pragmatic, economy-connected values at the expense of the life of the mind. The authors are keenly aware of the political realities and inadequate funding that drive resource-hungry colleges and universities into ventures and partnerships they might prefer to avoid but perceive as essential in order to remain competitive in an intensively challenging and competitive environment. But compromise prevails.

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) have described the academic capitalist university, Model B for present purposes. They do not claim this to be a new paradigm, for indeed theirs is a description of contemporary higher education long in the making. (Kerr (1982, p. 28), for instance, four decades earlier had referred to the ongoing 'managerial revolution'.) But they have, as I suggest, brought together the elements and evidence in such a way as to take the description of capitalism-on-campus to more robust and convincing levels, delving into the venues of patents, copyrights, big-time Division I intercollegiate athletics, interlocking directorates between governing boards and corporations and so on.

4.1 The Emergence of a New Paradigm

The evolution, of course, continues. Now I turn to a description of what I believe to be the emergence of a new paradigm, the re-stratified university. Perhaps it is only a variation of Model B, the capitalist model, as described by Slaughter and Rhoades (2004). Model C, I shall call it for now, has several features that are particularly noteworthy. Most notable of these features are these three: the groundswell of off-track, full-time academic appointments; the half-hidden but very serious threat to tenure; and the more sharply differentiated compensation packages for faculty, within institutions, by institutional type and across institutions by discipline. My thesis is that the convergence of these developments, as yet not adequately understood, is having a powerful transformative effect.

4.2 The Rapid Rise of Contingent Appointments

First is the increasingly stratified academic status among faculty that characterises this new look. It represents a kind of reversion to a more highly stratified, even more caste-like university of long ago – a regression, it would seem.

Yes, the university has always been a stratified employment venue. The 'community of scholars' has never been an enclave of co-equal seekers and imparters of knowledge, although some modest experiments have consciously sought to minimise hierarchy. The dons and masters and their surrounding concentric circles of 'lesser' academic workers aspiring to higher status were focal points of unequal status for centuries. Also, the model from which the American research university imported so much in the way of academic values, the nineteenth-century German university, featured a single professor who presided authoritatively and, stereotypically, autocratically at the pinnacle of his field; subordinates served long apprenticeships with significantly diminished status.

American higher education arguably pointed the way to a more democratised, more egalitarian, academic profession. The academic ranks in the USA took on a more balanced numerical distribution, moving away from a steep pyramid featuring a chair holder at the peak and subordinates layered below. There developed, instead, a flatter configuration, a more balanced professoriate of more evenly distributed ranks: professors, associate professors and assistant professors. At the periphery there were also lecturers, post-doctoral appointees and so on. And academic tenure, as it evolved in the twentieth century, further differentiated academic status sharply between the haves and the have-nots. In all, the result was hardly an egalitarian commune of academic workers, but it was nonetheless a less accentuated hierarchy. An American model, more democratised than its historic Western European counterparts, had begun to emerge. But today that somewhat more egalitarian model may be coming undone.

The huge expansion of the legions of part-time faculty has shattered the fiction that there existed '*a* faculty'. Now numbering about a half million, the part-timers have nearly caught up numerically to the full-time appointments. Their status ranges from exploited 'academic pieceworkers', paid modest sums per course and bearing minimum status within their respective institutions (and with commensurate minimum compensation), to those specialised part-time faculty, often employed full-time professionally, whose appointments result in highly satisfying mutual benefit. The explosion in growth of part-time appointments, of course, is very old news. What is quite new, however, is the recent tidal wave of *full*-time, but non-tenure track, appointees.

This phenomenon of off-track, full-time faculty defines the essence of the re-stratified university. The amazing fact is that, since 1993, the clear majority of all new full-time appointments to faculty positions have been *off* the tenure track. The proportion has built steadily at every 2-year interval, as measured by the US Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System's (IPEDS) Fall administrative staff survey. So, from just over 50% of new full-time appointments having been made off-track in 1993, the proportion built steadily to a peak of 58.6% in 2003. The Fall 2005 data show a slight reversal in the proportion of such appointments, but the fact remains that perhaps 55 of every 100 new full-time appointments for the past decade and a half have been off the tenure track. By now, in the aggregate, close to 40% of all full-time appointments are off-track – and that proportion is increasing every year (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006a).

What makes this all the more remarkable is that several decades ago such appointments were rare or at least scarce. Yes, there were always off-track appointments, a scattering of clinical professorships, for example. But nothing existed even remotely like the deluge of such appointments in recent years; in the past, 'full-time' essentially *meant* tenured or tenure track (at least where a tenure system existed on campus). But off-track appointments have now become the *modal* full-time appointment for nearly two decades.

It is not that this phenomenon has escaped notice altogether, but it is safe to say that it is only recently that this trend has been emblazoned on the consciousness of higher education and that more serious attention is being devoted to the consequences of this 'faculty makeover' (a leading example is Bland et al., 2006). Viewed another way, these full-time, non-tenurable *contingent* appointments, coupled with the massive number of part-time appointments that are essentially *all* contingent appointments, mean that the American faculty has been massively transformed, in a relative short time, into a *predominantly* contingent faculty.

This development has significant positive aspects, as well as a negative side. While the data are sparse, it seems clear that many faculty *prefer* the off-track, full-time appointments because it means focusing on teaching, which many faculty prefer, and on emphasising faculty connections with students. It also means dodging the tenure-related Damoclean sword of publish-or-perish. Thus, frequently, it appears that both the individual faculty member and the institution benefit, the latter by not having to make a long-term commitment of resources and thereby by building in flexibility.

To summarise, the American faculty is being dramatically, radically transformed, and only now are the far-reaching implications for the faculty and their work and, more generally, for the academy becoming better understood. This redeployment of faculty, to repeat, is the central hallmark of the re-stratified university.

4.3 The Tenure Factor

A second characteristic of the re-stratified university is the emerging threat to tenure, long a hallmark of the academic profession. As suggested earlier, throughout the past century tenure has been a line of demarcation defining basic status within the faculty. That has not changed. But consider this aspect of what is happening. Tenure, in one sense, is alive and well and intact. Indeed, it is remarkable that tenure has been challenged frontally so few times in recent years, despite sometimes sceptical governing boards, as well as numerous critics of higher education among a doubting public and questioning politicians. And yet, curiously, there appear to be as many instances of institutions of higher education that have adopted tenure anew in recent years as there are institutions that have discontinued tenurable appointments (at least for their new hires). In any case, presumably, the political cost to the critics of assaulting tenure directly seems to have dissuaded all but the fiercest among them from attacking tenure head-on. Why has this been so?

Some critics may realise that they need not launch frontal attacks on tenure – that, with patience, the 'problem' may be taking care of itself. After all, as just noted, the clear majority of new full-time hires for some years now, year after year, have been made off-track, that is, *non-tenurable appointments*. Put in other terms, tenure is being slowly – or perhaps not so slowly – but surely *circumvented*, being made less and less relevant. That is, the proportion of faculty who are tenure-holders seems destined to shrink, maybe dramatically over time, barring some unforeseen intervention that would reverse the current powerful trends.

Thus, tenure is being undermined by this half-hidden, subtle, but deadly assault from the flank. And this process may well *accelerate* as the number of faculty approaching retirement climb sharply, meaning that in the proximate future more and more faculty *may* be replaced by faculty appointed to non-tenure-bearing positions (Chait, 2002).

The implications of this development for higher education and its role in society are huge, but, for immediate purposes, it suggests dwindling numbers of privileged tenure-holders and larger numbers of more vulnerable 'others'. This trend constitutes another prominent characteristic that defines the re-stratified university.

4.4 Trends in Faculty Compensation

A third re-stratifying feature lies in compensation trends and how these trends reinforce the concept of the re-stratified university. The evidence in recent years is very

clear: compensation for the professoriate is becoming ever more differentiated – by rank, by type of appointment, by institutional type and, perhaps most emphatically, by discipline. These trends are underscored by the data released by the American Association of University Professors (2007) in its 'Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession'. This analysis also emphasises the growing polarisation in the affluence of individual institutions' endowments, in some sense mirroring well the rapidly polarising distribution of income in the larger American society.

Model C (the re-stratified university) – or is it B-Prime or Model R or Model W? – is something of a blend, a hybrid, that melds the two robust post-war models that I have sketched: the first being the more or less traditional university but expanded in its mission and its engagement with its environment, as described by Clark Kerr as a multiversity, and then its successor, the contemporary free-wheeling, market-responsive, capitalist model that is ever more entrepreneurial and resourceful and less and less constrained by traditional academic convention. Whether the re-stratified university is merely a variation on a late-twentieth century theme or a sharper break with predecessors that redefines the academic work setting, it is clear that academic work now takes place in a more pressure-filled environment than in times past. This, in turn, means that orchestrating the academic workforce, famously resistant to being led, is becoming ever more challenging.

5 Conclusion

What does this emerging construct mean for faculty and their work, that is, to use the term emphasised by Slaughter and Rhoades (2004), the faculty as 'managed professionals'? In a word, it means a more tightly managed faculty workforce, a greater vulnerability for large and growing proportions of faculty who hold contingent, term-limited appointments and, in all, a more sharply polarised, more layered, more stratified faculty.

Also, what are the implications of these many substantial changes in what the contemporary university and its academic staff have become, and are still becoming, for the tasks of the academy's middle managers? The short, admittedly simplistic, answer is that discharging those responsibilities has become much trickier. These deans and department chairs have always played sensitive and challenging roles, but in the contemporary academy it is now clearer than ever that these academic administrators are required to serve as bridges between two increasingly disparate cultures. On the one hand, the traditional culture and priorities of the academy feature a more contemplative pace and honour the 'life of the mind' and the 'search for truth' – all those evocative if clichéd phrases – with minimal compromises to worldly realities. Always, there are differing subcultures by institutional type and by field, but there persist some ideal values that inform the traditional academy across these subcultures. On the other hand, the perceived imperatives of administrative efficiency and market-responsiveness in mounting academic programmes and employing academic staff drive a more intensely managerial culture. It is a culture that, if not inherently

sceptical about core academic values, certainly co-exists uneasily. Its central values press heavily upon the once-upon-a-time more relaxed enterprise, now demanding that the perceived anachronistic traditionalists shape up and respond to the new, hard realities.

There are, in sum, two competing scenarios for the future of the faculty. There are some exciting, even spectacular, opportunities for higher education and its faculty in this rapidly changing, highly volatile environment that is destined to become ever more volatile, more unpredictable. And there are much bleaker prospects of an academy stripped down to its more pragmatic, less lofty, less intellectual roles, where the faculty's 'job number one' moves them unambiguously into responding to the ever-changing needs of the marketplace.

Recalling the uber-lesson of history, higher education and its faculty have been strikingly resilient over the centuries. The enterprise has always risen to the occasion, adapting (for the most part) creatively, and, yes, opportunistically. Higher education has always endured and, within limits, even prospered. And so, there is the possibility that the faculty will manage to persist and even to thrive, albeit in a very different form.

But my own concerns run very deep. The threat is real. The 'faculty makeover' is real. Adaptation may well mean large-scale compromise of principle. In the era of the re-stratified university, the road will continue to be hard. The stakes are gigantic for preserving the core functions of the somewhat buffered, semi-autonomous university. To preserve as much as possible of traditional academic values, the faculty must intensify its efforts to demonstrate just what the larger stakes are, however challenging it may be to articulate those precious values to a sometimes sceptical, distracted public. In the midst of this turbulence, the academic manager must figure out how to balance wisely the task of serving and reconciling two disparate cultures. What will the future hold? Stay tuned.

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The Changing Nature of Academic Middle Management: A Framework for Analysis

Harry De Boer, Leo Goedegebuure, and V. Lynn Meek

1 Introduction

Universities are far better known for their academic achievements than for their management prowess. This can be explained by the protected status granted to them as key institutions of both the church and the state throughout history, in particular though not exclusively in Western Europe. But over the last three to four decades the university has gone through a period of profound change, as has been clearly demonstrated throughout the previous chapters in this volume. Collectively, they demonstrate that the universities' external environment has become increasingly complex, with more and more demands placed upon them by increasingly vocal, influential and diverse groups of stakeholders. Simultaneously, universities have significantly expanded in size and complexity due to processes of massification and research specialisation. These multiple pressures have impacted on management and leadership: 'The challenges facing [higher education institutions] are becoming bigger and more complex and require a continuous pipeline of leaders who can bring about the changes needed for sustained performance' (Bisbee & Miller, 2006, p. 24).

The country analyses support the proposition that, in general, universities seem to be moving towards a 'managed professional public organisation model' (Hinings, Greenwood, & Cooper, 1999). In this type of organisation, 'productivity', 'client service', 'executive leadership', 'competition' and 'marketing and growth strategies' are common concepts, though the analysis in the previous chapters demonstrates that the extent to which one or more of these ideas prevail differs considerably across the various higher education systems. This, once again, confirms the fact that, although many of our systems are heading in similar directions, context and traditions are crucial factors in helping to explain the different flavours and management approaches in the systems that have been our object of study. One obvious conclusion in taking stock of the evidence presented in the previous chapters is

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that management is not confined to the 'top' of the institution, but cascades down to its constituent parts: the faculties, departments, schools and research institutes.

Academic middle managers today have increased responsibilities and possibilities to actually manage their faculties compared to their colleagues some decades ago (Deem, 2004). Although in most cases they still hold an impressive academic record, necessary for legitimacy within an academic environment, their role increasingly has become more of a manager. They are expected to combine academic expertise with managerial competence (as in other public sectors) (see Exworthy & Halford, 1999). The time of the elected academic as 'shopkeeper' for a limited number of years has passed in most higher education systems. The selected 'executive' has entered academe with an explicit responsibility (and associated performance-based fixed-term contract) for his/her organisational unit in line with overall institutional strategy.

Although the concept of academic middle management has been transformed, at present remarkably little is known about how these 'new generation' middle managers go about their tasks. The contributions in this volume have increased our knowledge, to some extent, but much more coordinated research is needed to fully grasp the nature and impact of these changes. The objective of this final chapter is to present a framework to encourage further research on middle management in higher education in order to increase our understanding of how today's universities are run. First, the position of middle management is analysed generally, as well as more specifically in higher education. Second, a proposal for further research on middle management in higher education is presented to fill the current gap.

2 Middle Management and Leadership

Leadership and management are contested concepts, difficult to capture, and open to multiple definitions and interpretations. They involve the use of power, interpersonal influence and direction setting in an effort to influence people to follow, join forces and work towards organisational goals. Leaders and managers motivate others by using a variety of methods including facilitation, coaching, mentoring, directing and delegating. They do this through a variety of styles depending on personal attributes, competencies, resources and organisational culture.

The focus in leadership and management studies is mostly on the top executives. Leadership and management at other levels are remarkably neglected. Also in higher education studies, mid-level management is under-researched. This is undeserved, because in particular at this level the connection between institutional strategies and implementation is made, making it crucial for organisational success (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994, 1997). Research suggests that organisational performance is influenced by what happens in the middle rather than at the top (Currie & Procter, 2005). Being located between the strategic apex and the organisation's operating core, middle managers occupy a unique position. They supply information upwards and translate and tailor strategic decisions downwards. Through mediation, negotiation and interpretation of activities, middle managers form the nexus between the

strategic and operational levels of an organisation (Balogun, 2003). Ideally, they play a role in the formulation of strategic plans by top-level management, they gather and synthesise information, and use resources at their disposal to champion innovative ideas and business opportunities linked to overall institutional strategies (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994, 1997). Middle managers also may (and do) use their position and associated power to protect their own self-interests and push their own agendas. In doing so, they can become an obstacle to change rather than an advocate and instigator (Balogun, 2003). Yet, this only serves to underline the strategic importance of middle managers.

Being in the middle is also a stressful place. Multiplicity of expectations and demands often leads to confusion and conflict. This is particularly true for universities where, as argued earlier, a strong operating core exists. However, the modern university middle manager is required much more to face the challenges of becoming a strategic actor than what used to be the case. Which raises the question of how they deal with these challenges and tensions.

3 University Middle Managers: An Emerging Profession

As we have argued in the introduction to this volume, outside of the USA, remarkably little is known about middle management in higher education. There are some in-depth empirical studies, yet these are mainly confined to Australia and the United Kingdom. In itself, this is not surprising as these two countries most probably are the strongest examples of the introduction of New Public Management doctrines. The Australian studies, in particular Marginson and Considine (2000), paint a picture of an emerging class of executives and the corporatisation of the university. The introduction of more corporate-style management practices is corroborated by Meek and Wood (1997), who also note, however, that this has not been at the expense of academic autonomy. A more nuanced and up-to-date picture is provided by Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008). In what no doubt is the most comprehensive and up-to-date study on academic leaders, Scott and his colleagues profile these leaders and the roles they perform, identifying the capabilities associated with these roles in terms of effective performance, and thereby clarifying the concept of leadership in an academic context. The study confirms the conclusions formulated by Meek, Goedegebuure and De Boer in the chapter 'The Changing Role of Academic Leadership in Australia and the Netherlands: Who Is the Modern Dean?', but moves beyond these through its focus on the full breadth of leadership positions at the lower, middle and executive levels in Australian higher education. Senior executives clearly focus on planning and policy development, and management and administration as primary work domains, which would also be true of deans. Both groups indicate less emphasis on academic activities. This, one could argue, appears in line with an ongoing professionalisation of academic management in Australian universities. Heads of schools, on the other hand, appear more involved in people management, while being less involved in networking. They emphasise the more hands-on, operational activities over the more strategic. Taken together, the study

also highlights the fact that today's institutional management requires a broad range of capabilities, a point we will return to in the next section of this chapter.

The first series of UK studies (Bargh, Bocock, Scott, & Smith, 2000; Deem, 2007; Reed, 1999) reflect this nuanced picture, finding that the older forms of collegiate management and decision making have been joined by newer approaches, such as performance appraisal, creating more hybrid management practices. More recent studies initiated by the UK's Leadership Foundation for Higher Education confirm this evolution of middle-management roles. Bryman (2007), in a comprehensive literature review on what constitutes effective leadership in higher education, in a way, restates many of the findings of the previous chapters of this volume, indicating that leadership and management in higher education constitutes an amalgam of characteristics and capabilities. He summarises these as: providing direction, creating a structure to support the direction, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment, establishing trustworthiness as a leader, having personal integrity, having credibility to act as a role model, facilitating participation in decision making/consultation, providing communication about developments, representing the department/institution to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf, respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department/institution and protecting staff autonomy (Bryman, 2007, p. 2). In particular, with respect to middle management, Bryman notes that 'a very significant feature of the expectations of academic staff in particular are: the maintenance of autonomy; consultation over important decision; the fostering of collegiality (both democratic decision-making and mutual cooperativeness; and fighting the department's corner with senior managers and through university structures' (p. 3). The notions of autonomy and collegiality in the sense of distributed leadership are further explored by Bolden and his colleagues (2008) through a series of in-depth interviews with academic managers/leaders in UK universities. They noted 'how strategic direction emerges and is negotiated between varying actors within and beyond the institution' (p. 1). Their findings point in the direction of institutional restructuring aimed at devolving greater autonomy to larger 'business units' accompanied by attempts to ensure effective communication and connection which often are proving to be a major challenge. They identify the emergence of professional managers to support deans and heads of schools, a finding that is corroborated by Whitchurch (2008). In contrast to the Australian findings by Scott et al. (2008), it is concluded that 'middle-level leadership and management roles such as Head of School/Department are no longer seen as purely "operational" or "administrative" and have evolved into something more strategic and empowering' (Bolden, Petrov, & Gosling, 2008, p. 2). As for the concept of effective leadership, they suggest that their evidence implies combining individual and collective leadership into 'blended leadership' and point to the importance of rhetoric: 'With regard to the notion of "distributed leadership" . . . its utility as a concept is perhaps more valuable in rhetorical than descriptive terms – thus distributed leadership offers a new language (and perspective) with which to discuss opportunities for collective engagement in institutional leadership and management even if the actual execution of such activities remains largely unchanged' (p. 4).

Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, and Nies (2001) analyse the way in which the US deanship – probably the most pivotal middle-management position – has evolved over time, portraying a similar pattern. Traditionally, the academic dean's focus was on the student and on providing academic leadership to the faculty. But the role expanded due to the changing nature of the higher education system, and the manager-dean replaced the scholar-dean. But one needs to be careful in assuming how far down the road this transition has progressed. As has been demonstrated in some of the preceding chapters, in particular the chapters by Larsen, Boffo and Mignot-Gérard, more executive types of positions do not necessarily go hand in hand with the negative normative interpretations of managerialism, such as top-down management styles, loss of the 'personal touch' and outright financial bottom-line obsessions. In the USA, this is perhaps best illustrated by a series of publications by the University of Toledo Law Review on how deans of law go about their 'business'. What is expressed in these journal articles comes much closer to the servant leadership concept of being there for the academics to support and guide them, than is expressed in the Australian and British research on academic middle management. The following quotes may serve to illustrate this point: 'The essence of teaching is not learning, or questioning, or grading assignments. The essence of teaching is helping others to reach their potential. And helping others to reach their potential is the quintessential job of a dean' (Dickerson, 2008, p. 116); 'A deanship in a law school is the ultimate position of service through leadership' (Ammons, 2008, p. 209) and 'Deaning gives one a rare opportunity to serve, and to make a difference' (Dessem, 2008, p. 268). Yet an interesting question that emerges from these quotes is: To what extent are these characteristics particular to law faculties, or to law faculties in the USA? For as Weissberg (2007, p. 147) argues, other perspectives on the deanship in the USA are equally possible:

> In short, today's successful college administrator must have traits *exactly the opposite* of those that once certified heroic leadership. We are attempting to reverse human nature. If Alexander the Great applied for a deanship he would be instantly rejected as excessively courageous, a man who would surely invite 'trouble' (and his testosterone-flavored persona would surely give most recruitment committee members the jitters despite his gender ambiguity). Dwight D. Eisenhower may have been the last major university president who in a previous life voluntary courted life-threatening danger.

We will return to this in the discussion section of the chapter.

As the previous chapters in this volume quite explicitly show, not only has the nature of the job changed, but the nature of the position has as well, evolving into one of great complexity. As Bolton (2000, p. 45) says,

> The role of the dean is potentially stressful because of conflicting pressures – both from colleagues whose interests are to be represented to senior management, and from there to the faculty, since the dean will normally be a member of the senior management team which takes 'cabinet responsibility' and a whole-institution perspective.

Most deans are under-prepared for the job they take up, which may well account for some of the stress associated with the position, especially since many have not taken on this type of leadership role before although most of them would have had

some exposure to coordination and management as associate deans, course or programme coordinators and the like (Gmelch, 2004; Scott et al., 2008; Wolverton et al., 2001).

The question, of course, is how academic middle managers cope with such a complex and multifaceted job in practice. In the final section, a framework is presented to empirically analyse the management styles of academic middle managers and to investigate to what extent their efforts contribute to their units' effectiveness, which is ultimately what it all should be about.

4 A Framework for Analysis: The Competing Values Framework

The relationship between leadership and organisational effectiveness is an extensively researched topic. We build on the work of Robert Quinn and his colleagues who developed the Competing Values Framework (CVF). Since the 1980s, the CVF has been applied to a wide range of topics such as organisational culture, leadership styles, organisational development and organisational transformations (e.g. Kalliath, Bluedorn, & Gillespie, 1999). The approach fits our purposes as it centres around 'a concept similar to behavioural complexity . . . and thus offers the prospect of an empirical test of some of the important aspects of behavioural complexity' (Denison, Hooijberg, & Quinn, 1995, p. 526) that characterises the position of the deanship.

The CVF is constructed around two dimensions. The first dimension differentiates effectiveness criteria that emphasise flexibility and discretion from criteria that stress stability and control. The second dimension maps the degree to which an organisation focuses on internal orientation, integration and unity in contrast to an external orientation, differentiation and rivalry. Combined, these dimensions form four quadrants, representing what people value about an organisation's performance (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, McGrath, & St Clair, 2007; Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 35). Each quadrant in turn reflects one of four major organisational theory models (Quinn, 1989, p. 47). The first quadrant, the clan model, stresses cohesion, morale and human development. Teamwork, participation, empowerment and concern for ideas are valued. The second quadrant, the open systems model, emphasises flexibility, growth, resource acquisition and external support. The adhocracy is the organisational culture that fits this model. Innovation and creativity are important. The rational goal model, quadrant three, stresses planning, goal setting, productivity and efficiency. Market values underpin such an organisation. Task orientation, goal clarity and performance are key aspects. The fourth quadrant, the internal process model, focuses on information management and communication, stability and control. The hierarchy is the leading culture. Formalisation, routines, predictability and centralisation are of importance.

The four quadrants of the CVF are linked to leadership roles, eight of which are distinguished. The leadership roles fitting the clan culture are the facilitator and the mentor role. As a facilitator, the leader is expected to foster collective effort,

build cohesion and teamwork and manage conflict. As a mentor, he is expected to be open and approachable and to engage in the development of subordinates through a caring and empathic orientation (Quinn, 1989). The leadership roles of the adhocracy are the innovator and the broker. The innovator brings adaptation and change, absorbs uncertainty by monitoring information in the external environment, is creative, and envisions and conceptualises the changes needed. The broker role focuses on the maintenance of external legitimacy, liaisons and the control of resources. The market culture goes well with the leader as director and producer. The director is engaged in planning and goal setting, sets objectives and establishes clear expectations. The producer is task-oriented and work-focused and motivates members to increase production and accomplish stated goals. In the hierarchy, we see monitor and coordinator roles. The monitor role checks on performance, handles paperwork and collects and distributes information. The leader as coordinator maintains structure, schedules, organises and coordinates staff efforts, attends to housekeeping issues and sees that rules and standards are met.

Apart from the question of how academic middle managers run their faculties, the key issue is to what extent their leadership and management are effective. What is their added value with respect to the performances of the faculty? Leadership effectiveness concerns the extent to which organisational goals are reached. Typically, organisations have multiple goals, and so do universities and faculties. Based on the CVF, we argue that universities simultaneously want to be competitive (market), innovative (adhocracy) and efficient (hierarchy) and to pursue human development (clan). So, how can we test the relationships between the leadership styles of middle-level academic managers and their effectiveness?

Building on CVF research, it would be worthwhile to test the following three propositions. The first proposition is that *the most effective academic middle managers have at least average competency in leadership skills in all four quadrants*. Effective leaders possess the ability to perform well in all four quadrants. The highest performing leaders are self-contradictory in the sense that they can be simultaneously hard and soft, entrepreneurial and controlled (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 47). In our context, we expect that the more an academic middle manager simultaneously can play the eight leadership roles, the more effective his or her leadership will be.

The second proposition builds on the first. It has been argued that leaders and managers need to perform different managerial roles in their different role relationships (Hooijberg, 1992; Vilkinas & Cartan, 1997). Different stakeholders such as staff, peers and executives at the top level are likely to have different expectations of middle managers. Because academic middle managers literally are being caught in the middle, they may act differently towards different stakeholders. If this assumption is correct, the second proposition would be that *academic middle managers who are able to perform the different managerial roles required by each of their different stakeholder groups will be perceived to be more effective than those who are unable to do this*. Here, the ability of wearing different hats when dealing with different stakeholders is the key to effectiveness.

The third proposition is of a somewhat different nature. Instead of linking effectiveness to the ability of wearing different hats at the same time or towards different audiences at different times, the assumption is that the most effective leaders have highly developed skills in the quadrants that are congruent with their organisations' dominant culture. A close fit between leadership style and organisational culture thus leads to more effective leadership. In our case, we propose that *the more an academic manager's leadership style matches the existing organisational unit culture, the more effective his or her leadership will be*. If a faculty, for example, is mainly characterised as a clan, then a dean should at least have a facilitator and mentor leadership style in order to be an effective leader.

In order to test these three propositions, instruments must be developed to determine (i) the academic middle manager's management style; (ii) the organisational unit's culture; and (iii) the effectiveness of the manager's behaviour. The *management style* can be measured through the Competing Values Leadership Instrument (Quinn et al., 2007). This instrument consists of 32 items reflecting the eight different roles. Each (e.g. mentor, facilitator or broker) is represented by four items. Respondents such as faculty staff, students and central leadership as well as the manager-academic are asked to indicate the frequency with which the activities are undertaken. The outcomes result in profiles are presented in Fig. 1. As an illustration, we see the profile of the 'perfect dean', that is, the one that has maximum scores on all eight roles. Also reflected is a dean's self-assessment (in this case, the dean sees him/herself primarily as a mentor, producer and director) and the way in which others see how the dean runs the faculty (in this case primarily as a mentor,

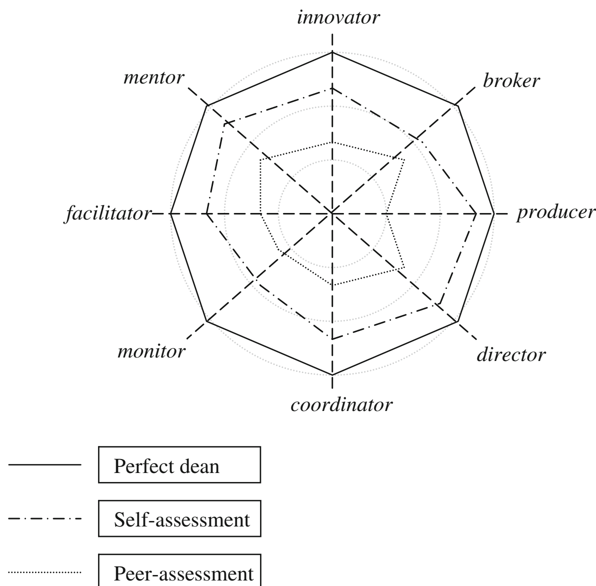

Fig. 1 Three leadership profiles

director and broker). The figure also indicates that usually self-assessment scores are higher than peer-assessment scores.

The *organisational unit culture* can be determined using the Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) which is based on the CVF. It contains six clusters of four items each. The six clusters have items on the dominant characteristics of the organisation, organisational leadership, the management of employees, the organisational glue, strategic emphasis and criteria of success, together representing the culture of an organisation.

Effective leadership is defined as the contribution to multiple goals of the organisational unit. It is linked to the outcomes that this unit wants to accomplish. It means that we have to measure the multiple performances of the unit. Performance and outcomes measurement are notoriously hard in higher education (Cameron, 1978), an issue to which we will return in the last section of this chapter. Nevertheless, with the increased emphasis on accountability in many of our higher education systems, performance reporting is advancing. In particular, in the UK, through the activities of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC), much progress is made on the reporting of institutional performance in the context of good governance. In 2006, the CUC developed an illustrative set of key performance indicators (KPIs) at the institutional level, based on 10 areas summarised in Table 1 (for a full overview, see appendix at http://www.shef.ac.uk/cuc/pubs/KPI_Booklet.pdf). Although the CUC KPIs are designed for use at the institutional level, if we assume that institutional performance in one way or another is an amalgam of the performances of the constituent parts, that is, the departments, schools and administrative units, logic would dictate that these ten key domains in some particular relative weighting would be appropriate to approximate the performance of a particular organisational unit, and hence feature as building blocks in the proposed framework for analysis.

Table 1 Suggestions for key domains measuring performances

1.	Institutional sustainability
2.	Academic profile and market position
3.	The student experience and teaching and learning
4.	Research
5.	Knowledge transfer and relationships
6.	Financial health
7.	Estates and infrastructure
8.	Staff and HRD
9.	Governance, leadership and management
10.	Institutional projects

Source: CUC (2006).

5 Discussion

In setting out a possible framework for both understanding different leadership styles and linking them to organisational effectiveness, we realise that we are embarking on an ambitious research agenda. Yet we believe that, by using similar or

at least comparable instruments in a comparative setting, we will be able to further our understanding of the challenges faced by middle managers in higher education, the way they try to tackle these challenges, and the outcomes they achieve in doing so. The chapters throughout this volume have highlighted the growing importance of the middle level in higher education in terms of leadership and management. There seems little debate that this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future, so the relevance of this type of research to us seems clear. Yet the robustness of our research endeavours remains something of a concern.

Bryman's (2007) conclusion that it seems quite difficult to come up with any solid conclusions as to the relationship between leadership and effectiveness in higher education is an important case in point. And, although there have been some attempts to link leadership to effectiveness (e.g. Pounder, 2001), the thrust tends to be towards normative interpretations of what should be, rather than analyses of what actually works. And what works most likely will be dependent on culture and context. The contributions to this volume already identify the importance that different systemic histories have on both the role and position of academic middle management. On the basis of these chapters, and the additional literature referred to, we know it is fair to say that middle management has evolved into a professional activity in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, though driven in different ways by history and political context. We know that higher education institutions in, for example, Austria, Flanders, the Netherlands and Norway are following suit, though what the actual outcomes over time in terms of middle-management leadership styles will be remains to be seen. But we also know that there is no iron law driving all systems towards the same structures and behaviours, as is well illustrated by the analyses on Canada, France, Italy and Portugal.

What warrants further attention, however, are the within-country variations. Do universities of technology require a different style of leadership to be effective than classic research universities? Do regional universities require different styles from metropolitan institutions? Does a law faculty require a different type of dean than a faculty of mechanical engineering, education or medicine? All of these are questions that we do not know the answers to, although each of us may have particular thoughts and ideas. The competing values approach could be one worth exploring in the sense that it incorporates a well-tested instrument to measure organisational and unit culture, which has been validated for a university context (e.g. Kwan & Walker, 2004; Sanderson & Watters, 2006), thus providing a relatively solid basis when it comes to the culture dimension of the proposed framework.

In terms of the identification of the leadership styles dimension of the framework, there is little reason or evidence to question the validity of the CVF. In the context of higher education, it frequently forms the basis for the 360° tools used to support performance reviews of senior academic leaders (see, e.g., Vilkinas & Cartan, 2006). Similar to how Burton Clark's famous triangle of coordination has been subjected to a variety of incarnations, the CVF over the years has featured in many modified forms with sometimes compression or merging of style dimensions and sometimes an added dimension (Vilkinas & Cartan, 2001). However, its emphasis on balancing

different and often competing leadership styles has gone uncontested, and this performance of different roles is also central to, for example, the Scott et al. (2008) study referred to earlier. Thus, a framework that explicitly addresses these multiple roles for academic middle management would seem to have strong theoretical foundations.

This leaves us with the last component of the proposed framework, the concept of effectiveness. Despite the obvious complexity of this concept in the context of higher education, we need to move beyond the assertion that the measurement of organisational effectiveness is problematic (see Cameron, 1978) and come to grips with the realities of both performance monitoring and assessment as well as methodological advances. From a governance perspective, much progress has been made with respect to the development of useable and useful KPIs. As identified above, most illustrative of this is the work undertaken by the CUC in the UK. In its report (2008, p. 1) on the implementation of KPIs, one of the key messages that the committee conveys is that

> given the diversity of governance arrangements and traditions in the sector, it is right that institutions will implement KPIs in different ways and at different speeds. Nevertheless, the monitoring framework illustrated in the 2006 Guide appears robust enough to be appropriate to all cases, if institutions interpret and adapt it flexibly as intended by the CUC.

It is this flexibility in combination with the contextualisation that leads us to propose that there may be merit in adopting this broad set of KPIs as a framework to operationalise the elusive concept of effectiveness. Of course, it is only through the application of this in a variety of settings that this belief can be tested.

Testing also brings us to our final point in the discussion, namely, the advances made with multi-level analysis of complex data sets. It is obvious from all of the above that if we want to analyse the changing nature of middle management in tertiary education in a way that does justice to the nature of these positions, we need sophisticated approaches that capture the complexity. Logically, this will lead to rather elaborate modelling, particularly if we want to relate styles to culture and then to effectiveness at both the unit and institutional levels. This, in turn, requires the use of multivariate, multi-level analysis techniques. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the notion of effectiveness in the context of a university organisation has been explored in some detail by a number of scholars. Lee and Brower (2006) have used the competing values approach in combination with data envelopment analysis in a study on public university research institutes and have come up with some quite promising results, although the issue of encompassing performance data remains to some extent. Similarly, Rosser (2003) has applied structural equation modelling in an analysis of leadership effectiveness of deans in a US college context. Her study shows that it is indeed possible to create 'a model that reflects more of the theoretical complexities of how groups and individuals affect, or are affected by, such organizational phenomena as leadership' (p. 417). However, in order to perform this type of analyses, of course, the first step is to create a robust dataset. It is our hope that the modest attempt at suggesting a framework for analysis of the effectiveness of academic middle management will contribute to the creation of such datasets that

will allow for further comparative research with the ultimate objective of improving the effectiveness of our institutions in achieving their multiple missions.

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