# **Shared Governance and Planning**

Notes for Panel Discussion at UNB Board of Governors Retreat, August 2016

Both faculty and administration need to play an important part in university governance. ... Each has valuable knowledge and perspectives to offer that can improve the quality of decisions.

Derek C. Bok, 2013<sup>1</sup>

Shared governance (sometimes called collegial governance) here means a structure established under a university incorporation act setting out the compositions and respective powers of two bodies: the corporate body (board of governors) and the academic body (senate or senates), and a framework for their interaction and cooperation in what is commonly called a bicameral structure. Planning means development, review and approval of a plan for future operation, development, or resources for one or more aspects of the university's endeavours or property, such as academic programs, faculty complement, student recruitment, facilities, buildings, equipment, or land.

I will outline answers to the following questions regarding shared governance and planning:

- why, when, and how it developed
- who were leading figures in the process in Canada, and at UNB
- why it is even more important now

The current governance model in most Canadian universities was influenced by models in the US and UK, as well as some in Canada. It was formalized a half century ago through changes to university incorporation acts that gave institutional standing to bicameral arrangements. The transformation was the result of efforts by many faculty, presidents, board members, students, and others across the country.

# Why?

Greater involvement of faculty in governance was one of the three concerns expressed in the 1915 founding document of the American Association of University Professors – the others were protection of academic freedom and provision of due process in dismissal cases.<sup>2</sup> The context was that as universities became larger and more complex, it became more evident that administration by a president with oversight by a board – most of whose members had little direct experience in university management – was inadequate. Although faculty were consulted on programs, planning and other matters, their advice was often ignored and as a result significant errors of judgment or implementation sometimes occurred.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Derek Bok was president of Harvard University 1971-1991. He also served as interim President for 15 months during 2006-2007 when he was called back to replace Lawrence H. ("Larry") Summers who resigned. The quotation is from Bok's book *Higher Education in America*, page 54 (cited later).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The immediate concerns of the AUPP at the time were academic freedom and due process because of a growing number of dismissals of professors by presidents and boards who disagreed with their views, but governance also was noted as an important concern in the AAUP 1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure (https://www.aaup.org/NR/rdonlyres/A6520A9D-0A9A-47B3-B550-C006B5B224E7/0/1915Declaration.pdf , section 2, p. 295)

#### When?

The issue would only be addressed when a sufficient number of presidents shared the faculty concern and persuaded their boards of its importance. In Canada, broad-based support developed in the 1960s. Change in the wider societal context of universities was important to the process, and so also was individual leadership. The context was the broad trend toward democratization of organizational structures following the Second World War.

An early catalyst for discussion was a study by a small group faculty members from UNB, McGill, Carleton and Manitoba. Their 1960 report opened by expressing the widely shared concern that "something is radically wrong with the system of university government in Canada" and proceeded to outline and discuss possible reforms for university governance.

### Who?

Leading individuals in the governance reform process can be identified and central among them were two university presidents and two faculty members:

- Norman A.M. ("Larry") MacKenzie, UBC President 1944-1962 (UNB President 1940-1944)
- J.H. Stewart Reid, historian, first Executive Secretary of CAUT 1959-1963
- Claude T. Bissell, U of T President, 1958-1971 and AUCC Chair 1962-1963
- Bora Laskin, U of T law professor, CAUT President 1964-1965 (Chief Justice 1973-1984)<sup>3</sup>

In 1961 MacKenzie published an article in the CAUT *Bulletin* outlining the significant advisory roles played by faculty in all aspects of UBC governance, including planning and development. This was implemented through a variety of committees, and included the UBC faculty association. MacKenzie gave many examples and explained why this shared approach to governance was essential:

The committee system remains one of the best methods of avoiding precipitous or ill-informed action. Senior administrators who fail to consult the best opinion available in solving a particular problem run the risk of costly and even tragic blunders which can cause irreparable damage to educational standards ... [I]n an institution which has direct and immediate access to experts and specialists, it is both foolish and wasteful not to make the fullest possible use of such resources."

#### How?

Responding with an editorial in the same 1961 *Bulletin* issue, Reid proposed that the presidents' organization, AUCC and the faculty organization, CAUT jointly commission a national study on governance. As Chair of AUCC, Bissell encouraged acceptance of Reid's proposal in 1962. AUCC and CAUT then jointly applied for and were granted Ford Foundation funds for the study.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> All four individuals had associations with the University of Toronto. MacKenzie taught international law there 1926-1940. Laskin was among his students and later, when MacKenzie went to UNB as its president, Laskin was hired to fill his faculty position. Reid received his history PhD from U of T. Each of Bissell and Mackenzie was instrumental in setting their respective universities (U of T and UBC) on the courses leading to their still being Canada's two most highly ranked internationally. MacKenzie (late 1940s) and Bissell (late 1950s) led successful national efforts to persuade the federal government to increase funding to the provinces for higher education. In 1958 Reid was a dep't chair at United College but resigned to protest the summary dismissal of Harry Crowe.

Bissell and his Toronto colleague Laskin were members of the joint AUCC-CAUT steering committee for the study (with Bissell as Chair) and played a key role in selecting the Commission members, Sir James Duff (UK) and Robert O. Berdahl (USA). The Commissioners had no power to be prescriptive; they could only recommend measures they considered to represent best practices. They began the study in 1964 and published their report in 1966, commonly referred to as the Duff-Berdahl Report.

The Duff-Berdahl Report recommended a bicameral system consisting of a board of governors and senate, and made a wide range of specific recommendations, including:

- The board of governors should include elected faculty members
- The senate should have clearly defined powers in academic matters and a general "power to make recommendations to the board on any matter of interest to the university," all subject to ultimate board authority
- "The majority of the senate should be elected by the faculty from the faculty"
- There should be a framework to facilitate mutual understanding and cooperation among the board, administration and senate, including joint committees
- Academic planning should be a shared responsibility of the board, administration and senate<sup>iii</sup>

Meanwhile, before the study was completed, "the mere existence of the Duff-Berdahl Commission resulted in discussion" of governance issues. At most of the comprehensive universities across Canada, committees of faculty members, administrators and board members were reviewing their own local governance structures in light of models in use elsewhere. For example, the current version of the incorporation act of York University (founded in 1959) is dated 1965 and sets out a bicameral structure along lines similar to those recommended by Duff and Berdahl in their 1966 report.

After it appeared, an effect of the Duff-Berdahl Report was to encourage approximate uniformity in the main features of bicameral structures across the country. However, there were variations in detail depending on local considerations. The specific revisions to incorporation acts establishing the new governance models were of course only those approved by the board of governors in each instance.

A year after the report was published, the University of Toronto hosted a conference on it and on experience with implementing its recommendations. Featured speakers included a president, a board member, a faculty member and a student (representing universities across the country). Duff and Berdahl attended and responded to comments and criticisms by the speakers and other participants. Criticisms included the report's failure to recommend student representation in governance. Nevertheless, several participants outlined progress at their universities in implementation of key recommendations. Duff and Berdahl both said that in hindsight they would have adjusted one or more suggestions in their report. A controversial suggestion in their report was that junior faculty should not be eligible for election to senates. The Commissioners "now favoured having all full-time faculty eligible to vote and to seek election."

# **Institutional Planning at UNB 1965-1967**

In early 1965 President Colin B. McKay appointed a Commission on the Future of the University to review almost all aspects of UNB operations, academic and non-academic and provide recommendations for the future. It was a comprehensive exercise in institutional planning and reviewed, among other things, the programs of all academic departments and faculties, the governance

structure, terms and conditions of faculty employment, faculty recruitment strategies, prospects for institutional growth, space and equipment needs, creative arts, possible new programs, the role of the alumni organization, relations with governments, relations with St. Thomas University, relations with Teachers College, and parking.

The Commission was chaired by Alfred G. Bailey, Vice-President (Academic) and included two board members and five faculty members (one each from Arts, Engineering, Forestry, Law and Science), informally called the "Bailey Commission." It submitted its report to President MacKay in early 1967, making a wide range of recommendations, both specific and general.

On governance the report said, "our debt to the Report on University Government ... of Sir James Duff and R.O. Berdahl will be evident to every reader of this chapter." It also acknowledged "indebtedness to many of the ideas expressed by the delegates of the Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers in their appearances before [the Commission]."vi

## **Development of Shared Governance at UNB 1967-1968**

A body called the University Committee was formed in early 1967 to review the Duff-Berdahl Report and the Bailey Commission Report. It was chaired by President MacKay and included the two Vice-Presidents (Academic and Administration), four board members, six faculty members representing the University Council (a body of faculty advisory to the president – this group of six included three deans: Arts, Law, and Nursing), and three faculty members representing the AUNBT. By late 1967, the University Committee had developed a detailed draft major revision of the UNB Act. The draft Act revision was submitted to the board for discussion and approval.

When the Board approved a final draft Act revision, it asked the President to consult with Law Faculty Dean William F. Ryan on a suitable member of his faculty to convert the draft into legislative language. George R. McAllister was assigned the technical drafting task. The Legislative Assembly enacted the bill as Chapter 12 of the Acts of New Brunswick, 1968, a Public Act of the Province, with effect from July 1 of that year. The 1968 Act provided for a bicameral governance structure along the lines of the Duff-Berdahl Report, with some differences in detail.

The original UNB Act of 1859 incorporated UNB as the provincial university, converting what had been King's College Fredericton affiliated with the Church of England into a non-sectarian institution. Between 1859 and 1968 the governing body – the corporate board of directors – was called "the Senate." In the 1859 Act, "the University Board" consisted of the President and the faculty and was advisory to the president on specified matters. In the 1968 Act, the primary governing body was given the more common name Board of Governors while the new academic body was given the name Senate. (In this paper, the current, post-1968 terminology is used.)

The 1968 Act and all subsequent revisions set out, among other things, the composition and the powers of each of the Board and the Senate (a 1986 amendment created a second Senate for the Saint John Campus). Also included were sections setting out powers of the President, other university officers, joint Board-Senate committees, and faculty councils.

As a Public Act, the UNB Act provides legislative protection for the existence and powers of the academic bodies, as well as limits to the Board's powers because the drafting and the amending

procedures for Public Acts (as distinct from Private Acts) are overseen by the relevant ministries. The government may choose to require public consultation on proposed changes.

Prominent in the development of UNB's bicameral system were:

- Colin B. MacKay, President 1953-1969
- Alfred G. Bailey, Vice-President (Academic) 1965-1969
- W. Stewart McNutt, President of AUNBT 1957-1958, Dean of Arts 1965-1970
- George R. McAllister, President of AUNBT 1966-1967, Vice-President of CAUT 1968-1969

Of particular note is MacKay's leadership in this major transformation. He inspired confidence in both the Board and the faculty that the process was necessary for the good of UNB, and could be implemented through tri-partite committees with Board, administration and faculty representation. In achieving this end he was in effect following MacKenzie's advice in the 1961 article cited earlier. In a recent account of UNB events during 1967-1969, MacKay's executive assistant Peter C. Kent wrote that "UNB had been a presidential autocracy ... initiative rested primarily in the hands of the president, supported by the faculty deans and other administrators." In late 1968, just after he decided to retire at the end of that academic year, MacKay remarked to Kent, "I'm not a good democrat." Yet he "steered the University toward a new and more democratic constitution in the design of the University of New Brunswick Act of 1968."

Bailey was a nationally distinguished historian and poet, who had served as UNB's first Dean of Arts 1946-1964 and led development of a large and academically strong Faculty. MacNutt was one of the five faculty members from universities across Canada on the 1960 CAUT committee that made the comparison study of governance systems (cited earlier). In addition to the UNB Act, McAllister drafted the technical language for New Brunswick's labour relations acts. He served as UNB's Dean of Law in the mid-1970s. Both MacNutt and McAllister served on the 1967 University Committee.

# The Post-Duff-Berdahl Era

As mentioned, the Duff-Berdahl Report made no recommendations regarding student participation in shared governance. Student activism led to their representation at universities across Canada, beginning in the late 1960s. The Report did make general procedural recommendations concerning appointments, tenure, promotion, and dismissal (pages 36-38). However, it was not until the advent of collective bargaining from the 1970s onward that faculty members in Canada gained enforceable rights to academic freedom, with access to due process in the important aspects of terms and conditions of employment, along with access to arbitration in significant disputes. Canadian university collective agreements included under academic freedom a right to criticize the administration and the board, and this made faculty participation in shared governance more effective.

Central features of the Canadian university governance model were to some extent internationalized through the *UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel* (1997). This states, among other things:

## Self-governance and collegiality

Higher-education teaching personnel should have the right and opportunity, without discrimination of any kind, according to their abilities, to take part in the governing bodies and

to criticize the functioning of higher education institutions, including their own, while respecting the right of other sections of the academic community to participate, and they should also have the right to elect a majority of representatives to academic bodies within the higher education institution.

The principles of collegiality include academic freedom, shared responsibility, the policy of participation of all concerned in internal decision making structures and practices, and the development of consultative mechanisms. Collegial decision-making should encompass decisions regarding the administration and determination of policies of higher education, curricula, research, extension work, the allocation of resources and other related activities, in order to improve academic excellence and quality for the benefit of society at large. ix

## The Current Environment for Universities

During the past half century, universities have been influenced by national and international developments, and many became much larger and even more complex. Public funding support declined in relative terms while societal expectations and demands increased. Academic disciplines and technology advanced ever more rapidly, with resulting changes in both teaching and research. Among the wider currents adversely affecting both internal university governance and their external environment has been a reaction against democratic organizational structures, coupled with a form of political economy – neoliberalism – facilitating the reaction.<sup>4</sup>

Universities now face greater and more diverse pressures, but their importance to the common good of society also is greater and more varied. They have new opportunities but some of these present new and greater risks. For example, there are both pressures and opportunities to operate in a more commercial manner. Engagement of faculty members or their universities with the private sector has a long history and is important to the modern world. To mention only one prominent instance, the great nineteenth century experimental and mathematical physicist Lord Kelvin (University of Glasgow) was one of the early faculty members who also were consulting engineers. Among other things, Kelvin designed – including the preliminary mathematical model and the relay devices – and supervised the laying of the first trans-Atlantic telegraph cable, and became wealthy from various electrical devices he invented and patented.

However, the pressures on universities to expand commercial engagements has intensified during the past three decades, and serious problems have arisen in many cases. Among these are proposals to lend universities' reputations for independence and integrity to private donors. In some cases, the funding agreements could facilitate donors' agendas in ways that would infringe university autonomy and the fundamental values of academic freedom and integrity. Investigations in a number of cases revealed serious flaws in governance practice or structure, and questions regarding leadership judgment.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This phenomenon and its adverse effects have been documented and analyzed in articles and books by public intellectuals and by academics. These include articles by *Harper's* editor Lewis H. Lapham in 2004 and Stefan Collini (History and Literature, University of Cambridge) in 2013, and books by Alain Supiot (Law, Collège de France) in 2012 and Wolfgang Streeck (Economics and Sociology, University of Cologne) in 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Among the problematic and controversial commercialization ventures in Canada, the US, and UK are those discussed in the articles posted at the links below. The first three are media summaries, the next two are reports

## **Importance of Shared Governance Now**

In these circumstances, the question often asked – on and off campus – is whether the governance structures implemented in the 1960s remain relevant and important? The answer – demonstrated at many universities in the past two decades – is that they remain relevant and important and need to be expanded and strengthened.

Discussions of university leadership and governance have been published by Derek C. Bok, former Harvard president and – 15 years later – former interim president. A former Dean of Law, Bok is currently University Professor in Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and an authority on American higher education, not simply his own university. University governance structures in the US are more diverse than in Canada, but there are general similarities – for example, "most non-profit universities have created institution-wide academic senates." American non-profit universities – including the most prestigious – are subject to pressures similar to those affecting Canadian universities.

In a study published in 2003, Bok discussed the benefits and risks of commercialization in universities. The potential benefits include funding for research at much greater levels than in any previous time, and prospects for new streams of revenue for general purposes. Risks include possible large losses of money in poorly conceived ventures, or damage to institutional reputations by ceding program autonomy to donors. In addition, there have been serious instances of risks to patient safety in clinical medical trials in which, under the funding contract, the commercial sponsor owned the trial data. The contracts gave the sponsor sole control of whether unexpected risks discovered during the trial would be disclosed to patients and regulatory agencies, as well as control of which trial results (if any) would be published in scientific journals.<sup>6</sup>

Bok concluded that "the structure of governance in most universities is not equal to the challenge of resisting the excesses of commercialization."xi He identified the source of the problem as a combination of increased pressure on presidents to find new sources of funding, insufficient board oversight in regard to fundamental academic values and principles, and inadequate consultation of faculty. Bok concluded the most promising solution would be reinvigoration and widening of shared governance. This would go beyond senates, faculty councils, and other existing bodies that guide institutional endeavours. Notably, he proposed formation of *ad hoc* board-administration-faculty joint committees on which faculty with immediately relevant specific expertise (such as accounting, marketing, genetics,

by independent formal inquiries, while the other is a Canada-wide study of a number of commercialization ventures:

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2012/04/02/york universitys 60 million deal with jim balsillies think tank cancelled over lack of faculty support.html (accessed August 17, 2016);

http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1161877,00.html (accessed August 21, 2016); http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/10/spreading-the-free-market-gospel/413239/ (accessed August 17, 2016); http://www.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/woolf/pdf/woolfReport.pdf (accessed August 23, 2016); https://www.caut.ca/docs/af-reports-indepedent-committees-of-inquiry/the-olivieri-report.pdf?sfvrsn=0 (accessed August 23, 2016); https://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/academic-freedom/open-for-business-(nov-2013).pdf?sfvrsn=4 (accessed August 25, 2016)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The extent of this problem and its adverse significance for the public interest can be seen from the discussions in David Healy, *Pharmageddon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012) and in Carl Elliott, *White Coat, Black Hat: Adventures on the Dark Side of Medicine* (Boston: Beacon Hill, 2010)

statistics, economics, engineering, ecology, health, or ethics, to name only a few of many) could review and help to assess the benefits and risks of administration proposals.

A decade later, Bok published a comprehensive study of all central aspects of American higher education, including governance. He reached the same conclusion on a much broader basis of issues: in many universities the governance system "is not working well." Xiii

As in 2003, Bok in 2013 again recommended reinvigorating and broadening the scope of shared governance as an essential remedy for this problem. Boards, administrators, and faculty should be engaged in more effective consultation processes on a wider range of concerns, in order to enable their university to better contend with evolving times and issues. Like UBC President MacKenzie in 1961 and in very similar terms, Bok in 2013 emphasized the wide range and high level of expertise of faculty members, any of whom may be called upon for advice. He added that such consultation could help "build greater trust on the part of the faculty."

## Bok wrote:

Although some presidents would disagree, experience suggests that professors frequently have a clearer appreciation of academic values than the top leadership and are less tempted to sacrifice these principles to raise more money or gain a competitive advantage [for their institution].xiv

At UNB, Senate and Board procedures and the UNB Act make provision for ad hoc committees, including joint committees that may be constituted to explore any institutional issues. There is no guarantee that in any specific instance faculty, administrators, and Board members will reach agreement on a course of action but, in the end, the Board has the legal authority decide almost all matters (with few exceptions, such as in the search for a President as set out in the Act). Bok observed, "There is no reason to regret such disagreements; if none existed, there would be no need for shared governance."

In his 2013 study, with the added experience of his own recent direct administrative involvement as interim President, together with review of many published studies and commentaries by experts on higher education, Bok reached a number of conclusions that should serve as guidance in all university communities:

1. There is no good substitute for strong academic values and shared responsibilities. They are the foundation on which much that is important depends – not only in research but in all aspects of academic life. They are the foundation ... of academic life. Those in authority who make little

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> During the period 2003-2013 Bok published three critical analyses of higher education in the US, identifying weaknesses and proposing remedies. In addition to the two cited here, one focusing on undergraduate education, *Our Underachieving Colleges* (Princeton University Press, 2006) appeared shortly before Bok returned to senior administration as interim President at Harvard. The appointment gave him an opportunity to practice what he preached, and he led a major review and successful reform of the curriculum with the very active involvement of the faculty (cf. Bok, *Higher Education in America*, 2013, pages 57-58, cited later). As with many scholarly books and articles, no matter how eminent the author, Bok's books contain speculative discussions – in this instance on enduring controversies of the academy – in order to stimulate further discussion by readers, but without reaching compelling conclusions. Readers should of course always distinguish such discussions from firm conclusions based on evidence and argument. This paper relies only on Bok's well-supported conclusions.

- effort to clarify and uphold these tacit obligations do so at considerable peril to the academic enterprise.xvi
- 2. However authority is divided, shared governance is unlikely to succeed where mutual trust is low and consultation tends to be contentious and frustrating to faculty members and academic leaders [administrators] alike. ... [But] when presidents and members of the faculty work together ... on substantive discussions of important issues, ... consultation will normally yield sensible decisions, provided the administration takes care to marshal adequate facts and arguments to support its recommendations. xvii
- 3. Presidents who are not perceived to be participating actively in the promotion of education and research are less likely to acquire the moral authority and respect of the faculty that academic leaders need in order to guide an institution composed of independent professors. Delegating these responsibilities to provosts and deans is not a wholly satisfactory solution. \*Viii\*

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Jon Thompson, UNB, August 2016

<sup>&</sup>quot;The Reform of University Government," a report by a five-member CAUT committee, CAUT *Bulletin*, v. 9, n. 1, November 1960, p. 10-35

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> N.A.M. MacKenzie, "Faculty Participation in University Administration," CAUT *Bulletin*, v. 9, n. 4, April 1961, p. 8-14. An earlier, shorter version of this article was published in an Australian journal in 1960.

iii Sir James Duff and Robert O. Berdahl, *University Government in Canada: Report of a Commission sponsored by the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), 32, 29

iv J. Percy Smith, "From the Executive Secretary's Report to the CAUT Annual Meeting – June 14, 1966," CAUT Bulletin, v. 15, n. 1, 1966-1967, 15-19 (Stewart Reid died in 1963 and Smith was Executive Secretary 1964-1969.) v Edward J. Monahan, "Duff-Berdahl Conference on University Government," CAUT Bulletin, v.16, n. 3, 1967-1968, 54-62

vi "Report of the Commission on the Future of the University," Commission chaired by A.G. Bailey, January 1, 1967 (200 pages), UNB Library Archives: HIL-SPECAR LE3.N292 U536 1967, 166

vii https://www.gnb.ca/legis/publications/billbecomeslaw/billbecomeslaw-e.asp

viii Peter C. Kent, *Inventing Academic Freedom: The 1968 Strax affair at the University of New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac, 2012), 130, 195. The Strax affair was a major controversy at UNB that attracted national attention and was resolved after CAUT imposed censure on the University's President and Board. (During his later career at UNB Kent served as Chair of the History department and as Dean of Arts.)

ix UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997), http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf (accessed August 23, 2016), 57

<sup>\*</sup> Derek C. Bok, Higher Education in America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 51

xi Derek C. Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 185

xii Bok, Higher Education in America (HEA), 53

xiii Bok, HEA, 58

xiv Bok, HEA, 54

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>xv</sup> Bok, *HEA*, 59

xvi Bok, HEA, 380

xvii Bok, HEA, 63

xviii Bok. HEA. 399