

ABSTRACT

In this study, I examined the structural development since 1960 of the entire postsecondary education system – that is, post-compulsory, formal education for adults – in Canada's westernmost province, British Columbia. I synthesized changes across teaching and research universities, public colleges, private career colleges, apprenticeship, faith-based institutions, Aboriginal-governed institutions, and continuing education activities. My focus was on sectors, not individual institutions, and I considered the consequences of federal government actions along with those of the provincial government.

I divided the era into three periods, from which I analyzed five significant historical moments. After considering the proximate causes of changes during these moments, I assessed the extent to which developments in each moment were consistent with three enduring public policy rationales for postsecondary education in British Columbia.

The first policy rationale concerned a set of concepts about fairness that emerged cumulatively to constitute a fulsome understanding of social justice: access to educational opportunity for individuals, compensatory justice, cultural recognition and promotion, and spatial adaptation. The second propelling rationale, economic in nature, emerged from the literature on human capital formation and found expression in both generic and occupationally-specific forms. The third rationale concerned a means perceived to foster effective and efficient educational administration, namely a neoliberal, market-oriented approach that I explicated using some concepts from institutional theory and new public management.

All three policy rationales proved helpful in interpreting the historical record, but none was present in all five historical moments. I commented about aspects of these policy rationales that might be useful to consider regarding future postsecondary development. I also made two observations, one about historical themes and the other about the language used to describe postsecondary education, that are relevant regardless of the approach taken when examining the postsecondary history of British Columbia.

I offered recommendations concerning the social stratification implications of a growing vertical differentiation among institutions, the role of continuing education, information about the private sectors, a more current usage of human capital theory, attention to sub-baccalaureate education, the implications of international enrolment, open data, terminology, and systems thinking.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Academic Studies: Master of Public Administration
University of Victoria, 1982
Bachelor of Arts
The University of British Columbia, 1976

GRADUATE STUDIES

Field of Study: Higher Education

Courses

EDST 536	Higher Education Systems in Canada	Dr. A. Metcalfe
EDST 596A	Phil & Educ'l Policy: Neo-Liberalism	Dr. T. Webb
EDST 601A	Critical Social Theory in Education	Dr. T. Webb
EDST 601B	Doctoral Seminar: Advanced Methods	Dr. A. Mazawi
EDST 602A	Second Year Doctoral Seminar	Dr. C. Ruitenbergh

Instructors

AWARDS

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Award
The University of British Columbia:
Four Year Fellowships for PhD Students
Four Year Fellowships Tuition Award
Faculty of Education Graduate Award
Special UBC Graduate Scholarship – Faculty of Education PhD
Entrance Scholarship

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Cowin, B. (2013c). *Student transfer, success and mobility in BC post-secondary institutions: A synthesis of research*. Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer.
- Cowin, B. (2013b). *Private career colleges*. Made in BC: a history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 545544)
- Cowin, B. (2013a). *Post-baccalaureate programs*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 540825)
- Cowin, B. (2012b). *Agencies and organizations*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 536089)
- Cowin, B. (2012a). *Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 532003)
- Cowin, B. (2011). *Aboriginal postsecondary education*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 524626)

- Cowin, B. (2010). *Continuing education in public institutions*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 512293)
- Cowin, B. (2009). *Faith-based institutions*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED505878)
- Cowin, B. (2007). *Overview*. Made in BC: A history of postsecondary education in British Columbia. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 501776)
- Cowin, B. (2004). *Transfer in British Columbia: What does the research tell us? Research Results, April 2004*. Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- 2014 International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
(first author with Alison Thomas and Siobahn Ashe)
Guaranteed to be Transformative?: Investigating the Impact of Short-Term Study Abroad Experiences
- 2013 European Association for Institutional Research
Using Learning Community Pedagogy in Short-Term Study Abroad
Pacific Northwest Association for Institutional Research and Planning
Neoliberalism 101: Understanding some Unexpected Reactions to Institutional Research Reports
Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education
(Poster) *Two BC Data Bases for You to Access and Analyze*
- 2012 Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training
Out of the Shadows: Policy Formulation Processes of the "Other" BC Postsecondary Sectors
- 2011 Association for Institutional Research
Panel: Multiple Perspectives on Environmental Scanning to Strengthen Strategic Planning
European Association for Institutional Research
Variation and Similarity in Institutional Research Offices
- 2009 Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association
Newbies – Life as New Douglas College Students as Described by Students in their Blogs
- 2008 European Association for Institutional Research
Student Services Results from a System-Wide Survey of Former College Students



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(Educational Studies)

JOHN ROBERT (BOB) COWIN

MPA, University of Victoria, 1982
BA, The University of British Columbia, 1976

Monday, January 23, 2017, 12:30 pm
Room 200, Graduate Student Centre
Latecomers will not be admitted

“Public Policy and the Structural Development of Postsecondary Education in British Columbia, Canada, 1960 - 2015”

EXAMINING COMMITTEE

Chair:

Dr. Laura Moss (English)

Supervisory Committee:

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Dr. Jason Ellis (Educational Studies)

Dr. Alison Taylor (Educational Studies)

University Examiners:

Dr. Paul Harrison (Botany)

Dr. Amy Metcalfe (Educational Studies)

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