

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

This chapter brings to a conclusion the research undertaken in this thesis. It includes presentation of a summary of the approach adopted to the research problem, an overview of the principal findings, and implications arising from the study including suggestions for further research. As the writer is inclined to believe with T.S. Eliot that "in my end is my beginning", no claim could be made that research about vice-chancellors in Australian universities has been concluded.

Summary of Approach

The research reported in this thesis was undertaken in response to the three deceptively simple questions which formed the problem statement in Chapter I:

1. How is the office of vice-chancellor defined in Australian universities?
2. Who are the occupants of this office?
3. What do vice-chancellors do?

In developing an appropriate response to these questions a research design was outlined that took account of a number of factors likely to influence the study, principal among which were those relating to time, to context and to the subject of enquiry, vice-chancellors themselves.

The study of vice-chancellors can be properly located within the field of sociological research and ethnographic enquiry as was research in this thesis. A sociological approach with culture identified as a critical concept enabled the writer to take an holistic overview of the office of vice-chancellor and of the organisational setting in which vice-chancellors are active. Research about a social institution such as a university and its CEO, the vice-chancellor, must take account of time in order to understand the development of the organisation historically as well as conceptually. Single snapshots of a setting, however sophisticated the technology that either took the photograph or which was available to scrutinise it, cannot be as illuminating as a broader canvas, even if it were as ancient or as clumsily worked, in parts, as is the Bayeux Tapestry. An historical perspective is evident in this thesis and this is an important factor in

sociological research as Martins (1974, 21) observes: "a sociological analysis that does not take time and history into account lacks historical perspective and is ultimately sterile".

In the research that was pursued in the present thesis due account was taken of the historical perspective and of the time factor through, for instance:

- The length of study overall of the office and role from 1963 to 1986 but including, in respect of one set of enquiries vice-chancellors who began their incumbencies in the 1940s.
- Selective collection of data mediated by different but total populations of vice-chancellors incumbent at different times within the period 1963 to 1986.
- Enquiry into the characteristics, in relation to specific issues, of a core population of incumbents and incumbencies at three different times in the recent history of Australian higher education: 1963, 1973 and 1983.
- A heightened focus on the office and role of vice-chancellor in the years 1983 to 1986.

The data that were collected in such an extensive time frame carried the potential to provide a more complex and balanced picture that would be availed from intensive collection of evidence from a single population in a shorter time period. Through a triangulation of data collection methods – *viz.*, documentary analysis, use of a survey instrument, and verification and clarification through personal or telephone interviews – in the time frame of 1963 to 1986, it was possible to maintain central concern for the office and role of vice-chancellor rather than be distracted by the individual attributes or performance characteristics of persons in a smaller cohort of incumbents. Among research outcomes that resulted from the analysis of data gathered by this approach were a more composite yet differentiated display of: how the vice-chancellorship is defined and engaged; how the office and role have changed over time; and how the study of vice-chancellors exhibits aspects of change and development in the system of Australian higher education. The latter two outcomes are incidental to the principal research enquiry and only brief mention is made of those aspects in a later section of this chapter.

In setting the framework for enquiry the research approach located the office of vice-chancellor in the context of the university and undertook a typological analysis to establish if

there were any attributes or perceptions that were distinctive or unique to the university as an organisation.

This approach recognized the enduring nature of the university as a residual social institution in western and many other societies. This did not suggest immutability or even unwillingness to accept change. Rather it acknowledges that if teaching and the granting of formal awards are central to the purpose of Australian universities among other functions, then, given that the average length of an undergraduate degree is three or four years, a contemporary university, however vital and responsive it may be, is like a supertanker: it takes time to change course significantly, let alone to turn it around in midstream, should the prevailing and future environmental conditions permit. Four conceptual models were analysed to test their appropriateness to the university as an organisation. Each of these four – the bureaucratic, the collegial, the political and the anarchical model – shared some common attributes with the actual and the perceived organisation type of the modern Australian university. None provided a sufficient or comprehensive account of total organisational culture and a pluralist perspective was advanced as one which could accommodate both divergent and congruent elements of each model and also variation in emphasis and interest that in universities evidently change over time in response to internal and external circumstances.

Another set of organisational characteristics that was identified, not only in the analysis of conceptual models in Chapter 2, but also in other enquiries such as the examination of the legal and formal basis to the office and the analysis of work patterns was the recurrent emphasis on the labour intensive nature of the university, a commitment to human interaction and the implications that these carry for the office and role of vice-chancellor. To continue the tanker analogy further: supertankers are sophisticated vehicles for bulk transportation, assisted by high technology and with fewer crew than in previous times. The captain is formally in command and is often on the bridge. For the captain to alter the vessel's course involves co-operation with several ranks of specialists and support personnel, each with differing degrees of visibility, from the navigator to the technical officers and oilers in the engine room to the cooks and steward victualling the crew. The point is, the office of vice-chancellor was seen to be inextricably related to a context which is a multi-dimensional organisation with formal and informal characteristics to which in varying ways, he must be responsive. In another and closer analysis of the university as an organisation, it could be argued that a university possesses a number of distinctive, if not unique, definitional characteristics. At the least, this interpretation would find support in the perception of many participant members.

Modes of enquiry differed among chapters as the writer gathered data in relation to issues that addressed the research questions. The triangulation of data collection methods were complementary and helped to guard against any inconsistency and to provide verification in

order to achieve general reliability and validity. Together they resulted in a prodigious volume of facts, opinions, insights and perceptions. While on numerous occasions the writer was challenged to investigate some among the myriad of fascinating research issues that the data presented, inevitably he was obliged to select and to analyse data that would yield information that was most directly relevant to the research problem as stated in Chapter 1. As Miles and Huberman (1984, 36) caution:

Empirical research is often a matter of progressively lowering aspirations to study all facets of an important problem or fascinating social phenomenon. Choices must be made, unless one is willing to devote most of their professional life to a single study.

Whether this thesis displays a lowering of aspirations or a heightening of focus within a stated methodological frame will be decided by others. One critical issue in the modes of enquiry that were pursued was, as Fetterman (1986, 31) notes, to achieve a balance between collecting enough information (*sic*) and making assessment and judgement. Additional data may well be contributory but analysing them to become information that in relation to a stated problem is pertinent and reliable takes time; and the law of diminishing returns applies to research as to other endeavours. Furthermore, as Geertz (1973, 20) has observed "it is not necessary to know everything in order to understand something". Thus in the selection of data used for analysis in various chapters, choices were made that were primarily guided by the three questions at the centre of the research problem. Treatment of the data as presented in Chapters 3 to 6 involved both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Overview of Principal Findings

This section presents a synoptic perspective of the office and role of vice-chancellor based on the research reported in Chapters 3 to 6. Consideration is not given here to the analysis of context as reference was made to this in the preceding section. While some mention is made of change and development in a maturing system of Australia higher education during the years 1963 to 1986 as revealed by the research pursued in this thesis, the focus is upon the vice-chancellor and principally in the period 1983 to 1986.

Legal and Formal Basis to the Office. A review of university legislation that deals significantly with the office of vice-chancellor was undertaken to address the first research question and as a necessary prerequisite to understanding how that office is defined in Australian universities. Data collection and analysis were executed in 1986 in respect of all nineteen universities and the following are among the principal findings. There was a remarkable lack of similarity – in form, in content and in specific emphasis – in the legislation of Australia's nineteen universities that dealt with the office of vice-chancellor despite the comparable parliamentary source of the legislation. A university council has the ultimate legal

control over the affairs of a university and the vice-chancellor is, in legal terms, the council's officer to whom powers are delegated.

Specific emphases in legislation affecting the office of vice-chancellor and also any apparent deficiency in act or bylaws may be related to local history, traditions and particular experience within a university. Given the dynamic and pluralistic organisational environment of a university, the power of personal expertise and influence are as important to a vice-chancellor as any formal specification of responsibilities and powers in legislation. Analytical discussion of these and other findings appears in the first section of Chapter 3. An additional general outcome is that, notwithstanding the formalities of a legislative framework that define the office, a vice-chancellor works in an intensely interpersonal setting where precedent and convention can be as influential as legal provisions.

Appointment Procedures and Selection Criteria. A review was completed of all Australian universities in which advertisement action to appoint a vice-chancellor was taken during 1984 and 1985 and the total was eight. These institutions were sufficiently diverse – in location, student enrolment, mix of disciplines and other organisational characteristics – to represent a profile of Australian universities. Data collection was done by telephone, letter, acquisition of other documents and in some cases also by interview. A detailed report of the analysis of these data is found in the second section of Chapter 3. Among the principal research outcomes, that also address the question of how the office was defined, are the following.

A university council controls and directs appointment procedures and selection criteria for the position of vice-chancellor acting on the initiative of the chancellor. The advertisement for a vacant vice-chancellorship is generally brief and small while information provided to enquirers and applicants varies considerably in extent and format among institutions. Membership of selection committees ranged from ten to twelve persons with constituencies represented, in addition to the chancellor and deputy chancellor, being lay, academic, student and usually administrative, with a bias towards academics as the largest single group. The deliberations of selection committees were confidential, with one exception, and followed fairly narrow and structured processes, with much effort being expended on attracting a suitable field of applicants and on defining selection criteria. Selection criteria for Australian vice-chancellors in the mid-1980s could be classified into four categories: characteristics appropriate to the institution, personal attributes, task skills and interpersonal competencies, with greatest emphasis apparently being placed upon personal attributes and least upon task skills. The time taken to conclude an appointment from advertisement to assumption of office by the new vice-chancellor was generally 15 to 18 months.

Despite the often high levels of direct and opportunity costs associated with appointing an Australian vice-chancellor, it was concluded as a general finding that, because universities are seldom homogeneous organisations, councils need to follow appointment procedures and selection criteria which ensure that the various constituents with whom a vice-chancellor works are accepting of the authenticity and legitimacy of the appointee to hold office. Research in this area was without precedent; and because among the ultimate responsibilities of a university council, there can be no action of greater significance or gravity than the appointment of a vice-chancellor, the findings and understandings that were elucidated from the research reported in Chapter 3 have already been used by numerous appointment committees.

A Social Characteristics Profile. Data about the 46 vice-chancellors of Australian universities who were incumbent in 1963, 1973 and 1983 were collated and analysed to furnish information about them as academic, as higher education executives and as human beings. This information, which addressed the second research question, was reported in Chapter 4, substantially through 16 tables which displayed details of such characteristics as schooling, academic discipline and final degree, career employment and other interests, and recognition and rewards that were attained. While the total population of 46 incumbents is small and care needs to be exercised in interpreting data in this survey in isolation from other information relating both to vice-chancellors and to the organisational setting in which they are active, this research is the first of its kind undertaken in Australian higher education. Those vice-chancellors surveyed could be described generally by the following characteristics: male, Australian by birth, aged 45-54 years, married once with two children; likely to have been educated in a government high school in Melbourne or Sydney; an undergraduate major in science, preferably from the University of Melbourne, and completion of a Ph.D.; a career as an academic and previous employment as a deputy vice-chancellor; possession of a learned fellowship, willingness to forego a knighthood and the expectation of serving on government advisory committees and statutory bodies; and the ultimate prospect of an honorary doctorate.

As the research about this social characteristics profile scrutinised incumbents of the office of vice-chancellor over several decades, several outcomes concerning changes at the system level of higher education in Australia were also identified in Chapter 4. Within the survey period of 1963 to 1983, these included: an emerging recognition of a higher education sector *per se* with the number of universities growing from ten in 1963, to seventeen in 1973, to become nineteen in 1983, concurrent with the inauguration of the advanced colleges during the 1960s and 1970s; differentiation, including a status ranking among the nineteen universities, becoming more overt within a relatively stable and singularly funded system; and a comparative loss of political priority for higher education as resources allocated to the sector declined during the 1970s and 1980s, while student enrolments and other expectations of the sector increased. How these phenomena at system level, which were observed in the period that

was the subject of research in this thesis, changed markedly after 1988 with the creation of the Unified National System is the concern of other enquiry, as is the extent to which such changes have affected the office and role of vice-chancellor.

Incumbency Patterns. A study was pursued of the length of time that Australian vice-chancellors actually occupy the position using as the survey population all incumbents in the years 1963 to 1983. Data sources included documentary evidence, correspondence with university registrars and telephone conversations with university personnel. Information derived from analysis of these data was reported in Chapter 5 and displayed in eight tables. By employing, as a comparative device, the classification of Australian universities developed in Chapter 2, outcomes were presented not only in respect of incumbency patterns, an aspect of the second research question, but also with regard to likely trends within a maturing system of higher education. The following were among the principal research findings.

The average length of incumbency has declined substantially from 13.6 years in respect of 1963 vice-chancellors to 8.0 years for 1983 vice-chancellors. The overall pattern suggested by the research was that the several groups of longer established universities attract vice-chancellors who serve longer incumbencies than the average for the total. For vice-chancellors who have held office in more than one university, the movement is from an initial incumbency in a more recently established institution to a longer established institution of greater enrolment, budget and generally acknowledged status, this being an attribute of a more mature and differentiated system of higher education. Shorter incumbencies will be served by future vice-chancellors because, in part, of the exceptionally long terms served by foundation CEOs in recently established institutions and the trend to appoint persons with previous experience as a vice-chancellor or deputy vice-chancellor. The average incumbency period is likely to be shorter than previously with a term of six to seven years in one institution becoming the overall pattern. Two general outcomes, derived from the integration of research done in previous chapters with the findings of Chapter 5, were: to indicate that a relationship exists among institutional age, organisational culture and the average length of incumbency served by Australian vice-chancellors; and to identify that while vice-chancellors, as persons of developed individuality, define to a large extent their own incumbency, universities as organisations attract and sustain their vice-chancellors in a way that influences the length of incumbency among other matters.

Work Patterns. To address the question of what vice-chancellors do, the research findings presented in Chapter 6 were obtained from unique data collected from all nineteen incumbents by means of a diary analysis survey conducted over fourteen days during May and June of 1986. The survey instrument recorded data for seventeen hours daily from 7 am to 12 midnight and these were then analysed to provide information about the disposition of a vice-chancellor's time, the location of principal activities and the people with whom a vice-chancellor in the mid-

1980s spent most of his professional life. As such a study was novel among CEOs of Commonwealth universities, appropriate comparisons could only be made with published research about university presidents in the USA. Significant outcomes from the research reported in Chapter 6 include the following.

Australian vice-chancellors were found to devote long hours to the diverse requirements of the position, committing an average of 68.7 hours to official duties during a five day week and an average of 77 hours during seven days. Based on available comparative evidence, the CEOs of Australian universities work longer hours than their American counterparts. From an analysis of time expended in seven different locations, Australian vice-chancellors were found to spend a majority of their working week, being 54 percent or 38.3 hours, on campus. While the largest part of a vice-chancellor's professional work is located in his own office, the average being 24.9 hours or 35.2 percent, the Australian vice-chancellor spends more time elsewhere on campus and less time working at home than does an American university president. Through an analysis of interaction patterns, it was established that a vice-chancellor's work is essentially social, with most time being given to talking directly with people both in relatively structured settings and less formally. The location *Elsewhere on Campus* in association with six or more people is the setting in which vice-chancellors spent the greatest amount of time, being 31.3 percent or 12 hours of the working week spent on campus.

The overall picture of a vice-chancellor that resulted from the survey of work patterns was that of someone who is subject to heavy demands being made on their time, their energy, their intellect and their total capacities. Even though the office of vice-chancellor in the mid-1980s was subject to social circumscription, to expectations relating to the cyclic nature of university activities, and to internal and external demands, room existed for each incumbent to interpret and fulfil their role distinctively. In part, this interpretative distinctiveness was seen both to be related to and also to derive from the intensely social and interpersonal factors which are inalienable from the office and its context in the modern university.

Towards an Integrated Frame

The succession of snapshots which are displayed through the principal research findings present a generally congruent perspective on the office and role of vice-chancellor in an Australian university. In what follows an attempt is made to create a more composite picture within an integrated frame and this is done by reference to statements made by vice-chancellors and others about their position. While it may seem slightly unorthodox to introduce new material in the conclusion of a thesis, the statements that follow highlight research outcomes reported in earlier chapters and the previous section and, after the brush-point style of

impressionist painters, they may add colour and texture to aspects of these findings rather than being seen to initiate the broad sweeps of a Jackson Pollock upon a raw canvas.

The “variety and burden of work” that an Australian university imposed on its vice-chancellor during the 1980s would certainly be no less than that experienced by a British counterpart at the time of the *Robbins Report*. In probability it was more extensive, the increase in internal demands being as great as those from the external environment which have been mentioned in this thesis.

Excerpts from a newspaper interview with an Australian incumbent (Cowen, 1968) within the survey period echo the tone of these observations:

Australian Vice-Chancellors, though I daresay they can speak for themselves, must feel pressed down by the almost intractable problem of just managing.

The horror of this job is the extent to which you have to improvise and balance finance, and the constant dealing with problems which destroy creativity.

But I suppose this year I’ve sometimes felt baffled because I have so many tasks that do not engage the intellect.

If a fundamental cause of this order of job stress were a lack of time, then all but one of the 36 retired and incumbent vice-chancellors interviewed during the 1980s would be in general agreement. Yet despite the growing complexity of the office and attendant role frustration, none of the vice-chancellors interviewed expressed regret at having taken up appointment. How institutions make appropriate structural and other arrangements to reduce the burden and stress of office ought to be of increasing concern to university governing bodies.

Recognition of the crucial importance of the office of vice-chancellor to the university as an organisation by the councils of Australian universities is found in the *Submission to the Academic Salaries Tribunal from Chancellors of 18 Australian Universities* which was prepared in December 1984 and considered by the Tribunal at its sittings in May 1985. In a section outlining their view of the work of vice-chancellors, the Chancellors stated that the responsibilities of a vice-chancellor included:

- the management and supervision of the administrative, financial and other business of the university, the determining of priorities in resource allocation and a major voice in the selection of professors and other senior staff;
- long-term planning for optimum use of physical and financial resources;

- introduction of new teaching, research and other academic programs and the elimination of out-moded programs (this increasingly includes initiation of departmental reviews);
- mounting of public relations programs to attract good students and staff, and currently to support Government policy by encouraging the enrolment of disadvantaged students;
- decisions on an increasing number of legal and quasi-legal matters (e.g. copy-right, defamation, affirmative action, discrimination, safety and occupational health, industrial relations, human relations);
- supervision of such commercial activities as a University Press or a University consulting and marketing campaign;
- involvement in initiatives to exploit university inventions and patents;
- responsibility for the administration of the Superannuation Scheme for Australian Universities and for investing hundreds of million of dollars;
- responsibility for the discipline of staff and students, including the laying of criminal charges;
- fostering favourable attitudes among external bodies and the general community (including speeches to business and community organisations, speech nights, and alumni associations);
- liaison with other tertiary bodies and with government bodies to avoid overlapping, to coordinate programs and to share resources;
- acting as agents for the Commonwealth in managing international educational development projects and R & D especially in S.E. Asia and the Pacific;
- fund raising; and
- negotiating with State and Commonwealth authorities.

The nature of a university requires the Vice-Chancellor to provide an official response on issues relating to the activities of its departments, faculties and other distinct units, perhaps a hundred in all. Heads of departments, deans, professors and indeed all members of staff and some students claim the right of access to the Vice-Chancellor and expect the Vice-Chancellor to be knowledgeable on the details of departmental operations and problems.

(Submission, 1984, 9)

This description details and complements many of the research findings of this thesis in relation to the organisational context, the legal and formal basis to the office, and the work patterns of vice-chancellors. Elsewhere in the *Submission* the Chancellors implicitly address

both some of the social characteristics of vice-chancellors and also the pluralism found in a modern university. As was discussed previously, this pluralism, which is sometimes latent but more often dynamically overt in the culture of a modern university in Australia, affects the office of vice-chancellor and its incumbent.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that a Vice-Chancellor carries the ultimate responsibility for executive decisions in his university. No doubt a high proportion of academic problems are solved at department or faculty level; but a staff member who disagreed with a decision at this level would always regard himself, and be regarded by others, as having the right of access to the Vice-Chancellor. Of those tasks and problems that originate in the policy and administrative centres of a university, all in some form find their way to the Vice-Chancellor's desk. Some will ultimately be decided by the University Council: the great majority of problems must be decided by the Vice-Chancellor, who, no doubt, will seek advice; but ultimately the responsibility is his . . .

Although the duties resemble those of a managing director, albeit with less authority but wider responsibility, the qualifications include the high intellectual qualities and international recognition as a scientist, lawyer or scholar necessary to command the respect and support of highly qualified professors. Such a person has almost certainly developed outstanding leadership qualities and demonstrated skills as head of an academic department, as dean of a faculty, as leader of an academic board and in similar capacities before gaining the post of chief executive of the institution. The Vice-Chancellor must also be able to present proposals lucidly and persuasively.

(*Submission*, 1984, 10)

Professor Peter Karmel, who has been Chair of CTEC, Vice-Chancellor of the Flinders University and of the Australian National University and Chancellor of the University of Papua New Guinea, in pragmatic prose expressed a comparable viewpoint about the university as an organisation in response to legal examination before the Academic Salaries Tribunal in May 1985.

Well, universities are large institutions, they employ large numbers of very senior people who within many organisations would be regarded as being highly paid. It is not a very hierarchical or pyramidal structure, and it is never going to be possible, whether one is dealing with academic problems or non-academic ones, simply to make firm decisions rapidly without a good deal of consultation and negotiation and getting people on one's side. So that the universities are *sui generis* in the sense that there is a great deal of what I call collegiality about them, people coming to agreement, long discussions and repeated discussions to get agreement, and I believe that that does to some extent spill over into the non-academic activities of the university. ... I do not think you could in fact run a university just by fiat from the top, and if one works in the university one is used to that kind of environment. With a good deal of patience one can in fact bring about changes, although sometimes rather more slowly than one would like.

(AST, 1985, 55-56)

In response to questioning about the role that a vice-chancellor has in the area of general supervision and responsibility for academic staff and for any staff problems that may arise Professor Karmel testified as follows:

I think it depends on the level of the problem. If problems develop in the relationships between academics in a department, generally an attempt to settle these is made at the level of the dean of the faculty or the head of the department first, I should say, but perhaps the dean of the faculty. If the problem becomes very acute it is bound to end up on the vice-chancellor's table. ... There is one thing which has to be remembered. The academics are appointed because they are particularly competent in their own fields, and if an argument develops within a department, a dispute about the way a subject should be taught or the content of a subject, the people who are experts in it, are the people themselves. So one cannot in dealing with those kinds of tensions – one cannot just lay down the law and make decisions; it is largely a matter of trying to find a solution by consultation and negotiation which is acceptable to the people involved.

(AST, 1985, 55-56)

This evidence is congruent with findings in this thesis about the intensely interpersonal nature of many activities in a university and of the effect that this organisational attribute had on the role of a vice-chancellor.

To an extent all vice-chancellors are captives to tradition: captives to the diverse and enduring heritage of Western higher education and, more narrowly, captives to the recent history of their own institutions including that wrought by their predecessors. Only foundation vice-chancellors are free, to a greater measure, from the civilised rattling of institutional skeletons at meetings of council and academic board. As an alternative sounding board in new universities, there is usually a robust plethora of vision and mission statements, even though these are not exclusive to such institutions. In the period studied in this thesis, which was before the inauguration of the designated Unified National System, there was evidence of a range of institutions exhibiting different attributes at different levels in response to a widening network of constituencies; and examples of a maturing system of higher education have been noted. In identifying tradition and heritage, which are both real and perceived elements of organisational culture, the writer does not wish to advance a more homogenous view of the Australian university or of its vice-chancellors than actually existed. Not surprisingly, differences were found and will continue to be manifest in the characteristics of vice-chancellors and in the way in which they occupy their office and discharge their role, between institutions and in the same institution over time. Something of this perspective is gathered in a contemporary record of interview (Mahoney, 1994) with a recently retired vice-chancellor:

It seems to me that any Vice-Chancellorship is not a distinct entity in itself, but rather a time period in the continuous evolution of development and tradition of the University, he said just before he left

office. What one achieves – or fails to achieve – depends on the work that went before and the opportunities and constraints which arise in the period.

It was not the intent of this study to define an ideal-type Australian vice-chancellor and none was found; even though some aspirants to the office (and eager readers of the writer's published research) have attempted to construct an identikit picture. Much research into this vital office remains to be done and some is noted in the following section.

Implications for Further Research

As the research pursued in this thesis was generally quite novel in respect of vice-chancellors, it is to be expected that a number of matters worthy of further investigation have been implied or identified. These are classified into three sets.

First, there are those issues which were relatively clearly identified as separate topics even though some are of incidental significance. Included among this set of research topics are the following:

- A comparison of appointment procedures and selection criteria in, say, UK, Canada and New Zealand.
- Gender and other issues of social equity among vice-chancellors not necessarily only in Australia.
- Changes in the office and role of Australian vice-chancellors since 1988 with the inauguration of the UNS.
- Growth of the vice-chancellor's unit with its own administrative superstructure, parallel to or above a university's central administration.
- Change in the legal basis and the formal responsibilities of vice-chancellors and the implications for work patterns.
- The role of the vice-chancellor's spouse.

- Altered demands upon the office in such areas as resource base expansion and income diversification and any effect these might have on the pool of applicants for a vice-chancellorship.
- The training, preparation and professional development of vice-chancellors.
- The extent to which newer universities validate their institution through the appointment of a graduate as vice-chancellor.

Whereas the previous set proposed somewhat discrete topics, this second set considers broader research themes and issues. Many of these are concerned with processes which often are interrelated to structure and the jurisdiction of offices and of decision-making bodies in a university as well as with personnel arrangements. Most of the following suggestions for further research could be subsumed under the general rubric of organisational matters as they affect the office and role of vice-chancellor.

- The *sui generis* characteristics of a university as a modern complex organisation and any implications these may have for the vice-chancellor as CEO.
- The relationship in Australian universities between a vice-chancellor and the governing council and also between the vice-chancellor and the chancellor.
- The relationship between the office of vice-chancellor and various major constituencies of a university both internal and external.
- The extent to which a maturing higher education system in Australia and the recognition of a status hierarchy among universities influence a vice-chancellor in pursuing institutional and external activities and also the length of incumbency in one university.

Since the research reported in this thesis which identified these areas for further investigation was completed, the inauguration of the UNS has significantly changed the operating mode of Australian universities and implicitly the office and role of vice-chancellor. Some observers contend that the value base of higher education has dramatically altered since 1988. Factors in

these changes that are likely to affect the office and role of vice-chancellor include: altered structural arrangements, there being few single campus universities, and the subsequent changes in executive staffing patterns; the rise of managerialist ideology and the emphasis on performance indicators and quantitative output measures; the necessity of income diversification including full fee academic and export education programs; budget and resource management issues including unwieldy staffing profiles, rising costs of institutional overheads and of infrastructure obsolescence; and industrial, social and other regulatory legislation that impinges directly on teaching and research activities.

The third set of research issues is simply noted and this relates to theory-building using the basic information and interpretations about the office and role of vice-chancellor that have been examined and reported in the present study. Further research in this area would respond to criticism advanced by Birnbaum (1989, 126) that "with few exceptions ... studies of leadership in (American) higher education have been atheoretical ... ". Among further exploration in this domain of theory-building could be included, for example, the analysis of a vice-chancellor's performance and image in relation to the dominant frame of operation in terms of organisational theory. Such matters were not a concern of this thesis.

Conclusion

The field for further research is extensive. The challenges in gaining data from and access to vice-chancellors in current circumstances that are as turbulent as any reported in this study are not inconsiderable. The satisfaction the writer has in being privileged to set down, in relation to the significant office and role of vice-chancellor in Australian universities, *the exact nature of events now past*, will be increased if the present work *be thought useful* and also when further research is completed.

Legal and Formal Basis:

Letter to Registrars

10 April 1986

Dear ,

For some years I have been pursuing research into the office and role of vice-chancellor, a project which has been endorsed by funds from Internal Research Grants.

During 1980-85 (apart from a period of secondment in Indonesia in 1982-83) I was able to tape interviews with most of the then retired vice-chancellors. In 1986 I plan to conduct a work analysis of all nineteen incumbents via a two-week diary audit and also to interview at least ten incumbent vice-chancellors. In addition, I am currently analysing the formal basis to the office and it is in this connection that I am now writing to you.

Because information in university calendars is necessarily dated, I should be grateful if you would provide me with current copies of the following documents:

1. The University Act.
2. Any By-Laws that deal specifically with the office of vice-chancellor, pro- or deputy vice-chancellor/s, registrar, secretary and/or any other senior executive and administrative officers.
3. Any Resolutions of Council that deal specifically with the office, role, powers, functions and duties of the vice-chancellor and/or pro- or deputy vice-chancellor/s.
4. Any other information that you think might contribute to a fuller understanding of this important but relatively unstudied office.

A similar letter has been sent to all registrars with my assurance that any confidential data provided under Item 4 above will be treated confidentially. As the focus of research is on the office of vice-chancellor, there would be no identification of particular institutions or persons. I should add that I am a Senior Lecturer in Higher Education in this Centre having previously been Vice-President (Administration) at the Asian Institute of Technology (1976-78) and an administrator at the Universities of Papua New Guinea (1969-76) and of Sydney (1967-69).

There are many interlocking elements in a study as complex as this one and it would help greatly if the above material could be posted before 28 April. May I thank you and your staff for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

D.W. SLOPER.

Legal and Formal Basis to the Office

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**Work Patterns:
Correspondence with Vice-Chancellors**

DWS:td

10 April 1986

Dear ,

For some years I have been pursuing research into the office and role of vice-chancellor, a project which has been endorsed by funds from Internal Research Grants. During 1980-85 (apart from a period of secondment in Indonesia in 1982-83) I was able to tape interviews with most of the then retired vice-chancellors.

In 1986 I hope to interview at least ten incumbent vice-chancellors to learn about complexities of the contemporary office. In addition, I would like to conduct a diary analysis of all nineteen vice-chancellors in the two weeks 26 to 30 May and 2 to 6 June 1986. The analysis follows that completed by Cohen and March (1974) in their survey of American presidents. Basically, I am endeavouring to establish what it is that vice-chancellors do, with whom, at whose initiative and where.

If you were willing to allow your diary to be analysed, I would enlist the support of your private secretary and provide her with a daily sheet divided into time slots requiring a brief one or two word entry under each of the above four headings. The May/June dates have been chosen based on advice from Frank Hambly that AVCC Full Committee and Executive meetings are not scheduled at that time. As it is important that all vice-chancellors be surveyed and at the same time, I hope you will participate even if, for instance, you plan to be overseas or on holiday in Australia. After receiving confirmation of your willingness to participate, my next step would be to write to your secretary enclosing the daily analysis sheets and then to telephone her to discuss any procedural issues.

A similar letter has been sent to all vice-chancellors with my assurance that any data obtained will be treated confidentially. As the focus of research is on the office of vice-chancellor, there would be no identification of particular institutions or persons. I should add that I am a Senior Lecturer in Higher Education in this Centre having previously been Vice-President (Administration) at the Asian Institute of Technology (1976-78) and an administrator at the Universities of Papua New Guinea (1969-76) and of Sydney (1967-69).

I am conscious that work cycles are likely to vary both within a year in relation, for example, to Council meetings and CTEC submissions and also within an incumbent's tenure of office. As the diary analysis will provide limited but valuable data about the important, but hitherto unstudied office of vice-chancellor, I look forward to receiving your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

D.W. SLOPER

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DWS:td

8 May 1986

Dear Professor ,

I am most grateful to you and all other Australian vice-chancellors for participating in the diary analysis survey during the last week of May and the first week of June. Copies of the Diary Analysis Sheet with an explanatory letter have been sent to your personal secretary whom I shall telephone before the survey begins.

Some vice-chancellors have expressed misgivings about the diary audit methodology. In part I share their reservations, particularly as the influential Cohen and March study was of 41 from a total of 1235 USA college and university presidents and for two days only. It is largely because of this study that I am including the diary analysis and for a longer period. May I assure you that it is but one among a number of data sources, the most important of which will be personal interviews with vice-chancellors and their gatekeepers.

I wish to thank you once again for your co-operation and for the assistance of your personal staff.

Yours sincerely,

D.W. SLOPER

Work Patterns:

Correspondence with Secretaries and Diary Analysis Sheet

DWS:td

8 May 1986

Dear ,

I am pleased that Professor has agreed to participate in a diary analysis of how his time is spent during the period 26 May to 8 June 1986 and I am most grateful to have your assistance.

As indicated in my letter of 10 April, this diary analysis will provide valuable data about the important office of vice-chancellor by assisting us to understand better how each Australian vice-chancellor allocates his time. For our results to be accurate, we need to know as exactly as possible what Professor commitments were for the two week period. There is provision for entries to be made in the evening and at weekends when the Vice-Chancellor is engaged on work or other activities related to his official role.

All vice-chancellors have been assured that data collected will be treated confidentially. As the study is focussed on the office of vice-chancellor, there will be no particular identification of institutions or persons. Where the Vice-Chancellor is involved in personal matters either during the day or after formal office hours, please enter PERSONAL to safeguard any intrusion upon his privacy. Space is also provided on each Diary Analysis Sheet for you to note your comments on features of the day which might be unusual. Any such comments you make would be most appreciated.

If you have any queries about keeping the Diary Analysis Sheet (fourteen copies of which are enclosed) please telephone me on (067) 73 2919 after 19 May, 1986. I intend to call you prior to commencement of the survey. At the end of the survey period all Diary Analysis Sheets should be posted to me using the enclosed envelope.

May I thank you once again for your assistance and co-operation in this important study.

Yours sincerely,

D.W. SLOPER

Enclosures

DIARY ANALYSIS SHEET

TIME	WHERE WAS HE? (e.g. home, office, ... meeting room, council room, car, research station, Canberra motel,)	WITH WHOM? (Identify by title rather than name, e.g., student, Registrar, Deputy V-C, Dean of ..., Managing Director of ..., CTEC official, ...)	ACTIVITY or GENERAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION (e.g., Finance Cttee. Meeting, travelling to ..., discussion of overseas students admission policy, opening art show, personal, ...)
7.00 am			
7.30 am			
8.00 am			
8.30 am			
9.00 am			
9.30 am			
10.00 am			
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10.30 pm			
11.00 pm			
11.30 pm			

DIARY ANALYSIS SHEET: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DIARY ANALYSIS

26/5/86 - 8/6/86

ADVICE TO PERSONAL SECRETARY COMPLETING SHEETS

1. On the blue Diary Analysis Sheets, please record all the Vice-Chancellor's face-to-face contacts and activities that relate to his work.
2. Column 1: TIME The time record begins at 7.00 a.m. and ends at midnight. A full account of this time period is sought. If the Vice-Chancellor is involved in personal matters unrelated to the University or his position, simply write "Personal" in Column 4: ACTIVITY OR GENERAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION.
3. Column 2: WHERE WAS HE? If the Vice-Chancellor is not at home or in his office, please specify briefly where else on or off campus he is.
4. Column 3: WITH WHOM? Identify the person by title rather than by name (e.g., student, Professor of --, President of Staff Association, Chairman of the Academic Board). If the Vice-Chancellor is with a group or an organization, identify the group rather than individuals (e.g., the Planning Committee, Alumni Association Executive, deputation from Animal Welfare League.) If the Vice-Chancellor is spending the time alone, please indicate so; if with one of two persons please specify (e.g., Personal Secretary, Registrar and Deputy V-C, Bursar and Budget Officer).
5. Column 4: ACTIVITY OR GENERAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION Whether the Vice-Chancellor is alone or with others please indicate how he is spending his time. (e.g., Preparing Graduation Address, dictating letters, Research Committee Meeting, meeting new professor). If he is travelling, indicate his destination. (e.g. travelling to city, travelling to Geneva).
6. This survey and the data generated are to be treated confidentially.

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