

Chapter Four: Governance

Governance, simply defined, is Who gets to decide what? Governance is a dynamic concept, describing multiple players from individuals to institutions, rules, and stakeholders in any given setting. A resilient governance system must be flexible, use local (instead of off-site) decision making, but still retain some structure and continuity.¹⁴⁰ An adaptive system can react quickly to opportunities and develop local responses to changes within the larger panarchy. Well-adapted governance models respond to adversity and uncertainty with acceptance and capacity for change instead of brittleness and vulnerability.

The issue of resilience is not one of change *versus* not changing; it's about making good choices when change is required. One of the original board members was adamant during our interview that change was built into the founding of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. "When we establish these organizations, they are established to evolve. I always took umbrage with the idea that things have to stay the same. Change is a testimony that what people did in the early days set things up for evolution, to continue in today's world. It has to be relevant and to find a place to exist and grow. Staying the same is just stagnation, not tradition."¹⁴¹

For most of the Centre's history, governance involved three fundamental components:

- the series of five-year operating agreements that set out the structure and mandate of the CSC
- the board of directors
- the Centre's director, who carries the responsibility for CSC operations and sets the Centre's tone and direction

¹⁴⁰ Resilience Alliance, *Assessing Resilience in Social-Ecological Systems: Workbook for Practitioners*, revised version, 2.0, 2010, p. 36.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Ted Turner, 29 January 2018.

In practice, the office manager, support staff, librarian, research associates, communications staff, and education liaison carried the heaviest day-to-day load. Yet, staff report to the director, and from a governance perspective, that is the critical lynchpin. This chapter will discuss in more depth the Centre's three critical governance components, revealing a strong sense of change over time. The discussion to follow will reflect on governance and connect it back to notions of resilience.

Operating Agreements

The five-year operating agreements provide the legal basis for the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. There have been seven agreements between 1982 and 2018 (at the time of writing this history), with a few minor addendums along the way. The original agreement was five legal-sized pages, which included the signatory page; the most recent agreement (2014) was seven pages on letter-sized paper, including one signatory page and a schedule of co-op sector financial contributions.¹⁴² While these agreements are legal and binding, the Centre is also wholly within the legal and financial framework of the University of Saskatchewan — it is not a separate nonprofit, charity, or other legal institution.

One of the simplest ways to trace governance change at the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives is to follow the subtle ways in which the operating contracts have changed over time. Each contract lists the parties involved, the objectives of the entity, the administrative structure of board and board duties, the staff/faculty structure, the financial contributions and operational responsibilities, and the services that the Centre is expected to provide.¹⁴³ As governance covers both formal and informal rules, the question becomes, how do we create value, and how do we measure what we value? The Centre as a new

¹⁴² In the early agreements, the co-operative payment schedule was separate.

¹⁴³ The operating agreements are in the files of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and were shared with the writer of this history.

entity required clarity of shared purpose, which was achieved via the discussion around and signing of operating agreements. Each agreement was a wholly new contract, with revised signatories and a chance to build better alignment between contract vision and daily operations, or to set out new mandates for operations or governance. Two areas in particular stand out for closer review: the objectives laid out for the CSC and how those have evolved, and the services expected to be provided by the CSC and the university. A secondary level of historical review compares the operating agreements with the public annual reports, which reveal the on-the-ground interpretation and adaptation of the agreements. This is adaptive governance in action.

Objectives

The Centre's formal objectives have undergone subtle changes throughout its existence, but for the most part, the goals have remained constant. The original 1982 agreement contained four objectives:

1. Establish a program of studies at the undergraduate and graduate level with a specific focus on co-operatives and credit unions (available to students across campus).
2. Undertake off-campus programs in collaboration with the Co-operative College of Canada.
3. Undertake research of particular interest and relevance to co-operatives and make available the results of such research by publication, including textbooks and curriculum for colleges and universities.
4. Undertake research concerning legislation governing co-operatives and credit unions.

The Centre is known for its program of studies about co-operatives and credit unions, its off-campus and public work, its research, and its publications. Three of these original four

objectives changed quite dramatically in the second iteration (1990–94), in both wording and intent, although the overall thrust of the four remained similar. The first objective changed to “maintain” a program of studies for both undergraduates and graduates, indicating success in creating that program during the first contract. A secondary clause was added: the program of studies would work to “[train] a workforce of high productivity and high levels of innovation and entrepreneurship, and a particular understanding of the Co-operative Sector.” The wording of this objective is remarkable, as it shows a distinct pull towards workforce training for productivity, with co-operative knowledge as almost an add-on to the main goal. This reflects the university’s drive, and the sector’s goal, of specific workforce training at the university level for incoming employees. It sounds like the kind of objective created by government, yet the provincial government was not part of this agreement. It is the only agreement with such strong statements on workforce training.

Given the demise of the Co-operative College in 1987 and its amalgamation into the Canadian Co-operative Association, the second objective also changed significantly, becoming “provide seminars and short courses for the Co-operative Sector to improve skill levels and understanding of work and market environments.” Again, there is a distinct goal of workforce training, in this case, via seminars and short courses for the sector, not for students at the university. This objective most clearly lays out extension activities and potential roles for the staff and faculty.

The third objective changed considerably as well. It deliberately backed away from promising the publication of “textbooks and curriculum” to simply “publications based on scholarly studies.” Textbooks and curriculum outputs are rarely the purview of academic scholars, and such publications would not allow them to achieve tenure. Academics generally only write textbooks *after* they have been teaching a particular subject for many years; they know what is important and what is missing from the larger literature. Also, *for whom* would they be ex-

pected to write textbooks and curriculum? For high school students? For college-level teaching? That was never clear. Revising the objective to “publications” in general better matched on-the-ground operations. By 1990, Centre faculty and staff had begun in-house publishing of Occasional Papers, as well as journal-based academic publications, academic and trade books, as well as reports and similar outputs. The original agreement was, in fact, far too limiting. The fourth objective, to examine legislation and regulations, remained virtually the same.

The objectives were revisited once again in 1994, and pulled back considerably from the innovation, entrepreneurship, and workforce training goals outlined in 1990. The Centre would be expected to simply maintain a program of studies at undergraduate and graduate levels with a specific focus on co-operatives and credit unions. The second and third objectives, outlining seminars and publications, remained the same, while the fourth objective (studying legislation) was dropped. This change was due in part to the departure of Dan Ish as the director; none of the remaining faculty members had specific legal training. These three objectives — a program of studies for university students, seminars and short courses for the co-operative sector, and scholarly studies leading to publications — remained the same until 2004. At that time a new line was added to the first objective, expanding the focus of university teaching to include “alternative forms of institutions associated with the co-operative sector or adhering to co-operative values and principles.” This addition reflected the growing impact of the Centre’s grant success — research and collaborative work on the social economy and concepts of social cohesion — which often included nonprofit or other community-based groups whose legal structure might not be co-operative, but whose goals and work might be in alignment. These three objectives have remained in place to 2018.

The contracts that established and then renewed the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives are not easily available to the general public, although there are copies in both the Centre’s

archive and in the University of Saskatchewan archives. The easiest source of public information about the Centre, including its objectives, is the annual reports. Digitized copies going back to 1998 can be found on the Centre's website, and physical copies are available back to 1989. Since the contracts lay out the Centre's objectives, it would be reasonable to assume that those listed in the annual report would be the same — *but they are not*. In some ways, the objectives in the annual reports reflect the interpretation and on-the-ground activation of the contracts, and so are a more accurate reflection of what CSC staff and faculty viewed as their mandate and marching orders.

The objectives begin at the same starting point: the first is to develop and offer university courses “that provide an understanding of co-operative theory, principles, development, structures, and legislation.” While this explains the contractual objective in somewhat more detail, it is fundamentally the same between the operating agreements and the annual reports. But after that, differences are obvious. In the contracts, the second objective is for the Centre to offer seminars and short courses for the co-operative sector. That objective is not listed in the annual report. It's not that the Centre doesn't offer seminars and short courses — it does, and so fulfills the contract — but it's a question of emphasis. Seminars and short courses fall under the university-defined goal of outreach and extension, which has its own section in every annual report. By *not* listing co-op seminars and short courses as specific objectives in its public report, that mandate becomes less visible and not as easy to track. Accountability changes.

In the operating agreements, the Centre is tasked with undertaking research and publishing research results. In the annual reports, that function is split into two: undertake original research about co-operatives, and publish research about co-operatives, from both Centre staff and others. By splitting research and publication into two separate objectives, the Centre reveals the importance and difference of each function. It also showcases the fact that not all research can be easily published for public consumption, nor do all publications from the Centre

stem directly from Centre-based research projects. The CSC has, from the beginning, used its in-house capability to publish a wide range of co-operative knowledge, from a broad field of scholars and authors both inside and outside the CSC. The research and publication functions are often related, but in practice, they are distinct.

The fourth objective is perhaps the most interesting and controversial. The Centre's self-mandated objective, advertised in all annual reports between 1991 to 2013, was "to maintain a resource centre of co-operative materials that support the teaching and research functions of the Centre" — in other words, a library. This objective is *not* found in the contracts; it was never imposed from or expected by the funders, with the exception of a formal request in the 1982 contract for the University of Saskatchewan to contribute \$3,000 per year for "Library acquisitions." Creating a library resource centre within the CSC was a faculty and staff decision, perhaps begun by happenstance, but built over time to become a major part of its identity. The library took on a life of its own, a space and place as tied to the Centre as its publications or people, part of the larger CSC identity as a unit attached to the university, but with its own separate mission.

During the interview process, multiple staff and faculty members spoke at length about the library, its importance to the Centre, and its function as an integral aspect of the Centre's identity and draw. Isobel Findlay, Centre scholar and then fellow, said, "I used to love when we had the library. That was a big loss. As a researcher, it's important to have a bit of happenstance in your processes. Just going into the library and finding things was important. I do miss that."¹⁴⁴ Recollecting the decision to relocate the library and amalgamate it with the larger university collection led to high emotions, even tears, during the interview process. It was a decision made, some charged, without consensus, dovetailing with administrative changes at the CSC and the Diefenbaker Centre. The new Johnson Shoya-

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Isobel Findlay, 24 January 2018.

ma Graduate School of Public Policy came to reside in the building, necessitating a complete reconfiguration of space. The Centre's library met the same fate as other institutions pressed to change from physical to digital resources, creating meeting rooms and work stations for students in spaces once reserved for books. By 2014, it had been relocated to Special Collections within the university's Murray Library, and the fourth objective dropped from the annual report.

The annual report of 2013 cited the positive aspects of the move, including more visibility and accessibility to researchers if the collection was in the main library instead of the out-of-the-way Diefenbaker Centre, but the opposite has proven true. While the integrity of the collection was maintained — the books are in one space and archival documents are accessioned, sorted, and properly stored — it is, in fact, more difficult to access. As part of the non-circulating University Archives and Special Collections section, it can only be physically accessed during business hours and is closed evenings, weekends, and holidays. It cannot be browsed, borrowed, or otherwise used with serendipity and happenstance; researchers must know which items they would like to view and request each one separately. The Centre ceased to purchase additional publications for the collection, and while searchable on the university database, it now has a completely different dynamic for researchers.

The resource room is remembered with nostalgia as an open and welcoming space for co-operative researchers from around the world, a place where conversations sparked new ideas. It was a place of new knowledge for some. Lou Hammond Ketilson recounted: "I remember when one fellow came in as CEO of FirstSask, now Affinity. First thing he did was come to the Centre, sit in the library, and learn about Saskatchewan co-ops."¹⁴⁵ But as some of the original board members would note, this kind of nostalgia can act as an anchor point, antithetical to forward-thinking change. The library was never

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Lou Hammond Ketilson, 4 December 2017.

part of the mandate or operating agreements, but is a perfect example of how those matters were translated and actioned by staff and faculty. It was a localized adaptation that suited the CSC for many years, but as governance and digital publishing changed, the library did not fit the new iteration. It seems clear that the relocation of the library has not substantially undermined the resilience of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives as a site of new research and publication on co-ops, and it remains a meeting place where conversations spark and people are the integral ingredient to learning.

Services

Each of the five-year contracts outlines the services to be carried out by the Centre and the university; in other words, it was the university's responsibility to make sure that each of these CSC activities was supported. Several of the services laid out in 1984 have never changed: the Centre's teaching and research pursuits would be net *additions* to the university (i.e., not meant to replace any existing activities); no university program of relevance to co-operatives would be curtailed or cut without consultation with the CSC board; and when space is available, auditing courses is allowed. The audit function has not often been used, but rising university tuition might make this a reality.

In the original agreement, CSC faculty were expected to teach one half-class in the Co-operative College of Canada. After the demise of the college, this service line was replaced by a commitment to work with the Canadian Co-operative Association to support or participate in off-campus programs, short courses, or seminars. It was a change from actually teaching a class to a service and extension component. This change reflected a movement within the larger co-operative community for more in-house or conference-based training instead of sending people to the Co-op College. This service expectation was in effect in all contracts between 1990 and 2014, when it was changed. Instead of a specific call to work with the Canadi-

an Co-operative Association or its new iteration — Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada — the agreement broadened to “make reasonable efforts to co-operate with co-operatives and co-operative associations” to support off-campus programs, courses, and seminars. This change better reflects a broader collaborative mandate beyond the national apex organization. It also acknowledges an understanding that distance, time, and budget must always be considered. In effect, this clause asks Centre faculty and staff to be a resource for the larger co-operative community — a function that CSC members have fulfilled consistently with both grace and verve.

One service clause had a small but significant change. In the original contract, faculty members were expected to undertake research related to the Centre’s objectives. In 1990, faculty-assigned duties would be *both* research related to the CSC objectives *and* within the discipline of the faculty member. This change reflected the reality of the way in which faculty were hired and how they had to function within the university. Hired into home departments, Centre faculty faced a service conundrum of two masters: their home discipline and site of tenure, and the CSC. The revision to the contract gave the university responsibility and leverage to ensure that faculty were supported in both directions.

The two most interesting service responsibilities were around teaching and financing. In 1994, an additional clause mandated the university to “use its best efforts to raise additional funds to support the activities of the Centre,” which remained in place until 2014. This put specific onus on the university to find needed funds via whatever channels it could. That could mean supporting the CSC through its grants, service contracts, or helping to bring in additional core funders. The 2014 revised and present version reads that the university will advise the Centre on “opportunities to raise additional funds ... and to assist where appropriate.” The new clause matters; between 1989 and 2014, the university’s overall financial support for the Centre rose, including up-front cash contributions when necessary and backfill of the budget. The new clause

could be viewed as a pullback, indicating a switch to limiting the university's largesse. However, there remains a commitment to advise and support the Centre on financial matters, a point that may be useful for future Centre negotiations. The agreement essentially makes sure that the university will be at the table during any funding discussions with incoming new partners.

By far the most important service clause is about teaching. Right from the beginning, the contract stipulated that the Centre would offer at least one full-time class on co-operatives at the graduate or undergraduate level, "for each full-time faculty member employed under this contract." The fact that the university was expressly charged with making sure this activity went forward is key. It gave extra leverage to the director and faculty desperately trying to insert co-operative content into the college or departmental course calendars. It is a cleverly worded clause, focusing on the minimum number of classes to be taught, but not specifically indicating that each faculty member must teach a class on co-ops every year. In practice, to the extent that faculty were allowed to do so in their home departments or colleges, each faculty member *would* teach a course. But over time, given sabbatical leave, research obligations, or administrative leave, faculty were busy. Four full-time course equivalents per year was sometimes a stretch. Nonetheless, CSC faculty all received accolades for teaching and graduate mentorship through the years. In 2014, this course load was revised. The new clause simply stipulates that the Centre's academic staff will offer, at a minimum, one three-credit unit class "specifically related to the co-operative program." With the new certificate and graduate training courses, the Centre routinely surpasses this minimum.

The Board of Directors

Early governance decisions, from idea to formal creation of the Centre and the hiring of Chris Axworthy, were in the hands of the task force committee, which morphed into the first official board. This group had the power to sign the Centre into being and to set out its mandate and operations. The board had five duties, as laid out in the original agreement:

1. Recommend candidates for the position of director
2. Advise the director concerning research priorities for the Centre
3. Report annually to the university board of governors on the accomplishments of the Centre
4. Review and advise the director on matters that the board deems appropriate
5. Provide leadership in establishing a practicum or internship at the Co-operative College of Canada

These duties reflect a stewardship role, combining decision making with advice. The board did not hire staff or faculty directly, aside from the director, nor did it make day-to-day decisions; it was never an operations board. By 1990, its role had solidified into a management board in the classic executive style, with formal director's reports and budgets, which required debate by the board before recommending approval by the university's VP academic. Although funding flowed through university accounting processes, the Centre director made minor budget decisions and otherwise guided budgets for staff action or board review and revision. This localized decision making remains in place.

For the first thirty years of its existence, the Centre's board, particularly the university deans, held strategic sway within their own spheres and brought that role and power to the board table. Lou Hammond Ketilson spoke strongly about this issue: "Having the deans sit at our governing table was

very important. It was a reminder that they had some involvement with us and that they had a faculty member whose focus was co-operatives and that they needed support. There were voices across campus to speak in support of the Centre at Dean's Council." What she saw was partnership: "Senior people from co-ops were sitting with senior university people. That spoke to the partnership between university and the co-operative sector."¹⁴⁶ There was a sense that it "was more about a commitment to a relationship than it was to a contract," added Brett Fairbairn.¹⁴⁷ That rapport proved a valuable resource for the university. Other campus undertakings, including health projects around rural agriculture and medicine, or fundraising for the new agriculture building, brought the same co-op leaders to the table — with money.¹⁴⁸

During the first few years, the ten-member management board reported through its board chair to the president of the university. Over time, although the contract stipulated direct reporting to the President's Office, these matters filtered to the office of VP Research, with financials and budgeting reported to the VP Finance and Administration, both of which positions reported to the president.¹⁴⁹ This slight change moved the reporting level one step away from the president, but still connected the Centre to the university's senior executive. The opposite was also true. The deans came directly to the Centre as university board appointees, until multiple cascading changes were introduced in 2014.

Co-op sector appointees to the board were codified in the five-year agreements, which stipulated a board member drawn from each of the co-op financial supporters. Yet those appointees changed subtly. Whereas the Centre began with direct support from leading decision makers, CSC board minutes soon began to reflect substitutions. Ted Turner, president of

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Brett Fairbairn, 23 November 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Ted Turner, 29 January 2018.

¹⁴⁹ This informal change was formalized in the 2014–19 agreement.

the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, for example, was busy. “I would have liked to play a bigger role” in building the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, he remarked, but he was president and had to spend his time on other matters such as international trade negotiations or national-level policy discussions. So he delegated. Other major co-operatives also listed alternates who would attend meetings. There was a chair for each sponsor at the CSC board table, but the person filling that chair could and did change.

As is the case with co-op apex organizations such as Credit Union Central or Federated Co-operatives Limited, board members were drawn from regional representatives. Those who became board members of apex bodies became professional board meeting attendees. Major entities tend to have an interest in multiple organizations and must then find people to serve on those boards. This kind of board representation is a participation model, designed to support legitimacy and parity (one from each of the funding entities), but does not necessarily lead to strength or capacity. CSC board duty often fell to new directors with little experience and less sway. In some cases, these board members were farmers, school teachers, or others with little university experience who may have found the deans intimidating.¹⁵⁰ It was suggested during some of the interviews that the strength of the board appointees from the co-op sector was an important contributor to the Centre’s overall resilience. With strong co-op appointees, sitting head-to-head with the deans, there was collective action, network-building, and strategic capacity that satisfied both the sector’s needs and those of the university, as well as the CSC. If the sector representatives had less strength, the university could sway direction.

Provincial appointees met a similar fate. Ministers held far more sway than junior ministers or, later, staff members. As co-ops fell over time from having their own ministry to being merely a file in a deputy minister’s portfolio with a junior staff

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Myrna Hewitt, 5 February 2018.

member to sit in on meetings, the Centre's provincial representative lost the power to influence government. The once strong connection to co-operatives and an understanding of their economic and social role in Saskatchewan society gradually disappeared from government understanding. In 2014, the provincial government withdrew.

Even though the original board viewed the CSC as a long-term project, it can be difficult, admitted Vern Leland, to defend or support some initiatives within a business milieu that worked on a transactional basis, value for money, results for input. "It [the Centre] is not all that relevant to the average [co-op] member out there," he noted.¹⁵¹ Ted Turner agreed. "I would ask, why are we spending money on the Co-op Union of Canada? It was hard to see how it was money well spent. You had to get into the area of philosophy. It was a little bit like that with the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. You couldn't measure it in dollars and cents. You had to measure it in philosophical terms."¹⁵² The issue of relevance, and measuring relevance, would come down to the difference between the funders' needs and interests, and those of the university. Myrna Hewitt sat on the board both near its beginning, and again, many years later. She traced the so-called "transactional" issues as a matter of mission drift and suggested that credit unions, whom she represented her second time around as a board member, were partly to blame. "The credit unions were sending the wrong people. They were nice people, but not directing the Centre to a place that was needed."¹⁵³ It was a management board, but, in her view, didn't do as good a job of managing as it should have. The university deans on the board pushed a different research and teaching agenda. Not enough work was being done on issues of critical importance to credit unions. Over time, the relationship between credit unions and the Centre lost its cohesive strength.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Vern Leland, 20 January 2018.

¹⁵² Interview with Ted Turner, 29 January 2018.

¹⁵³ Interview with Myrna Hewitt, 5 February 2018.

The Centre embarked on a new round of contract negotiations between 2012 and 2014, when it was also going through a period of governance change. After years of reporting to the VP Academic, as do all other research and affiliate centres at the university, the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives shifted, creating a formal partnership with the new Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS). Formed in 2007 as a partnership between the universities of Regina and Saskatchewan, JSGS was one of three new schools formed within the University of Saskatchewan.¹⁵⁴ Centre Fellow Murray Fulton was an instrumental part of the team that created these schools, bringing many years of administrative experience and interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship to the table. While the five-year agreement signed in 2014 reiterated that the CSC would report to the VP Academic, the university assumed full control of appointing the director and routed the reporting structure through the JSGS. In effect, the university and the policy school assumed a greater level of oversight.

There were well-thought-out reasons for this change in governance. As Lou Hammond Ketilson noted in her 2013 director's report, the new relationship between the CSC and the policy school would grant "access to additional faculty and students interested in doing research on co-operatives,"¹⁵⁵ while also enhancing its focus on co-operative governance, strategy, and public policy. The partnership also solved one of the Centre's longstanding problems: as a centre and not a school, the university teaching structure did not allow it to create its own teaching curricula and programs, nor did it have degree-granting powers. While the CSC did have some success via the Interdisciplinary Studies program, that worked best when the Centre had a large, multi-year grant that could support scholarships; it had less success when there wasn't a specific grant or cohort of students. While access to undergradu-

¹⁵⁴ The other two are the School of Environment and Sustainability and the School of Public Health.

¹⁵⁵ "Director's Report," Centre for the Study of Co-operatives *Annual Report*, 2013.

ate education lost ground, formally joining with JSGS allowed the Centre to develop specific senior-level courses and certificates, available to both graduate students and practitioners. Instead of going hat in hand to the different departments and asking to teach about co-ops, the CSC was finally its own education master.

At a practical level, the new reporting structure goes to the JSGS's executive director. As a school within the university, the JSGS executive director reports to the VP Academic; so ultimately, the Centre still reports — albeit via a mediator — to senior university administration, but the line is no longer direct. While some might view that as a minor change, others expressed consternation and concern during the interview process for this history. "I'm very, very concerned about the loss of autonomous identity," one long-time faculty member noted.¹⁵⁶ Many others shared those thoughts. Which will become the identity of reference, the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives or the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy? What happens to institutional memory if the CSC is subsumed? In some ways, this point echoes what happened to the Government of Saskatchewan's Ministry of Co-operation and Co-operative Development: it merged, changed and reformed, was subsumed into economic development, until it was all but erased. As Michael Gertler pointed out, "There are costs to change. It creates excitement and newness, but you've lost institutional memory."¹⁵⁷

The new governance structure does raise questions around current and new faculty recruitment. Must existing faculty be affiliated with JSGS, or can they still be drawn from across campus? Will their work be reviewed or approved based on their academic work in public policy instead of co-operatives or the broader social economy? Even though JSGS was built as an interdisciplinary school, will the focus on policy and governance outweigh other major areas of co-operative

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Lou Hammond Ketilson, 4 December 2017.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Michael Gertler, 9 February 2018.

research, such as co-op history, law, sociology, economics, or co-operative principles? The closer relationship means faster decision making, as the Centre and the policy school share space in the Diefenbaker Building — yet, some might argue that the old relationship allowed for more local autonomy.

The new reporting structure also means that the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives has a vested interest in ensuring the stability, academic *bona fides*, and institutional power of the policy school, and *vice versa*. They become, in effect, each others' champion — but the power relationship matters. JSGS helps to carry the Centre's flag, to defend and support it within the larger university. This is a closer relationship than the Centre ever had with its scattershot faculty affiliations with multiple departments or colleges. But concerns remain.

A related change in the Centre's governance is the structure of the board. Created and operated as a management board for most of its history, the 2014 agreement saw it revised to an advisory board, which also de-coupled from its unwritten traditional arrangement of drawing from university deans. Murray Fulton, who led these changes, noted that while deans held a lot of decision-making autonomy in the 1980s and 1990s, that ability had eroded, and having them on the board no longer created the leverage it may once have done.¹⁵⁸ The new advisory board uses the five former university positions to draw from a cadre of experienced researchers, in Saskatchewan or from non-signatory co-op sector representatives and others whose advice would be valuable. In practice, the director and existing board recommend people for these positions. Co-op signatories who provide financial support retain their board seats. In effect, co-op voices on the board have almost doubled and have broadened beyond the university to entities such as Credit Union Central of Canada, or other co-op research centres such as the Desjardins International Institute for Co-operatives (affiliated with HEC, the business school) in

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Murray Fulton, 12 December 2017.

Montreal, or the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives in Madison.

Board responsibilities have also changed subtly. It is no longer required to review or pass budgets, but instead must turn its attention outward, to ensuring the Centre's overall financial integrity. Meeting twice instead of three times per year, the advisory board still provides strategic advice on research, teaching, and training, but must now conduct an annual performance review of the director. It ensures that an annual report is prepared and provides other advice as necessary or requested. But here is a point that may prove interesting about the new configuration. On the former board, both co-op and university members brought an already-existing relationship to the table. The deans met and mixed within the university, working together on multiple other projects and governance decisions. Co-op board members did the same, building relationships outside the Centre. Both groups could leverage these connections at the CSC meetings, bringing familiarity, friendships, and trust to the table. Less time needed to be spent on board cohesion, at least within these subgroups. The new advisory body may have less cohesive connections, which may make for more interesting discussions, but trust requires time.

Part of the reason for the change is that a management board created with representatives from the different colleges and co-ops can act like a zoo — one animal of each kind, so everything is even. The structure of the new advisory board is more strategic and draws on co-operative and academic institutions across the United States and Canada. Formally aligned with the policy school, the Centre no longer needed the deans to activate a larger voice across campus. The changes to the board might make it possible to once again make room for government perspective not tied to direct funding, building bridges and bringing the provincial or other government into future contracts. The new board is tasked with considering and responding to larger issues of strategy and change in the co-operative environment beyond the University of Saskatchewan and the co-op funders, leveraging capacity at the board level to

vault the CSC into a new, international era of innovation and influence.

The board also tells a story by the numbers. Over the past thirty-five plus years, sixty-four people have served on the Centre's board, or as an alternate to a listed board member. The gender split has been 25 percent women and 75 percent men, overall, but more women have come on the board since the turn of the millennium. Those who served on the board for ten years or more included Bill Brennan, Peter MacKinnon, Gary Storey, and Lynne Pearson from the University of Saskatchewan, and Bill Turner, Bob Effa, Herb Carlson, and Karl Baumgardner from the co-operative sector. Of the sixty-four board members, twenty-six represented the university. Each of the major co-op stakeholders — FCL, SWP, and CUC — had six or seven board members over the years. Others came from the provincial government, the combined representatives for The Co-operators, CUMIS, Co-op Trust, and Concentra, with a few outliers such as an early delegate from the Co-operative College of Canada, and more recently, new funders or advisors. There has been a mix of board members with shorter appointments and those who had a long commitment and saw the Centre through multiple years of change.

As noted in the first few chapters, there was a bit of an internal organizational struggle to determine who should set the Centre's direction: the board or its faculty. Working out areas of strength meant occasionally working through major concerns and disagreements. Overall, though, the board worked best when it served as advisor and place of second thought, as well as working with CSC faculty and staff during planning sessions around research goals and directions. Contract renewals offered space for reflection, feedback, and strategy, as well as relationship building. The strength and vision of the board members has always been reflected in the overall health, vitality, and direction of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. With the new advisory board reaching beyond Saskatchewan, the CSC is poised for growth and change in the years ahead.

The Director

Each of the contract agreements stipulated staffing levels for both faculty and support staff, including budget allocation for these positions. The first contract outlined four academic positions (one director, three academic faculty), but gave provision for hiring sessional faculty to teach courses when necessary, and seconding staff from the Co-operative College of Canada to work on research projects. Support staff levels were clear: two clerk-stenographers and one research assistant. In 1990, there were minor changes to the support staff: one clerk-stenographer and two research associates. The provision to pull staff from co-op organizations for research or teaching remained in place. The 1994 agreement had no specific stipulation for support staff, providing, instead, for staff “necessary to meet the ongoing operations of the Centre as allowed by the budget.” By keeping intentions fluid, staff could be brought in depending on funding sources — in response to major grants or project activities, for example. This basic outline — one director, three faculty, and necessary staff, sessionals, or seconded personnel — would remain in principle in every subsequent contract.

Leadership for board, faculty, and staff, to a large extent, pivoted from the director’s chair. Interestingly, despite this critical role, there are no specific provisions in the contract outlining the duties of the director until the 2014 agreement. This change was necessary partly because the board no longer had direct control over or responsibility for appointing or hiring a director; this duty passed to the university in its “ultimate sole discretion,” though in consultation with the board. As of 2014, the director must be a University of Saskatchewan employee — though it does not stipulate that the person must be faculty — and reports to the executive director of the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy. The director is responsible for the “general management and operation of the Centre,” but will receive guidance “as appropriate” from the advisory board.

The director serves as the lynchpin of all the moving parts — anchoring board meetings, working on funding agreements, directing Centre staff on projects and targets, supporting and engaging other faculty, as well as guiding his or her own teaching, research, and home department commitments. “Every director has different interests,” one interviewee commented. “The CSC has moved in different directions because of their interests.”¹⁵⁹ Even so, the formal governance structure set out by the five-year agreements created a core mandate and expectations, and a major part of the director’s responsibility has been to ensure that these are carried out. Nonetheless, there was room for personal flair. The personality and direction of the Centre would change depending on who sat in the director’s chair, and each developed goals for their directorship.

Chris Axworthy, the first director, took on the task of developing the culture and position of the Centre as a leading player in the larger co-operative community. With a complement of four academics, plus accomplished researchers and communications leads on staff, Axworthy defined the Centre’s connections to the broader North American community. “He took us international and to the US, such as conferences that we’ve gone to ever since in the same way.”¹⁶⁰ For a nascent group, finding like-minded peers and creating a new co-operative research and publication space was critical. In some ways, Axworthy’s directorship was about building brand and creating exposure.

A second aspect of Axworthy’s leadership was defining the difference between research *for* co-ops and research *about* co-ops. Much of his work with the board contested any sign of encroachment or influence by the co-op funders. After all, academic research is unpredictable: “What if the research results were not favourable? What happens then?”¹⁶¹ It was unthinkable that research results could be suppressed, skewed, or oth-

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Lou Hammond Ketilson, 4 December 2017.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Chris Axworthy, 29 November 2017.

erwise changed. Clarity through discussion led to respect; in fact, all of the co-op leaders interviewed for this project remembered *supporting* academic integrity. Ted Turner, president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool when the Centre was created, noted: “One thing I was so proud of was that we accepted criticism. We didn’t reject it at all. Organizations that we trust, like the CSC, they were not criticizing just to criticize, but to make us better. We could accept that sort of thing without blowing our tops.”¹⁶² Bill Turner, who served ten years on the board as a representative from financial co-operatives, also recalled strongly supporting academic integrity: “We were supportive of the CSC to be free in their thoughts and publicizing of their thoughts and insights through the whole process. I can’t recall any attempt to say to any of the people, ‘Don’t say anything, don’t get involved.’ There was complete academic freedom to pursue whatever they wanted to say.”¹⁶³

A third feature of Chris Axworthy’s leadership was about defining research areas of interest. It was important, he later noted, to make sure that Centre faculty were studying *all* kinds of co-ops, not just those that financially supported them. Housing and health co-ops, fishing co-ops, and worker co-ops, for example, earned their attention. The Occasional Papers series, instituted early in the Centre’s history, reveals CSC faculty interest in bringing international perspectives and activities into local focus. By 1989, there were several papers that examined international co-operative issues such as the Mondragon worker co-ops, producer co-operatives in Israel, and social democracy examples from Norway. These perspectives balanced work specific to western Canada and Saskatchewan, including a history of Saskatchewan co-operative law, a look at farm interest groups, and a bibliography of co-op organizations across western Canada. This balance among local, regional, national, and international would continue throughout the Centre’s history.

¹⁶² Interview with Ted Turner, 29 January 2018.

¹⁶³ Interview with Bill Turner, 15 January 2018.

As Chris Axworthy transitioned to federal politics and left the CSC, Lou Hammond Ketilson accepted a limited interim appointment as director, under an active board and with cooperative decision making. Dan Ish from the College of Law soon became the Centre's second director. His tenure was about stabilization and strength. Inheriting a massive funding gap with the pullout of the provincial government, Ish stabilized the Centre's funding with the university, worked to bring the provincial government back on board, and developed relationships with the colleges on campus in support of faculty members involved with the CSC. Ish's leadership strengthened the core faculty as a cohort, supporting the move from multi-disciplinary to interdisciplinary work and viewpoints — an active process of vision, dedication, and work to create something new and unique. The Centre was still relatively young, with faculty hungry for publications, for new research, for setting the standards of a new area of inquiry. "We thought of it as experimental and a new enterprise," Ish recalled, an attitude that allowed for creativity and failure as much as it aimed for success.¹⁶⁴

By 1993, CSC faculty were all tenured and promoted within their home departments. When Dan Ish left the Centre for a sabbatical at Stanford in 1995, Murray Fulton applied for, and won, the director's chair. "I've always been attracted to the conceptualization of the problem that I'm trying to understand. Trying to simplify it down to its essence," Fulton recalled.¹⁶⁵ That commitment to concepts and theories translated in practical ways for the Centre. Under his leadership, staff and faculty engaged in a summer retreat to discuss the Centre's strengths and direction. One major outcome was the development of vision and mission statements — a way to capture and define the essence of CSC activities, strengths, passions, and goals. His first director's report in the 1995 annual report outlined the Centre's self-defined mission: "When people in Saskatchewan

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Dan Ish, 1 December 2017.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Murray Fulton, 12 December 2017.

or Canada or other parts of the world have a question about co-ops, the Centre should be one of the first places they think of to find the answer.”

Fulton’s first time in the director’s chair brought a renewed commitment to international presence and research collaboration. In alignment with larger university grant initiatives, Fulton’s leadership defined a new era of research that encompassed both theoretical and conceptual work, including “the questions no one wants asked,” alongside selective applied research for the co-op sector.¹⁶⁶ It was aggressive, ambitious, and goal-oriented — to support the Centre in its objective to become the leader in co-operative knowledge.

As part of the renewed commitment to research, the Centre invested enormous energy in outreach and extension, particularly at the community level, working with co-ops or nascent co-ops. This offered “an opportunity to observe” what was happening in the real world and to use those observations to build better research questions and design stronger research projects. Identifying areas or issues where co-ops could provide an alternative local solution also grew in importance. This is a shift from observing co-ops in action to finding potential co-op “hot spots” where development initiatives could thrive. Communications outputs also shifted in response to these activities and began to include items such as resource kits and videos that would support co-op development. Digital technology figured high, as well, as the 1990s saw the exponential growth of online technology. Under Fulton’s directorship, one staff position was dedicated to Community-Centred Technology Programs focused on the possibilities of online learning. The Centre moved in lock-step with technological change.

Brett Fairbairn assumed the directorship in 2000 and was in the chair as the Centre ushered in a new era of major collaborative research leadership. Shared research projects with the

¹⁶⁶ “Director’s Report,” Centre for the Study of Co-operatives *Annual Report*, 1995, np.

Government of Canada's Co-operatives Secretariat and the national Canadian Co-operative Association jostled with important new work on the connection between co-operative models and First Nations in Canada, including work with the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Department of Indian Affairs. This dovetailed with a major push at the university level to target large grants from the national funding entity, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, via multi-partner, collaborative research proposals. That new focus, Lou Hammond Ketilson noted, "shaped our work for a long time, and our relationships across the country. The co-ops were quite happy. FCL in particular wanted to see us work with others and not work in isolation."¹⁶⁷

Under Fairbairn's leadership, the Centre reinforced its role as a connector: connecting theory with practice, international with local, university with sector and government, students with knowledge, and research with education and extension. "The knowledge we create," he wrote in 2001, "is co-operative in the sense of being shared and mutual." In other words, he saw the Centre's role as a key networking hub, a place where co-operative ideas collide and grow. Its interdisciplinarity, he argued, was central to this process. The Centre had the ability to transfer knowledge from one space to another, across time, space, and disciplinary perspective to both academic and public audiences.¹⁶⁸

When Lou Hammond Ketilson took over the director's chair in 2004, she picked up this new mandate and charged forward. Centre faculty won and led major national collaborative research grants, which resulted in an explosion of staff and, more particularly, students. The new interdisciplinary co-op courses allowed for a concentrated cohort of graduate students working on these grant projects. Hammond Ketilson was

¹⁶⁷ See *Annual Report, 2000–2001*; *Annual Report, 2001–2002*. Also interview with Lou Hammond Ketilson, 4 December 2017.

¹⁶⁸ Centre for the Study of Co-operatives *Annual Report, 2000–2001* and *2001–2002*.

also chair of the International Co-operative Alliance's Committee on Co-operative Research, which raised the Centre's international profile. Hammond Ketilson's tenure as the CSC director defined its strongest era, combining collaborative research success with graduate training.

While celebrating this success, however, she had an ongoing battle with the university. The funding achievements ensured the Centre's good standing at the university level, but Hammond Ketilson also worked tirelessly to see the supporting co-ops recognized for their foundational contributions. She had the clearest perspective on the connection between the funding base— which provided the means to hire core staff — and the ability to apply for and carry out large collaborative research projects. That core support, she thought, should be more recognized and honoured by the university. But in her view, despite deans sitting on the board of directors, the university did not adjust its policies or practices to support the Centre. In the end, the Centre was more or less forced to alter aspects of its original mandate in order to better match university governance structures.

In 2014, Murray Fulton once again took the reigns as director, shepherding most of the recent governance and operational changes. Through the massive Co-operative Innovation Project (CIP), which Fulton led, research attention refocused on the concept of co-op development, but with a new grant vehicle — direct funding from a major co-op to carry out a public, not private, research project. This model may usher in changes in how the larger co-operative community views and funds research. The CIP also showcased how co-operatives must understand the difference between core operating funding and money for specific research projects. In this instance, FCL supported *both*. While staff and faculty retirements and relocations define contemporary change at the CSC, Fulton carries the central responsibility for building a cohort of board members and funders who share a vision of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and once again commit to funding the core personnel who will define the Centre's future.

In addition to those who have assumed the directorship, other faculty members have contributed significantly to establishing the Centre's identity. Long-time faculty member Michael Gertler provided a frank and candid interview, replete with astute observations on the Centre's history and direction. In particular, he presented clear thoughts on how centres fit into the larger university system both in Canada and the United States, the difference between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and insight into thornier co-operative issues such as labour relations, corporatization, and sustainability. His perspective is quiet but clear and firm, and occasionally willing to be critical in ways that go against the grain. His research is firmly embedded in rural sociology, particularly around agricultural co-operatives and sustainable rural development, but by his own admission, he is a slow scholar, with less published output than others. Being thoughtful, though, meant that Gertler was the perfect candidate for critical positions, such as being the graduate student liaison or spearheading a major conference. A workhorse professor with a large teaching load every year, Gertler would often account for the majority of the Centre's annual teaching commitment. He was also instrumental in conceptualizing and activating the Centre Scholars program, which created a second tier of scholars connected with the CSC. As with all other faculty, his connection to the Centre has waxed and waned over the years, depending on his involvement with CSC research or sabbatical leaves. He served as acting director for a year when Lou Hammond Ketilson went on leave in 2011.

Several board and faculty interviews conducted for this history indicated that the resilience and connective strength between the Centre and its board and funders required a solid working relationship between funders and the director, with shared goals. Gertler acknowledged that his proclivity for criticism, beyond issues of academic autonomy and into the realm of ideology and sustainability, meant that despite his administrative capabilities, he would never have been selected to serve a regular term as director. The director's position, he pointed out, requires willingness to be politically adept and comforta-

ble with a certain level of diplomacy and negotiation, including capitulation.

Other faculty members through the years have included Cristine de Clercy (2000–2006), Catherine Leviten-Reid (2008–2010), Dionne Pohler (2013–2016), and more recently, Eric Micheels, Isobel Findlay (now retired but active as a researcher), Abdullah Mamun, and Marc-André Pigeon. Through the years, there have also been a number of research associates and assistants whose positions were critical to the Centre's research and publication productivity. These have included Skip McCarthy, David Laycock, Lars Apland, Andrea Harris, Brenda Stefanson, Roger Herman, Byron Henderson, Audra Krueger, and Darcy Overland, among others. One of the Centre's defining features, in fact, is that it has consistently hired staff who also had research and publication depth and were able to carry the CSC mandate forward. It would be far too simple to say that faculty carried out research and staff played a supportive role. In many cases, staff held advanced degrees and were well able to pursue independent projects. In a booklet on interdisciplinarity published by the Centre in 2000, Murray Fulton and Brett Fairbairn argued that true interdisciplinarity required diversity and included non-academic members of different ranks, skills, and orientations equally and fully integrated into the team.¹⁶⁹ Their point reflected the Centre's everyday experience: knowledge building came from multiple team players, working together. However, staff did not have the same level of autonomy as faculty. Particularly in the case of major research grants, faculty members were the principal investigators who defined and set the projects, while staff carried the operations load.

¹⁶⁹ Brett Fairbairn and Murray Fulton, *Interdisciplinarity and the Transformation of the University* (Saskatoon: Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, 2000).

Reflection: Governance and Resilience

Governance and decision making at the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives have flowed from three major points: the operating agreements, the board, and the director's chair. The three operate on a revolving axis of power that combines immediate decision making with long-term planning, alignment, and shared vision. The formal policy-making power of the contracts sets out responsibilities, while the board manages a connecting role between the Centre and its three main spheres of influence: co-operatives, the university, and the provincial government. The director oversees operations, which take the mandate into action. This shared triple layer of governance provides strategic checks and balances at different scales.

Minute changes to the operating agreements and service requirements over the past seven contracts indicate how the contract renewal process allowed signatories to create the mandate, then adjust it over time to bring mandate and operations into alignment. Unlike institutions created with a long-term operating agreement or founding documents that are filed away and never viewed again, the contracts are an integral part of the Centre's governance and operations structure. They are living documents that define both the operating mandate and the relationship and responsibilities of the signatory funders, staff, and faculty. The five-year cycle built extensive resilience into the system, even though, in the words of one director, contract renewal was always a time of upheaval and uncertainty. Renewal discussions favoured reflection and realignment, as a shared contract. They also offered the opportunity to drop mandates that were no longer suitable — working with the Co-operative College or researching law — or to insert new or expanded mandates, such as redefining research around the social economy or working with co-operatives and co-op groups beyond apex organizations. The contracts allow for both Centre personnel and funders to build shared directions, goals, and strategies.

The Centre's on-the-ground operations, as reflected in annual reports, provide another view of governance and decision making. Extension activities, particularly offering short courses and serving as a knowledge pool for the broader co-op community, receive different levels of emphasis in the operating agreements and the annual reports. Nonetheless, providing the co-operative and general public with informational assistance and support beyond academic teaching has been a key activity. In the case of the library, there was a significant difference between what was outlined in the contracts and how faculty and staff interpreted matters on the ground. None of the contracts expressly indicated that the CSC should operate its own library. The idea was led by faculty and supported by the board via yearly library budget allocations for staff and purchases, but none of the contracts were ever revised to bring the library into the official mandate. It's possible that the library was always viewed as a "nice to have," but in times of budget restraint or reorganization would be the first to face cuts. In any case, the library's relocation and amalgamation with the larger university library did not necessitate any official changes to the operating agreement. Annual reports show the contracts in action, and in turn, become strong documents to support annual review within the five-year cycle, offering a smaller timeframe as a place for reflection and renewal.

The board has been a site of both collaborative and contentious governance for the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. It brings a connection first and foremost to the signatories who build the five-year agreements and participate in the core funding. Their collaboration to create the living agreements underlies much of the Centre's success and longevity. The board also reaches into the larger co-operative, university, and government communities, drawing them into a collaborative association with the Centre. Over time, these relationships waned somewhat within the co-op and government communities, as board members from these groups pivoted from active leaders to those in support roles. This may have created a board with leadership from the university deans that proved stronger than co-op or government direction, poten-

tially skewing research towards university- rather than co-operative- or government-approved topics. On the other hand, at the same time, university funding for the Centre rose, which bolstered its overall health and resilience.

The sweeping board governance changes wrought in 2014 reset that balance in favour of the co-operative sector. However, this has created less resilience within the university milieu, as the CSC is tied strongly to a single school — the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy — and may have a difficult time asserting its independence, forging its own research direction, and de-coupling from issues that may affect the JSGS directly. Conversely, the CSC is set to enjoy the benefits of that relationship as well; the JSGS brings in students from two universities (Saskatchewan and Regina) and enjoys strong support from university leaders. Overall, though, building a governance system that includes a board provides a breadth of perspectives and connections that adds to the Centre's overall resilience. Management and advisory boards provide high-level direction, guidance, and feedback that move in two directions: back into the operating contracts, and forward, to guide the director. At its most basic level, the board remains powerful via its connection to funding, signing the living contracts, and negotiating new iterations and future directions. Without a board participating in negotiating and signing contracts, the Centre ceases to exist.

The third level of governance and decision making at the Centre flows from the director, who ensures that the day-to-day operations carry out the mandate as outlined in the living contracts, with the support and guidance of the board. Because this position guides the Centre's public face and activities, it holds as much power in some ways as the other two governance arcs. Each director's style and self-set mandate determined the Centre's objectives and path under his or her tenure. Carrying out the contractual mandate was, in fact, the easier aspect of the position, and it's clear that the operating directive and day-to-day activities were never expected to be a complete match, giving leeway for localized interpretation and decision

making. The working relationship between the funders (via the board) and the director has always been critical. In times of stress, such as asserting academic autonomy or negotiating new contracts, the director was a pivotal figure in defining these associations and ironing out differences. Luckily, the tripartite CSC governance structure has never faced the ultimate test — firing a director. Up to 2014, the contract carried no specific terms outlining conflict resolution protocol, and any difficulties were met with collaborative decision making. Since 2014, the board's advisory capacity allows for both more and less oversight of the director. While the board has only a strong advisory role in hiring, it provides annual reviews to the JSGS's executive director, leveraging the board and the larger co-operative community's perspective in a tangible way.

The tripartite governance structure of contracts, board, and director has led overall to an enhanced resilience and exceptional longevity for the Centre. Resilience can be found mainly in the fluidity of the governance components, each of which can be modified. Contracts reflect different funders and subtle changes to the mandate over time. Board change has been fluid as long as it conformed to overall parameters; moreover, both co-operative and university board members meet in other settings and activities, building an enhanced connection beyond Centre board meetings. The director's chair allows for both stability and a certain fluidity through appointments and interim arrangements that keep Centre operations functioning smoothly. Governance could not flow from just one source; only in working within and among these three main structures can the Centre maintain integrity and legitimacy.