

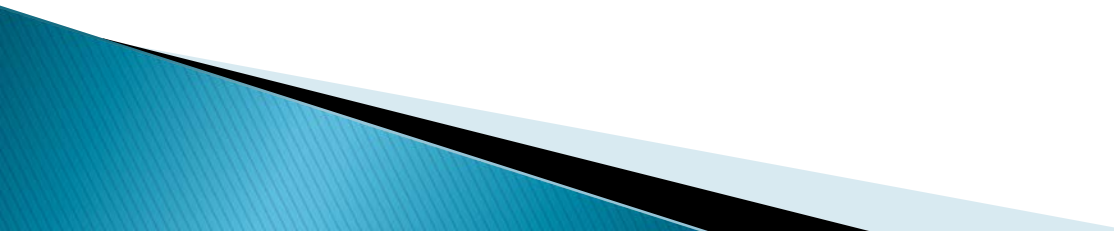
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Academic Freedom in the Fracked Academy

- ▶ “At its most advanced stage, domination functions as administration” (Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* 1964])
- ▶ (Marcuse’s statement confirms what he had learned and argued in the Research and Analysis branch of the United States Office of Strategic Services in the 1940s where he wrote regular reports on Nazi Germany with Franz Neumann and Otto Kirchheimer.)

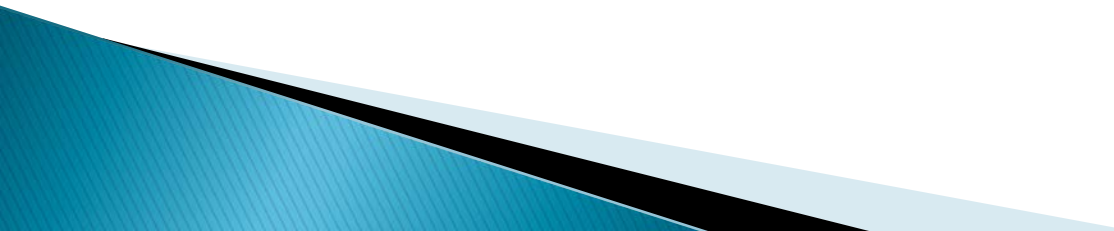
Overview

- ▶ The basics on academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and collegial governance
 - ▶ Current contexts of fracking: federal, provincial, institutional
 - ▶ Idling no more: standing with and for our students and ourselves, and in the public interest
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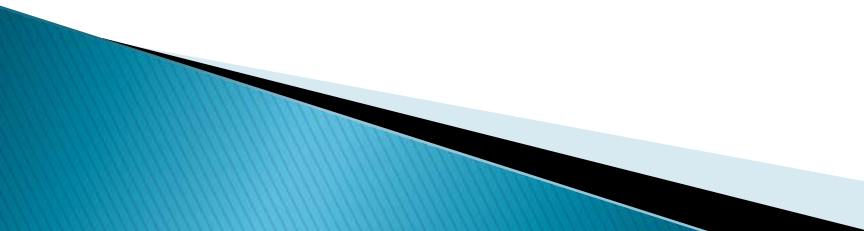
The basics

- ▶ The idea of a university or equivalent entity is ancient, pervasive, and persistent
- ▶ Universities and their analogues derive from two human impulses: the desire to know, and the desire to control what knowledge can do or enable, politically, economically, socially, ecologically
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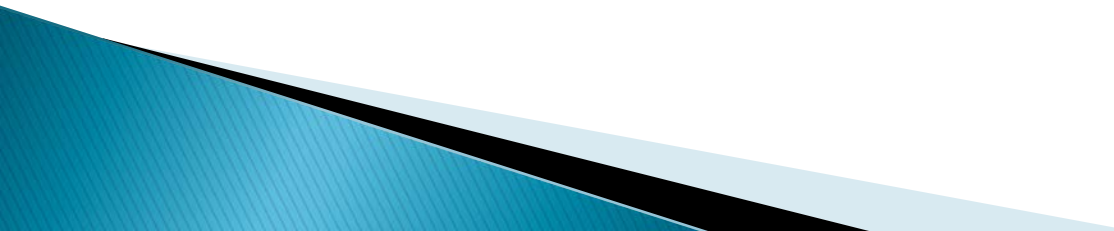
The basics contd.

- ▶ The tension between time and place for reflection (GK. *Scholē*) and desire for control—in the names of stability, efficiency, accountability, etc.—never goes away
 - ▶ How that tension is resolved changes according to time and place, “history” and “geography” (with each of these latter two terms standing for disciplines that themselves incorporate that very tension)
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The basics contd.

- ▶ Regularly respecifying and reflecting on institutional co-ordinates in time and space, tradition and place, is essential in a healthy institution
 - ▶ That is, understanding the *current* context or conjuncture is basic to sound daily operations and effective cyclical review
 - ▶ And this work is *everybody's* responsibility and opportunity, even and especially in the gerbilized (and fracked) academy
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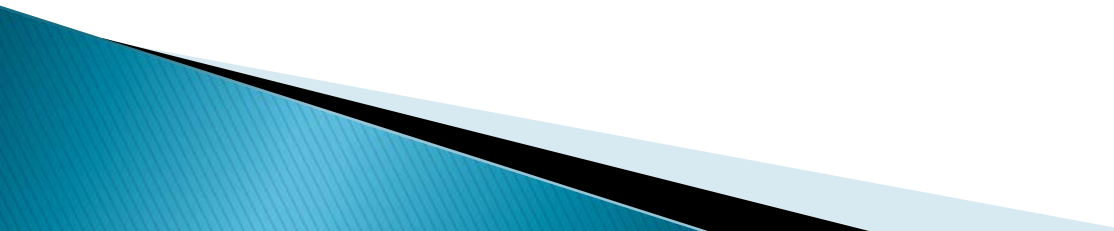
The basics contd.

- ▶ When reporting and review occur, the traditional roles of scholars, students, administrators, and governors reveal themselves along an axis of accountability extending from inside the institution to its multiple outsides
 - ▶ At such times the institution's *relative autonomy* becomes apparent, as do the reasons for such autonomy
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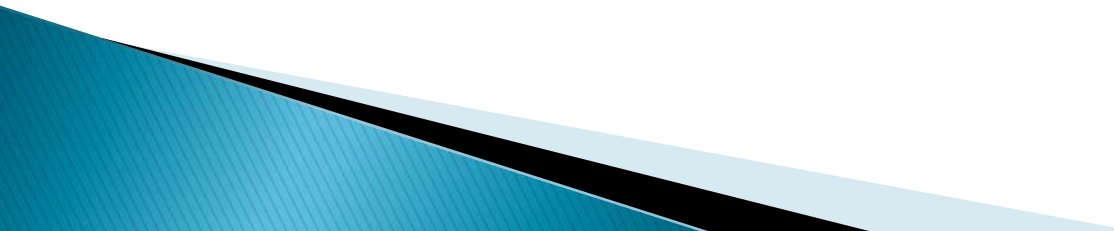
The basics contd.

- ▶ Autonomy, meaning self-governance, in its collegial forms should be well understood by all because it is so important to all and to the institution's core values and mission
- ▶ Impediments to such understanding take the form of apathy, over-extension, self-censorship, and also official paternalism, discouragement, or intimidation
- ▶ None of these impediments is welcome, although some are more understandable than others; you need a life as well as a cv!

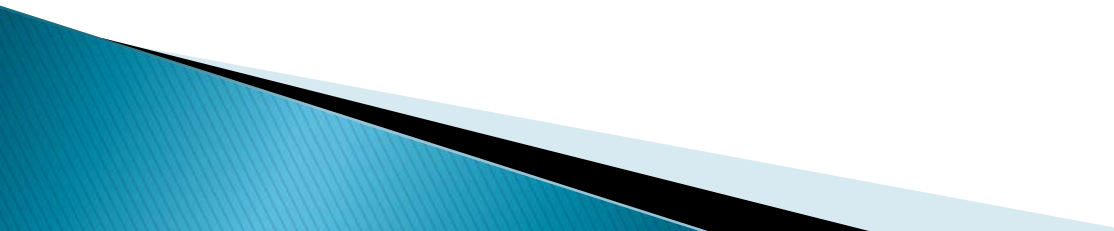
The basics contd.

- ▶ Collegial governance is a distinctive set of rights and responsibilities existing in the more or less tense interface between freedom and control, external entities (like governments, corporations, donors, accreditation boards), internal mediators, and groups invested in teaching, research, and community service
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The basics contd.

- ▶ Everyone in the institution has a governance role to play, some roles being unique to post-secondary institutions and some not
 - ▶ The primary distinguishing feature is collegial governance of the academic domain, and the relations between academic staff and boards of governors mediated by an administrative cadre composed in part of (erstwhile or active) academics
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The basics contd.

- ▶ Academic staff, administrators, and governors each represent a distinct set of interests and duties which, ensemble, can complement or conflict with each other
 - ▶ When things are going as they should, the work that is done is academic, administrative/facilitatory, and financial/fiduciary respectively
 - ▶ When things are going badly *domain-creep* is usually the reason
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Basics contd.

- ▶ This domain creep takes a number forms, some of which you are clearly struggling with (Campus Alberta, e.g., and the question of whose university this is and who speaks for it)
- ▶ Senate (or its equivalent) is the supreme *academic* body, but it cannot function if it is stacked with admin. types, and their pets and quislings; in that case Senate increases 'efficiency' while losing legitimacy ... and everybody loses, including students, while academic stewardship moves to the academic staff association and the collective agreement

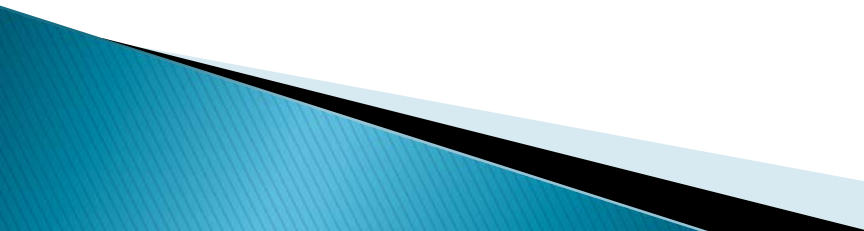
Basics contd.

- ▶ Domain-creep leads to the following symptoms of decline and disarray in the name of a “leaner,” more efficient workplace, and/or a responsible managing of “crisis,” whether real or manufactured
- ▶ Managerial unilateralism, lack of transparency, pseudo-consultation, infantilising the faculty, coercive collegiality, demands for “civility,” and misuse of resources to reward “team-players,” silence sceptics, and punish critics

Subverting Autonomy

- ▶ The nature of the current conjuncture
- ▶ What forms of limitation are aspired to, agreed to, or imposed in the name of institutional autonomy?
- ▶ How apples become oranges
- ▶ *Erklärung* or *Verklärung*? [clarity or cleansing?] *Sapere aude* or risk aversion?
- ▶ Towards a new semiotics of solidarity, not the current metric whose main meanings are instrumentalization and faculty compliance

The Current Conjunction

- ▶ Neoliberal hegemony: brass knuckles and a nimbus; and the thugs of law and order;
 - ▶ The state's communications "war room" and its matériel: redaction, secrecy, muzzling, and spin;
 - ▶ Bad inclusivity: the budget as bundling and bungling, foreign aid as trade, and NGOs as corporate figleaves;
 - ▶ Economism eats value, including academic value
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AUCC and U15 Ape the PMO

- ▶ From the liberal to the neoliberal arts; and the thugs of campus order;
- ▶ The university's bloated "war room" and its matériel: opaque partnerships, directive donors, secret searches, and silencing--all in the name of "the brand";
- ▶ The sad coercions of integrated planning; the venality of internationalization; imminent intellectual desertification and species loss in non-compliant and/or inconvenient places;
- ▶ Academic economism and "program prioritization" (Dickeson) eat academic value hitherto preserved and produced as diverse, independent inquiry, teaching, dissemination, and outreach;

Governing as Technique: the State and its Collegium

- ▶ Harper: stacking the Senate and fracking the nation: the politics of division
- ▶ ‘The university’: stacking our senates and fracking the academy: the race for resources and reputation, producing ‘winners’ and ‘losers’
- ▶ Harper: interpellating the citizen as mean-spirited, selfish, and scared
- ▶ ‘The University’: interpellating the scholar as self-maximizing careerist, teacher-scholars as academic centaurs or other mythical beasts

Institutional Autonomy I

- ▶ Collegial or managerial autonomy?
- ▶ A necessary protection of collegial governance or internal autocracy and external co-optation?
- ▶ Why do so many university administrations see CAUT as *the* threat to their autonomy?
- ▶ Why do such administrations appeal to institutional autonomy rather than the academic freedom of individual faculty as *the key* guarantor of institutional and academic integrity?

Institutional Autonomy II

- ▶ Such autonomy ought always to function in the service of academic freedom as envisaged by CAUT *and* entrenched in collective agreements
- ▶ In practice, it does not, and indeed cannot, because, even if collegially driven, it can clash with the rights and responsibilities of individual members of academic staff
- ▶ If managerially driven, institutional autonomy tends increasingly to become internally limiting and externally abject, both sovereign and for sale


The Metamorphosis of Funding

- ▶ Two University of Saskatchewan examples: “nuclear innovation” and “global food security”; boom provinces act broke too
- ▶ Creating the apple of structural deficit
- ▶ Receiving the orange of ‘opportune’ funding
- ▶ Hollow autonomy escapes collegial oversight while pleading financial exigency: the chance to shrink or eliminate disciplines while preserving bureaucratic bloat
- ▶ Meanwhile, academic freedom is constrained or violated by exclusion, termination, casualization and precariousness

#idlenomore I

- ▶ Universities should be home for young people (vilified for their alienation and for their engagement: *carré lyrique*, or *carré rouge*) and those who teach them
- ▶ The Red Square Movement reprises the Quiet Revolution: *pas "lucide" mais "solidaire"*
- ▶ #idlenomore reprises resistance to the notorious White Paper (1969), this time not a paternalistic effort to emulate Civil Rights gains in the name of equality but a federal budget virulently neocolonial, acting "at the speed of business" (former Minister Duncan)

#idlenomore II

- ▶ Under the leadership of its Aboriginal President, the University of Saskatchewan Students Union unanimously moved last week a vote of non-confidence in the TransformUs program prioritization process;
 - ▶ This has triggered all sorts of faculty resistance to the process and media interest, despite the best efforts of administrators to enforce their triple whammy for students: pay more, get less, be grateful!
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#idlenomore III

- ▶ Student exercise of their expressive freedoms and tuition clout plays better with the public than (what are perceived as) the minor grievances of a pampered guild (us)
- ▶ When students act as more than individual consumers-lite, the fracking has to stop and broader solidarities can be developed
- ▶ Fairness trumps privilege, and quality in and as diversity takes over from alignment with imposed institutional priorities

Or Austerity is Fracked:i.e.

- ▶ More and more subject to an extractive model tied to a reductive theory of value
 - ▶ Its residual potential subject to pressuring from toxins whose names and nature are withheld for commercial reasons;
 - ▶ And with little heed to knowledge ecologies that have developed complex interconnections and interdependencies over time
 - ▶ And with no Duty to Consult in sight.
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