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AUTONOMY IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

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Dedicated to the memory of my parents

Kay and Kazunobu Yamamoto

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ABSTRACT

Tension between a university's autonomy and its responsibility to the public is a recurring theme in public higher education. While academic freedom has been widely defined, institutional autonomy, whether in substantive matters of program and mission or administrative matters of budget and personnel, has been less clearly understood. Notions of institutional autonomy, however, create a setting within which public policy discussions and decisions occur. In today's changing environment, as public resources have decreased, higher education has been linked to entrepreneurial activities and states' economic development. Demands for accountability have grown and increasingly stakeholders from outside the campus have become involved in higher education policy. Although the literature has addressed these conditions, less is known about how stakeholders in this environment shape institutional autonomy and mold the state-public university relationship.

In order to identify factors, this study focuses on the perceptions of autonomy among internal and external stakeholders in the public higher education environment, examines similarities and differences, and explores the role of these perceptions on public higher education discussions. This single-state case study of Hawai'i utilizes data from twenty interviews conducted with those who work within the public university system and outside, mostly in state government.

Resource dependence and institutional theories provide useful conceptual frameworks for the study. Findings show that both those within the university and the state perceive that autonomy refers to administrative, particularly budget, matters and

that substantive issues, such as program decisions, are the realm of the campus. Notwithstanding this similarity, differences in perception between the groups produce divergent expectations of higher education. As expected from resource dependence theory, the university, faced with diminishing state resources in the late 1990s, looked increasingly toward extramural funding. Tensions are evident in how this is perceived to affect autonomy and higher education's responsiveness to state priorities. The study also confirms the understanding that, while resources and technical efficiency are part of an institution's operating rationale, stakeholders have additional social expectations of universities. The far-reaching implication is that these institutionalized expectations exert strong claims on a public university as it seeks to extend its legitimacy and effectiveness.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

A recurring theme in public policy within a democratic context is the inherent tension between the autonomy of public institutions and their accountability to government (Berdahl & McConnell, 1999). In public higher education in the United States, autonomy has had strong normative value (AAUP, 1940). Traditions of academic freedom for scholars and a laissez faire stance regarding institutions have historically sheltered higher education from the oversight that government has exerted over public schools. Yet, in the late twentieth century, both federal and state governments became increasingly involved in postsecondary education (Hines, 1988; Trow, 1993). This involvement took many forms, including the passage of broad federal legislation, such as those expanding access, to which institutions are accountable (Gladieux, Hauptman, & Knapp, 1997). At the state level, the creation of governing structures centralized control of higher education, and mandatory reporting of performance indicators specified the form and extent of accountability (Gaither, Nedwek, & Neal, 1994; McGuinness, 1997).

In contrast, however, in the last decade of the century, scattered developments in deregulation and decentralization have strengthened institutional autonomy in a few states (MacTaggart & Associates, 1998). These policies of autonomy assume that control divested from state government to the postsecondary system or institutional level enables higher education to meet educational goals, ensure access, and generate revenue more efficiently (Ingram, 1998; Shaw, 1998). These assumptions flow from a

prescriptive understanding of organizational autonomy that focuses largely on the formulation and intent of policy. What is not explored is the link between the intent of these normative, broad policies and their actual enactment. Clearly, stakeholders and the process of policy implementation affect outcomes, but the literature has not examined this relationship. How do stakeholders differ in their understanding of desired policy outcomes? This study explores the perceptions about institutional autonomy held by stakeholders within a public university and within state government, and examines how these perspectives may influence critical decisions that mold the practice of autonomy. An examination of autonomy brings with it a glimpse of accountability, and the tensions between autonomy and public accountability. In order to develop layered explanations of individual perspectives set within sociopolitical and cultural contexts, the study will analyze a single case, one state that has recently adopted constitutional autonomy for its public higher education system.

Definitions

The literature in higher education defines autonomy as, "the power of a university or college (whether as a single institution or a multi-campus system) to govern itself without outside controls" (Berdahl, 1971). The need for autonomy has been attributed to the multifaceted missions of the academy and its unique responsibilities to create new knowledge, engage in critical analysis, and transmit a cultural heritage to succeeding generations (Carnegie Foundation, 1982; Duderstadt, 2000). Autonomy has been characterized as having two distinct dimensions, academic freedom and institutional autonomy (Berdahl, Altbach, & Gumport, 1999; Berdahl &

McConnell, 1999). The concept of academic freedom is perceived as a basic tenet of higher education in a democratic society, and ensures faculty the freedom to teach and conduct scholarly research free from external interference (Ambrose, 1990). Institutional autonomy allows a public college or university the flexibility to fulfill its mission without undue interference from external bodies such as political or special interest groups. Scholars have identified two types of institutional autonomy, the first surrounding academic matters and the second concerning administrative activities. Substantive autonomy, also labeled academic flexibility (Volkwein & Malik, 1997), has been identified with the "goals and programs" of the academy (Berdahl et al., 1999). Procedural autonomy subsumes the processes by which these are achieved (Berdahl et al., 1999), including the financial and personnel tasks in administrative procedure (Volkwein & Malik, 1997).

While an institution of higher learning requires autonomy to pursue its mission of teaching and research, as an institution within society that depends on resources and continued support, it is also accountable to many groups within its environment (Dressel, 1980; Harcleroad, 1999). Accountability in higher education incorporates both formal and voluntary responsibilities that institutions have to their constituents to use resources effectively to produce desired educational outcomes. Mortimer (1972) made a distinction between internal and external accountability. Internally, faculty, the board, and administrators are accountable for the quality of their scholarship and management decisions. Externally, public institutions are accountable not only to students and peers, but also to state and federal government, the courts, collective bargaining contracts, legislative and accrediting bodies, and donors. Accountability is

expressed through legal and financial requirements, and by academic standards in teaching, research, and public service (Mortimer, 1972; Trow, 1998).

Tensions

The common understanding has been that, in a democratic society, both autonomy and accountability are necessary to public higher education institutions. 'Colleges and universities safeguard society's efforts to protect critical discourse, create new knowledge, and transmit a heritage, and need autonomy from shifting political forces to fulfill these responsibilities (Zumeta, 2001). The value of academic freedom in the sanctity of the classroom has been affirmed by courts at several levels (*Hammond v. Brown*, 1971; *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 1957; *White v. Davis*, 1975), while the autonomy of faculty members is woven into the cultural fabric of the academy (Ambrose, 1990; Austin, 1990; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Institutional autonomy, illustrated by practices such as corporate governance under lay boards and shared authority among groups on campus has a strong history in the United States (Birnbaum, 1991; Bogue & Aper, 2000; Duryea, 1991; Kerr & Gade, 1989; Metzger, 1989; Mortimer & McConnell, 1978).

Nonetheless, public institutions provide public good (Chandler, 1998), and as social institutions they operate responsively within an external environment. Higher education builds an informed citizenry in society (Nie, Junn, & Stehlik-Barry, 1996) and contributes to the development of human capital. As a result it is provided financial, political, or public support to reach this mission and therefore it is accountable to public and private groups.

In the 1980s and 1990s, public colleges and universities operated within an environment of diminishing resources coupled with a substantial growth of costly social programs in health and corrections. As a discretionary expenditure in states, higher education costs were closely scrutinized. Accountability reporting proliferated, in the form of performance measures and indicators (Trudy W. Banta, Rudolph, Van Dyke, & Fisher, 1996; Bottrill & Borden, 1994; Freeman, 1995; Gaither et al., 1994; Gillmore & Hoffman, 1997). Legislators, scholars, and the public focused on accountability issues in faculty work and productivity (Fairweather, 1996; Frost, Hearn, & Marine, 1997; Hearn, 1999b; Layzell, 1996; Milem, Berger, & Dey, 2000; Presley & Engelbride, 1998), graduation efficiency (Gillmore & Hoffman, 1997), and inevitably, leadership and authority in policy and programs (Gilley, 1997; Gumport, 1993; Michael, 1998).

Paradoxically, as states increased their demands for accountability, the proportion of revenue derived from state governments by public higher education institutions declined in the decades from 1980 to 1996 (National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 2000). During this same period of time, the percentage of revenue from tuition and fees increased substantially, as did the percentage of revenue from private sources, sales and services (Breneman & Finney, 1997; National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 2000).

Some have characterized the effects of this growing dependence on private and multiple sources of funding as evidence of a shift from a publicly funded system to one that is only partially publicly supported, and to the incipient rise of "academic capitalism" (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). As defined by Slaughter and Leslie, academic capitalism occurs when individual faculty and universities engage in market, or profit

seeking activities, and practice market-like behaviors, competing with each other for external funds (p. 11). The shift to these market driven conditions developed with the decline in unrestricted public subsidies of higher education and as policymakers rewarded academic research that enhances state and national competitiveness (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

Evolving economic conditions driven by a global economy dramatically altered higher education finances, and institutions, particularly research universities, became involved in industry relationships of research, technology transfer, and training (Cote & Cote, 1993; Fairweather, 1990). In more recent years, some have examined the ways in which these relationships are affecting the conditions of academic work, and influence patterns of university governance (Alexander, 2000; Marginson & Considine, 2000).

Within this current context, the concept of autonomy has become more complex, and fundamentally unlike the earlier dynamic between public institutions and the state. In the last decade of the century, initiatives in restructuring, deregulation, and decentralization of public institutions (Berdahl, 1998; Greer, 1998; Hines, 1997; MacTaggart & Associates, 1998; McLendon, 2000b; Mingle & Epper, 1997; Peterson & McLendon, 1998) appeared to free them from restrictive controls. As autonomy from state government seems to grow, however, public institutions become more dependent on private sources, a situation that causes its own concerns (Blumenstyk, 1998; Irving, 1999; Press & Washburn, 2000) and introduces questions about appropriate responsiveness to state needs. While accountability to many constituents

is necessary to assure society that the academy is fulfilling its responsibilities, by its very nature it diminishes the autonomy that is at the heart of the academic endeavor of open inquiry and critical questioning (Trow, 1998).

Research Problem

While the literature is filled with studies of accountability, a relatively small body of research scattered in the higher education literature addresses the issue of autonomy, with a mix of topics, approaches, and frameworks. Some of the earlier writing on the topic was historical or prescriptive statements about the desirability or importance of autonomy to the academy. Some empirical studies were produced before 1985 (Berdahl, 1971; Glenny, 1959; Glenny & Dalglish, 1973; Millett, 1984), but most research throughout the 1990s mirrored the overwhelming public concern with accountability. A few studies operationalized the dimensions of autonomy at the institutional level, defined it within the content of state legislation, or compared decision makers' views about the preferred locus of authority (Boone, Peterson, Poje, & Scarlett, 1991; Fisher, 1988; Volkwein & Malik, 1997). Others examined the effects of governance structures, or recent decentralization efforts in several states (Berdahl, 1998; F. M. Bowen et al., 1997; Greer, 1998; Peterson & McLendon, 1998).

Most recently, McLendon (2000b; 2001) has focused on the decentralization of higher education in three states, testing competing theories of how autonomy comes to the forefront in state policy agendas. He concluded that autonomy found a place in the policy arena, not as a result of long-standing struggles surrounding the control of

higher education, but instead when these issues were connected at the "right" time to wider policy issues (McLendon, 2000a).

Many intriguing questions remain. Little is known, for example, about how autonomy is actually put into practice once it is enacted, and what the relationship is between the intent and the application of policy. What were the expectations of decision makers in adopting a public policy, and how do those expectations affect the carrying out of that policy?

Another potential area of inquiry surrounds the problem of whether and how the location of stakeholders within the environment affects their understanding of autonomy. How is the changing resource environment reflected in the expectations of those within the academy and those, like lawmakers, who are outside the academy? As the number and variety of external participants in higher education decisions grow, it is of central importance to examine their understanding of the role and governance of public higher education.

A third area that has had little exploration in higher education literature concerns the role of culture in policy-making. Research on higher education governance has largely concentrated on structural studies (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). A few studies have investigated the perceptions of higher education held by lawmakers and the public (Immerwahr, 2000; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and Public Agenda, 1999; Ruppert, 1995; Serban, 1998a), but these studies have not applied a cultural lens as an explanatory framework. One notable exception is the work on policy values in state performance indicators by Burke and Serban (Burke, 1997; Serban, 1998a). And, previous scholarship on the unique culture of the academy gives an

indication that culture may have explanatory significance as we investigate the viewpoints of diverse stakeholder groups within the campus and at the state capital.

Thus, the research problem that emerges is how autonomy is perceived and practiced. How do the resource environment and professional or policy cultures affect these perceptions and practices? How do stakeholders perceive autonomy, and are there differences between internal and external participants? From the perspectives of those inside and outside the academy, what should be addressed within the public arena and what should be left to institutional administration? Who should decide, who should lead, and what operating mechanisms or structures could facilitate critical decision-making?

Conceptual Lens

Two conceptual streams guide and frame this study. First, a resource dependence perspective frames the context within which both state and higher education operate. Resource dependence theory assumes that the critical element in the longevity of an organization is its relationship to its external environment and its ability to gather essential resources from outside its boundaries (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Environments are unstable and subject to change, and an organization's ability to compete with other organizations for scarce resources establishes its borders and determines its levels of independence (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Slaughter and Leslie (1997) apply resource dependence theory to an analysis of higher education, demonstrating that in the last several decades a changing global economy has affected public support for higher education and work-life within the

academy. As public revenues declined, institutions became more dependent on external and private resources to finance public higher education. Furthermore, as institutional support shifted, the nature of labor in the academy also changed. Scholars entered knowledge-based market competition for research awards, and became adept at "entrepreneurial knowledge to protect their autonomy, prestige, and expertise." (p. 179).

As understood through resource dependence theory, academic organizations in the late twentieth century practiced strategies that ensured their survival and managed their resource dependence. By locating expanded "markets" for scholarly research in technology transfers to industry, for example, universities diversified their revenue base and reduced their dependence on public resources. Or, if education itself is viewed as a commodity, then institutions can be seen positioning themselves to compete for market share of student consumers, thus increasing the chances for their own survival (Zemsky, Shaman, & Shapiro, 2001). Applying resource dependence theory, we would expect that in times of state funding restraints, universities would turn to external resources, including avenues such as student tuition, private foundation funds, and revenue from patents and technology transfers.

What is unclear in the analysis offered by resource dependence theory is an explanation of the link between the public interest and the public university as state support diminishes and institutions rely more heavily on private funding. Historically in the United States, higher education has been a critical vehicle for public interest agendas such as federal access and equity policies. The expansion of educational opportunities through legislation such as the Morrill Acts in the late nineteenth century

and the Civil Rights Act in the mid twentieth century are clear examples of the relationship between public policy agendas and public institutions during an era when federal or state funding predominated in the support of public higher education. A significant issue that arises when private sources provide increasing proportions of support to higher education budgets and as institutions are freed from close state control is the matter of accountability to public interests such as access and affordability (Heller, 2001).

These concerns regarding the responsibility of public higher education to society touch upon questions of institutional legitimacy as well as policy values and culture. Higher education, particularly American public higher education, is identified with creating public good and supporting the democratic ideals of our political system (Chandler, 1998). Universities are considered unique institutions because of their multiple and diffuse goals, and although they are complex organizations, function quite differently from commercial enterprises. In contrast to corporations, profit is not a purpose that encompasses the entire organization and its employees; "customers" (i.e., students) do not pay the full cost of all of the goods and services they receive; employees (faculty) have high autonomy and individual goals linked to their own professional standards; and administrators employ collaborative decision making processes because of the nature of the academy and the role of the faculty (Weingartner, 1996). Furthermore, colleges and universities espouse "idealistic goals" and their products or outcomes are not easily measured or identified (Winston, 1997).

Thus, in spite of the growth of academic capitalism and entrepreneurial faculty, higher education is not primarily deemed an economic enterprise that produces

education as a commodity or outcome. The legitimacy of American higher education has been tied to its role as a social institution, and its "legacy of service" to society through its mission of teaching and research (Gumport, 2001). The long term benefits of higher education, including knowledge creation and social reproduction, place it in a unique position in society that is differentiated from the narrower and shorter term goals of industrial organizations (Gumport, 2001).

The second frame for this study borrows from institutional theory to explore the question of how public universities enfold their legitimacy as social institutions when they pursue a more privatized entrepreneurial model. DiMaggio and Powell, who developed the concept of institutional isomorphism, argued that organizations compete not only for technical resources but also to protect their legitimacy and political power (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the process, organizations become more isomorphic, or similar to one another within the same field (i.e., a profession or a related group of organizations). In focusing on legitimacy, institutional theory stresses that the culture of a field of organizations provides an understanding of what is valued (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

Studies of higher education have applied institutional theory to show that organizations compete, not just for technical efficiency and resources, but for legitimacy as well. Brint and Karabel's study of the American community colleges attributes their history of expansion in part to their ability to recognize the untapped market for vocational training, but also to their success in negotiating three potential constraints to their claim for a segment of the higher education field: first, the well-established legitimacy of four year colleges and universities in providing post secondary

education; second, the approval and influence of the business sector that would hire its graduates; and third, the fiscal and regulatory powers of government (Brint & Karabel, 1991). Delucchi studied college mission statements and found that an institution may espouse a liberal arts mission statement while graduating a high proportion of students in professional fields. His analysis, based on institutional theory, suggests that liberal arts mission statements are focused outwardly in order to gain legitimacy from external constituents (such as applicants or standards boards) who believe in the importance of a liberal arts education, while the proliferation of professional programs meets the demands of students within the college (Delucchi, 2000). This decoupling of legitimizing mission from actual technical or educational activity increases an institution's chances of survival.

Applying institutional theory to this study, we would expect that notions of legitimacy would play a vital role in how a public policy like autonomy is perceived and eventually implemented. If autonomy is valued because great universities have greater autonomy, we would expect, applying institutional isomorphism, that other universities would seek to establish greater autonomy.

In institutional theory, traditions, norms and structures give legitimacy to an organization. The institutionalized beliefs, myths, and values are part of the culture of an organization that is shared by its members. A cultural lens brings with it the understanding that members of a group or society share values, beliefs and assumptions that evolve from a common history, and are revealed in myths, rituals, and symbols (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Schein, 1992). The culture of the academy has been studied extensively in higher education, both within campuses and within the higher education

profession (Austin, 1990; Bergquist, 1992; Birnbaum, 1991; Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Clark, 1991; Dill, 1991; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 1988; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The benefit of the cultural lenses employed in these studies is that it explains why and how decisions are made within the context of an academic organization's values and beliefs. As Tierney has written, "An organization's culture is reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it. It concerns decisions, actions, and communication both on an instrumental and a symbolic level." (Tierney, 1988).

While cultural studies provide an inward look at the effect of culture within an organization, institutional theory adds a perspective that is outward, as an organization strives to accrue resources of legitimacy that guarantee its survival. The interplay between notions of culture and institutional legitimacy is an area for potential study.

A cultural lens has also been applied to studies of policy, analyzing the values implicit in policies and the assumptions behind the actions of competing groups (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Although the higher education literature largely has not addressed the subject, the public schools literature provides us with examples of policy studies that apply a theoretical framework to the analysis of relationships between policy, policy participants' perceptions, and values. Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt (1989), working from a premise that the work of "policy actors is to transform cultural values into policy," use data from six states to reveal values manifested in a cross section of state education policies. The authors describe assumptive worlds, based on common principles and values in state policy cultures that form a basis for predictability in policy behavior. A single state study applying the culture and

educational policy lens of Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt, found that over time a dominant state political culture was consistently reflected in the values embedded in school policies, and had long term implications in educational benefit among groups (Benham & Heck, 1998).

Other than the Burke (1997) study cited earlier, higher education scholars have not used a framework of policy values or political and professional cultures to frame research. Some cross-state analyses have compared historical, economic, leadership, and structural factors in higher education governance, thus touching on policy contexts, but they have not explicitly focused on culture or values to explain performance (F. M. Bowen et al., 1997). There is some anecdotal evidence, from the viewpoint of college presidents, of a "clash of cultures" between the institutional or professional culture of the campus and the political culture of states (R. W. Bowen, 2001; Lovett, 2001). But there are few systematic studies that demonstrate the differences between the two cultures, how cultural beliefs among the two groups might affect decision issues, and how higher education as a social institution protects its legitimacy and resources.

The present study intends to extend the discussions of academic culture and explore its relationship to state policy culture and to notions of institutional legitimacy. Employing both resource dependence and institutional frameworks allows the study to look at environmental changes at the organizational level while examining the perspectives of individual stakeholders.

Purpose and Research Questions

Autonomy in the form of academic freedom is a central premise of, and more commonly understood, than institutional autonomy in American public higher education. Institutional autonomy is an elusive concept, and one observer has contrasted the universal nature of academic freedom with the less constant nature of institutional autonomy (Berdahl, 1971). The implication seems to be that institutional autonomy is shaped by the relationship between public higher education and the state, and therefore emerges from the particular conditions in the environment at a given time. This environmental context includes elements such as the type of governing board and its political influence, the state's needs and its history of educational support, and the characteristics of state and campus participants in decision-making (Berdahl, 1971).

In both the procedural and substantive realms, institutional autonomy is difficult to define, delimit, and defend. While some recent research has been grounded in empirical and theoretical considerations and broad organizational, programmatic, or policy frameworks, it has not explored the constructions of autonomy from the perspectives of stakeholders. The process of moving from policy formation to implementation seems to enfold policy intent, contextual variables, and the perceptions of social, political, and economic aspects by those who participate in policy activity (Ripley, 1997). These stakeholders, both within and outside the academy, will determine the mechanisms and processes to implement autonomy. It is therefore of critical importance to understand their perspectives.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the concept of autonomy as perceived by decision makers both within and outside the academy, and to explain how these perspectives may affect critical higher education issues. In the process, the study will examine how changes in resource patterns and organizational control affect these perceptions of autonomy and how notions of institutional legitimacy and a common culture may affect the policy context within one state. Specifically, the study will be guided by these questions:

1. How do internal and external stakeholders perceive autonomy in the current context of scarce resources?
2. Are there marked differences in perceptions among groups, are there inherent tensions, and how are they explained by those who hold them?
3. How are notions of autonomy reflected in debates or critical higher education issues (i.e., those that determine program priorities and funding)?

Significance of the Study

The literature in higher education generally has approached institutional autonomy as an issue in governance or organizational process. In contrast, this study seeks to extend the discussion by focusing on the institutional and cultural determinants behind policy decisions and intended structural changes. These frameworks have largely been ignored in the theoretical literature of higher education policy, and this study will initiate an exploratory dialogue based on the findings in one particular case.

Second, this study seeks to identify tentative factors, constructed from the perspectives of higher education stakeholders, for future research on autonomy. In spite

of increasing market behavior and movement toward deregulation in the state-campus relationship, the questions of autonomy and accountability are perplexing but key issues in public higher education. Excessive external interference and challenges to academic self-governance continue to be of concern to those within the academy (Hines, 2000), and merit research and open discourse.

Third, by its focus on practitioners on campus and at the state capital, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the practical activity of policy implementation and change. As Berdahl points out, different groups of stakeholders have different interests in the outcomes, and these many positions must be addressed in the process of change (Berdahl, 1998). It is essential that research clarify the unique perceptions of autonomy held by stakeholders, and the implications of these perceptions for the implementation of higher education autonomy. It is also important to understand the effect of the existing culture of state political and regulatory oversight.

Berdahl has written, "The real issue with respect to autonomy ... is not whether there will be interference by the state but rather whether the inevitable interference will be confined to the proper topics and expressed through a suitably sensitive mechanism." (Berdahl, 1971). To understand the course of institutional autonomy or to affect its outcome, it is therefore crucial to analyze what are deemed "suitable" and "sensitive" mechanisms by the academy and its surrounding political and socio-cultural environment. In addition, as part of the discussion it is necessary to identify the "proper topics" by examining the perceptions of stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature on higher education reveals a modest number of studies of autonomy in higher education institutions, and a large body of literature on the many forms of accountability. Many studies have focused on the structural features of public higher education governance in various states, or on the internal organizational dynamics of higher education institutions. Somewhat less evident are studies that are grounded in theory to explain how or why autonomy or accountability is manifested in a particular way in a given state. A body of recent research has discussed resource dependence theory and its application to the higher education environment today, but there is less written about the values and symbols that are embedded in higher education policy or discussions. The literature reviewed in this section encompasses five topical areas: 1) historical overview; 2) autonomy and accountability; 3) current context of higher education; 4) resource dependence and institutional theory, including culture; and 5) the Hawai'i context.

Historical Overview

The higher education literature chronicles the evolving relationship between public higher education and its stakeholders within the environmental context of public higher education in the United States.

Issues of autonomy and accountability are intrinsically tied to American higher education governance and structure, and form an underlying dynamic within its history. During the earliest period, with the establishment of Harvard and William and Mary in the early seventeenth century, the colonial government followed the English model of granting authority to an internal council of fellows and an external governing board (Duryea, 1991). Later, in 1701, Yale College was established under the governance of a single external board. Since this early history, governance by an external board of lay citizens has been a characteristic of American higher education (Bogue & Aper, 2000). Another characteristic has been the "corporate autonomy" (Duryea, 1991, p. 5) of institutions, a principle that was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1819 Dartmouth College case. Ruling that the college's charter was a contract between the state of New Hampshire and Dartmouth College, the court affirmed that both state and college were bound by its terms, thus limiting the state's interference into the internal affairs of a private college. Following the Dartmouth case, a distinction developed between these private corporations (which had received funding from the colonies) and publicly supported institutions of higher learning (Duryea, 1991).

The mission of the early colleges had been to teach students to become clergymen in colonial society; later the purpose and scope of American public higher education expanded as the nation grew and as expectations of its educational systems became more complex. Industrialization, urbanization, and westward expansion in the post Civil War period created social and economic demands for technical and scientific knowledge (Gruber, 1997). The establishment of Johns Hopkins University in 1876 marked the nascent era of the modern American research university and the burgeoning

link between research and higher education (Geiger, 1997). This link has forged a strong tie between the federal government and state universities. As Trow (1993) has pointed out, federalism in the United States places public higher education governance and finance within the jurisdiction of each state. However, while the federal government does not directly govern public universities, its broad strategies have shaped the development of public higher education in the nation (Trow, 1998).

The first Morrill Act of 1862 appropriated federal lands to states in order to establish land grant universities that supported the study of agriculture, military subjects, and mechanical arts (NASULG, 1995). The Morrill Act gave the states considerable discretion in the use of the lands and federal funds, and in academic decisions (Trow, 1993). But the effects, after a century, have been extensive and nationwide: the creation of a system of public higher education in each state throughout the country; the broad expansion of access and the growth of enrollments; and the impact, from the late nineteenth century, of higher education research upon national development (Johnson, 1997). Another distinctive feature that developed, unique to American higher education, has been the expectation that colleges and universities provide public service to their states, industry, and citizens (Bogue & Aper, 2000).

Interestingly, as higher education became more closely bound to the needs of state and federal government, shared authority among faculty, administrators, and the board emerged as the ideal form for campus governance. In the early twentieth century, campus organizational structure became more complex as size and research specialization fostered the growth of departments, divisions, schools, and colleges within universities. Presidents and faculty influence in governance grew. In 1966

shared governance was endorsed in a joint statement issued by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Council of Education (ACE), and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). It is notable that the joint statement refers to groups internal to the academy, and makes little reference to the growing number of external groups requiring accountability from the academy.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the passage of significant federal higher education legislation demonstrated the intent of the federal government to broaden higher education access and opportunity. Federal oversight grew as federal funding increased. During the 1970s, under the strains of budget cuts in an environment of student protest and the formation of faculty unions, shared authority was questioned (Mortimer & McConnell, 1978). External forces, such as labor organizations and the federal government, developed an increasing interest in the procedural realm of the academy.

The 1980s, labeled the "state period" in American higher education because of considerable increases in public enrollments and state financial support, was also a time characterized by state governments' rising concern with educational outcomes (McGuinness, 1999). This focus on accountability is demonstrated by the widespread development of indicators to measure and report institutional and student performance to state and legislative bodies (Gaither et al., 1994). In the early 1990s, rising costs coupled with the competing needs of other state public sector programs heightened public scrutiny of education and produced a proliferation of methods and measures to assess higher education (Trudy W. Banta & Borden, 1994; Bottrill & Borden, 1994; Freeman, 1995; Ruppert, 1995). One example of the concern with cost and efficiency is

the attention to faculty productivity, workload, and rewards (Fairweather, 1996; Hearn, 1999a; Layzell, 1996; Milem et al., 2000; Presley & Engelbride, 1998). Another example is the implementation in several states of performance funding, which links state appropriation levels to higher education outputs such as retention and graduation rates (Burke, 1997, 1998; Burke & Modarresi, 2000; Gillmore & Hoffman, 1997; Serban, 1998b; Stein & Fajen, 1995; Zumeta, 2000). This focus on accountability may be perceived by those within the academy as a threat to autonomy.

In addition, the restructuring of public higher education systems reflects states' initiatives in shaping higher education accountability. In earlier decades statewide coordinating or governing boards had been established as higher education flourished, but in the 1980s and early 1990s, gubernatorial and legislative involvement grew, and a majority of states considered making structural changes to their higher education systems (McGuinness, 1997). While the type and scope of changes differed from state to state, what seems significant is the active involvement of external stakeholders in higher education structuring and governance (pp. 148-151), a sharp contrast to the conceptualization of governance as shared authority among those within the academy.

A hallmark of American public higher education's vitality has been its flexibility and responsiveness to changing conditions and social needs (Francis & Hampton, 1999; Zumeta, 2000). This adaptability has added complexity to public higher education governance and changed the nature of its autonomy from external influences. Hines has employed five themes to characterize higher education governance today: multiple internal and external sources to authority; a corporate governance style alongside the earlier participatory model; "policy actors external to the

campus;" diffusion of authority to include governors and legislators; and the view that higher education is a "major instrument in state policy" (Hines, 2000). Governing boards which had been more inward looking in the past are now urged to become more activist or to serve as "bridges" between campus and government in order to help the academy negotiate the demands of external constituents (AGB, 1998; de Russy, 1996). These changes in public expectations and governance have had implications for accountability in higher education and may also affect its ability to maintain the autonomy that contributes to accomplishing its mission.

Autonomy

The literature on autonomy has been sparse, and much of the interest in the topic occurred after the growth decades of the 1960s when the number of institutions proliferated and states began to centralize coordination and governance of public postsecondary education. During this period studies of types of coordinating state structures were common (Berdahl, 1971; Glenny, 1959; Millett, 1984).

States are characterized as having constitutional or statutory autonomy for higher education, but autonomy from the state depends on state history, context, and type of board as well as legal status. An early study contrasted the relationship between state and higher education in four states with constitutional autonomy and four states with statutory status, and concluded that, "The findings of the present investigation indicate few occasions, however, when a tax-supported institution of higher education, whatever its legal status, can successfully resist concerted legislative pressures, particularly in matters requiring state funds." (Glenny & Dalglish, 1973, p. 147). The

study notes that limitations on autonomy emerge from political pressure, the appropriations process, judicial interpretations of constitutional autonomy, and constitutional powers given to other entities such as the legislature or governor.

Over the years a few studies have operationalized autonomy. Research based on national data has provided constructs and operational descriptions of institutional autonomy. Examining state regulation and administrative flexibility in public universities, Volkwein and Malik (1997) confirmed two dimensions of institutional autonomy, administrative and academic, and factors and variables within each dimension. Administrative, or financial/personnel flexibility is defined by four factors (revenue flexibility; expenditure detail flexibility; budget detail flexibility; tuition and fee flexibility) and related variables within each factor. Academic flexibility is defined by six factors (program flexibility; standards; accountability requirements; disciplinary flexibility; department flexibility; degree requirements) and related variables. The work of Volkwein and Malik provides a tool for operationalizing and measuring the degree of institutional autonomy. The study, however, suggests that there is little relationship between levels of regulation and a state's social, political and economic characteristics, and no significant relationship between autonomy and faculty or undergraduate quality (Volkwein & Malik, 1997). A related study surveyed campus administrators to assess their levels of job satisfaction, and found little relationship between satisfaction and state and campus regulatory conditions (Volkwein, Malik, & Napierski-Prancl, 1998). This finding, counter to expectations based on organizational theory, leads us to believe that additional study may be needed to explore the nature of flexibility as experienced by those who work within campuses. The continuing concern expressed by groups like

the Association of Governing Boards (2001) about threats to autonomy is additional reason for searching beyond the operational definitions of autonomy to seek insight from practitioners at the campus and state levels.

In an effort to determine how autonomy is controlled, some research has investigated the role of state regulation and governance structures. Both Fisher (1988) and Sabloff (1997) examined state legislatures and the restriction of autonomy at public universities. Fisher found that, in spite of perceptions of increasing restrictions by those within the academy, there was no increase in restrictive legislation between 1900 and 1979. The number of restrictive higher education laws increased, but the total number of legislation of all types also increased during the period, with no disproportionate increase in restrictive legislation aimed at postsecondary education (Fisher, 1988). Sabloff, however, concluded that legislatures are likely to continue passing laws restricting higher education autonomy because of the increasing professionalization of state legislators, a growing regulatory climate, and the need for lawmakers to respond to constituent demands for accountability (Sabloff, 1997). Neither Fisher nor Sabloff specifically discusses the potential effects of the decreasing levels of public funds upon state regulatory behavior. Given a climate of diminishing state revenues and multiple external claimants for higher education accountability, legislators' perceptions of their responsibilities toward public higher education would be of vital interest in understanding policy direction.

In spite of a changing environment, states mold public higher education governance structures, and restructuring initiatives in the past decade have prompted a number of studies. Hearn and Griswold (1994) found that strong centralized governing

structures are positively correlated with higher education policy innovation in academic areas, but not in the area of financing education. Others have found that federal and unified systems were most successful at identifying priorities and guiding work processes, although unified systems are vulnerable to external political interference unless protected by constitutional autonomy (F. M. Bowen et al., 1997).

Accountability

The literature on accountability has been abundant, and what will be reviewed here will be the literature that is most relevant to a discussion of autonomy. Some reports describe the many constituents with an interest in higher education priorities and outcomes. Public land grant universities, for example, must respond to the needs of internal stakeholders and local constituents, but are also accountable to the federal legislation by which they were established and funded. Today in addition to government, higher education has embedded relationships with private business and foundations that provide grants and endowments and look at universities as a source of research and development. During times of fiscal constraints, the public university is encouraged to seek external funding, and these providers of support potentially influence the direction and strength of particular programs within the academy (Harcleroad, 1999). Academic program priorities, traditionally a prerogative of the autonomous academy, also may be affected by policy and politics external to the academy (McGuinness, 1999; Michael, 1998).

In the 1990s, the higher education literature demonstrates the overwhelming interest in accountability to state government, expressed through performance funding,

measured by performance indicators, and influenced by structure and governance (Trudy W. Banta & Borden, 1994; Bottrill & Borden, 1994; Burke, 1998; Freeman, 1995; Gillmore & Hoffman, 1997; Marcus, 1997; Ruppert, 1995; Serban, 1998b; Stein & Fajen, 1995). Attention also turned to faculty productivity and rewards, program assessment, and student outcomes in the effort to measure the costs and results of public higher education (Fairweather, 1996; Hearn, 1999b; Layzell, 1999; Milem et al., 2000; Presley & Engelbride, 1998). In this period, campuses reported to the state about matters that traditionally had been under campus oversight.

Current Context

In a recent edited work, MacTaggart (1998), portraying higher education as a "mature industry" saddled with the accretion of bureaucratic regulation and centralization (both associated with impingement on autonomy) draws our attention to state decentralization efforts in the 1990s. Three examples of states implementing autonomy are cited from his book and described in the following paragraphs. Berdahl's chapter on the privatization of St. Mary's College of Maryland is instructive in discussing how support for autonomy was built (1998). Several factors were instrumental in St. Mary's case: a strong record, including the board's record of public accountability; the process of change, which included faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and students; political support at both the postsecondary system and state levels; and change that involved only one campus and one board, not a whole system. A major element of success was the focus on procedural autonomy, which reassured the public that the

campus remained accountable on substantive issues to the state's higher education commission (Berdahl, 1998).

In a second case, New Jersey experienced mixed success after statewide autonomy laws were passed. Although operational autonomy was less problematic, policy autonomy regarding legal representation and personnel matters created contention (Greer, 1998). Without clear educational goals and a new governing or coordinating structure to lead the process of implementing higher education autonomy, tensions developed among stakeholders, placing the system at risk for program duplication and shifting missions (Greer, 1998).

In contrast to Maryland and New Jersey, Michigan, the third case described in MacTaggart's book (1998), had a long history of autonomy, beginning in 1850 when the University of Michigan was granted constitutional autonomy. The state's economic, political and social milieu created a positive environment --- public support of higher education; voluntary coordination among campuses in the absence of formal structures; active litigation and state court decisions guiding the practice of autonomy; and a strong public higher education sector (Peterson & McLendon, 1998). Constitutional autonomy and a vibrant university system, however, do not preclude the efforts of the legislature and a strong governor to affect higher education. Legislators concerned about campus tuition increases passed two measures influencing higher education choice, a prepaid tuition plan for families and a tax incentive program for students attending particular institutions (Martinez & Nodine, 1997). Whereas legislators prioritized affordability of education and access for state residents, some members of the academy were concerned that these measures intruded upon constitutional autonomy (Martinez & Nodine, 1997).

The experiences of these three states indicate that enacting a policy of autonomy is only the initial part of a process that continues to be negotiated between campus and state. When flexibility replaces state regulation, mechanisms or structures to guide coordination among campuses and between campuses and state may be absent, leaving a void in the course of implementation. The characteristics that autonomy takes as it is put into practice are affected by the public and policy climate in the state, the structure of higher education, and stakeholders' assumptions about goals and parameters.

Some of the most recent studies have investigated the shift toward decentralization in some states, examining autonomy and deregulation using a policy or political framework to explain agenda setting in state policy formation (McLendon, 2000a, 2001). Unlike the literature in K-12 educational policy studies, policy analysis in higher education has been largely atheoretical; this very recent effort is one exception. McLendon's examination of autonomy in three states (Arkansas, Hawai'i, and Illinois), tests theories of policy formation by focusing on the process by which postsecondary decentralization emerged as an agenda item in the state political arena. McLendon borrows from the "punctuated equilibrium" theory of policy change from Baumgartner and Jones (1993) to explain the dynamic between subsystem (university) and macrosystem (state). As seen through punctuated equilibrium theory, the semi-autonomous nature of institutions in the United States creates a context of conflict within which policy formation is not a smooth progressive evolution, but is characterized by periods of inactivity interspersed with periods of policy activity when subsystem concerns surface at the macrosystem level. McLendon applies three competing models of policy formation to analyze cases in which decentralization (or

autonomy) emerged successfully in state policy agendas. He builds on Kingdon's Revised Garbage Can (Kingdon, 1995) model to develop a Policy Streams Model, and observes from his case studies that higher education decentralization did not develop incrementally or through rational choice, and was not strongly related "to conflict over autonomy and control in higher education" (McLendon, 2000b). Instead, he concludes that higher education decentralization emerged as policy when state economic conditions, political conditions, and university needs converged and flowed into an open window of opportunity in state policy formation.

In the case of Hawai'i, for example, McLendon focuses on the period from 1997 to 1998 when the issue of autonomy for the state higher education system leaped to the policy forefront, garnering support from political, business, and labor leaders. This occurred after a period of decades when autonomy had been a dormant issue, of interest to only a few within the state university. McLendon's finding is that "*chance* and an unusual combination of conditions" (the economy, upcoming elections, and the university president's role in recasting autonomy as somehow linked to economic development) "redefined" the agenda and created a hot button policy issue (McLendon, 2000a, p. 215).

This research leads to building theory about the initial stages of policy activity, and might suggest a direction for exploratory research about what happens after autonomy is enacted. If, as McLendon suggests (2000), dormant policy agendas met with success only after a convergence of leadership, economic, and political factors, then one could also presume that implementing a new policy of autonomy would depend on a diversity of latent factors. While politics and leadership are critical in

McLendon's analysis, the surrounding social and policy contexts within a state seem to warrant close examination in order to understand how policies of autonomy are carried out once enacted. In the St. Mary's case from MacTaggart's book (1998), the qualities of the board, the involvement of internal stakeholders, and external political support all contributed to the support for a policy of autonomy, and its later implementation at that institution. It would be of particular interest to look at how the expectations of internal and external stakeholders affect decisions about how autonomy is practiced.

Shifts in public policy regarding autonomy are indications of the changing relationship between the academy and its environment, and the transformations in the environment itself. Investigating at the micro or individual level may contribute to our understanding of how practitioners perceive these changing relationships and suggest factors for developing successful implementation processes.

Concepts of Resource Dependence

Recent studies of changes in universities in several countries have applied resource dependence theory to describe the university's evolving relationship with its external environment and the faculty's shift in work and rewards (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Formulated by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), resource dependence theory analyzes organizations in the context of their external environments and provides a framework for discussing change in the academy. In contrast to writing in organizational literature that describes the internal functioning of organizations, resource dependence theory focuses upon the relationship

between an organization and its external environment, and considers this relationship critical to organizational survival. It is based on the premise that the longevity of an organization depends upon its ability to gather essential resources from outside its boundaries (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

As developed by Pfeffer and Salancik, resource dependence theory is built upon several understandings: 1) organizations do not exist in isolation, but exist within a surrounding environment; 2) environments are unstable and subject to change; 3) an organization's efficiency (the amount of resources used to produce outcomes) is an internal standard less crucial to its survival than an organization's effectiveness in meeting stakeholder demands; and 4) organizations are not concrete entities or collections of individuals but are fluid coalitions of various interest groups and behaviors. Resources are the key to an organization's ability to compete with other organizations in boundary setting and in determining organizational independence, and the criticality, magnitude, and use of a resource determine its importance to a particular organization (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Slaughter and Leslie (1997) extend the analysis provided by resource dependence theory by examining the phenomenon of academic entrepreneurship from the perspectives of individual faculty and administrators as well as from the perspective of the institution and the global political economy. They trace the growth in international competition since the 1980s and the pressures placed upon higher education institutions to expand knowledge applicable to the marketplace, then show, in the same period, government's declining support of higher education and the growing number of restrictions placed upon the use of public appropriations. These forces

contribute to an evolving academic reward structure that shifts research activities toward the more lucrative applied areas of technology and science (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Described as "state-subsidized entrepreneurs," some public university employees "are employed simultaneously by the public sector and are increasingly autonomous from it" (p. 9).

Explicit in the research by Slaughter and Leslie is the observation that resource change affected multiple levels --- at the global and national levels, at the level of organizational adaptations, and in the behavioral and attitudinal changes at the individual levels. At the individual level, process theories of professionalization explain the active and continuing initiative that academics take to adapt to changes in resource dependence and technology transfer strategies (p. 140). Slaughter and Leslie found that faculty rank affected faculty's receptivity to technology transfer (p. 173), but that faculty activities changed with a relatively small amount of reward when they were required to demonstrate market success in their scholarly pursuits. Moreover, at the Australian centers studied by Slaughter and Leslie faculty responded positively when asked about the advantages of capitalism as long as traditional elements of faculty prestige were not threatened.

In another study of academic work, Fairweather also demonstrates the dilemma faced by public higher education practitioners in the 1990s caught between a public concerned with accountability for undergraduate education and the outcomes of teaching, and an academic culture and reward system that increasingly prioritizes research and scholarship (Fairweather, 1996). Data cited by Fairweather illustrate the conflict: faculty who were more heavily invested in technology transfer and received

industry-related support spent less time in teaching; and faculty who spent the highest percentage of their time in teaching received lower pay (p. 151).

Thus the characteristics of the academic incentive system are evolving in response to the significant drop in state government appropriations and the changing resource base supporting public higher education. Based on resource dependence theory, we would expect that stakeholders both within and outside the academy would respond in highly visible ways to these changes. In this study, the problem posed is how public higher education autonomy is affected by these resource changes when state deregulation frees institutions from procedural restrictions. As proposed in this study, the entry into this area of concern is through the perspectives of individual stakeholders both within and external to the academy in order to compare and contrast possible differences in viewpoints and to discuss their potential implications for critical decisions.

Institutional Theory

Policy legislation in itself does not necessarily create the mechanisms needed to produce desired outcomes. The process of moving from policy formation to implementation seems to enfold policy intent, contextual variables, and the perceptions of social, political, and economic aspects by those who participate in policy activity (Ripley, 1997). The second approach that informs this exploratory study is an institutional framework. Institutional theory contributes an understanding that organizations are social institutions with norms, rules, and myths. Institutional theory is based on the premise that organizations exist in unstable environments and struggle for

survival by competing for "social as well as economic fitness," and in doing so copy the norms of successful organizations in a process called institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio and Powell contrast their approach to Max Weber's "iron cage of bureaucracy" characterization of modern organizations, and instead argue that organizations compete for normative legitimacy and not just for technical or economic efficiency. They identify three mechanisms for institutional isomorphism: coercive, through laws or mandates; mimetic, or copying in order to reduce uncertainty; and normative, when professional standardization occurs (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio and Powell hypothesize that institutionalization affects organizations like universities and schools because their goals and the means of achieving goals are ambiguous, creating a lot of uncertainty in a field in which there are a number of requirements for professional. In other words, professional reference points are wider than the boundaries of the individual organization.

Meyer and Rowan (1977) point out that "conformity to institutionalized rules often conflicts sharply with efficiency criteria" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 340). Several writers refer to the notion of *decoupling* whereby organizations espouse institutionalized rules or myths that seem contradictory with the technical activities of the organization (Delucchi, 2000; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Weick, 1991). And yet these rules and myths have an existence that rationalizes and legitimizes the organization. Rowan and Miskel describe the environment of schools and their growing conflicts in a highly institutionalized organizational milieu that also began to focus on technical productivity (i.e., educational outcomes) (Rowan & Miskel, 1999).

Several empirical studies have applied institutional theory to the study of organizations (DiMaggio, 1991; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Morrill & McKee, 1993), and the current study also intends to apply an institutional framework in examining autonomy. While institutional theory focuses on the organization, the current study will also explore the usefulness of concepts of academic and professional culture in explaining how individuals are affected by the values and symbols of their groups and societies. This approach, looking internally toward characteristics within groups, complements the external focus of resource dependence theory upon the surrounding environment. Culture includes shared norms, values, rules, and meanings, outwardly manifested in ritual and custom. Basic assumptions develop when groups share experiences and observe and test results over time (Schein, 1992). As in theory development, basic assumptions are reinforced when events produce expected results. Deeply embedded, although not readily identified, assumptions and values form a basis of understanding about events and how things work, and are difficult to change even as external conditions change.

The public schools literature provides us with examples of policy studies that apply a theoretical framework to the analysis of relationships between policy, policy culture and values. Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt (1989), use data from six states to show how the cultural values of policy makers are manifested in a cross section of state education policies. Coming from the understanding that politics is the "arena for conflict over value allocation" (p. 12), the authors code state policies applying Garms' taxonomy of the policy values of efficiency, quality, and equity (Garms, Guthrie, & Pierce, 1978), and add a fourth value, choice. The authors describe assumptive worlds

of policy elites within a subculture where common perceptions of influence and politics shape a basis for predictability in policy behavior. Other studies in the schools literature clearly demonstrate the applicability of a cultural frame when analyzing policy and its effect on educational opportunity over time (Benham & Heck, 1998).

The higher education literature in large part has not addressed issues of value. Some research has looked at perceptions of members of different constituent groups, however it has not been based on the theoretical literature of policy value or culture. A study by Boone, Peterson, Poje, and Scarlet (1991) compared the responses of faculty, presidents, governing boards, coordinating agencies, and legislators regarding the location, and preferred location, of higher education decisions. Based on previous literature and their own experiences, the authors grouped the decisions into five types: financial, academic, faculty, student, and administrative. The analysis of the participant responses indicated the degree of autonomy preferred by each of the groups in the various areas of decision-making. The study found less disagreement about autonomy than anticipated in all five areas of decision-making. However, the authors point out that an analysis of the reasons for this outcome was beyond the scope of their research, and that dissatisfaction with autonomy in decision making may have more to do with "how authority is exercised" rather than where decisions are made (Boone et al., 1991). This suggests that it may be useful to explain the relationship of each of the five groups to formal postsecondary governing authority and to informal decision making practices in their states and institutions. Looking at each group's location within the larger social and political context of the state and examining this context may provide an understanding of the expectations that underlie critical decisions.

The higher education literature that has dealt with culture is focused on organizational culture on campuses, and compares and contrasts elements of the various types of cultures (Bergquist, 1992; Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 1988). Some scholars have observed that there are shared myths within higher education culture (Clark, 1991), commonalities stemming from expectations of shared governance within the academy (Birnbaum, 1991; Mortimer & McConnell, 1978), and a value-laden academic belief system that is distinctive from that of market-oriented structures (Dill, 1991). Others have written about a common culture of the academic profession that values academic freedom, collegiality, and the pursuit of knowledge (Austin, 1990; Fairweather, 1996; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 1988; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). These values have been reinforced in written position statements issued by the major professional organizations of academic personnel (AAUP, 1940; AAUP/ACE/AGB, 1966).

We expect that the identification of the "suitable" and "sensitive" mechanisms for implementing policy is affected by interpretations made through the lens of a common academic culture. We would presume that there is also a distinctive culture in state executive and legislative government that affects policy assumptions and perspectives on higher education autonomy (Rosenthal, 1998). Some writing, from the point of view of college presidents has described the "clash of cultures" between the groups (F. M. Bowen et al., 1997; Lovett, 2001). Seen by these campus leaders, the long tenure of academic appointments creates vastly different work conditions and cultures compared to the short, politically dependent tenure of elected officials. Presumably in the academic culture, for example, critical thinking and questioning are

valued, whereas in the political culture competition for concrete goals predominates (F. M. Bowen et al., 1997). Decision processes differ because legislators work under the constraints of short sessions while longer periods of debate are more common on campus (Lovett, 2001). And finally, as Lovett points out, the abstract concept of "freedom of inquiry" seems scarcely relevant to the practical and public concerns regarding productivity and performance on the job.

The Hawai'i Context

In order to examine the values and symbolism embedded in autonomy, the state of Hawai'i was selected as a case study. Studying a single case facilitates an exploration of possible constructs by focusing on a more limited number of respondents and events. However, study of a single case is limited by the boundaries of the case and its unique circumstances, in this instance, the geography, history, and social conditions of Hawai'i. This section provides a brief background of three aspects of Hawai'i's environment – centralization of government, ethnic relationships, and educational opportunity as a value - and explains why they are pertinent to the current study.

Centralization of Government

The centralization of government, wealth, and power in Hawai'i has had a long history, beginning with the Hawaiian kingdom (1795 – 1893), and continuing through the periods of the Republic (1893 – 1899), the Territory (1900 – 1959), and the state (from 1959). After the arrival of American traders, then the missionaries in the early nineteenth century, wealth and power were concentrated in a small, mainly Caucasian and Republican business and political elite (Pratt & with Smith, 2000). From the mid-

nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, the population demographics in Hawai'i changed dramatically as contract laborers from China, Japan, and later Korea and the Philippines arrived to provide labor for the sugar plantations.[1] As these laborers left the plantations to participate in the wider economic life of the islands, Hawai'i's social history changed, and politics took a decisive turn after World War II. Five years before statehood, the 1954 elections in Hawai'i not only marked a change in the dominance of one political party over another, but also signaled a change in complex relationships of ethnicity, economic opportunity, and political participation. The political force behind this first-time victory for the Democratic Party in Hawai'i was John Burns, a local non-elite Caucasian policeman and small businessman who won his race as Hawai'i's delegate to Congress in 1956 and governor in 1962 (Boylan & Holmes, 2000).

The Democratic Party continued to hold power from the 1950s, through statehood in 1959 and later in both the governor's office and the state legislature until 2002 when the state's first Republican governor was elected (with Democrats holding a majority in both houses of the legislature). Centralized power has continued to the present time, with the substitution of one dominant group by another. The native Hawaiians who were once the majority and held political sovereignty, have not shared in these changes and are disadvantaged in health, education, and other social indicators as well as in economic and political power (Benham & Heck, 1998).

[1] Nordyke's study of the demographics of Hawai'i demonstrates the extent of this change. By ethnic composition, Hawai'i's population dropped from 97 % Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian in 1853 to 24.4% in 1900, and 17.3% in 1950. The total Caucasian population rose (including Portuguese, Spanish, Puerto Ricans and other Caucasian) from 2.3% in 1853 to 18.7% in 1900, and 24.9% in 1950. The Chinese and Japanese populations also rose, from 0.5% in 1853 to 16.7% in 1900 and 6.5% in 1950 for the Chinese, and for the Japanese, 39.7% in 1900 to 36.9% in 1950. Figures were not available for the Japanese in 1853 or for the Filipinos and Koreans in 1853 and 1900. By 1950, the Filipinos were 12.2% and the Koreans 1.4% of the population of the state. (Nordyke, 1989).

The literature of public administration has described the development of strong centralization in the state of Hawai'i. Pratt argues that the high degree of centralization in the state originated from a top down historical development, and continues today in many forms, for example, a) the state controls most government functions such as education, most taxes, and many social services, leaving little authority to local government which is weak or nonexistent below the county level; and b) the governor has broad powers, ranging from appointing department heads and officials of numerous boards to line item veto over the budget and the power to restrict funds appropriated to departments by the legislature (Neubauer, 1992; Pratt & Smith, 2000). Meller attributes the origins of this "institutionalized centralization" of policy control to the legacy of nineteenth century Hawai'i when workers needs were met by a paternalistic plantation system with little need for outside services of local government (Meller, 1992).

The University of Hawai'i is the state's only public higher education system, and it, too, has a traditional system of centralization. The university was established in the early 1900s and is a land grant institution. It is composed of one research university, two baccalaureate institutions, seven community colleges, as well as an employment training center and five education centers on six of the islands. All ten campuses are governed by one Board of Regents. Tensions between the university and state government over the state's involvement in the internal management of the university have had a long history in Hawai'i. Potter traces the attempts over many decades to provide greater independence to the university, and writes with foresight, "It takes more than a constitutional provision, however, for a university to gain the

autonomy and 'operational freedom' necessary for developing into an institution of high quality." (Potter, 1984).

Social and Historical Forces

Hawai'i is the nation's most ethnically diverse state, and the demographics of ethnicity continue to change. In 1980, 80 percent of the state's population growth was attributed to in-migration of those from other countries, and the mixture of national origins and the social demographics of groups have changed (Agbayani, 1991; Boylan, 1992; Crane & Okinaka, 1992). What has persisted is a "culture of the local" (Okamura, 1980, 1994). The use of the term "local" is often thought to refer to cultural characteristics of specific ethnic groups or to refer to local lifestyles, but Okamura, a Hawai'i sociologist, shows that it is intrinsically tied to class stratification and insider/outsider identities. The concept of local originated within plantation culture as a way to differentiate the disparities in power between the ruling group and the subordinate Hawaiian and immigrant populations (Okamura, 1994).

Although schools in Hawai'i were initially segregated between English standard and other schools,[2] as in other states education became a vehicle for social change. One study shows that among the Japanese American second generation (*Nisei*) population in Hawai'i cultural practices persisted while education became the vehicle for social and economic mobility and acculturation to American customs from the 1920s through the 1950s (Tamura, 1994).

[2] Between 1924 and 1949, the Department of Public Instruction in Hawai'i designated a select number of schools as English Standard schools. Ostensibly created to promote Americanism and the use of a standard English language, the schools were criticized for sustaining ethnic and class discrimination in the territory (Tamura, 1994).

It was in this rapidly changing milieu in 1964 that the Hawai'i state legislature passed Act 39 which established a statewide system of community colleges in 1964. Even before statehood a number of reports supporting the need for postsecondary education in Hawai'i had been issued by the territory, the state, and the University of Hawai'i. The primary arguments for educational expansion were the high level of aspirations for education beyond high school among Hawai'i high school students, their high retention and graduation rates (at that time third highest in the nation) and the financial and geographic obstacles that were effective barriers that prevented local students from continuing to postsecondary education (Ihara, 1959; Kosaki, 1964; Territory of Hawaii, 1959, January; U.S. Office of Education, 1962, November.). In other words, the value of access was clearly primary when the higher education system in Hawai'i was developed.

Summary

This survey of the literature pertinent to autonomy and accountability illustrates the need for ongoing systematic studies of autonomy, adding both empirical and theoretical work to the existing body of literature. The current context of higher education in a global economy is one that is significantly different from the earlier more closed environment of public institutions and state governments. Nonetheless, whether in relationship to the public or private interests, the autonomy of institutions remains a significant topic for current research and scholarly analysis.

CHAPTER 3
METHOD

The purpose of this study was to explore the concepts of autonomy as perceived by stakeholders and to explain how these perspectives affect higher education issues, and the research strategies for the study were designed to best answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1. A case study was selected because it gave the researcher an opportunity to collect appropriate and sufficient data to develop in-depth descriptions of perceptions and to compare and explain differences in perceptions among groups both within and outside the academy. The case selected is a single state, the state of Hawaii, where the study was conducted two to three years after the passage of a constitutional amendment that gave increased autonomy to the state's public higher education system. This section describes the design of the study, clarifies the purpose and rationale behind the design strategies, describes the collection and analysis of data, and discusses the strengths and limitations of the method.

Design of the Study

A single case study was selected as a strategy for the research. Several strong reasons, related to the nature of the research and kinds of questions asked, supported this selection. First, the focus of this study is to understand how autonomy is perceived, to explain why these perceptions may differ among groups of stakeholders, and to describe how these perspectives may affect discussions of critical higher education issues. Second, the research problem selected, a restructuring of the relationship

between state government and higher education through a constitutional "autonomy" amendment, is a recent event but part of an emerging topic for scholarly inquiry because of the rapidly changing expectations and social role of higher education. While the higher education literature gives some evidence that the policy and social environment affects the relationship between state and public university, few studies have systematically explored the phenomenon and identified concepts and constructs. Therefore a research strategy that allowed for an in-depth but preliminary examination of perspectives and tensions was selected.

Yin (1994) identifies three primary criteria for selecting a research strategy: the type of question, the researcher's control over events, and the time frame of events being studied. A case study is an appropriate strategy when the research asks "why" or "how," when the researcher has no control over events, and when contemporary, rather than historical, events are being studied (Yin, 1994). The current study meets Yin's three criteria because a contemporary event is being studied, the researcher has no control over events, and the research questions asked are how and why perceptions affect higher education issues and mold the implementation of autonomy. These questions probe the "contextual conditions" (Yin, 1994) surrounding the enactment of autonomy, including the changing nature of resources available to higher education and shifts in legitimating values of public universities within an existing state policy culture. Questions of context as well as perception are probed, and the single case study is particularly suited to this investigation.

Stake has pointed out that in a case study, "the case" refers to the object of study rather than the method of data collection, and many methodological techniques can be

used to conduct the research (Stake, 1994). Data collected from a survey would have answered a few of the research questions in this study but semi-structured interviewing was selected as the method that would best lend itself to investigating contextual conditions. Individual interviews, particularly in an exploratory study, give an opportunity to probe the meaning behind pertinent events or topics that have not been identified in previous research, but are glimpsed in the process of interviewing.

A case study also provided the flexibility to assess the explanatory usefulness of a conceptual lens of resource dependence and institutional legitimacy. Yin observes that case studies can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive (Yin, 1994), and other methodologists have noted that case study research can explain phenomenon, and thus explore theories (Maxwell, 1996; Merriam, 2001; Yin, 1994). While the primary purpose of a case study is to provide an in-depth look at a particular case, and not to create generalizations applicable toward a larger population or other cases, case study analysis can be generalized and findings applied to theory (Maxwell, 1996). In Stake's words, as we explore both what is unique and what is common about a case, we could take "a small step toward grand generalization" (Stake, 1994).

In summary, the single case study design was selected because it lends itself to an exploratory but in-depth research of a contemporary phenomenon. A review of the literature on the topic of autonomy had produced a mixture of approaches and studies, but few that provided theoretical underpinnings or practical guidance for policy makers about how autonomy is implemented. This suggested that the in-depth and rich descriptions that emerge from a close examination of a single case would be appropriate for the research purposes of this study.

The Case Study

The state of Hawai'i was selected for this particular case for several reasons. First, Hawai'i has had a recent change in the constitutional status of its public university system. In statewide elections in November 2000, Hawai'i voters overwhelmingly approved constitutional autonomy for the University of Hawai'i system. The change followed years of incremental statutory changes. This recent event makes it possible to interview participants in the policy making process within a fairly short period of time after the change, and to trace initial efforts at implementation and the rationale behind them.

Second, as a state, Hawai'i's characteristics offer some advantages in designing a study. Its small size and limited number of public postsecondary institutions make it manageable to study autonomy from both a campus and state government perspective. And, in spite of its small size, the ethnic and cultural diversity of its population enrich the complexity of the data and may suggest areas for further research.

Third, Hawai'i has a unified system of public higher education that includes institutions of three types: one Doctoral/Research Extensive institution, two Baccalaureate Liberal Arts Colleges, and seven Associate's Colleges (Carnegie Foundation, 2000). A single Board of Regents governs the ten-campus system. There is a president for the entire system, a chancellor at each of the four-year campuses and the flagship campus, and a provost at each of the community colleges. This highly centralized system has its roots in the history of higher education in Hawai'i that developed even before statehood was enacted in 1959. The structure was reaffirmed

with the establishment of the community colleges in 1964 and the decision was made to place them under the single board that governed the research campus, an arrangement that continues today. This postsecondary education structure exists within a state policy environment that has been characterized as one of "institutionalized centralization" (Meller, 1992). The state's past history, with its high degree of centralized control in both government and public education, provides a stark contrast to its new policy of public higher education autonomy, and this provides a rich background for investigating the tensions between groups.

A fourth reason for selecting Hawai'i is that its resource base changed drastically between the 1980s and the 1990s. The state experienced a period of continuing economic downturn for the ten-year period between 1991 and 2001, and state resources designated for the public higher education sector decreased sharply. Compared to other states, Hawai'i experienced the largest reduction in state support for higher education, 11 percent between 1993 and 2000, while tuition doubled and enrollments fell (Selingo, 2001). A focus of this study is the changing resource environment of higher education, and Hawai'i's changes produce a fertile ground for study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Sources and Sampling

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews of twenty individuals, eleven from the University of Hawai'i and nine from outside the university, including the executive and legislative branches of state government and one outside state

government. In the first step of identifying informants, individuals were selected through purposive sampling among those who might make decisions or give input on budgets and programs for the university. Selection was made from among board of regents members, senior university administrators, faculty representatives, deans and directors as well as legislators, state executives, board members, and union representatives.[3] Secondarily, snowball sampling was used, and those referred by the initial group of interviewees were contacted. Not everyone who was contacted agreed to be interviewed, although most agreed. The purpose of informant selection was not to ensure representation from all groups, but the sample studied did include a range of informants situated in different places in the university and state.

Interview Questions

Interviews were semi-structured, using an interview protocol of 12 questions followed by probes. Because some of the questions described complex issues and then asked for a response, the probes were especially important in clarifying the questions and eliciting discussion.[4] Three questions directly asked respondents about their expectations and observations on higher education autonomy. Five questions describe scenarios of critical higher education issues and asked informants to give their perspectives on why or how decisions could be made or who should make decisions. Two questions asked respondents to comment on the resource situation surrounding

[3] The position held by informants is not identified because of a concern for confidentiality. Especially in a small population the size of Hawai'i's, individuals could be identified by job or position, and were assured that guidelines for strict confidentiality would be followed.

[4] Merriam identifies four types of questions that can be used to elicit responses during interviews: a) the *hypothetical question* that asks what the respondent would do in a given situation; b) the *devil's advocate question* that poses an opposing view; c) the *ideal position question* that asks the respondent about an ideal situation; and d) the *interpretive question* that asks the respondent for an interpretation (Merriam, 2001). These types of probes were used during the interviews.

higher education. Two questions looked into academic freedom and public policy values.

The interview protocol and procedures were piloted with two respondents, one from state government and one from the university. The purpose of the pilot testing was to uncover ambiguously worded questions and scenarios that may have been vague or misunderstood. The protocol is attached as Appendix A.

Procedures

Informants, or their staff, were contacted by phone to ask if they would participate in the study. At that time the topic and purpose of the study and confidentiality issues were briefly described. If more information was requested, examples of interview questions were given, and in a few cases the interview questions were submitted beforehand when requested by the interviewees. In most cases, appointments for interviews were made immediately.

At the time of the interview, after preliminary introductions about the researcher's purpose, the goals of the research were explained. Respondents were informed that the required procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects had been met by the researcher as required by the university in all of its research, and were asked to sign a "consent to participate" form and given a copy. The form explained that the researcher was a doctoral student, summarized the purpose and significance of the research, and asked for permission to tape record the interviews so that statements would be accurately remembered. In all but two cases, permission was granted for taping. The researcher explained that confidentiality would be maintained and that tapes and transcripts would be coded so that the names of respondents would not be

revealed. Tapes were stored in a locked cabinet and would eventually be destroyed. Extensive notes were taken during the interviews. Each interview lasted from one to one and a half hours.

Data Analysis

All tapes were transcribed by the researcher, and notes and transcripts were coded. Miles and Huberman support the development of coding during several stages of analysis:

> Coding is analysis... Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

A Preliminary List of Coding Categories (Appendix B) had been developed before the beginning of data collection as a provisional "start list" of codes. This start list "comes from the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables that the researcher brings to the study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The first step in data analysis was to code the data using these categories (Boyatzis, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994); the "start list" functioned as a tool for organizing during the initial stages of working with the transcribed data.

Coding was done throughout the study. After initial coding by the descriptive categories, analysis moved to a more complex interpretive level, and then to a third step when transcripts were compared for themes or patterns, and tentative explanations were formed applying the conceptual lens of the study (Merriam, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the second or interpretive step of data analysis, codes were grouped into

structures as relationships between categories appeared.[5] In the third step of analysis individual transcripts were summarized to describe the key features of an informant's responses, and the coded data for each transcript was once again reviewed for pattern coding. Pattern coding of qualitative data is parallel to cluster or factor analysis in statistical data. It reduces the data and identifies themes and constructs. In a final level of analysis, tentative propositions were developed when patterns from a number of transcriptions were compared for consistencies (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

It is important to state that in this study both deductive and inductive forms of analysis were used. The conceptual framework of resource dependence and institutional notions of legitimacy provided a lens to help shape the data and begin to see relationships. At the same time, during the process of coding the raw data and matching patterns, analysis followed inductively, arising from noting patterns in the data that had not been anticipated when the study was formulated.

Dependability

A concern with qualitative data analysis is with validity and reliability. Merriam (2001) lists six methods for strengthening validity: triangulation with multiple researchers or data sources, confirming data with those who were informants, investigating over time, peer review, collaborating, and examining the researcher's own assumptions (p., 204). She observes that reliability, or repetition of results in qualitative

[5] Structures were created as heuristic devices to develop awareness about common threads in the data and to explore tentative relationships. Some examples of structures are:

a. Autonomy properties	b. Internal context	c. External context
i. Prior	i. Norms and values	i. Political culture
ii. Expectations	ii. Organizational culture	ii. Policy values
iii. Actual	iii. Professional culture	iii. Economic context
iv. Mechanisms		

studies may not be realistic in all situations, and suggests the concept of "dependability" or the consistency of results to data, as defined by Lincoln and Guba (Merriam, 2001). Boyatzis suggests other methods, such as using multiple coders so that inter-rater reliability can be tested (1998), but that technique, and collaboration, was not possible in the present study. However, some steps suggested by both sources to increase the consistency and dependability of data collection and analysis were followed in the present study: 1) Documentation of collection and analysis procedures was maintained; 2) key concepts were operationalized and coding categories were established and linked to the conceptual framework of the study; 3) interview data was triangulated between and among interviewees and through comparison with documentary sources; and 4) the interview protocol was pilot tested and both the interview questions and proposed coding schema were evaluated.

Limitations

The case study has many advantages as a research strategy. Examining a phenomenon, individual, or group holistically can produce rich descriptions and possible explanations of events or institutional transformations. A case study is a sound strategy for research interests and questions like the ones in this study when theories and hypotheses have not been developed and when basic exploration is needed to define concepts and constructs. It is, however, constrained by its very design. As an in-depth examination of a single case within a narrow time period, it may be limited by the unique characteristics of the case being studied. While efforts can be made to

increase the dependability of data collection and analysis, broad generalizations to other cases and time periods must be approached with caution.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The interview protocol was designed to uncover the respondents' perceptions about university autonomy. Specific substantive scenarios, that is, descriptions of recent situations facing the university, were used to provide respondents with a context for discussing autonomy. Analysis of the interview data proceeded in two stages. First, responses to those interview questions that asked interviewees to comment on specific programs or practices (e.g., teacher education, public health, benchmarks) were examined. Describing specific programs or practices in the interview questions gave substance around which respondents could frame answers about who should make decisions or how public higher education could respond to public priorities. The programs or practices described in these substantive questions were illustrations rather than a focus of the study, and allowed respondents to use an example to explain their thinking. In the second stage of the analysis, those interview questions that asked more explicitly about autonomy, resources, and policy values were analyzed. The responses to the scenarios were also reviewed to uncover commonalities and differences among respondents along the lines of the conceptual framework of the study.[6]

This chapter describes these findings and discusses the perspectives that emerged as the analysis proceeded. Taken together, the data from the responses to the interview questions helps to explain perceptions of autonomy and expectations of public

[6] Quotes are used extensively because they are gleaned from the raw data and demonstrate the perception of the speaker about a particular issue. Because confidentiality of informants is a key concern, quotes are attributed in general terms, i.e., "a senior university administrator" rather than by specific position.

higher education among decision makers inside and outside the academy. Answers to the research questions will be discussed in Chapter Five, along with a discussion about how the conceptual framework contributed to the study.

Interview Questions using Scenarios

In order to provide respondents with a framework or a context for thinking about how decisions about public higher education should be made, some of the interview questions described situations faced by the public university, and asked respondents how decisions should be made about those issues. These scenarios were created around situations or processes during the 1999 - 2002 period, and included teacher shortage, public health, and benchmarks for performance measurement. The interviewer explained that the research interest was not so much in what took place during the particular event, but in how, in respondents' perspectives, decisions of that sort should be made. Participants were asked how decisions should be made and who should make them, whether those at the university or outsiders. Strong responses were elicited, perhaps because of the current and contentious nature of the situations evoked by the scenarios.

Teacher Shortage

In this scenario, respondents were asked how and whether the state legislature should influence the University of Hawai'i's College of Education in meeting the need for more teachers, a critical issue in the state. There was a range of responses about the teacher shortage problem and its link to teacher education at the public university. On the one hand, some respondents saw a somewhat clear cut issue that would be resolved

by the state's wielding a heavier hand in influencing the university to produce more teachers. In this view, the university was not upholding its responsibility for producing an adequate number of teachers for the community, and others outside the system should hold the university accountable for this deficiency. This view was exemplified by a campus outsider who commented:

> I'm certain that the legislature has to influence the university. I'm certain that the university doesn't take leadership with that. It just amazes me that there hasn't been more of a commitment to the College of Education and to teacher training when they know how desperate the state is to having good teachers....If the university isn't going to answer the tremendous need of the state on its own, then perhaps it has to be done through the legislature.

This respondent spoke of being disinclined to have the legislature impose laws, but perceived that it was necessary in this case, given the dire teacher shortage situation, and the unwillingness of the university to respond. Other respondents from outside the university also voiced a conflict between a reluctance to prescribe priorities for the academy and concern about a situation where the public's interest was being neglected. This conflict was exacerbated by the budget situation, and the inability of the state to provide extra funding for programs that it considered a priority. A legislator expressed this dilemma:

> So the dilemma always is should we ask them to generate more teachers within their own resources or do we provide additional resources. I think in the ideal situation we'd give them more money and say we want to generate X more teachers.

Without funding as a leverage to impose state or legislative priorities upon the university, a few legislators expressed frustration that, with autonomy, the university

was free to reallocate its funds internally and could hamper a program that was seen as a high public priority. One legislator characterized the public perception of the university as "in their own world" and "ivory tower...stubborn, they don't want to help out." Another seemed to feel that the legislature was held hostage in a situation where the university reallocated funds, "knowing that the legislature knows that it's the critical area and we can direct resources to that area, thereby boosting the university's budget."

For those outside the university, then, there was an assumption that the university understood the state's priorities, that they were not budgeting to meet these priorities, and that autonomy prevented outsiders' intervention in the use of university funds. In the case of teacher education, outsiders clearly felt that the state had a responsibility in the education of teachers. One state legislator commented, "especially in the last year we have been...really **forcing** the Department of Education, the Board of Education, to work with the College of Education on a seamless system from preschool all the way up to higher education."

To others, however, teacher shortage was not a university problem but part of a more complex social issue. Some outside the university observed that there was both a problem with teacher training and teaching as a profession. One respondent saw it as something that higher pay would solve, but others empathized with the university. "...the public demands that if there's a teacher shortage, they say just get more people at the College of Education and that's the solution." But, this respondent went on to say that the College could not simply recruit and educate more students. It faced capacity problems of its own, with inadequate facilities, faculty vacancies, and salary structures bound by collective bargaining agreements.

Those from within the university system certainly would agree that teacher shortage problems were part of a larger social issue, and one that needed the resources and responses from many within society to solve. This is a typical comment:

> There are things that have to be done by other parts of society in order to address that problem. The conditions in the schools, it doesn't do much good for the university to turn out teachers if they drop out of that profession after a year or whatever.

Others agreed that teacher shortages were not caused by the university's unwillingness to produce a sufficient number of teachers, but arose because, "teaching is not an attractive profession, you don't get paid well for it, and people don't stay in it." Several pointed to a high attrition rate in Hawai'i that created "a very leaky bucket" in the profession. And another commented that, "it has to start first with making sure that people want to enter that profession." "It's all about market forces," one administrator commented. That being said, teacher shortage was still a long term and complex social issue because even after a sufficient number of students were recruited, it would take them many years to complete their education and professional training before they were able to teach in the classroom.

To university insiders the state has a fiscal responsibility to provide funding for programs like teacher training:

> They have every right and responsibility to make it clear what their expectations are in terms of trying to address that problem. At the same time they have a great responsibility to provide the funding to do it.

A cry of, "no mandates without money" was heard more than once, but one department chair paused to ponder thoughtfully that such funding for a specific purpose may infringe upon autonomy,

> I think the thing for the legislature to do would be to set aside funding and have very specific objectives. ...Now in a way that may be violating autonomy if the legislature is deciding, ...but I think if you had a really good information base to project from, and you wanted to solve a specific problem, I would think that the university would be glad to try to solve that problem provided it was getting adequate resources to do that.

A senior administrator differentiated between an acceptable designation of funds for specific purposes and interference: "...sometimes they actually appropriate money with earmarks and to some extent that's a legitimate, it is legitimate, the extent to which it goes toward a public purpose. We only get concerned if they say it's going to go for the X department or the Y campus. But I think those are legitimate ways in which the state can express its concern about manpower shortages, but it should be left to the university the questions of how to accomplish those things..."

Public Health

In 1999 the University's Board of Regents voted to close the School of Public Health as a separate entity and offer programs through the School of Medicine at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The issue was a highly controversial one, generating public vigils, the creation of a task force to study alternatives, angry testimony at Board of Regents meetings, and calls for the resignation of the university president. Students, alumni, citizens, and elected officials rallied to recommend sustaining the school in its existing structure. At public hearings of the task force, Hawai'i's congressional

representatives and state Department of Health officials voiced their support for a stand alone School of Public Health. An air of pride in local capabilities was evident in some of these public statements. Geri Marullo, president and chief executive officer of Child and Family Service and former deputy health director, exemplifies this tone as she describes the role of local public health providers after Hurricane Iniki devastated the island of Kauai in September 1992. "Long after our mainland help went home, it was our homegrown who dealt with and helped solved the long-term concerns. If that hurricane had hit the island of Oahu with the same vengeance, we would not be debating the need for the school of public health today." (Kreifels, 1999, August 17).

Respondents were asked to comment on who should make decisions such as the one about the School of Public Health that produce professionals who work in Hawai'i as well as the Pacific in communities with unique needs. Even three years later, the question elicited strong comment. By and large, both those within and outside the university responded that it was the responsibility of the university Board of Regents to make the decision about the closure of the School. But within that response there were many shades of meaning. Most within the university mentioned academic or research standards and accreditation as legitimate measures by which to guide decisions about program continuity or suspension. Several also felt that community or legislative input and public debate should be invited. However, some university insiders saw risks in that process. A few alluded to the politics involved in such decisions. One senior university administrator commented that, "every program in the university has a constituency," and if left to politicians who must heed their constituents, no program would close.

Among legislators a few showed an almost grudging respect for the university when it made a difficult decision. One legislator remarked that the university needed to make vertical cuts, and that, "the decision was made by the appropriate party," although it should have been structured differently, consolidating public health with other health and social work programs. Another university outsider spoke of the public health decision:

> That is a very good example of how difficult it is to change rhetoric to action. We'd gone through eight straight years of budget cuts, the university's no different from other agencies of the state, and outside of public health I don't know of an example where people have practiced what they've preached. ...And as difficult as it is you have to make decisions on how you're going to prioritize. And the one on the bottom, as good as it is, maybe is not as good as the rest. ...And that's what happened to public health.

And another legislator was convinced that the university had made the right decision, and one that did not eliminate access to public health because programs had been subsumed within other schools. "And I think that's part of the reason to advocate for autonomy, because things do go in cycles. And if we had to legislate every creation of school or program that ends up being a very horrendous kind of process. It's always easier for the regents to create a school or program than for us to legislate it. The frustration is when the legislature thinks it's a good idea and the university doesn't respond." (One example of not responding was in the teacher shortage situation where some outsiders perceived that the university had reallocated funds intended for teacher training to other areas. Although no specific preventive or corrective action was

proposed, more than one elected official said that there is a "huge propensity to proviso"[7] as these actions are observed by outsiders)

One legislator sums up the public health situation:

> I guess at the minimum we should have input. It's primarily a university decision. ... It's hard for me to criticize that one. They tried to address it and they made a hard decision, it wasn't a popular decision. I kind of disagree with it...The most you can do is be transparent about it, and this is what you based your decision on...and you have to trust that they've made the best decision within the context of what they're doing.

Benchmarks

Given the changing relationship between public higher education and the state, respondents were asked how the university should be held accountable to the public, and about the role of benchmarks that were developed to measure and report indicators of university performance. Benchmarks were first adapted by the University of Hawai'i system in response to Act 161 passed by the 1995 Legislature. Act 161 required the university to adopt benchmarks and report on them to the legislature. In his, "Introduction to the Benchmarks/Performance Indicators Report 2000 Update," President Kenneth Mortimer writes of, "a new university-state relationship" should the proposed constitutional amendment regarding autonomy be approved by voters. Nevertheless, he affirms that the university would still be accountable to the public through mechanisms such as legislative process, accreditation and program reviews, and audits. The benchmark report is one such mechanism for reporting to the legislature.

[7] Several respondents used the phrase, "to proviso" to mean, to create a stipulation within the budget or to designate funds for a specific purpose or program.

In spite of the requirement for performance indicator reporting, many from both within and outside the university had some difficulty in giving positive support for a benchmark system. Several reasons were given. First, many questioned whether benchmarks measured the right thing. Faculty asked whether measuring effectiveness indicators was just another hoop to jump through and one which added to their workload. Both groups were aware of the dangers of narrow indicators that are easier to measure than more global ones, but which may be less relevant to meaningful success. Even those who supported the creation and implementation of benchmarks observed that it was a complex system and could not be directly tied to funding. Several respondents perceived that indicators would be tied to funding on the margin, that is, over and above a base budget given by the state to the public higher education system. Respondents from both within and outside the university felt that benchmarks should create incentives rather than be applied punitively.

When respondents were asked in a follow-up question to describe specific ways in which the university could be held accountable to the public, there was a struggle with the answer, particularly within the framework of the constitutional amendment in 2000. Legislators expressed a feeling of having less power to exert measures than before the change. When respondents formulated accountability measures, they were global. One, formerly with the state executive branch, commented that in the entrepreneurial academy, "publishing is the accountability." For those in the legislative branch, however, the new autonomy seemed to create an uncertainty about how to elicit accountability from its public higher education system. One legislator called it, "a wait and see" period. Those within the higher education system tended to take a more

collaborative approach. Several within the campus felt that it was necessary to show the community the shared way in which universities study and discuss options. But what is glimpsed behind these statements is the assumption that one's accountability for faculty work itself is essentially to a profession and professional standards, and that scholarly contributions are not easily measured by the types of benchmarks that institutions create. One faculty member asked rhetorically whether the measure of productivity of a brilliant young researcher, a graduate teaching assistant, is meaningfully tied to the number of students enrolled in his classes and the number of graduates in his field.

Interview Questions on Concepts

After analyzing the raw data gathered from responses to the interview questions describing scenarios, the interview questions on the topics of autonomy, resources, and policy values were analyzed. The responses to the questions using scenarios were also analyzed to locate consistencies or conflicts, and to refine the interpretation of a response.

Autonomy

Most respondents, both from within the university and within state government, perceive that autonomy is tied to administrative issues, specifically budget control. With autonomy, the university system is given a lump sum budget and decisions about funding specific programs are made internally, within the public higher education system. As for academic issues, one respondent summed the views of others by commenting, "I think there was a history of leaving the academic decisions to the Board

of Regents and university administration." When program decisions, such as cutting a program or starting a new one, were to be made, respondents within state government as well as the university felt that it would be up to the university, although the reasons they identified may have been different.

Three perspectives on autonomy were identified: 1) economic engine; 2) budget control; and 3) double-edged sword. The perspectives were not mutually exclusive definitions, and a single respondent may have held more than one perspective because they are intertwined. For example, the university's potential to become a more entrepreneurial, competitive enterprise, and thus of greater service to the state, was part of the description put forth by the university in its FAQs on autonomy (University of Hawai'i, 1998). To achieve this potential, the university identified the changes needed, including greater flexibility in control over assets (budget control), right to its own legal counsel, and control over personnel matters. The university also stated that it would continue to be held accountable to the people of Hawai'i by mission statement, performance and results, through legislative oversight and process, external and internal audits, and accreditation and program reviews. Thus, establishing its own budget control was linked to the university's capacity for supporting the state's economic development. The interviews were conducted two years after the passage of the constitutional amendment, and some respondents were concerned about autonomy's impact on accountability, both in prescribed and informal ways. For example, some questioned how, with increased fiscal autonomy for the university, the public can be assured that state funds find their way to programs of public priority such as teacher education. And, outside the formal processes such as budgeting, some respondents

perceived that informal avenues of communication between legislators and some university insiders would be closed as a result of the university's new-found autonomy. In their perspectives, these channels seemed to function as an informal means to achieve "checks and balances" among university groups, and their anticipated decline produced the insight that autonomy is indeed a double-edged sword.

The Economic Engine: In the late 1990s, the notion that the university could fuel a resurgence of the economy in the state became a justification for changing the constitutional status of the public higher education system and giving the university autonomy. McLendon (2000) writes that while state government interference had been a continuing issue over many years to those within the university, it was only in 1997, when Hawai'i's governor and legislative leaders established an Economic Revitalization Task Force in response to the state's economic crisis, that the connection was made between university autonomy and the state's economic well-being (McLendon, 2000, pp. 217-219). It was that fortuitous juncture of issue and circumstances in the environment that propelled autonomy from an internal university concern toward a broader public policy arena, culminating in the vote for a constitutional amendment in 2000.

A few respondents in the current study observed that the relationship between the state and the public university system had been evolving, with incremental legislation to give the university greater control over the years. Acts 320 and 321 in 1986 allowed the university increasing operational flexibility, legislation in 1995 allowed the university to keep tuition and fees, and in 1998 the university was delegated increasing control in order to support economic revitalization. However, the perception

that university autonomy is linked to the state's economy was not universal among stakeholders either within or outside the campus. Linking the two concepts, the university as autonomous and as being an economic engine, was most commonly employed by those who were in some way tied to the task force during its period of activity, but the connection appeared to be outside the perspectives of many within state government as well as the public higher education system.

The recollection of one respondent who had been within the executive level of state government, and thus close to the development of the task force, is paraphrased below:

> ...we all agreed that UH is the intellectual heart of the economy. In California, the UC system is so autonomous that it was referred to as the fourth branch of government. I thought that the California model was a good model because it produced economic development, and that spoke for itself. ... My expectations were that the university should become more entrepreneurial....The point of autonomy is to let the university go for it.

And another who had been within the executive branch of state government:

> So public universities should not be treated the same as departments. Actually if it's a public university it ends up as a core function. In fact, it's a very important part of the state's core function because education, and higher education, is more than just the university. It's really an investment in our future. It's an economic engine.

The perspective of a respondent, formerly with the university, was that outcomes after the passage of the constitutional amendment fell short of many expectations of autonomy for the university. "To get to the next level, in my opinion, the university needs to go out and raise, to be more entrepreneurial and to get more money. ... the true way to get autonomy is to get your own money."

Another respondent who had worked within the university administration during the time the task force was formed also highlighted the role of faculty and described a "love-hate relationship" whereby the university is perceived as necessary for state growth, but mistrusted because faculty work life is not well understood by non academics.

> I think there's a perception amongst people outside the university that faculty not just at this university but at any university have an easy life....So there is this problem and if you look at most faculty, at least the faculty I'm familiar with, they put in by any standards a full day's work...But it's not the typical kind of work that other people are used to. So there is that kind of misperception....but what balances that off... is the acknowledgement that a university, and in this case the university is the University of Hawai'i, the university is essential for an economic recovery. And it provides the engine to start and to sustain the recovery, and so you need to have a strong university, and a strong university depends on a strong faculty.

Two other respondents perceived that greater flexibility would also enhance the state's ability to attract industry. In the words of a legislator:

> So I just believe that with globalization, the rapid acceleration and pace of change, very centralized control kind of organizations and institutions cannot succeed. And I've been a proponent of increased autonomy because I really believe that if an organization is not empowered to respond, then it's only a matter of time... And when you look at case studies of other states, if you are in fact trying to create economic diversity, almost always it's centered around a university and intellectual property or research or whatever you may have that spins off the university. And so I think it's fundamentally important. The university has to be vibrant. Technology centers all surround universities.

And to another, a university administrator:

> I think it became apparent in the last decade or so When other institutions have become much more flexible that we need to also provide that flexibility to the university because we expected more of this university. We expected it to not only be just another public school, but we expected it to be actually an economic driver. A lot of research is driven out of the university or out of the private-public partnerships that are driven out of the university, we needed a university that's a lot more flexible and able to react a lot quicker.

Another, a dean, commented that, "the state should not be in the business of universities…it's like any other big business, and you need to empower a board and hire competent faculty to assure the state that it's a good outstanding business. And the business is research, education, and service. And the state has too many other things to deal with…" The perception of this academic was that, while the state has a responsibility to provide financial resources to public universities, many professional schools and colleges also want to, "create an environment to attract dollars" for the local economy.

With the exception of those above, however, most respondents did not initiate discussion about the university as an economic engine, and most did not appear to perceive university autonomy as a means to foster development. One legislator chuckled, "I don't know that it's an engine so much as I think it's an engine as far as spending." When questioned, this legislator acknowledged that the university may have fostered job creation after the closing of the sugar industry on the Big Island as well as by generating research, but his overriding concern was over the diminishing state funds available to the legislature for state government allocations, including public higher

education. His perspective was that university resources should be poured directly back into the community to "provide instruction and research that would then help the community," citing the land grant ideal of university research to support agricultural purposes.

Budget Control: To respondents within the university, autonomy gave hope for freedom from onerous budget controls that stifled fiscal efficiency and in instances, academic pursuits. More than one respondent commented that being able to keep tuition was a boon to developing fiscal responsibility. Changes in specific procedures were often cited as characteristics of the evolution toward autonomy.

A former university senior administrator observed that the constitutional amendment enacted in 2000, "while very important, was just another step in a very long trend" that began in 1995 when the university was given control over its tuition. With increased autonomy, the university was able to make decisions to release itself from a number of state restrictions, and made changes such as issuing credit cards for small purchases, discontinuing the time-consuming practice of inventorying small items, and moving funds according to its own priorities. "Those actions provided substantial incentives for the university to do what's right. They were incentives. That's my portion of truth."

A university faculty member and department chair commented:

> My expectations were that this [autonomy] would allow the university administration to have a great deal more discretion in its use of the funding that it got from the legislature. To give you an example, some semesters our department has a greater need for teaching assistants than in other semesters because enrollments are different or we might offer a new course or one that's only offered every

> other year. One of the things that I thought autonomy would allow us to do would be to simply say, "Oh, all right you don't have to have a specific position...the dean can just say you can have another TA this semester."

A university administrator also perceived that financial issues were the key to autonomy:

> In general I expected some greater flexibility within the university in the financial side of the house, and I think the other change I expected, which has more or less happened is a greater sense that the university was in charge of its own destiny. Both in a sense to be able to chart its own future, but usually the legislature did not interfere with the general goals, but in terms of prioritization within those. We knew we could approach the legislature with the funding priorities that would be honored.

Those outside the university also cited changes in budget controls as a signal of the shift toward autonomy, although their view was a more general one, and they did not mention specific procedural changes in procurement or administration. A few explained that the mechanism for implementing the new autonomy would start with the university's initiatives to change each related law, procedure and practice, step by step. One legislator commented:

> And the autonomy issue basically dealt with ...setting up their own system, purchasing or procurement system, contracts, human resources, etc. up at the university.

The process was seen as a gradual one of progressive steps toward greater fiscal control by the university. What is of interest about some of the comments is the perception of the legislative body "granting" autonomy. A legislator comments:

> There's been a whole sequence of additional authority, flexibility, autonomy granted to the university over a period of years. It started with fiscal flexibility in the early eighties. Then in the early nineties we granted

> them control over tuition and tuition waivers and a whole bunch of other financial-related kinds of things. And then we granted them authority to do their own legal work.

Another state government respondent referred to the need for the state providing a stable funding base to the public university, after which the university would "take care of everything else."

To summarize, both those within and outside the university perceived autonomy as having to do in large part with budget control. While a few mentioned the university's legal representation and personnel matters, the most common initial definition offered by both groups referred to autonomy as greater control or flexibility in financial matters.

The Double-Edged Sword: While there was some common ground for both groups in their characterization of autonomy as largely an administrative matter, there were differences in how members of each group perceived the positive and negative effects of autonomy. Two interviewees from within the university used the phrase, "a double edged sword" to describe the dual nature of autonomy. First, the "good news, bad news" polarity is described by a few administrators. "Good news is that you have autonomy - go get your own attorneys - the bad news was that you find a way to pay for them." Lump sum budgeting from the state may be good news, but the possibility of unfunded mandates is bad news (as, for example, if the legislature were to mandate tuition waivers for particular groups of students, but without additional allocations to the university to make up for its loss of tuition revenues).

Second, a few respondents within the campus perceived that autonomy was a double-edged sword because it applied differently to different groups within the university itself. One, a department chair, felt that the positive aspect of autonomy was that it allowed the institution to make decisions without going back to the legislature for every (personnel) position and supported the freedom of scholars to plan and develop programs of academic interest. However, after the amendment, this chair perceived that university administrators could more autonomously make decisions about internal allocations, with the potential of treating some groups (i.e., a department or a program) less favorably than others. This respondent felt that only good accountability (to outsiders such as the public) would mitigate some of these dangers.

Another within the university also asked whether the changes resulting from autonomy applied to all sectors of the university:

> Some of the tensions that date back to that constitutional change are tensions that continue and that haven't been solved yet that have to do with whether or not autonomy means the same thing to every part of the university or not. I had hoped that it would mean a stronger role for faculty, and ...I was disappointed. It seems to me more autonomy for the administration than it meant for the university as a whole.

State legislators alluded to a dual nature of autonomy in referring to segments within the university who in the past had brought their appeals directly to state government representatives, thereby circumventing the university's own budgeting processes and priorities. Several legislators used images such as, "don't come crying to me" or, "you can't have your cake and eat it too" to describe their admonition to university supplicants in the post-autonomy age. One legislator characterized the new

condition as, "cutting off your means of appeal" because decisions were to be made internally by the university, without legislative oversight.

Both those within the university and within state government acknowledged that a few deans or faculty made "end runs" or appeals to the legislators (or executive) for support when the university's budget requests were different from their own priorities. In the words of one campus administrator:

> ...The university quite frankly has always had a fair amount of what you could call autonomy, but control over its academic programs. Generally when the legislature gets into the academic affairs side it's because some people from the university are down there lobbying for very specific agendas.

It was the perceived end (or decrease) in opportunities to make end runs that prompted one legislator to comment that the university wanted autonomy and individuals shouldn't "come crying to me."

Resources and the Public University

Clearly, dwindling resources and the economic condition of the state changed the relationship between the public higher education system and state government, and caused considerable and observable strain. While both groups were affected by the sustained period of diminishing resources, they held divergent perspectives that reflected their differing areas of responsibility. Three aspects were observed: 1) the impact of fiscal constraints among those who work within the university; 2) the effects of changing levels of appropriations on accountability; and 3) the role of resources in the evolving relationship between public higher education and the state.

Impact of Fiscal Constraints: During the decade of the nineties, state funding to public higher education decreased from twelve or thirteen percent to eight or nine percent of the state budget. The university reeled from the debilitating effects of these reductions, and morale, especially at the research campus, was low (Johnsrud, 1998). The decade ended with a system wide faculty strike and the faculty union's opposition to the autonomy amendment. A respondent from within the university described the effect that the state's economic situation had on their work lives as faculty:

> One very concrete impact was...it had a profound impact on recruiting, recruiting of young faculty. We weren't able to get good people in some cases. And I know that the other departments have a much harder time than we do...Those are disastrous problems. ... Clearly the impact on the library when journal subscriptions were cut off and no books were purchased for a couple of years. Those were very bad. Right now there's a serious problem with faculty travel funds. And that shouldn't be the case.

Another, a faculty member and department chair, describes the effect of budget cuts on professional work conditions:

> With the rate at which computers change, improve, and stop working if they get a lot of use we should all be able to replace our computers once every three years. Well, we've got faculty who've had the same computer for ten or twelve years.

This respondent also described crowded rooms and insufficient space for students to study, termite ridden furniture, leaky roofs, and buildings badly in need of repair. In this respondent's view, the irony of occupying "some kind of academic ghetto" was that the department did well in national rankings, and students were recognized with national awards for their work.

Senior administrators recognized that public higher education could not compete for funding with other state agencies burdened with mounting costs of mandatory social welfare programs:

> We were in a downturn when the rest of the country was on an upturn. ..[in some other states] what they cut in the early nineties they got the money back in the late nineties. The University of Hawai'i never got the money back. [This was partly due to cuts in the percentage of the state budget allocated to higher education and]...partly due to the increased cost of Medicare and prisons and a variety of those things.

With insufficient resources available to meet the operating needs of the university, administrators were forced to look for cuts either across the board or vertically in specific programs, and to find additional sources of funding. Efficiencies were realized by taking the initiative to make administrative changes. The mechanism was to change the law, step by step, and then to implement procedural changes (such as the credit card and other purchasing changes described above). One administrator commented:

> As we approached the legislative session, we looked at the varying things that impeded our ability to carry out what we thought was our job. This was in the administrative area.... we looked at the varying statutes that made life difficult or at least impeded what we felt to be an efficient way of doing business. And we basically amended it so that it would not apply to the university.

Once the law was changed, the university implemented internal procedural revisions.

Perhaps the most visible impact of efforts to boost revenue was an increase in tuition. Another impact was to intensify private fundraising efforts. In addition,

proposals to increase the number of nonresident students were discussed. One faculty member responded positively to this, for academic reasons:

> The reason that I wouldn't mind seeing more students recruited from outside is that I think it would be good for the student body to have a greater mix. There's a strong tendency for kids who come here to stay with their high school cliques. And somehow that undercuts the university experience.

In contrast, a legislator's perception focused on out of state students as a source of tuition revenue:

> We put more resources into recruiting from the mainland because they pay the higher tuitions so we get more money. Before that it was no, we want more local kids to go to school, more Hawai'i kids to go to school, and ... keep that percentage [of nonresidents] down to 5% and get mad if we went over, because it was all taxpayers' money.

It was evident to several from within the university that the university's operating budget was no longer "all taxpayers' money" and that sources from outside the boundaries of the state were of growing importance to the university. One respondent pointed out that professional schools such as schools of law and medicine were largely self sufficient contributors because of their high tuitions and the large amount of external research dollars they attract. Another pointed to the contribution made by external research dollars when state law was changed to allow the university to keep its overhead.

In short, as the decade of the nineties wore on with little relief from the state's budget crisis, the university began to more actively compete for resources outside the

state as it also sought to free itself from statutory restrictions and fiscal procedures that limited its flexibility.

Effect on Accountability: Providing adequate resources to the university and having control over its disposition assured legislators that the university could be held accountable. With the resource crisis in the state in the 1990s and the subsequent passage of the autonomy amendment, legislators perceived that they were losing the ability to steer the university toward public priorities. Many expressed a troubled concern that state priorities may not be honored, and sensed a tension between the university's autonomy and its accountability to the state that supports it. Some who supported autonomy in principle felt conflicted about maintaining a hands-off approach when they observed the university following its own priorities rather than the ones expressed by the legislative body. Several legislators perceived that, once given its lump sum budget, the university reallocated funds in a manner that was not consistent with the intent of the appropriations. "They're reallocating all over the place," was a complaint heard several times.

Legislators spoke of being caught in a dilemma between the belief that strong universities need a certain degree of autonomy, and the pressure toward being prescriptive, for example by adding provisos to budgets in order to target recognized public priorities such as teacher training. A respondent commented, "That's the dilemma, the accountability and autonomy..."

The Role of Resources: For those within state government, a central theme clustered around the loss of control over public higher education, especially given the

weakened resources of the state.[8] The assumption was that by appropriating sufficient levels of resources to the university, the state could more effectively influence higher education decisions. One legislator who has "seen the control move out of the legislature back to the UH" commented:

> ...every session, especially in the last decade it's been hard to meet the minimum requirements of the program without cutting to the bone. In the eighties when the budget was fat it might have been more obvious that you would use this kind of method to either entice or punish. But when the economy's bad and you're barely getting by, those excesses aren't available for this kind of hammer approach.

Other legislators spoke positively about the statutory changes that were made "to create an incentive for the university to pursue increased extramural funding," but then expressed concern that money would be used for general university purposes rather than being returned, as intended, to the unit that generated the funds.

There was also a perception among outsiders of being locked out of the information loop about university decisions, and the role of resources as a bargaining tool. One legislator, not averse to autonomy, spoke of the "tension" in legislative decision making:

> ...there's a constant, a political tension of how we allocate resources and then we're not gonna give them anything if they're not gonna tell us what they use it for.

[8] By the time the interviews were conducted, both the governor and university president had changed. The university president resigned effective July 1, 2001, and a new governor was elected on November 5, 2002. While changes in leadership undoubtedly are important, what is clear is that resource allocation was, and continues to be, a troubling issue in the relationship between the public university system and the state.

The struggle between public higher education funding and control was fought over many issues. One elected official said, when asked about tuition waivers:

> So when we've applied pressure by saying that The university has to provide tuition waivers they come back and say, "Where's the money?" It's a very frustrating process at this point. Because on the one hand we want to encourage the university to move in a certain direction, on the other hand they're saying we'll move there if there's funding available. If there's no funding available, we can't guarantee it.

Some within state government still perceived that the legislature could exert control through funding mechanisms. To paraphrase one state government respondent:

> The legislature can express itself through laws or resolutions. [proviso?] Yes, they can. It has to be an issue where the legislature has enough of an interest to make a statement. Can the legislature be punitive? It can cut funds. It can cut the base.

More commonly, however, legislators themselves expressed a frustration over their narrower options, given the university's new found autonomy.

The relationship between the state and public higher education had been fueled by generous levels of state funding in past years. An elected official somewhat poignantly contrasts the days of surplus in the 1980s and the situation in the nineties:

> ...we had surplus monies so we could direct those monies to the university. Issues like access through community colleges, open access for a lot of people. ...Hawai'i was the darling, the model. I thought that the legislature believed in higher education and put money in higher education. I think with this whole fiscal situation that's deteriorated quite a bit. I don't think it's a matter of legislators then and now [being] different in terms of their support for higher education, it's more a matter of availability of resources.

By the nineties, however, the university was developing many other sources of funding external to the state. How would this changing resource situation change assumptions about accountability to the state? Or, is there another aspect of accountability that derives from factors other than financial leveraging? One respondent recalled a conversation with a colleague in another state in which only 15% of the public university's funding came from state funds. And yet, he recalled, they were treated "as if a hundred percent was being funded by the state." The findings in this study also seem to reveal that assumptions about the accountability of the public university to the state go beyond the ties that come with fiscal dependence. In the next step of the study, responses that reveal beliefs and assumptions about the role of public higher education were explored in order to inform the analysis about links between culture and notions of autonomy and accountability.

Culture and Policy

Notions of culture were derived from several areas in the interview protocol. For example, respondents were asked to select the most important public policy value in relation to public higher education. Respondents were prompted by asking them to select from four values, efficiency, quality, equity and choice. Most respondents quickly replaced the word choice with access in discussing policy values as they applied to higher education. Responses to other interview questions were also scanned to uncover data about beliefs about the role of public higher education.

Data clustered around three topical categories: values and decision strategies, perceptions of control; and perceptions of role.

Values and Decision Strategies: When asked about policy values, most respondents outside the university named access as the highest policy value in public higher education. Elected officials spoke with strong conviction about the importance of access. They spoke of the necessity of providing geographic access to higher education for students from the islands of Maui, Kaua'i, and Moloka'i. One respondent perceived that this was tied to workforce issues, because "the only way to succeed is for those communities to grow their own because no other people would want to stay in those [remote] areas." Others, however, described a belief in access because it is the cornerstone of the democratic ideal. They spoke with conviction about the importance of the university's community college system that provides an array of vocational programs and offers open access to residents on all islands.

In contrast, the responses of university insiders were more scattered when asked to select among the values. Several selected quality as a key factor, but also acknowledged the vital importance of access in an island state. "You have to recognize it's a long paddle," one university insider stated, "and so in order to provide people with access to education we have foregone some efficiencies." If efficiency were the policy value, there would be few neighbor island programs. Respondents valued opening access to a "window of opportunity to neighbor island students." Nonetheless, campus respondents who selected quality also felt that "access to mediocrity is not access" and perceived that the university system at all levels must strive to develop and maintain educational quality.

Responses to a number of interview questions substantiated the value placed on quality by those who worked within the university system. A university administrator

and faculty member emphasized the importance of education in society and the risks of focusing only on the economic returns of higher education. Education is a "loss leader" because it is costly and cannot be accomplished using a "cookie cutter." However, it is an investment in producing a higher quality of life for individuals as well as community.

> It is not the university that is the economic engine. It's the educated person that's the engine so that when we educate someone that person then becomes an engine that drives our society not just in dollars ... in terms of quality of life, the educated person [will question] and say, "Don't put in this thing here. We're going to degrade our environment and our health. ... The state has to understand its obligation to its populous, and that is to give our kids a prime education.

While there were similarities in policy values, university insiders and outsiders cited different strategies in coming to decisions about higher education. Elected officials adopted populist strategies, heeding the voices of constituents. Those on campus, particularly those who were faculty, perceived that decisions could be approached in the same manner that faculty approached campus decisions --- through discussion and debate, collaboration, and reasoned analysis. A few thought that campus decision making models could be a model of debate and democratic collaboration.

In contrast, from the perspective of some campus outsiders, the practices of the university (in selection or promotion practices) appeared as a, "secretive kind of process that generates that closed club kind of atmosphere" in contrast to the more open, diverse legislative processes.

Perceptions of Control: In their study of culture and education policy, Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt (1989) create a taxonomy of seven mechanisms (finance, personnel training, student testing and assessment, program definition, organization and governance, curriculum materials, buildings and facilities) of state control over school policy. While mechanisms of state control over public higher education would differ from controls over public schools, the taxonomy contributes to an understanding of how control is perceived and implemented. Respondents in this study of a public higher education system focused on mechanisms of financial control during the period studied (after the passing of a statewide constitutional autonomy amendment). Those listed by stakeholders outside the university include budget tools such as provisos, cutting the base, and incentive funding on the margins. At the same time, however, this same group of respondents expressed frustration that this form of control had weakened because of the state's economic crisis. These respondents had few comments about other types of mechanisms, for example, benchmarks which are forms of accountability through measurements such as student achievements and graduation rates.[9]

In contrast, those in the higher education system operate within a network of academic controls based on scholarly or professional criteria. These include activities such as peer reviewed publication of research findings, discoveries of new knowledge, and academic or accreditation performance standards that affect personnel and program

[9] Another mechanism of control affecting the public university are teacher certification requirements. During this same period, from about 2000-2001, the Hawaii state legislature (Hawai'i has only one school statewide district) passed a number of laws dealing with teacher quality initiatives. These included financial incentives, teacher preparation, licensure and certification, provisions for a Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board, professional development, and recruitment and retention (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)).

decisions. To a large extent these academic controls have broader reference points beyond the actual geographic location of the scholar or institution. When asked to explain professional academic standards (for example, class size), the dean of a professional school commented:

> I like to explain that by the following analogies: The airline industry is standard around the world, especially the economically enhanced world...you know that it's standardized...or cars, standardized all across the country and so what I talk about is the discipline and academic standards are the same and we want high quality just like we want high quality in our goods and services that we have in our secular environment.

Another member of the faculty characterized faculty as, "oriented to their disciplines not to the community. Most faculty think of themselves as a part of a great interchangeable parts machine that's worldwide."

This contrast between accountability to a professional culture among academics and the culture of state officials created clashes in approach between the two groups.

Perceptions of Role: Respondents from state government perceived their role from both a public servant and political conflict approach. As public servants, they viewed their responsibilities through a thick lens of "oversight" and "checks and balances." From their perspective, a primary public concern is whether or not the university is responsive to the needs of the community. One elected official had this understanding about their role: "..it's the legislature's duty to lobby the regents..." This respondent perceived that the state has a pure interest for the public good. In contrast to the state's interest, external entities like private companies have motives that

may compromise the university's mission, and thus need to be monitored by the public sector:

> In discussing biotech we haven't discussed the moral and ethical implications which are the real core issues in public policy decisions. .. You have big corporations dangling millions of dollars in research funds...And I see an important role for the university is not only as a think tank but also as a model community where you [bring] all these great thinkers together to move toward a better society... So you have to have some security with nonbiased funding. [the legislature?] Yes, the core values of the university will always be perpetuated because we are supporting the university for these purposes. Uncompromised purposes.

Another facet of the legislature's public role is in being "a citizens group" and one that is in the forefront, directly accountable to the public on current issues and practical outcomes. One respondent perceived these contrasts between the two institutions:

> You guys are the intellectuals, all based on theory. When you come down here it's not theory. It's common sense, practically to the point that we are here to get re-elected. So I listen to my constituents...

In contrast, many university respondents had an "educated person" approach and perceived their role more globally, and intrinsically tied to the goals and functions of the university.

> I think our quintessential mission is to define what it means to be an educated person and I think we should offer an experience for our students that makes them an educated person. ... **We're not here to educate nurses, or doctors or engineers or teachers.** We're here to define what it means to be educated, to produce, to nurture this educated person.

This perspective of what makes an educated person is not specific to a particular vocation or local community, but situates itself in a broader framework of education. This creates a gap in understanding when contrasted to the more immediate labor needs of the local workforce. Even in the case of a university insider associated with a professional degree program, the reference point was to a larger global standard rather than a predominantly local one. In the words of a faculty member, "Faculty like to think of themselves as free and able to go anywhere and do whatever they do wherever. And I think that's a problem with meeting local needs, with understanding local conditions."

Summary

The interview questions for this study directly asked informants about their perceptions and expectations of autonomy; they also asked informants to frame answers to scenarios that described critical higher education issues. Taken together, the responses reveal similarities as well as differences in the perceptions of autonomy among those within and outside the public higher education system. More importantly, the findings point to sources of tension stemming from these unique perspectives and suggest that these tensions are intensified under conditions of resource scarcity.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a review of the study, including its purpose, method, and findings. It interprets the findings discussed in Chapter 4 and analyzes them within the conceptual framework of the study and discusses how resource dependence and institutional theory contributed to our understanding of the research problem. The research questions posed in Chapter 1 are answered, and implications of the study for theory, policy and practice are discussed. Because this study was exploratory, with the purpose of identifying factors in autonomy and categories or constructs that may contribute to perceptions of autonomy, it has implications for future research that are discussed in the final section.

Summary of the Study

This study explores perceptions of autonomy held by those within and outside a public university system. In its more general form as academic freedom, scholarly autonomy is commonly understood; on the other hand, institutional autonomy whether in substantive matters of program and mission or administrative matters concerning budget and personnel, is less clearly delineated in the literature. These notions of institutional autonomy, however, create a setting within which public policy discussions and decisions occur. This study asked how autonomy is perceived by those who make decisions for public higher education and how these perceptions may affect expectations of public universities. Research was conducted to uncover these

perceptions and discuss how they may affect the implementation of autonomy in a state with a recent constitutional change that granted autonomy to its sole public university system. In the process, the study asked whether the perspectives of those who work within a public university are different from those outside, particularly in state government, with the understanding that these perspectives would affect expectations of a public higher education system and discussions of higher education issues and policies. Interview responses were examined for differences and tensions between groups.

A major premise of this study was grounded in resource dependence theory, and follows the thinking described in the work of recent studies of higher education, e.g., Slaughter and Leslie in *Academic Capitalism* (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). They argue that the resource environment surrounding public higher education has been changing dramatically for over a decade, and that as public resources become scarce, academics would look outside their usual funding sources for expanded resources. In this study respondents were asked how resource scarcity affected the work of the university, and how changes in resource dependence from one key source, the state, to multiple sources, including higher student tuition, private and federal grants, and entrepreneurial activities might affect the public university's responsiveness to public interests in the state.

A second premise of the study draws from institutional theory, and explores the understanding that institutions compete for legitimacy as well as technical and financial resources. Institutional theory claims that organizations are oriented externally, and in order to reduce competitive uncertainty, may mimic structures or legitimating beliefs of

similar organizations in their field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Examples of legitimating beliefs in higher education are the value of a liberal arts education and the value of residential housing experience for undergraduates. To understand the legitimating beliefs that are pertinent in this context, the study asked respondents what they perceived to be the most important policy values regarding public higher education, and also examined respondents' perceptions about the relationship between the state and public university. The study also explored the policy and professional cultures of respondents who worked within and outside the university.

Twenty interviews were conducted of those who worked in the university and those who worked outside the university, mostly in state government. Findings suggest that resource changes affected the work of those both within the university and within the state, that there were differences in perception about autonomy and that these perspectives caused tensions, not only between groups, but for individuals who grappled with difficult choices given resource scarcity and their belief in public higher education that is accessible and of high quality.

The study finds that tensions are evident as stakeholders within the university, looking outward for additional resources, also look outward for legitimacy, measuring the university in terms of national or universal standards adopted by professional, accrediting, or other organizations outside the state. In contrast, non-university stakeholders within the state appeared to judge the university in terms of its responsiveness to agendas like teacher training that arose from the workforce needs of the local population. Their own expectation of the public university was that it would provide access to students from within the state, training for the workforce needs of the

state, and contribute specialized knowledge to solve the economic and social problems of the population. In other words, the university's legitimacy as a social institution was strongly tied to its meeting public needs in the local community.

Discussion

In the following section, each of the three research questions is answered with findings from the data, and the conceptual framework is applied to lend an added dimension to the interpretation.

Research Question 1. How do internal and external stakeholders define and perceive autonomy in the current context of scarce resources?

This question is answered by examining the responses to the interview questions that directly ask respondents about their expectations of autonomy and their perception of the changes in relationship between the public university and state government, as well as those questions framed around current situations or processes facing the university, like teacher education or benchmarks that reveal how autonomy would function in actual situations. As discussed in Chapter 4, both internal and external stakeholders seemed to define autonomy primarily in terms of authority over administrative matters, specifically financial resources. The university's jurisdiction over substantive matters such as program development or closure seemed to be accepted by both those within and outside the campus system; however, in the broader application of education's mission itself there was divergence of perspective. Several respondents from within the university described their mission as one of creating an educated person who is able to think and make reasoned judgments, while respondents

from outside the university described the expectations of higher education in more concrete terms, such as providing education to meet the workforce needs of the state. A few internal respondents perceived that if the university would clarify its mission and the unique mission of each campus, accountability would be more easily measured and there would be less contention about autonomy or whether the university was serving the public. This contention suggests that if the mission were clear it would be acceptable to external stakeholders --- seemingly ignoring the possibility that the mission itself might be the subject of legitimate debate.

Some stakeholders within state government clearly acknowledged that a great higher education system requires well-defined and differentiated missions for the research university, baccalaureate colleges, and community colleges. However, among external stakeholders there was an appreciation of the community colleges' responsiveness to state vocational and workforce needs and a criticism of the research campus for not being responsive enough to the needs of the surrounding community. An example of responsiveness would be to conduct research that is immediately applicable to the needs of the local economy (as in agricultural technology) and thus help to solve the state's economic problems. These responses would seem at odds with the perception of some insiders that the purpose of the university is to create an "educated person" and not a teacher, lawyer, or engineer. While some in state government did recognize the need for researchers "to do crazy stuff" in the name of experimenting and discovering knowledge, a more common response was to assess the university by its attention to local needs and its contribution in finding solutions to social and economic problems.

The assumption may be that if missions were more clearly articulated, as in the California model, outsiders including the general public may have less difficulty with the different activities pursued by each campus. In the California system, there is a well-developed presence of comprehensive institutions which is not the case in Hawai'i. Comprehensives typically address workforce needs that require work beyond an A.A. or baccalaureate degree, for example, a baccalaureate degree in an applied science. When missions are well differentiated, it becomes apparent that the community colleges would respond to the more immediate work force needs at the certificate or A.A. level while the research university would concentrate on research and graduate education. In Hawai'i, which lacks strongly defined comprehensives, outsiders tend to see that the community colleges provide vital workforce development and expect that the Mānoa campus would provide all other programs, a role that is inappropriate given its mission to provide research and graduate education.

The current context of scarce resources plays a significant role in both the perceptions of autonomy and the expectations of higher education. There are three types of resources that are related to different perceptions about autonomy: state funds, tuition and fees, and entrepreneurial resources. Elected officials perceive that state appropriations are directly tied to their ability to make the university accountable to providing publicly needed programs. If resources were plentiful, the state could appropriate more funds for specific programs in teacher education, and require the university to use those funds for those programs. Without adequate resources and with autonomy, the perception of those outside the university was that the university was able to reallocate state funds internally, and indeed did disregard the "understood"

priorities and reallocated internally to other areas of the university. For state officials, public higher education autonomy may be seen as a threat to meeting public purposes, especially when resources are limited.

From the perspective of university insiders, the relationship between the state and the public university was also of vital importance, and respondents were keenly aware that the university is a state entity. Their perspective is that the state has a responsibility to its state higher education system, and that state funds are essential to the basic operations of the university. Several insiders pointed out that outside funding, like federal grants or other external research dollars, does not provide basic salaries or infrastructure support that are within the state's realm of responsibility and which must be present in order to win outside funding. Thus, from this perspective, autonomy does not waive the university's resource relationship to the state. Instead the strength of that relationship is tested, because a high level of integration is essential in order to provide those basic state services and operations that would most advantageously be used as leverage for generating additional outside research dollars.

In the late 1990s, weak prospects for state funding seemed tied to the public university's actively seeking external sources of funding.[10] Two alternative sources of revenue are student tuition and fees and entrepreneurial activity. Student tuition and fee averages, including room and board in Hawai'i grew at a higher rate than the national average between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s.[11] Tuition increases in the

[10] The percent of state general funds appropriated to higher education in Hawai'i fell from 12% in 1992 to approximately 8.5% in 1997, and again rose to about 12% in 2002 (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), 2002).

[11] The National Center for Educational Statistics reports that the average in-state undergraduate tuition and fees and room and board increased in Hawai'i's public 4-year institutions by 136.0% from 1986-87 to

1990s were a source of contention on campus and in the public. The current study did not specifically ask respondents about their perceptions about raising tuition for public colleges and universities, but increases occurred in many states, and caused one campus insider to refer to this changing climate surrounding tuition, student aid and affordability as, "the social contract is being renegotiated." And, if an earlier form of the social contract was to provide open access and affordability, then autonomy, which allows the university to make the decision to raise tuition, may threaten broader public expectations about a university education and the responsibility of the university to deliver education to all the state's citizens that qualify. The current study found that state officials particularly expressed an admiration for the community college system because of its practice of open access, its responsiveness to state vocational training needs, and its affordability. And, the community colleges are in a better position to provide affordable access.[12]

Increasing revenues through entrepreneurial activity also has a bearing on perceptions of autonomy. Slaughter and Leslie define entrepreneurial activity as follows: "...our operational definition of *entrepreneurism*: activities undertaken with a view to capitalizing on university research or academic expertise through contracts or grants with business or with government agencies seeking solutions to specific public or

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1996-97, and by 180.6% in Hawai'i's public 2-year institutions. In comparison, the national increases for the same period were 111.2% and 93.3%, respectively. It should be noted, however, that in 2000-01, Hawai'i's average in-state tuition and fees, $2,968 for public 4-year and $1,066 for public 2-year institutions, were lower than the national average of $3,501 for public 4-year and $1,379 for public 2-year institutions (National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 2002).

[12] For example, at the University of Hawai'i's community colleges tuition covers 14% of the cost of instruction. In other words, the state subsidizes 86% of costs. In contrast, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, undergraduate tuition covers 28% of the cost of instruction, and the state subsidizes 72% of costs. In general, while Hawai'i has kept its tuition low, student financial aid is low compared to other western states (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), 2002).

commercial concerns." (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Extramural research funding at the University of Hawai'i doubled in the 1997-98 to 2002-03 period, from $160 million to $320 million.[13] There is keen awareness about the potential effect of entrepreneurial activities from both internal and external groups. The 1999 appointment of a new Medical School dean experienced in obtaining National Institute of Health (NIH) funds drew media attention about the university's focus (Altonn, 1999, December 1). After his arrival, a Honolulu daily newspaper published an opinion piece written by the new dean in which he explained how NIH funds enhance the effectiveness of state funds spent on faculty salaries and infrastructure by creating new jobs and a positive climate for new business, and by bringing in additional funds from overhead recovery (Cadman, 2000, June 3).

Internal respondents in this current study also saw positive outcomes from entrepreneurial activity but recognized that some departments are more able to generate external funds than others. The perspective of insiders, particularly those involved in research and teaching (rather than administrators), was that external funding gave them the ability to pursue scholarly interests on the cutting edge of knowledge discovery, but that these interests are not easily explained to those outside their fields of study. They also described a sense of flexibility in hiring research assistants, buying equipment, and creating research units focused on a specific purpose. This clearly has an effect on power relations within the university, and on decisions about (in the words of one respondent), "whose termites get treated."

[13] University of Hawai'i, Office of Research Services, March 2004.

When a local magazine, *Hawaii Business,* published a special edition, "UH Research" it listed the "big projects, big names and big grants" at the university that bring benefit to the state. Each year from 1999-2003, the School of Ocean and Earth Sciences and Technology (SOEST) and the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) were first and second in the percentage of extramural funding generated for the University of Hawai'i. In addition to these two schools, the School of Natural Sciences, the Cancer Research Center, the Institute for Astronomy, and the Pacific Biomed Research Center were consistently among the top five units generating the most extramural funding for the university (Hawaii Business, January 2004). These schools and units tend to hold the highest prestige in the public's eye. It is noteworthy that none of these schools and colleges is closely linked with areas most commonly identified as a high state priority, such as teacher education. While the College of Education did bring in two to four percent of the university's extramural funding during the same years, it is not in a position to bring in the level of funding available in the sciences and medicine.

From the perspectives of those outside the university, the additional funding produced by entrepreneurship was welcome but held risky aspects, especially in partnerships with private corporations. State officials seemed well aware of the Novartis[14] case at the University of California at Berkeley (Blumenstyk, 1998). Some felt that the legislature had a more impartial interest in public higher education than private companies, and should provide the forum for public dialogue about university

[14] Controversy and debate surrounded the partnership between Norvatis, a Swiss life sciences company and the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology in the College of Natural Resources at the University of California at Berkeley. Norvatis gave financial support to the whole department in exchange for exclusive licensing rights for up to one-third of its inventions. The criticism surrounded issues of academic freedom and the commercialization of scientific discoveries, including a fear that research discoveries would be slanted toward commercial rather than public benefit (Blumenstyk, 1998).

direction. Thus for at least one legislator, qualms about threats to the university's autonomy from private corporations were perceived to be more of a potential hazard than the state's oversight.

In summary, the context of scarce resources profoundly affected perceptions of autonomy in public higher education. The university sought to compete for external funds when state resources decreased, and in doing so appeared to become more independent of the state. The shift appeared to add tensions to the subtle balance of the state-university relationship that had been based on generous state funding in past years. State officials who tied state funding to accountability perceived that state priorities were not being met as the university was free to reallocate funding and sought to increase funding from outside sources.

Research Question 2. Are there marked differences in perceptions among groups, are there inherent tensions, and how are they explained by those who hold them?

One outgrowth of scarce resources is the effort to generate more external resource funding, and as the university looked outward to win extramural research funds, it was competing, not with other Hawai'i government agencies for state social service funds, but, in the case of the flagship campus at Mānoa, with other Research I universities and university research centers. It was competing for financial resources as well as legitimacy as a Research I university. The perspective of those within the research campus was that standards of teaching and scholarship must attain a quality that is acceptable in the field of higher education and in the specialized area of research. Thus, research leaders in the university speak of an industry-like standard that is national and international. Others with social science or humanities rather than

scientific or research backgrounds also frame their reference points toward an external legitimizing standard. They understand their purpose is to create an educated person who is literate in a broad sense, rather than to train labor for vocational workplace skills.

Those outside the university in state government did not deny the need for standards or the external reference points in judgments about quality. But with the dire insufficiency of public funds, financial support of higher education programs was secondary to other state needs in a range of public services. Public officials spoke of the difficult dilemma they faced because of the high value they placed on access to educational opportunity, and the increasing difficulty in financing that belief. For this group, the legitimacy of the public higher education system rested in providing educational access to youth of the state. These tensions between external and internal stakeholders developed out of differing expectations of higher education and have become greater in the environment of diminishing resources.

In the late 1990s, this dilemma was not unique to Hawai'i. A February 2003 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* describes the difficulty faced by state universities as their proportion of state funding continues to decrease while legislators and governors impatiently demand quick outcomes (Selingo, February 28, 2003). Like Hawai'i, most universities are trying to argue that they make a valuable contribution to economic development, and need the flexibility to develop partnerships with the private sector, but in states like South Carolina and Wisconsin, Selingo reports that public universities are considering a move away from state control in order to develop that flexibility (Selingo, February 28, 2003). In raising tuition levels and putting a higher

burden of educational cost on students, states are beginning to redefine higher education as a private rather than public good (Selingo, February 28, 2003). While this rationale was not heard among lawmakers in Hawai'i (where the university sets tuition) a few respondents both inside and outside the campus described tuition in Hawai'i public universities as "a bargain" and, in an example not unlike one given by Selingo, a respondent in this study remarked that students who drive nice cars could probably bear the burden of higher tuition.

What makes Hawai'i different from other states is that there is a single system of public higher education, few private institutions, and a great gap in distance and cost if a student were to attend an out-of-state institution. While tuition rates are still well below the national average at comparable public institutions, rising tuitions lead to questions about how high they can be raised before access is affected. The uniqueness of Hawai'i as an educational and research environment was also well recognized by many respondents. Researchers appreciated the distinctive social and physical environment and the opportunities it presented for research and discoveries that could not be found elsewhere. To some outside the university, Hawai'i's public higher education system has a distinction because of its geographical location and its training of leaders of Pacific Rim nations.

The notion of Hawai'i as a unique place has been mentioned in social histories of the state, and may have been a legitimating value for the development of institutions like the East West Center. Although belief in the uniqueness of the university system was mentioned by some respondents in the current study, access and the role of the university in the local community were high on the agenda of those in state government,

and recognized as well by those on campus. As expected from the literature on Hawai'i's social history, a high value was placed on educational opportunity and a belief in its role in Americanization, acculturation, and social mobility (Boylan & Holmes, 2000; Tamura, 1994). One elected official told of his own experiences, when as a high school graduate unprepared for college entry, open access to a two year college gave him the opportunity to broaden and build his foundation; subsequently he was able to progress to baccalaureate and professional degree programs. Another said simply that if efficiency were the policy, there would be no campuses on the more remote neighbor islands. Consistently over the years the state of Hawai'i has chosen to expand access outside of the main urban area in Honolulu and on the outer islands. To outside respondents access is a key legitimizing value for a public university system.

While there are areas of overlap, legitimating rationales for public higher education as a social institution were juxtaposed for the two groups, insiders to the university and outsiders in state government. Many inside the university, especially faculty, tended to regard quality as important, while those outside the university selected access as a key purpose. Scholars appreciated the distinctiveness of Hawai'i's environment, in contrast legislators (although they also expressed pride in being part of a socially and ethnically diverse culture), expressed highest concern for common public needs, such as workforce development.

In describing their own professional values also, respondents in the study revealed differences that echoed separate cultural realities. Participants in the academic culture placed a value on the process of discussion and debate. Informed discussion is a basis for decision making, and collaboration and consensus are preferred, even if the

process takes time. Within campuses, the sacred practice of peer review is based on standards of academic quality and productivity, and organizational control is characterized as a system of shared governance among the board, administration, and faculty. Scholarship, informed discussion, and shared governance form the basis of an enlightened decision making that must be protected from political intrusion.

In the political culture of state officials, it is essential to respond quickly to constituents who, as the electorate, have the power to return or remove officials from office. The political arena is open for public display, and some on the outside questioned the closed practices of academic peer review. The political culture described by elected officials was one of conflict for control, and interestingly, these officials recognized the same qualities in university politics. One politician remarked, "There's politics up there at the Mānoa campus that's worse than the kind of politics I was in." At the same time, as legislators spoke with pride about the diverse ethnic and social representation in the Hawai'i state legislature, they questioned whether academic practices, such as decision-making about tenure, would produce as diverse a group of faculty as represented in the local population.

In summary, differences in perception produce inherent tensions between groups and dilemmas for individual stakeholders. These differences are linked to the legitimating rationale about public higher education mission that stakeholders perceive. In these interviews four rationales that serve to legitimize public higher education emerged: 1) that the university should be of high quality, that is, follow the standards of similar institutions in the field of higher education; 2) that the university should be distinctive in its study and research, due to the opportunities within its unique

environment; 3) that the university should provide access as an overriding value; and 4) that the university should meet present public workforce needs.

Research Question 3. How are notions of autonomy reflected in debates or critical higher education issues?

Respondents were presented with scenarios surrounding issues such as teacher education, public health, and benchmarks. They were asked to discuss who should make decisions, how decisions should be made, and whether decisions should primarily be made at the university or state. Several common threads run through the responses to these scenarios and are substantiated in responses to other questions as well. First, there are some similarities in understandings about three types of autonomy - academic freedom, substantive autonomy, and procedural autonomy. Second, commonalities emerged in the application of autonomy when the specific critical higher education issues were discussed.

Academic freedom was not a point of contention, and was accepted as a value by the respondents in this study. When asked if the constitutional amendment on autonomy would affect academic freedom and practices such as tenure and peer review, respondents replied that it would not, and that these practices had no relationship to autonomy. Faculty members went on to explain that they did their work with a high degree of autonomy, and conditions had not changed with the passage of the amendment. Among outsiders there was little comment about teaching practices in the classroom, although one or two commented that tenure practices were secretive and not open to public review.

There was also agreement on substantive autonomy surrounding the programs of the university among both internal and external stakeholders. Even in discussing the School of Public Health situation, which was a highly charged issue, both groups perceived that the decision was one that should be made by the university. Respondents perceived that the university has the expertise to make knowledgeable decisions about programs within the academy, and that such decisions are best made by the university rather than outside groups that may be influenced by short term conditions. There was, however, little discussion, about the goals of the academy, which are another element of substantive autonomy. For example, neither insiders nor outsiders brought up the desirability of goals such as attaining high national ranking in particular programs or in standards of instruction. And, as brought up in a previous section of this chapter, respondents did not discuss the differentiated missions of the three types of institutions (research, comprehensive, and community college). Thus it was not clear, for example, whether respondents perceived that the goals of the research campus are distinct from the comprehensive campuses. It also was not clear whether respondents perceived that the university should be free to set institutional goals or whether these should be a subject for wider public discussion.

Interestingly, although budget control was a contentious issue between groups inside and outside the academy, developing the mechanisms to implement areas of procedural autonomy were considered the realm of the university. In other words, once the constitutional amendment had passed, respondents considered it the responsibility of the university to create the mechanisms to implement fiscal flexibility. Those within the university searched the law and administrative procedures for processes that could

be amended; those in the state legislature took a "wait and see" attitude but perceived that it was up to the university to make the procedural changes.

Common themes surrounding autonomy emerged from the discussions of specific situations in teacher training, public health, and benchmarks. One thread that ran through the discussions was a perception that the university should collaborate with the state in addressing the community's work force needs. In this perception, the public university is responsible, not only for training the work force, but also should play a role in finding solutions to public problems. Both those within and outside the university expressed this expectation. The expertise of university scholars was well recognized; the distance they maintained from local concerns was considered troublesome. Both insiders who were politically involved and outsiders indicated that most faculty appear to be strangers to the political process and players. The issue was not that faculty should become more politically savvy, but that they should become more cognizant of issues that concern the community. This gives us an indication of the varied nature of autonomy; faculty autonomy in their work is accepted, but faculty and the university itself are expected to make choices about the priorities of their work that are responsive to public need. For example, although members of the legislature feel frustration regarding the production of teachers and look for ways to ensure that funds are allocated toward that goal, they do not address the ways in which teacher education is delivered. While they believe it is appropriate to make the state's priorities known, they do not believe that they should interfere in the academic decisions made to accomplish the goal.

Another thread that ran through the discussions was the extent to which the state legislature could "force" the public university to address public priorities. In days of generous state funds additional allocations could be made to areas of high priority to ensure that priorities identified by the state would be met. But unfunded mandates created by the legislature caused frustration in the university and did not seem to wield the same power in requiring compliance. The legislature, however, within the language of the amendment, has been given constitutional authority over matters of statewide concern --- and awareness of that authority was an undercurrent in the discussions. Specific mechanisms for compliance were not described, but respondents referred to the political capital of the governor and legislators, and suggested that when concerns are expressed, the university must make a choice in each case about whether to acquiesce to this influence or negotiate for its own interests.

When elected officials examine critical higher education issues like the teacher shortage, their search for solutions leads them to the College of Education within the university system. Respondents identified immediate, concrete factors contributing to the problem, including the amount of funds allocated to the College by the university, the number of vacant faculty positions that are not filled, and the condition of College facilities. Legislators could also ask if tuition waivers might be provided to a select group in order to give them an incentive to seek teacher training. The challenge of this suggestion is that while a tuition waiver may well be an incentive for recruitment, unless the legislature also deems to fund the waivers, it is foregone income for the university. Another aspect of this type of involvement by an outside group is that tuition policies, budget allocations for programs, and personnel selection are all areas of

internal decision making, and thus infringe upon university autonomy. But the state clearly feels a primary responsibility in issues of statewide concern that appear to supersede matters of procedural autonomy for the university.

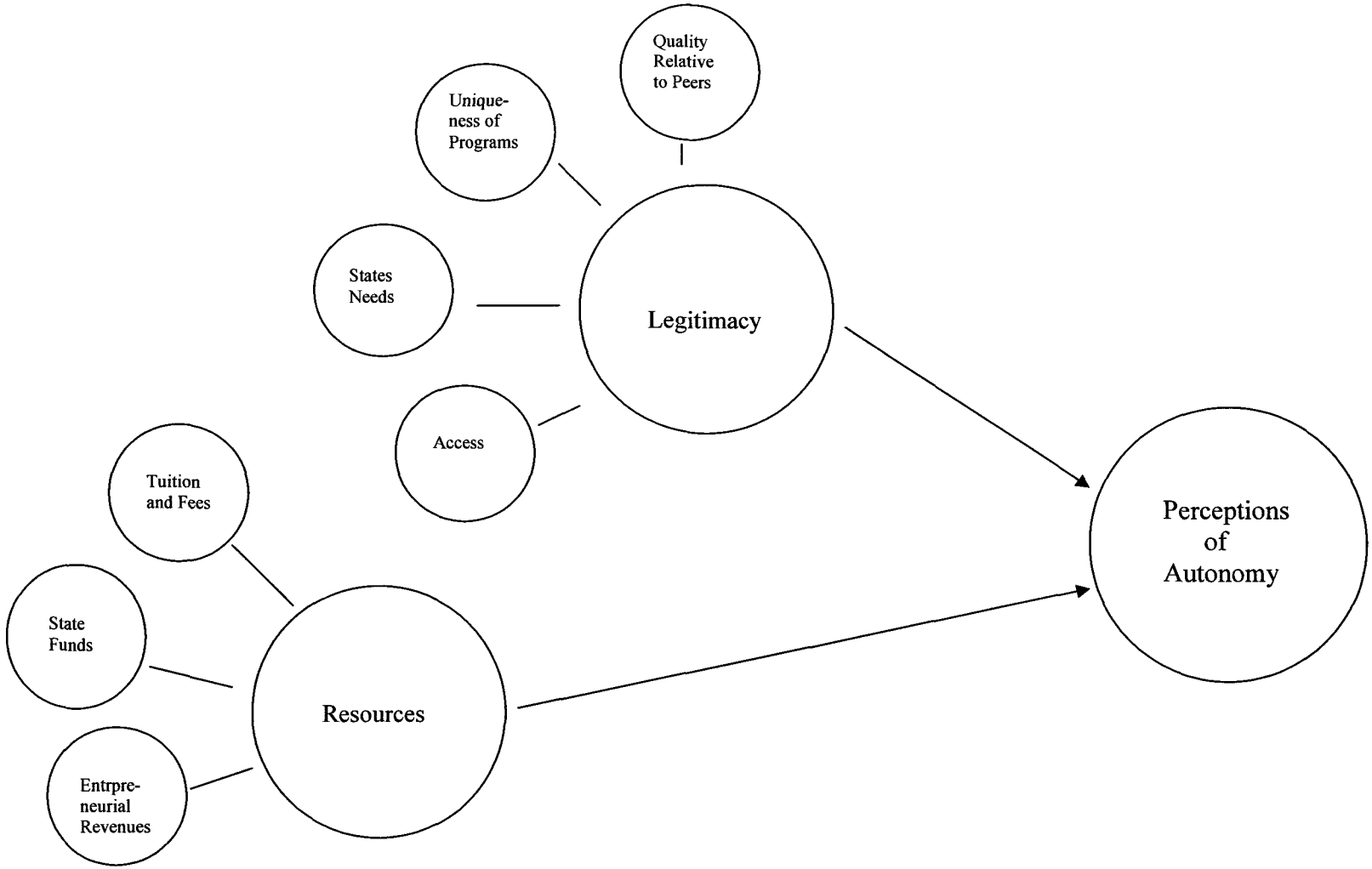
Implications for Theory

This study explored the concept of autonomy in public higher education by examining the perspectives of stakeholders both within and outside the academy, by identifying differences, and by observing how these perspectives are explained by those who hold them. In this exploratory study, the role of theory was to provide a lens to frame discussion and interpretation of the data. The conceptual framework of the study, borrowed from resource dependence theory and institutional theory, with added discussion about concepts of culture and policy value, contributed toward an understanding of how individual perceptions of autonomy are shaped by two constructs, resources and legitimacy.

Figure 1 provides a conceptual model that displays the relationship among resources, legitimacy, and autonomy. The model also operationalizes the constructs with examples based on the findings of this study.

Implicitly, this study is an investigation of organizations and organizational survival, and resource dependence theory is useful in its explanation that organizations continually struggle with their environment for resources, and in doing so, limit their autonomy by depending on the external organizations that provide them with scarce resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). One obvious type of critical resource is financial, and the model shows three examples (among many) ---

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



state dollars, tuition and fees, and entrepreneurial revenues --- of income for public universities that were discussed by respondents in this study. The organization's autonomy is constrained by the extent of its reliance on a single or multiple source of revenue. While this study focused on the relationship between state and public higher education, we may surmise that a university's strong resource relationship with a private funder would constrain autonomy in different ways. And, at an individual level, the perception of autonomy described by internal and external stakeholders of public higher education is also affected by a change in resource mix.

Organizations must also compete for social legitimacy if they are to survive. Legitimacy is established through processes of institutionalization, movements "by which social processes, obligations, or actualities come to take on a rulelike status in thought and action" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). In the view of institutional theory, organizations strengthen their legitimacy by institutionalized conformity to similar organizations in the same field, especially successful ones. Organizations conform because they are coerced through laws and mandates, they mimic successful organizations, or they follow the same norms (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). There are numerous examples of institutionalized conformity, for example, having all managers complete EEO training before being promoted, or requiring staff to join professional organizations. The model in Figure 1 shows four clusters (many more are possible) of university legitimacy that came out of this study --- provide access to education; meet state needs; attain quality relative to peers (standards); and provide unique programs. These factors are examples identified in this case study of the university's quest for legitimacy as a social institution. Within the context of its environment within the state,

providing access and responding to local needs has priority, while among peer institutions, program quality and uniqueness are significant.

As indicated by the conceptual model, when resource shifts occur, perceptions of autonomy also shift. A change in the (relative) level or conditions attached to any type of resources would change the resource structure and thus the perceptions of autonomy. In the university case, for example, the institution's autonomy was perceived to be low when it was primarily dependent on the state for its budget. It was perceived to be "just another state agency." When diminishing state resources pushed the university to compete for external resources, a mixed-model of resource dependence came about. As institutions rely less on a single resource provider they develop greater autonomy from that provider, but may have less autonomy from other providers of scarce or critical resources. For the case at hand, although the university increased its level of extramural funding, tensions with the state over reallocations continued to exist, and took on symbolic value as a sign of the continuing relationship between state and higher education. At least one respondent perceived that it was the state's role to monitor the public university's relationship with other funding sources, suggesting that financial resources alone do not determine the level of institutional autonomy. Table 1 below suggests a relationship matrix between autonomy and the changing bases of resources and legitimacy.

Table 1. Matrix of Relationships Among Constructs: Autonomy, Resources, and Legitimacy

	Resources	Legitimacy
Low institutional autonomy	High dependence on state; Low external funding	High local legitimacy and community responsiveness; Low external legitimacy
High institutional autonomy	Low dependence on state; High external funding	Low local legitimacy and responsiveness; High external legitimacy

It is important to note that this matrix is a broad depiction of the public higher education system, but is applied differently in the case of the research campus and other campuses. Within the university system, the sources of legitimacy for the research university stand in sharp contrast to the community colleges. Forty years ago, the university was more like another department in the state bureaucracy than it is today. It sought institutional conformity to state legitimating values of access to educational opportunity and work force development. Those were very high priorities in a "young" state that was developing its economy and had a large second generation immigrant population within its workforce. Today, respondents in this case study perceive that the community colleges continue to respond to community needs and to provide state-supported open access to higher education.

This study suggests that toward the end of the twentieth century as the university system looked outward to compete for resources, it also looked outward to other

institutions of its type (field) to compete for legitimacy. For example, the research campus adopted those standards of quality (such as developing cutting edge research units) and uniqueness of programs (e.g., health-related studies of local ethnic population groups) that are found among other Research I institutions nationwide. Following institutional theory, we would expect that the emphasis in organizational as well as professional reference points shifted toward those from outside the state, influenced by norms, legal codes, professional certification requirements, and accepted structures of the higher education sector (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1991; Rowan & Miskel, 1999).

The findings in this study support the argument of Meyer and Rowan that institutionalized legitimacy and resource efficiency are dual tracks that organizations pursue to ensure their survival (Meyer & Rowan, 1991). This study also suggests an additional dimension to the notion that myths, norms, and structures support institutionalized legitimacy. Just as tensions over control of resource allocations were exacerbated by diminishing local resources and increasing external resources, so too do tensions over institutional legitimacy become more complex as institutions seek to address symbols of legitimacy from both outside and within the boundaries of its immediate environment, in this case, the state.

As an organization, a university exists within a field of institutions of higher education that is external to one state, and in fact spans the globe. It also exists within a field of public organizations within a single state. Within that state environment, higher education institutions have technical as well as symbolic functions. Institutional theorists describe technical activities as the essential internal work of an organization, in

this case, the processes and resources associated with educating students or conducting research, while symbolic functions are outwardly oriented, and include myths and values that prescribe how an organization performs its work, whether or not these are rationally tied to technical outcomes (Basu, Dirsmith, & Gupta, 1999). Institutional theory suggests that an organization's survival depends as much upon conforming to these social norms as maintaining technical efficiency (Meyer & Rowan, 1991).

This study confirms the understanding that, while technical activities are one aspect of an institution's operating rationale, stakeholders have additional social expectations of universities that exert strong claims on an institution's activities and effectiveness. In this study, external stakeholders relegated the technical aspects of education to academics, and had few prescriptive statements about these activities. What they expressed, however, revealed their expectations of the public university as a social institution, and closely mirrored the purposes stated in the mission statement of the higher education system: equal opportunity to higher education training and education; access for students; and response to state needs (University of Hawai'i, 2002a, 2002b). In other words, these stakeholders appeared to regard the technical work of higher education – teaching, conducting research, developing programs – as a function for those who work within academics. Where tensions were evident between the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders, they surrounded the expectations of the university as a social institution (and whether or not it met public priorities), rather than in how the technical aspects of higher education were being conducted.

In the public health school example, the decision by the Board of Regents to fold the school into the medical school was made within a broader context of severe

fiscal constraints and uncertainty in the environment. Notwithstanding the actual cost savings, the university's decision was a demonstration of its commitment to reduce costs, and had high symbolic value in an environment of uncertainty in which departments in state government had been warned by the state's budget director that steep cuts would be necessary. As shown in the data from this study, to those within the state, the university accrued legitimacy by "offering up" a program of its own to cut. In contrast, stakeholders from within the university identified academic or technical justifications for making program decisions of this kind, for example, student outcomes, faculty publishing, and research production.

Similarly, the scenario on benchmarks reveals an example of decoupling between the technical and symbolic aspects of organizational process. States' interest in assessing higher education performance became common in the 1990s, and the state of Hawai'i followed this trend when it instituted a benchmark reporting system. Institutional effectiveness reported by the University of Hawai'i include indicators such as graduation rates, degrees earned, professional licensing pass rates, tuition and affordability, and funding (University of Hawai'i, 2001a, 2002b, 2003). While the benchmarks clearly indicate performance over time in specific activities or processes, and are linked to university goals, stakeholders did not perceive that attaining these benchmarks could be easily or rationally tied to levels of funding, incentives or penalties. Instead the reporting in itself appeared to be a symbol of the university's accountability to the state and to its constituents.

Similarly, the tensions revealed in the teacher education scenario illustrate a relationship between the public university and state that is tied not only to levels of

funding, but also by the expectation that the university as a social institution must meet community priorities. In short, although state funding for teacher education did not completely meet the needs of the College of Education for more positions, larger facilities, or greater capacity, tension was evident in the expectation was that the university should generate more teachers because it is a high state priority. The discussion is summarized in Table 2:

Table 2. Resource Dependence and Institutional Legitimacy Exemplified in Three Scenarios

	Resource Dependence	Symbolic Legitimacy
Public Health	Reduce program costs during state budget crisis	Demonstrates fiscal responsibility
Benchmarks	Report outcomes to meet state mandate	Demonstrates accountabilty
Teacher Education	Meet state priority expressed in provisos	Demonstrates responsiveness to community

To summarize, this study gives one example of how an organization is embedded within its environment by both technical and social resources. In addition, the perceptions of an organization's stakeholders, and the cultural lens through which these perceptions are formed, have implications for organizations. In this case study, stakeholders within and outside the academy had different professional cultures and

reference points which appear to affect their expectations concerning a public institution.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Three years after passage of the 2000 constitutional amendment on university autonomy, Honolulu newspaper headlines would lead one to believe that the vote had not yet taken place. Articles such as, "UH autonomy bid gains backing" and "Self-rule at UH on hold for now," describe the struggle for autonomy as an ongoing one, and claim that the constitutional amendment provided a very limited flexibility for the university that centered around limited financial matters and the power to award construction contracts (Creamer, 2003, February 17, 2003, January 30). Furthermore they suggest that another constitutional amendment would be necessary to give the university full autonomy.

This situation serves to support the observation of Robert Berdahl that institutional autonomy is an illusive concept (Berdahl, 1971), and that it is shaped by the particular conditions in the environment at a particular time. The implication for policy is that statutory or constitutional change will not generate changes in practice; instead each step seems to be a negotiated one and one that is influenced by the political, economic and social conditions of the time. In Hawai'i's case the arrival of a new university president and newly elected governor definitely created added issues and contention. And the deteriorating budget situation also continued to fuel tensions between the state and the university.

The history of the amendment itself produced a less than broad basis for support. State intrusion had been an ongoing issue between the campus and the state, and Hawai'i was known for its highly centralized structure of government control, with strong executive and budgetary powers vested in the governor. Although autonomy came to the forefront in the larger policy arena because of its timely placement on the agenda as an economic solution to the state's budget woes, the aftermath shows that the common understanding needed for a smooth implementation was missing. Instead, stakeholders had some differing expectations which contributed to tensions.

Developing distinct missions for the different types of campuses (Research I, comprehensives, and 2 year associates) is one element that suggests itself to practitioners as one way to clarify expectations. Clear mission statements would help to distinguish between the research and graduate education mission of the flagship campus, the baccalaureate and post baccalaureate professional degree mission of comprehensive campuses, and the certificate and associates degree mission at the community colleges. Differentiated missions would help all stake holders appreciate the distinct values of the research university that can compete for research opportunities and external research dollars, and the four year and two year campuses that focus on providing a general or vocational education for the state's citizens.

And finally, this study implies that recognizing the significance of symbolic as well as technical expectations of universities would contribute toward an understanding about common as well as contested beliefs concerning public higher education. Even as the proportion of state funding decreases, the public university is essentially tied to the state as a social institution.

Implications for Future Research

By its nature as an exploratory study, there are limitations to this study that future research could expand upon and clarify. This study identified broad aspects about resources and institutional legitimacy that affect perspectives on autonomy and explained some differences between those inside and outside the public university. Responses indicated that there are differences within the academy and the state that warrant future study. Among academics, there is a wide divide between faculty and administrators that would affect how autonomy is applied. For example, most faculty members may not have noticed a change in their basic activity of teaching and research after the constitutional change, but administrators may have experienced immediate changes in flexibility in purchasing procedures that would affect the whole system. Another difference is among departments, schools, and colleges. The preliminary evidence in this study shows that differences in levels of extramural funding have implications for relationships within the university, and these differences may affect how funds are allocated within the campus. With autonomy, these decisions are made within higher education but have repercussions for meeting public priorities. Among state officials different perspectives were identified. Some were well-informed about other state systems of public higher education, saw them as models for the state, and discussed the larger social issues behind decisions like tuition increases. Some readily described the difficult tensions between autonomy and accountability, while others perceived the state-university relationship in more personalized ways. Past research shows that legislatures are likely to continue passing restrictive laws as they become

increasingly professionalized, as their constituents demand accountability, and as a restrictive environment grows (Sabloff, 1997). A larger sample would help to identify these differences among legislators and their relationship to regulatory legislation.

Another possible direction would be to examine recent higher education decisions or laws and investigate their relationship to notions of autonomy and the legitimating values of public higher education. A content analysis of public debates or laws was beyond the scope of this study, but would provide a fruitful avenue of research on policy values.

Further research could also explore the application of institutional theory to the evolving relationship between higher education institutions and extramural funding. If, as proposed by institutional theory, colleges and universities mimic more successful institutions and become more like each other as they vie for external sources of funding, there may well be repercussions for regional universities with distinct missions tied to their local communities. Because the concept of legitimacy in institutional theory is tied to beliefs, values, and norms, it is reasonable to expect that change would take place over a long period of time. Additional studies of local responsiveness and global reference points would be of interest, with either longitudinal research or data using a much larger sample size.

And finally, a single case study is limited in its generalizability. This study offered an in-depth examination of the responses of a few stakeholders, and identified potential constructs in the legitimating rationale of a public university system and the effects of resources upon perceptions of autonomy. Further research with a larger sample would be needed to confirm the evidence gathered in this study, and to identify

the relationships of these constructs to resources and legitimacy in molding the environment surrounding the implementation of autonomy.

Conclusion

This study has found that although internal and external stakeholders have differing perspectives and expectations of public higher education, some of their perceptions of autonomy may overlap and in cases they are similar. However, how autonomy is implemented depends on the particular concerns of the time, in this case, the overwhelming budget constraints within a state. Attempts to resolve budget limitations by turning toward external resource providers have implications for accountability to states needs and power relationships within the university and between state and university, and may also have implications in the legitimating rationale for public higher education. The study suggests that as institutions turn outward to compete with similar types of institutions for resources, they also compete with them for legitimacy and the symbols of legitimacy. This outward focus exacerbates the inherent tensions between university autonomy and its accountability to state government, and this may have significant long term implications for the financing of public higher education.

Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Notes:

Date: _____

Time of Interview: _____ to _____

Location: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Written Consent Form/Date: _____

Interview:

In November 2000, Hawai'i voters selected constitutional autonomy for the University of Hawai'i, and I am interested in what autonomy means for our public higher education system. I am not particularly interested in the legal or technical aspects of this change. Instead, I want to learn how those within the university and within state government view autonomy. I would like to hear your perspectives on what has changed from November 2000 until now in how the university operates, and I would like to know what you believe should change.

1. When the constitutional amendment regarding autonomy passed, what were your expectations about the changes that would take place at the University of Hawai'i? ["UH" includes Mānoa as well as the other four-year and community college campuses].

2. Have you noted changes in the relationship between the University of Hawai'i and state government since November 2000 that you would attribute to increased autonomy?

   [Probe: Would you describe some examples?]

3. In your view, is autonomy important for a public university?

   [Probe: To what extent? Why or why not?]

4. One of the tensions surrounding autonomy for public institutions is that some people see a conflict between the university's autonomy and its accountability to the state and its people. In the next section, I'd like to describe some situations and ask you questions in order to get your sense of how autonomy works, or should work, in action.

    a. Teacher shortage is a problem in Hawai'i as it is nationwide, and in many states teacher preparation is identified as a top priority for policymakers. From your perspective, how should the state legislature influence the UH College of Education in meeting the teacher shortage?

    [Probe: For example, I can imagine that the state legislature could make funding contingent on the College of Education's meeting specific requirements.]

    b. During the 2001 session, the UH College of Education dean presented testimony at the state legislature on proposed tuition waivers for special groups of students. How should decisions like these (about waivers) be made? Are these internal matters to be decided by the UH Board of Regents and administrators, or are these issues that the state legislature should decide? Would you explain why you think so?

    c. During the late 1990s budget shortfalls, the university made a decision to close its School of Public Health. Some constituents say that this deprived us of the type of professionals needed in Hawai'i and the Pacific region where we have remote communities and unique health situations. How should such a decision be made? Is it a UH decision? Or, should the governor or legislature have authority?

    [Probe: Would you explain your perspective?]

    d. In January 2002, the Honolulu papers noted that the UH School of Medicine was able to proceed quickly and easily with its Kaka'ako campus construction because, with autonomy, the UH had greater administrative flexibility in purchasing. What would happen now if, for example, the university consistently used out-of-state vendors instead of local vendors?

    [Probe: Would you see that as a problem?]

e. The Hawai'i state legislature has required that the UH produce benchmarks linked to the goals of the university. Would you consider it appropriate for the legislature to link funding levels with the UH meeting specific benchmarks? (Examples of benchmarks are student graduation rates and faculty instructional workload.)

   [Probe: Why or why not?]

f. Universities are able to attract large amounts of external, private funds through activities such as research and technology transfer to industry. Should legislative appropriations to a public university like the UH be reduced as the university receives more of its funding through external sources?

   [Probe: Please explain why or why not.]

5. Would you describe how the economic situation in the last five to ten years has affected the work of the university? How has it affected your own (public or professional) work?

6. Many think that what makes a university a unique place to work is the emphasis that scholars place on academic freedom in the classroom. Another unique aspect is that scholars' work is reviewed by their peers in the tenure process. Do you see these academic practices as related to autonomy? Does the amendment have implications for traditional academic practices?

7. Some of the public policy values talked about in public education's responsibility to the state --- efficiency, quality, equity, and access. What do you feel is the most important of these values for Hawai'i when it comes to public higher education?

   [Probe: How do you think that the state's ability to support this value is affected by the university's autonomy?]

Thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Appendix B

Preliminary List of Coding Categories

State Context
- Economic Climate
- Political Culture
- Policy Values
  - Efficiency
  - Quality
  - Equity
  - Choice

Academic Culture
- Organizational Culture

Alumni
- Professional Culture
- Policy Values

Resources
- Change
- Work life
- State
- University
- Private
- Federal
- Private
- Tuition
- Industry/Commercial
- External
- Global

Autonomy
- Academic Freedom
- Research
- Programmatic
- Legal Counsel
- Procedural
- Procedures/Mechanisms
- Decision Makers

Accountability
- To Students, Parents,
- To Profession
- To State

Decisions
- Programs
- Funding
- Personnel

Higher Education Mission
- Public Interest/Benefit
- Research
- Teaching
- Service
- Economic Development
- Workforce Development

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