Enabling engagement: a study of university-community engagement at a non-metropolitan Australian university

Jan d'Ambrosio Strom
Southern Cross University
Enabling engagement: A study of university-community engagement at a non-metropolitan Australian university

Jan d’Ambrosio Strom
Associate Degree, Management & Professional Studies, Southern Cross University
Master of Professional Management, Southern Cross University
Graduate Certificate in Research Management, Southern Cross University

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Southern Cross University
Graduate College of Management

July 2011
I certify that the work contained in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, at this or any other university.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University’s rules, requirements, procedures and policy relating to my higher degree research award and to my thesis. I certify that I have complied with the rules, requirements, procedures and policy of the University (as they may be from time to time).

Jan d’Ambrosio Strom

-------------------------------

------------------------------- 2011
When we die we leave nothing but the seeds of our life’s work

HH The Dalai Lama

I humbly offer these seeds to others to do with, as they will …

plant, nurture, harvest, adapt …
Abstract

This thesis is an in-depth study of University-Community Engagement (UCE) that was undertaken at a non-metropolitan university located in regional Australia. The study was embarked upon at the request of Professor Peter Baverstock, then Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) at Southern Cross University (SCU), in northern New South Wales, Australia. This UCE investigation at SCU took place between January 2006 and July 2009. The importance of effective UCE to support the common good through the facilitation of social, human, and economic capital growth is the foundation for this research.

The following three research questions form the basis of the enquiry:

1. How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?
2. How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?
3. How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

As the review of engagement related literature revealed a strong praxis orientation, other theoretical perspectives were also reviewed to provide a stronger theoretical base to underpin the study, and to provide greater depth when addressing the research questions. A range of theories, including Systems Thinking and Chaos/Complexity Theory were explored. Chaos/Complexity Theory was selected because it provided a systematic way of looking at a complex, dynamic, non-linear and messy UCE reality that encompasses human interaction, multiple disciplines and multiple communities.

The study is based on three areas of Action Research (AR) activity and multiple other data sources informed the study: extensive literature reviews, 38 semi-structured interviews with internal and external co-participants, internal and external documents, and a reflective journal. The iterative AR cycles of plan –
act – observe – reflect – provided many opportunities to build knowledge and understanding for myself, and my co-participants during the study.

Multiple methods of analysis were employed in order to grow UCE knowledge and understanding, they were: Summary Documents, the Williams Data Analysis Tool and Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST). A chaordic approach is a delicate and complex balance between chaos and order that had its genesis in Chaos/Complexity Theory. This approach combines the dynamic creativity of chaos and the predictability of order and it suits the multi-faceted UCE environment. While proponents of CST recognise that conventional management approaches can deal with more simple problems, they argue that these approaches tend to be static and inflexible. In contrast, a CST perspective acknowledges complexity and is based upon natural systems that flow and change, and adapt and evolve, quite naturally. CST encourages inclusive both/and thinking rather than either/or approaches. It is open, dynamic, evolving, and participatory and these features have simpatico with UCE.

The findings of this study have revealed a means of embedding a culture of engagement at SCU. The engagement-enabling method that was created could also advance UCE in higher education, and assist in building engagement activity in other sectors. The method encourages a focus on building community assets by embracing a holistic approach to UCE, with a particular focus on Engaged Scholarship (ES). This thesis establishes that ES is realised through Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery and Engaged Community Service. The purpose of undertaking an ES approach to UCE is to develop a more inclusive scholarly approach to higher education that supports the common good.
List of peer reviewed publications/presentations*
by the author that are related to this thesis

2009 Strom, J, *Embracing Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) to enable the emergence of strategic partnerships with business, industry and community*. Strategic Directions in Regional Engagement: Industry, Business and Community Partnerships, AUCEA Conference, University of South Australia, Whyalla, July 2009. Received Best Presentation Award.


*All publications peer reviewed*
Acknowledgements

In memory of my father John Edward Ambrosio

This thesis would not have emerged without the support, input and advice of so many people, and I would like to acknowledge and thank them all. I would especially like to give thanks to:

- my supervisors, Associate Professor Michelle Wallace and Dr Ros Derrett for their scholarly guidance, feedback and insights;
- my fellow participants who were involved in the projects that informed this thesis, for so willingly sharing their knowledge and experiences;
- my colleagues at Southern Cross University, especially the Office of Regional Engagement team – Justin St Vincent Welch, Lisa Francisco, Sue Pratten and Donna McIntyre – for their enthusiasm and can do attitude;
- my husband Peter for his enduring support and for coping with the late night mutterings of a distracted wife doing battle with her laptop;
- my sons Tim and Christopher for their humour and words of encouragement;
- my sister Lynne d’Ambrosio for reading every word and providing such comprehensive feedback;
- my parents John and Joy Ambrosio for being especially good listeners;
- my ever-patient Endnote guru Jann Small and Margi Wallin from the Southern Cross University library at Coffs Harbour;
- my diligent readers Cath Cosgrave and Julie Jones; Roz McHale for proofreading, and finally,
- my supportive friends Christina Hyde, Debbie Brummitt and Karina Morrison.
Table of contents

Abstract ......................................................................................................................... iv
List of peer reviewed publications/presentations* ....................................................... vi
Acknowledgements .................................................................................................... vii
List of charts .............................................................................................................. xii
List of diagrams ....................................................................................................... xii
List of tables .............................................................................................................. xiii
Preface: A personal perspective .............................................................................. 1
Chapter 1: Overview of an engaged research journey .......................................... 4
  1.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 5
  1.2 Thesis overview .................................................................................................. 6
  1.3 Thesis Framework ............................................................................................... 9
  1.4 Questions of Enquiry ......................................................................................... 11
  1.5 Conclusion ......................................................................................................... 12
Chapter 2: Examining engagement ........................................................................ 13
  2.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................... 14
  2.2 Exploring capital ............................................................................................... 19
    2.2.1 Social capital ............................................................................................... 20
    2.2.2 Human capital ............................................................................................ 23
    2.2.3 Economic capital ....................................................................................... 25
  2.3 What is engagement? ......................................................................................... 28
    2.3.1 From consultation to engagement ............................................................. 30
  2.4 Engaged scholarship ......................................................................................... 36
    2.4.1 Engaged teaching and learning ................................................................. 39
    2.4.2 Engaged research and discovery ............................................................... 43
    2.4.3 Engaged community service ..................................................................... 45
  2.5 Engagement practices ...................................................................................... 47
    2.5.1 Collaboration ............................................................................................... 47
    2.5.2 Connectivity ............................................................................................... 51
    2.5.3 Relationships ............................................................................................. 52
    2.5.4 Reciprocity ................................................................................................. 55
    2.5.5 Embeddedness .......................................................................................... 57
    2.5.6 Knowledge ............................................................................................... 58
    2.5.7 Partnerships ............................................................................................... 63
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5.8</td>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.9</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.10</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.11</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.12</td>
<td>Functional structure</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Engagement context – community, region, university</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.1</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.2</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.3</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Conclusion – encapsulating engagement</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 3: Examining theory .......................................................... 95

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>From Chaos Theory to Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST)</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Chaos Theory</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Complexity Theory</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Chaos/Complexity Theory</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.4</td>
<td>The Chaord</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Systems Thinking</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Grounded Theory</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Critical Theory</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Chaordic Systems Thinking</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>The Chaordic Lens</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Chaos/Complexity and CST – more than doing</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Conclusion – from theory to methodology</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 4: Research, methodology and research environment ............... 145

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>The Research Paradigm</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.2</td>
<td>The Qualitative Researcher</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>The Research Journey</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>A little about SCU &amp; the ORE</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>The Regional Footprint</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Action Research areas</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Engaging complexity – the collaborative learning journey

5.5.5 Emergence........................................................................................................... 240
5.6 Value of using Chaordic Systems Thinking ......................................................... 242
5.6.1 CST as a method of analysis .............................................................................. 242
5.6.2 CST as a mechanism for cultural change .......................................................... 243
5.7 Introducing engagEnable dialogue and diagnostic tool ........................................... 245
5.8 Multiple hats – a personal experience ................................................................... 253
5.9 Conclusion – engaging complexity ....................................................................... 254

Chapter 6: Enabling engagement – where to now? ................................................. 258

6.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 259
6.2 Answering the research questions ....................................................................... 259
6.2.1 Recommendations arising from the research .................................................. 265
6.3 Implications for theory ........................................................................................ 267
6.3.1 Engagement theory ......................................................................................... 267
6.3.2 Chaos/complexity theory .............................................................................. 267
6.4 Implications for policy and practice ..................................................................... 268
6.5 Growing internal and external engagement capacity .............................................. 270
6.5.1 Internal capacity .............................................................................................. 270
6.5.2 External capacity ............................................................................................ 272
6.6 Limitations of the study ....................................................................................... 276
6.6.1 Action research ............................................................................................... 276
6.6.2 Biographically situated researcher .................................................................. 277
6.6.3 Chaos/complexity – including CST ................................................................. 278
6.7 New knowledge ................................................................................................... 278
6.7.1 Engaged scholarship re-framed ....................................................................... 278
6.7.2 engagEnable© dialogue and diagnostic method .............................................. 281
6.8 Further research .................................................................................................. 282
6.8.1 Relevance and effectiveness of engagEnable© .................................................. 282
6.8.2 Auditing of UCE activity .................................................................................. 283
6.8.3 UCE related leadership ................................................................................... 283
6.8.4 UCE related communication .......................................................................... 283
6.8.5 CST as a mechanism for change ..................................................................... 283
6.9 Conclusion – the end is just the beginning .......................................................... 284

References ............................................................................................................... 286
Appendices .................................................................................................................. 311
List of charts

Chart 5-1: Key Themes and Patterns................................................................. 188

List of diagrams

Diagram 3-1 Locating the chaord ........................................................................ 108
Diagram 3-2 Levels of complexity within disciplinarity approaches ................. 114
Diagram 3-3 The emergent action research continuum ..................................... 118
Diagram 3-4 Role conflict: factors and impacts ............................................... 120
Diagram 3-5 Low complexity holons ................................................................. 125
Diagram 3-6 Simplistic marketing product lifecycle .......................................... 127
Diagram 3-7 Discontinuous change in a chaordic system ................................ 129
Diagram 3-8 Yin and yang – symbolising ‘both/and’ ways of thinking, doing and being ........................................................................................................... 134
Diagram 3-9 A summary of the author’s theoretical & methodological journey .. 144
Diagram 4-1 Action research areas ................................................................... 157
Diagram 4-2 CHCC cultural trails collaboration ............................................... 163
Diagram 4-3 Simplistic representation of action research cycles ..................... 165
Diagram 4-4 Developing a ‘culture-of-engagement’ ......................................... 167
Diagram 4-5 Summary of UCE analysis tools ................................................. 176
Diagram 5-1 Data sources, methods of analysis and analysis revelations ......... 179
Diagram 5-3 Context of engaged scholarship .................................................. 247
Diagram 6-1 Growing internal & external engagement capacity .................... 276
List of tables

Table 1–1  Summary of thesis framework................................................................. 9
Table 2-1  Topic areas and authors cited in this literature review.......................... 19
Table 2-2  Barriers to the development of human capital...................................... 25
Table 2-3  Business oriented “engagement” elements............................................ 29
Table 2-4  The iap2 public participation spectrum............................................... 32
Table 2-5  The university-community engagement participation spectrum .......... 33
Table 2-7  Knowledge areas .................................................................................. 61
Table 2-8  Internal characteristics of communities of practice .............................. 84
Table 3-1  Elements/features of chaos theory, complexity theory, and complexity/chaos................................................................. 105
Table 3-2  Defining chaord and chaordic .............................................................. 107
Table 3-3  Systems thinking versus un-systems thinking.................................... 111
Table 3-4  Understanding cross-disciplinarity ..................................................... 113
Table 3-5  CST and conventional reality (CR) worldviews compared ................. 131
Table 4-1  The research enquiry paradigm ......................................................... 149
Table 4-2  The author’s time-line of inter-connected and iterative action research and thesis related activities .......................................................... 152
Table 4-3  Research gathering methods employed .............................................. 164
Table 4-4  Summary of documents reviewed ....................................................... 170
Table 4-5  Summary of the WDAT approach to data analysis ............................. 172
Table 4-6  The core principles of chaordic systems thinking ................................ 175
Table 5-1  engagEnable – dialogue and diagnosis method .................................... 252
Table 5-2  Key areas of convergent and divergent data ....................................... 256
Table 6-1  Recommendations arising from the research ...................................... 266
Table 6-2  A summary of engaged scholarship characteristics ........................... 281
Preface: A personal perspective

Research is not an impersonal, external and solely intellectual endeavour, but rather a complex personal and social process ... an expression of a need to learn and change, to shift some aspect of oneself.

(Reason & Bradbury 2001, p. 415)

The Dalai Lama (1994) speaks of interconnectedness and the notion that it is incumbent upon each of us to share our skills and knowledge with others. While this statement does refer specifically to Engagement, the idea of interconnectedness and knowledge sharing is both the essence and the value of Engagement. This thesis is in many ways a drawing together of more than twenty years of learning, research, action and experience gained from my Engagement activities in relation to many community development and community capacity building pursuits on the Mid North Coast of NSW, Australia. Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 9) concept of a bricoleur working ‘between and within competing and over-lapping perspectives and paradigms’, resonates strongly with me. Over the years I have assumed many identities from: engaged citizen, lobbyist, activist, facilitator and university marketer/community relations person, to local government Councillor, business-person, catalyst, academic, leader, team member and since November 2005, engagement enabler and researcher.

Prior to undertaking the more formal research required for this thesis, my focus has primarily been upon the ‘what’ – or the outcomes – that community development and community capacity building activities can produce. Through this research undertaking I am seeking to better understand Engagement – theory and practice – in order to better enable the engagement practices of a university located in non-metropolitan Australia. I was also struck by the multi-disciplinary nature of UCE and the under-theorisation of the topic. I am privileged to be a member of a small team of regional engagement facilitators –whose purpose is to aid the development of an engagement culture within (and beyond) the University.
Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest that a bricoleur is a maker of quilts, a research *jack-of-all-trades* – a professional do-it-yourself person, who learns to borrow from a variety of disciplines in the course of a qualitative research endeavour. This has been very much the case during my previous work and community activities, as well as throughout this thesis. This exploration has taken me through several theoretical and methodological perspectives including Chaos/Complexity Theory, Grounded Theory and Critical Theory. This qualitative study utilises Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST). *Chaordic* is best described as the area of *overlap between chaos and order* — the word *chaord* is actually an amalgam. The features of Chaos include: non-linearity, messiness, adaptivity and *both/and thinking* while Order features: control and command, rules, regulations and *either/or thinking*.

I acknowledge that as an action researcher I am also a co-participant. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003) action-oriented qualitative researchers ‘create spaces’ in order to provide opportunities for those being studied to speak. Throughout the study I sought to create these opportunities through a number of formal and informal methods of data collection and the result is this thesis – this *bricolage*.

... *a pieced together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation, ... an emergent construction. ... It can be a moving, changing montage that uses multiple voices in a multi-method approach, ... [that] provides multiple perspectives on the same issue or phenomena - that could be referred to as a 'crystalisation' in that the same story is seen from different points of view* (Denzin & Lincoln 2003, pp. 4-8).

Latham (2001) encourages the researcher to learn to move as a magician in order to discover the stories of the Sharman or spirit guide, while acknowledging that knowledge is active not static and relies greatly on intuitive judgments. A phenomenological perspective provides no fixed map in which to traverse the circuitous (research) path, but Latham (2001) encourages the researcher to *make the way as you go*, guided by the phenomenon being studied. And so, as a participant/researcher I endeavoured to be *another traveller on the road*, being open and letting go of the notion that *I have the*
answers. I have sought to continue to listen with an open heart and an open mind, and to reflect upon that *listening* as I undertook this qualitative research. While the impetus for this research is from the perspective of a regionally based university in the context of the higher education sector, I hope it may also provide *food for thought* for the community-at-large. We need to recognise that what we do in the present (today) is informed by what happened in the past (yesterday), and this in turn influences what happens in the future (tomorrow).

While this is not purposefully a phenomenological study, the suggestion by Latham (2001) that research is enhanced if it is approached in the following ways was noted and consciously embedded (although I confess, not always successfully):

- Be temporal – wait patiently, allow time for the story to unfold
- Be cognoscente – of the cultural chasm that exists between self and others (e.g. mood, thought, habits, trust, and world-view).

I make no claims that the study is either generalisable or definitive and I acknowledge the context specific nature of this study, and its relevance to me, as author, and as a participant-researcher in particular. I offer it to you to provide an insight into other *ways of doing, being and becoming* in order to prompt and inform further discussion. Additionally, I suggest this study will assist people to build or deepen their understanding of action (praxis) and learning (theory) around the notion of Engagement and Engaged Scholarship that are, in and of themselves, the epitome of a chaordic system.

*Jan d'Ambrosio Strom*
Chapter 1: Overview of an engaged research journey

The breakdown of many of the old order ways of doing and being is altering the fundamental terms of the prevailing social contract and with it the (current) terms of engagement between universities and society

(Gibbons 2005, p. 2).
1.1 Introduction
This in-depth study of University-Community Engagement (UCE) was undertaken at the request of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), Professor Peter Baverstock, at Southern Cross University (SCU) in northern New South Wales, Australia. The investigation took place between January 2006 and July 2009. The importance of effective UCE to support the common good through the facilitation of the growth of social, human, and economic capital is the cornerstone of this research, and the following three research questions form the basis of the enquiry:

1. How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?
2. How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?
3. How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

Emerging in the 1990's, engagement has a focus on building mutually beneficial relationships and activities. It is a relatively new field of academic research and practice. Much of the literature reviewed has a strong practice oriented focus, although the important links between engagement and economic development (Garlick 2001; Garlick & Langworthy 2004; OECD 2006), and social and human capital (Gibbons 2005; Goldsworthy 2006; Lin 2001) were also emphasised, and these are extrapolated in this study. This study utilises Chaos/Complexity Theory and the literature review indicates that this approach has not previously been undertaken. There is strong congruence between Chaos/Complexity Theory and Engagement Theory, as this thesis will disclose. Therefore, the findings of this study will add another dimension to the understanding, growth and maturation of engagement. While this in-depth study focuses on a regionally located non-metropolitan university in Australia, the learning, including the engagement-enabling tool and activities could also apply to metropolitan universities and other organisations.
1.2 Thesis overview

Engagement can be both formal and informal. It is based on reciprocal, two-way relationships that are built upon trust, connectivity and shared understanding. Engagement can occur at individual-to-individual, individual-to-organisation, or organisation-to-organisation levels. It can enhance the wellbeing of communities from human, social, and/or economic perspectives and contribute to the community — in all its guises. Engagement is not a simple or formulaic activity, but a mix of inter-related, multi-level, holistic and interdependent activities, as this thesis will reveal. Engagement activity can enable the development of ideas and concepts including engagement practices such as partnerships and knowledge development, and these practices can provide ‘a greater sense of ownership’ (Carson & Gelber 2001, p. 98; 2001b) and community benefit. Throughout this thesis when the “E” in Engagement is capitalised it signifies a meta-view of Engagement that encompasses all types of engagement as well as engagement principles and engagement practices.

In the last decade, both in Australia and internationally, Engagement activity has expanded across the higher education sector. University-Community Engagement (UCE) links a university with its local, regional, national and international communities, and/or various communities-of-interest (CoI) or communities-of-practices (CoP) such as business, industry and social groupings. UCE is delivered through Engaged Scholarship (ES) that provides mutual benefit to a university and its community or a community-of-interest. Boyer’s (1991) concept of scholarship provides a platform to explore and build upon. This research supports the premise that ES should incorporate an integrated or inter-disciplinary approach that manifests through Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery, and Engaged Community Service.

This study of UCE is important because UCE is examined utilising Chaos/Complexity Theory. Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) emerges from Chaos/Complexity and it is used as one of three tools of analysis. A chaordic approach is a delicate and complex balance between chaos and order. This
approach combines the dynamic creativity of chaos and the predictability of order that suits the multi-faceted UCE landscape. Chaos/Complexity advocates interdependence and the transitive nature of systems, including human and organisational systems. CST is meta-practice that goes beyond the usual ways of doing. It recognises the unknowable future and embodies the growth of a shared consciousness or understanding and the importance of connectivity and interdependence. A CST approach is exemplified by iterative cycles of dissipation and emergence that is akin to the ecological notion of breaking down or death, and renewal or new life. CST encourages holonic thinking by focusing upon mutuality and the interdependence of the whole, rather than the independent constituent parts.

This in-depth study examines UCE within the context of a non-metropolitan, regional university. It is important to note that the location of an engaged regional university in a community can impact on the growth of regional assets. However, it is also important to recognise that regionality has many faces, it can be intra-state, national or pan-national. Therefore, while this study is particularly pertinent for regionally based universities, the findings also have relevance for metropolitan-based institutions that are themselves part of larger regions. Southern Cross University (SCU), is located in northern NSW, Australia, and is one of the regions' largest enterprises. SCU employs more than 1300 academic and non-academic staff, and has a student population of 12,000, across three campuses located at Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Tweed-Gold Coast.

To add further context, I have been employed one day per week as an Engagement Facilitator with the Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) at the Coffs Harbour campus since November 2005. In January 2006 I was awarded an SCU PhD Scholarship to undertake research into engagement, current SCU engagement practices, and to determine how to embed a university-wide culture-of-engagement. I have taken my embeddedness into account when undertaking this Action Research (AR) study, and have endeavoured to act in

---

1 See section 2.7.2
an ethical manner to ensure that the shape of participant contribution and the outcomes were not unduly influenced. I acknowledge that there is some "blurring" between my dual roles of Action Researcher and ORE facilitator. While I was mindful of the potential for conflict, I deliberately chose not treat the roles as mutually exclusive. I reasoned that learning from one area could provide valuable knowledge that could have application elsewhere. The areas of engagement activity did not occur in a neat sequential order, but were inclined to be “messy”, iterative and often interconnected.

AR utilises reflection, including journals, as a key tool. Journals provide a place to store personal observations and assist to track learning along the way; many of the diagrams and some reflections from my Reflective Journal are included in this thesis. The study covers a three and one-half year period, from January 2006 until July 2009, however, it cannot be seen in isolation. The AR researcher engages with the research by examining their own assumptions and 'learning through questioning inquiry' (Dick 2000). In AR the researcher is both participant and observer, therefore there is a need to be aware that any previous engagement activities — personal and professional, both inside and outside of SCU — are likely to have shaped, influenced or affected elements of this study. Similarly, other life experiences including my values, personality and perceptions will also have coloured my journey and reflections along the way. This situation also applies to every other participant who was involved in or contributed.

The findings from this in-depth AR study of one university will establish patterns that may be generalisable, and other universities could use the Engagement-enabling method. In addition to this, the learning that emerges could lead to the development of similar models and tools that other sectors and organisations could employ.
1.3 Thesis Framework

Table 1-1 summarises the thesis framework and the chapter outlines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Primary Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>An exploration of Engagement, University-Community Engagement and Engaged Scholarship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The theoretical and methodological underpinning of the thesis through Chaos/Complexity Theory and Chaordic Systems Thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A description of the Research Environment including the three Engagement Activity Areas, and the Research methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The research questions are answered by drawing on the findings as viewed through the five facets of the Chaordic Lens and the Williams Data Analysis Tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The implications for Engagement theory and practice, the recommendations arising from the research and the Engagement-enabling method are made known.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1–1 Summary of thesis framework

Chapter 2 explores the concept of Engagement, primarily within the context of higher education where it is variously referred to as Community Engagement (CE), Regional Engagement (RE) or University-Community Engagement (UCE) as it is referred to in this thesis. The UCE perspective illustrates the complex and dynamic mix of inter-related, multi-perspective elements that constitute Engagement within higher education. Engaged Scholarship and various engagement practices such as relationships, connectivity and partnerships are explored. Values, ethics and trust and the contexts of community, incorporating the multiple communities within community are addressed. Communities are not homogenous, and can be defined geographically, socially, culturally, spiritually, or economically, and also by areas of interest and practice. Similarly, regions comprised of multiple communities, each presenting their own complexity, are explored. Finally the multifaceted university environment, with its multiple tribes and range of academic disciplines, is investigated.
Chapter 3 provides an account of the exploration of theory and methodology. It was apparent through the review of Engagement literature that more theoretical depth was required to underpin, inform and fully explore the potential of this thesis. This exploration started with Systems Thinking, because it was referred to in an article on engagement, and circuitously led to Chaos/Complexity Theory. Chaos/Complexity is an amalgam of Chaos Theory and Complexity Theory and is the primary theoretical perspective used in this thesis. If viewed from an ontological perspective, the way of being is Chaos/Complexity Theory and this underpins the participative way of knowing, or epistemology. Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) has emerged from Chaos/Complexity and is used as one of three methods of data analysis. The Chaordic Lens is a CST based reflective-action method that encompasses the five lenses explored in this chapter — consciousness, connectivity, indeterminacy, dissipation and emergence. In addition to the reflective-action cycles, CST considers and respects multiple perspectives and recognises that understanding and knowledge will be the key outcomes. In embracing the interconnected nature of Chaos and Complexity, including elements such as interdependence, relationships and emergence, it is ultimately neither possible, nor appropriate, to separate the ontology, the epistemology and the methodology. Each perspective has influenced the undertaking and analysis of the field research.

Chapter 4 clarifies and reports on the AR methodological approach. This includes three different over-lapping and layered cycles of action and reflective learning involving my co-participants, within and outside SCU and myself as a biographically situated researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 2003). All participants were active in one or more of the following Engagement Activity Areas (EAA) – Engagement Enabling (EE), Aged Services (AS) and Local Government (LG). This chapter describes the SCU regional footprint, the SCU Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) and the three engagement activity areas. The following research methods were used to gather and reflect upon information, Action Research, semi-structured reflective interviews, internal and external
documents, a reflective journal and three methods of analysis; Summary Documents, the Williams Data Analysis Tool and the Chaordic Lens.

Chapter 5 chronicles the patterns and themes that emerged when the Summary Document data was examined through the three methods of data analysis to ascertain internal and external participant attitudes towards UCE, including Engaged Scholarship, engagement and engagement practice, and the University. All of the findings made known through these processes, coupled with the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 helped to shape the answers to the research questions. While the intention of this thesis is to look at UCE, the findings reveal that the University’s internal organisation — including policies and practice — has an effect on how the university can engage, or not, with its community.

Chapter 6 synthesises the research findings and the literature reviewed to determine the implications the research has on Engagement Theory, and Engagement Policy and Practice, ways in which a university-wide culture-of-engagement could be embedded including nine recommendations. These recommendations have arisen from the research and will need to be enacted to assist the emergence of a culture-of-engagement at SCU. Two areas of new knowledge, including an engagement-enabling method to encourage people to look holistically at existing or potential engagement activities are discussed. The method concentrates upon linkages in order to focus the constituent parts within the context of the whole (Strom 2007a). Fisher (1999) defines this as ‘web-thinking’. And finally three areas for further study are also identified.

1.4 Questions of Enquiry

Engagement is a vital element in building the social, human and economic assets of communities. There is strong synergy between the value of Engagement for enhancing the common or greater good and notion of interconnectedness and knowledge sharing. These notions will be explored through the following questions of enquiry.
1 How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?

2 How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?

3 How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

This study will establish a means of embedding an enduring or sustainable culture-of-engagement within SCU as well as between SCU and its CoI and CoP within, and to some extent, beyond its regional community. The emergence of answers to the research questions contributes to the broader body of knowledge and discussion about Engagement within the higher education, and also for the community at large. This study builds knowledge and understanding. The use of the participatory, experiential and transformative Action Research in this in-depth study confirms that the substantive responses to these questions can be implemented. The approach also focuses on change and on growing the holonic capacity of universities and communities.

1.5 Conclusion

The knowledge gained through this research study could have a four-fold effect. Firstly, by using Chaos/Complexity Theory it provides a different theoretical approach to understand and strengthen Engagement. Secondly, it can contribute to the general body of knowledge pertaining to Engagement, University-Community Engagement and Engaged Scholarship. Thirdly, it could shape and influence on-going engagement practices at SCU, laying the foundation for the whole-of-system change that is required to embed a culture-of-engagement. Finally, it supports further exploration of Chaordic Systems Thinking as a means of triggering a profound shift in the design and transformation of organisations. engagEnable® has been developed with this concept in mind. CST is a way of doing, being and becoming that encourages planning for possibility rather than seeking certainty.
Creating engagement will not be easy for it faces considerable resistance by institutional inertia, traditional definitions of scholarship and pressures from a market-based economy. The promise of engagement however lies in its potential to rejuvenate the academy, re-define scholarship and involve society in a productive conversation about the role of education in the new century.

*Engagement is higher education's larger purpose.*

(Brukardt et al. 2004, pp. 17-8)
2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores engagement within the context of Australian higher education, where it is variously referred to as Community Engagement (CE), Regional Engagement (RE), University-Community Engagement (UCE) and Community-University Engagement (CUE). However community consultation, public participation and the Johari Window are also explored to provide additional breadth to the discussion.

Garlick and Langworthy (2004) argue that the core business of higher educational institutions should be to enhance human capital through knowledge development and the employment of graduates within the region. This assists to build the links and networks that underpin the social capital of the community and contribute to the development of enterprise and economic capital. Building on this premise The University Community Engagement Perspective as depicted in Diagram 2-1 places economic, social and human capital at the centre of this two-dimensional mind-map. The diagram also provides a visual representation of the structure of the chapter and how each of the four key areas investigated – Engagement Context, Engagement Practices, Engaged Scholarship and Values – are interconnected. In addition, Diagram 2-2 provides a more linear representation of the chapter’s structure.

This chapter reviews and analyses a diverse array of national and international literature, to provide a better understanding of the complexity and interconnectedness of the Engagement environment. An example of this interconnectivity is demonstrated by the “dot, dot, dash” arrowed line, located at the bottom right of Diagram 2-1. This “link” clearly indicates that Values underpin all engagement activity, be that in the form of Engagement Practices or Engaged Scholarship activity. While it is a simplistic representation of a very complex environment, the “perspective” was developed to illustrate the inter-connected and inter-dependent nature of UCE.
Diagram 2-1  The university-community engagement perspective
(Source Strom: 2005)
I make no claim that the concepts explored in this chapter are an exhaustive representation of the engagement environment. Similarly, my intention is to provide a comprehensive overview of UCE including context, and twelve engagement practices. Some of the key concepts, such as engaged scholarship, social capital and communities-of-practice are more thoroughly developed than others.

As already indicated the development of social, human and/or economic assets or capital is at the heart of the University Community Engagement Perspective. The idea that effective UCE can directly contribute to the growth
of regional assets in the form of human, social, or economic capital is investigated. Three contextual perspectives, community, region and university are explored. Within the community context there are many communities-of-interest such as business, industry, community-based organisations as well as communities-of-practice (CoP), and the government sector, encompassing local, state and federal elected representatives and staff, boards and advisory committees. The Australian and international perspectives about region, and the complex and diverse mix of teaching, learning, research and scholarship activity within the context of a “modern” university are explored. Finally, an array of Engagement Practices such as collaboration, partnerships and knowledge, and values such as trust and ethics are reviewed. Table 2-1 below, lists the topic areas and the scholars cited in the engagement literature that was reviewed for this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element/Feature</th>
<th>Author/s cited in this Literature Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>ASEA Foundation 2001; Block 2008; Boyce 2008; Healy 2007; Lang 2004; Strom 2006; Taleb 2007;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Carson &amp; Gelber 2001; Dept of Sustainability &amp; Environment 2009; iap2 2008; NSW Dept. of Public Works 1995; Queensland Community Engagement Unit 2010;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Element/Feature</td>
<td>Author/s cited in this Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embeddedness</td>
<td>2007; Pracsys 2009; Webber-Thrush 2009; Wenger 2006; Gibbons 2005; Granovetter 1985; Lang 2004; Parry 1996; Strom 2006;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>AVCC 2005; Bradley 2008; Duke 2008; Fletcher 2008; Garlick 2001; Goddard 1999; Gunasekara 2006; Kellogg Foundation 1999; Longley 2005; McNall et al 2009; Muller 2010; Neller, Hall &amp; Eastall 2006; OECD 2007; Wedgewood 2006;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Partnerships            | Brukardt et al 2004; Buys & Bursnall 2007; Gibbons et al 1994; Hart &
Table 2-1  Topic areas and authors cited in this literature review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element/Feature</th>
<th>Author/s cited in this Literature Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>ASAE Foundation 2001; Buys &amp; Bursnall 2007; Garlick &amp; Langworthy 2004; Granovetter 1985; Lang 2004; Svendson 1999; Welch &amp; Wilkinson 2004;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Goddard 2000; Kanter 1995; Ramaley 2002; Talloires Network 2009;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The notions of social, human and economic assets or capital and their relevance to Engagement will now be addressed.

2.2 Exploring capital

Capital has many elements; however, in the context of this study it refers to the wide-ranging assets that exist in the social, human and economic capital of the region\(^2\) through its multiple communities\(^3\), including the university. Hillier and Rookesby (2005) suggest that capital has a broader connotation than the usual economic definition when Bourdieu’s (2005) notion of habitus is applied. Habitus comprises ‘acquired characteristics, it is not natural; rather it is a

\(^{2}\) Region – see section 2.7.2

\(^{3}\) Community – see section 2.7.1
product of history, and social experience that can (and does) change according to the experience, education and training to which a person is exposed’ (Bourdieu 2005, p. 1). Therefore the location of a university within a community or region is likely to have a strong impact on its habitus, and universities need to be mindful of this. UCE activity in a regional area should enhance the development of capital – social, human and economic. However, a variety of other factors such as power, personal contacts and formal and informal forms of knowledge (Hillier & Rookesby 2005) can also have an impact on social, human, and economic capital.

2.2.1 Social capital

Social capital is intangible and ‘refers to [the] features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions’ (Putnam 1993, p. 167). These features increase rather than decrease with use. The accumulation of social capital emerges from a circuitous link between trust and co-operation, with each building upon, and being built by the other. Goddard (2000) refers to it as the soft infrastructure that is embedded in social networks and linked to individuals, or linked to a community, or an organisation via the individual (Garlick & Langworthy 2004; Goldsworthy 2006; Starratt 2003). Social capital has been defined as a collective asset that is shared by members of a defined group,

…with clear boundaries, obligations of exchange, and mutual recognition; taking repeated exchanges to reinforce mutual recognition and boundaries and to affirm and reaffirm … each member’s claim to the capital (Lin 2001, p. 22).

Portes (1996) suggests that the popularity of the notion of social capital is bringing wide attention to an important phenomenon and he suggests that the name “social capital”, presents it as an appealing conceptual idea.

Social capital is not built in any one area but can emerge from multiple areas. From a higher education perspective Charles (2007) states that universities can contribute to its development through the participation of staff on various boards, committees and working groups and this can result in the sharing and
building of knowledge at a regional or local level. Onyx (2008) argues that the
generation of social capital is dependent upon volunteering, particularly in
rural communities. She argues that volunteers play at least three important
roles: firstly as community builders; secondly, as mediators within community
networks; and thirdly, by building linkages between various communities-of-
interest (including formal organisations and informal community networks).
University staff and students can undertake volunteer roles thereby
contributing to the development of the social capital of their community. This
participative role sits comfortably with the Muirhead and Woolcock (2008)
view of social capital that suggests the development of relationships coupled
with increased public participation creates greater levels of social inclusion in
decision making that is integral to its growth. Such networks are ‘crucial in
enabling the relatively powerless to access knowledge and resources from the
relatively powerful’ (Onyx 2008, p. 103). It should be noted that volunteering is
an integral part of service learning and university-community engagement in
the USA (NSLC 2009) and Service Learning⁴. This activity could also include
elements of Boyer’s (1990) Scholarship of Application⁵, as academic staff
assist the growth of social capital or community capacity that serves the
interests of the broader community. Arden, McLachlan and Cooper (2009)
identify a strong link between the concepts of social capital and engagement
particularly through partnerships and co-generative learning activities. Social
capital can be built upon collaborative networks⁶ among equals and these are
largely self-organising systems known as communities-of-practice⁷ (CoP)
(Smith 2003-2009).

According to Chappell (2010) there is also a strong interdependent link
between productivity growth and social capital because the emergence of the
knowledge economy, and the generation of social capital are features of
interactions between individuals within and between organisations.

⁴ Service Learning see section 2.4.1
⁵ Boyer’s Scholarship Theory, including “application” see section 2.4
⁶ Networks see section 2.7.1
⁷ Communities-of-practice see section 2.5.8
These interactions generate social capital – the connections that create new communities of practice, knowledge exchanges, information flows, alliances and innovative business structures. The more social capital – the more innovation is fostered and the faster the knowledge economy grows (Chappell 2010).

If universities seek to understand and capture regional knowledge through internal and external stakeholder communities, both shared knowledge and social capital will grow and it will help to identify and ‘minimise the weaknesses and the threats to the region’ (Maggs 1999, p. 278).

While acknowledging that the development and support of social capital has an enormous and positive role to play in UCE activities, universities should also be mindful that social capital can have bonding or bridging qualities that may impact on engagement activity. According to Putnam (2000) bonding social capital is exclusive and inward looking, and places people within very specific homogenous groupings. Therefore, if universities have a focus on bonding social capital it could result in alienation from other groupings and/or the broader community. In contrast, if universities support bridging social capital their engagement activity would be inclusive and have an outward focus by establishing a sense of connectedness across diverse social groupings. Research undertaken by Beugelsdijk & Smulders (2003, p. 3) reveals that ‘… bridging social capital has a positive effect on growth, whereas bonding social capital has a negative effect on the degree of sociability outside the closed social circle’. They refer to bridging social capital and bonding social capital as “open” and “closed” networks respectively.

While acknowledging the benefits of the collective character of social capital, Portes (1996) identifies four possible negative consequences. Firstly the exclusion of outsiders to the group, network or community as indicated above; secondly, group members making “excess claims” in relation to their effectiveness or contribution; thirdly, the restriction of individual freedom as group solidarity prevails; and finally this could result in a “downward leveling of norms” where group members may not allow individuals to be seen or heard and this could result in forcing them out of the group.
Social ties can bring about greater control over wayward behaviour and bring about privileged access to resources; they can also restrict individual freedoms and bar outsiders from gaining access to the same resources through particularistic preferences (Portes 1996, p. 21).

It is clear that the development of social capital is an integral component of building community well being. However, universities need to be mindful of the challenges that can ensue if they want to contribute to the positive growth of social capital that could provide benefits to the community. Social capital does not happen in isolation, but is interconnected with the development of human capital.

### 2.2.2 Human capital

Unlike social capital, human capital is not place specific, therefore it can be developed in one location and then purloined and applied elsewhere (Garlick 2001). It can manifest as skills, knowledge development and knowledge exchange, as well as through reputation, networks, relationships, partnerships and other collaborative elements that contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of communities and organisations (Hillier & Rookesby 2005, Kanter 1995, Lin 2001).

*Higher education can contribute to human capital development in the region through educating a wider range of individuals in the local area, ensuring that they are employable when they leave education, helping local employers by responding to new skills requirements, ensuring that employees go on learning by supporting continuous professional development, and helping attract talent from outside (OECD 2007, p. 5).*

Human capital can be enhanced by higher education by increasing skill levels, providing investment in training and wages and increasing employment rates among research personnel (Garlick 2001). Charles (2007) supports the idea that a university’s role in human capital development is clear and relates to the teaching and learning role, and the development of regional human capital is strengthened if graduates remain in the region. The Business Higher Education Round Table (B-HERT) recognises this nexus and states that the facilitation of human capital is the key driver in building communities of
engagement. It is through UCE activities that universities can ‘seek to generate, apply and use knowledge and other university capabilities outside academic environments’ (Goldsworthy 2006, p. 3). However he cautions it is important that universities do not stray too far from their core business of teaching and research. The building and development of human capital is a core aspect of universities. Therefore, UCE programmes that develop and facilitate the growth of human capital for undergraduate and post-graduate students, as well as for university staff, are vital (Cuthill 2007; Garlick & Langworthy 2004; Goldsworthy 2006).

A 2007 OECD report states that universities can serve their regions by contributing to a region’s knowledge-based industries and its human capital base can help to generate new businesses and contribute to tax revenue. Universities also derive benefit as people associated with local businesses may enrol in courses, or employ the university to undertake research, consultancy and training activities. In short, higher education can thrive better in a thriving region and this contributes to the attraction and retention of staff and students.

According to the OECD (2007) funding for teaching is weakly oriented towards building human capital. In order to build human capital educational programs that

...help people develop great organisational skills, serious analytic capacity, real understanding of the demographic, social, economic and political forces that any community is dealing with, and a very sophisticated understanding of the issues that they are working on. Such educational programs are extremely rare in the world today’ (Mott 2009).

This report also recognised that engagement activity in the area of human capital development could be impinged, and a number of barriers were identified. Many other scholars support these findings and Table 2-2 summarises the identified UCE barriers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OECD (2007) Identified Barriers</th>
<th>Other Scholars supporting view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patchy engagement that is generally driven by individuals, is small-scale and short-term and</td>
<td>(Garlick 2001; Gunasekara 2006; McNall et al. 2009; Mott 2009; Nongxa 2010; Wedgwood 2006);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lacks &quot;institutional thickness&quot; within and beyond the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lack of support from public policy on a regional focus for universities</td>
<td>(Garlick 2001; Gunasekara 2006; Wedgwood 2006);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional academic values do not recognise local/regional community-based activity</td>
<td>(Duke &amp; Moss 2009; Finkelstein 2001);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cultural gap between academic and private sectors</td>
<td>(Arden, McLachlan &amp; Cooper 2009; Dubb 2007; Duke &amp; Moss 2009; Finkelstein 2001; Garlick 2001; Powell 2008; Wedgwood 2006);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied research (that can be trans-disciplinary) is often seen as having less value than the</td>
<td>(Boyer 1990; Onyx 2008);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more traditional discipline-based research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lack of funding or research funding being directed to the already strong and advanced</td>
<td>(Bradley, D 2008; Brukardt et al. 2004; Garlick 2001; Wedgwood 2006);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial and other constraints of local government</td>
<td>(Garlick 2001; Healey 2005);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2-2 Barriers to the development of human capital*

If any of the barriers identified above are evident, they will need to be ameliorated in order to grow human capital. Chappell (2010) argues that while human capital was the focus of the 20th Century, the 21st Century has already seen greater interaction of individuals, within and between organisations, and this supports the emergence of the knowledge economy. Solutions to the barriers previously identified should emerge through the generation of social, human and economic capital and by building upon

*...the connections that create new communities of practice, knowledge exchanges, information flows, alliances and innovative business structures. *[T]he more innovation is fostered...the faster the knowledge economy grows* (Chappell 2010).

### 2.2.3 Economic capital

Economic capital is the third type of capital growth to which universities can contribute (Brukardt et al. 2004; Garlick 2001; Goldsworthy 2006; Longley 2005; Neller, Hall & Eastall 2006; Shadbolt & Kay 2005; OECD 2006). According to Gunasekara (2006) the importance of universities in regional development, including economic development, is a relatively recent phenomenon. The most basic impact of a university is its economic impact on
the community and region it inhabits, and this manifests through ‘the economic benefit derived from a university's income, expenditure and employment is positively related to the scale of the university’ (Pracsys 2009, p. 5). Webber-Thrush (2009) acknowledges the economic impact that universities can have through employment, by purchasing goods and services, through the provision of quality undergraduates in region/community, and by competing aggressively to win economic stimulus grants. While recognising that universities have a direct impact on a regional economy Garlick (2001) and Brukardt et al. (2004) suggest that the increasing level of community expectations on universities to contribute to economic development is impacting on the higher education sector. Communities look to universities to provide leadership and target knowledge to support various economic development initiatives because they have

... interest, independence, authority, networks and information, critical mass and longevity of existence to take an economic development leadership role in a region, free from outside organisational controls (Garlick 2001, p. 17).

Gelmon et al. (2005) recognise that while a university’s community engagement activity may not necessarily be scholarly it can also play an important role in economic development. As a result economic development is included in an institutional community engagement self-assessment tool that they have developed. An avid proponent of social capital Healy (2007) also recognises that formal alliances between communities also provide “linking capital” that encourages organisations to resource activities that can support and enable social and economic outcomes. The OECD argues that the role of higher education goes beyond education and research to include activities that support economic and regional development ‘...they must engage with others in their regions, provide opportunities for lifelong learning and contribute to the development of knowledge-intensive jobs which will enable graduates to find local employment and remain in their communities’ (OECD 2007). A 2006 OECD report that assessed the contribution higher education makes to regional economic development in the Australian context, observed that
Universities are being encouraged to diversify their funding and revenue sources through a range of joint ventures, partnerships and engagement with industry and the community (Neller, Hall & Eastall 2006, p. 29).

Neller, Hall and Eastall (2006) note that collaborative projects between higher education, business and other groups in Australia should attract $41 million during the period 2005-2008. They suggest that additional funding could be accessed through various government agencies and departments. Wenger (2006) argues that a communities-of-practice (CoP) approach, with an emphasis on knowledge building among practitioners, can provide a new paradigm for development work that includes economic development. However Howard (2007) warns that the limited availability of economic development funds can affect project viability and sustainability. This is further exacerbated in Australia because the Australian university foundation system is less developed than its US counterpart.

B-HERT recognises the valuable role that universities can play in assisting regions to move ahead with sustainable economic development through innovation and change. However, on a cautionary note, B-HERT states there is no single view on how this might be achieved, because different institutions make different contributions according to their strengths and capabilities. Some may be world-class centres of research excellence and players in the global markets, while others may collaborate with local businesses, communities or regional boards (Goldsworthy 2006). The involvement of higher education in the Regional Development Australia (RDA) boards could enhance capital growth – economic, human and social, and this supports the current Australian government’s view that higher education should have an increased role in stimulating the development of a region. This could be achieved through a range of University-RDA activities such as collaborative partnerships, knowledge sharing, and applied research.

In August 2009, thirteen RDA boards replaced the NSW Area Consultative Committees (ACC) and the NSW state based Regional Development Boards (RDBs). The aim of the RDA boards is threefold: ‘to improve co-operation...
across all levels of government by better aligning efforts and resources, and increasing engagement with local communities’ (DSRD 2008, pp. 1-2). These boards have an economic development focus with a strong emphasis on social inclusion in order to address areas of economic and social disadvantage. They provide advice to government about regional issues, assist with the coordination of regional plans and other regional development initiatives and work closely with universities, local government and other regional organisations.

The notion of capital – social, human and economic – is inextricably linked with UCE. Gunasekara (2006) states that the message to higher education institutions, particularly those located outside core metropolitan centres, is that they would be seriously remiss if they did not embrace regional engagement as a strategic priority.

2.3 What is engagement?
So, when thinking about the notion of engagement the following questions could arise: What is engagement? Why do we need it? Clearly, in order to be able to examine engagement, it is important to understand what it is. Kanter (1995, p. 195) states that engagement activity involves “living systems”, and has a strong connection to social and community responsibility, and a focus on collaborative partnerships.

As a former editor of Harvard Business Review (1989-1992) and a specialist in business strategy, innovation, and leadership for change (Harvard Business School 2010), Kanter’s business oriented engagement elements, Kanter (1995) are not incompatible with the views of many UCE scholars as listed in Table 2-3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kanter (1995) Business oriented elements of engagement</th>
<th>Other scholars recognising these elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treated all parties with respect and integrity to build trust</td>
<td>Brukardt et al. 2004; Buys &amp; Bursnall 2007; Magliocca &amp; Minati 2002; Mott 2009; Weerts &amp; Sandmann 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping people fully informed with effective communication</td>
<td>Buys &amp; Bursnall 2007; Campus Engage 2010; Hillier 2005; Stacey 1992);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having mental flexibility to think across sector and disciplinary &quot;boundaries&quot; and barriers</td>
<td>Brukardt et al. 2004; Cartwright, T. 2007; Chaordic Commons 2001; Hart, A. &amp; Wolff 2006; Seel 2006; Skaret, Send &amp; Roberts 2001; Weerts &amp; Sandmann 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapting as changes occur</td>
<td>Chaordic Commons 2001; Flood 1999; Giddens 1998; Losada &amp; Heaphy 2004; Torjman 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating and building personal relationships</td>
<td>Buys &amp; Bursnall 2007; Seel 2006; Skaret, Send &amp; Roberts 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating through joint activity to support greater ‘connectivity’ (that Kanter (1995) notes is a non-traditional Anglo-Saxon value)</td>
<td>Arden, McLachlan &amp; Cooper 2009; Centre for Sustainable Community Development 2006; Charles 2007; Chimhanzi 2004; McNall et al. 2009; Mott 2009; Seel 2006; Tuettemann 2003.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on shared action that enhances “quality of life”, social responsibility and caring for others</td>
<td>AUCEA 2008a; Campus Engage 2010; Mott 2009; NSLC 2009; OECD 2007; Pulley 2009; Talloires Network 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging leaders to establish “leadership coalitions” and to encourage work with others</td>
<td>Buys &amp; Bursnall 2007; Driscoll 2008; Dubb 2007; Howard 2007; Magliocca &amp; Minati 2002; Mulej et al. 2004; OECD 2001; Ramaley 2005; Weerts &amp; Sandmann 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooling and sharing knowledge, and making resources available to attract others including “cosmopolitan” organisations</td>
<td>Campus Engage 2010; Goddard 2000; Kellogg Commission 1999; Memorial University 2009; Talloires Network 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking to solve problems by working together</td>
<td>Arden, McLachlan &amp; Cooper 2009; AUCEA 2008a; Campus Compact 2010; Garlick 1998; Kellogg Commission 1999; Lang 2004; Mott 2009; Nonaka, Toyama &amp; Konno 2000; OECD 2007; Talloires Network 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming pre-eminent in more than one of the following ways, as: thinkers; makers; or traders’ (Kanter 1995).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-3  Business oriented “engagement” elements
Many of these elements have strong accord with Ramaley’s (2005, p. 1) definition of engagement from a UCE perspective:

Engagement refers to an educational and research initiative conducted through some form of partnership and characterised by shared goals, a shared agenda, agreed upon definitions of success that are meaningful to both the university and the community participants, and some pooling or leveraging of university resources and public and private funds provided by other participants. The resulting collaboration or partnership is mutually beneficial and is likely to build the capacity or competence of all parties.

In short, community-university engagement provides opportunities to share knowledge and expertise, to build social capital and co-generate learning (Arden, McLachlan & Cooper 2009).

In his book Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate (Boyer 1990, 1997) Ernest Boyer develops his theory on the Scholarship of Engagement as a way of doing the work of academia. He argues that academics should break out of the tired old teaching versus research debate by discovering a more creative way of being a scholar. The concept of engagement and the association between engagement and terms such as, community consultation and public participation as identified by the International Association of Public Participation (iap2) and others, and the Johari Window are first explored to provide an additional view on “engagement”. Consideration of these views provides an opportunity to enrich higher education’s approach to University Community Engagement (UCE).

2.3.1 From consultation to engagement

In the mid 1990’s when UCE was in its infancy in Australia, the notions of community consultation and greater public participation were also emerging as communities sought greater engagement with government and other institutions in order to directly shape the direction and growth of their communities. The emergence of these parallel “engagement-like” occurrences is not mutually exclusive.

---

8 Boyer – see section 2.4
9 The use of the lower case iap2 is this organisation’s branding
The NSW Department of Public Works (1995) describes consultation as an interactive process between parties that might involve imparting, receiving and sharing information, with an emphasis on clear communication as the essential element for successful consultation. This emphasis has equal application in the context of UCE. The Queensland Government’s Community Engagement Unit (2010, p. 6) declares that community engagement is a collaborative process ‘involving people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues that affect [sic] their well-being’ (p. 6). Similarly, the Victorian Government suggest that linking the ‘community’ to ‘engagement’ serves to broaden the scope, shift the focus from the individual to the collective, and to ensure that community diversity is considered. They regard community engagement as a planned process that works with specific people ‘…connected by geographic location, special interest, or affiliation … to address issues affecting their wellbeing (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2009). Finally, the OECD (2001) state that engagement is about genuinely involving people in consultative and participatory activities that are guided by a number of principles. These include: organisational commitment, especially the leaders; clarification of roles and responsibilities; provision of resources; co-ordination to avoid duplication; and effective communication.

Established in the USA in the 1990’s, the International Association of Public Participation (iap2) advocates for greater public participation, particularly in relation to decision-making about issues that affect the community at large.

*Community engagement is a two-way process by which the aspirations, concerns, needs and values of citizens and communities are incorporated at all levels and in all sectors in policy development, planning, decision-making, service delivery and assessment; and by which governments and other business and civil society organisations involve citizens, clients, communities and other stakeholders in these processes (iap2, 2008).*

Table 2-4 shows how the iap2 approach moves from *inform*, the lowest level of engagement, to *empowerment*, where the final decision-making is placed into the hands of the public, particularly in relation to matters that affect the public.
In the context of the higher education sector, UCE is driven by focusing on the needs of a particular community-of-interest and/or the region in which the university is physically located or associated with. While the iap2 and higher education may have a different Engagement purpose the iap2 Spectrum provides an excellent basis for UCE that could assist to quantify the terms of engagement, from both internal and external perspectives. Carson & Gelber (2001) are strong supporters of increased public participation, particularly in relation to planning processes. They identify a variety of methods available for achieving better involvement, such as search conferences and deliberative juries. Each method will have its advantages and disadvantages and it is important to match particular techniques to particular groups, with some methods placing a much greater emphasis on community participation and involvement. For example, a deliberative jury process was used to assist in the development of the Southern Cross University (SCU) Regional Engagement Functional Plan (REFP).

In Table 2-5 I adapted the iap2 Spectrum. While each Spectrum is presented as linear table, it is important to note that engagement activity will vary according to each situation or relationship and it is not a linear or sequential process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, the alternatives and the solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with the public to ensure that their concerns are consistently understood and considered.</td>
<td>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</td>
<td>To place the final decision-making in the hands of the public.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-4 The iap2 public participation spectrum (Source: iap2 2002)
In contrast to the aforementioned views, the definition proffered by the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) at the Sixth International Conference on Service Learning and Community Engagement (Oregon, USA 2006) was less encompassing:

…it engagement is NOT community participation, community consultation, community development, or public relations. Instead it is [a] two-way relationship in which the university forms PARTNERSHIPS with the community that yield mutually beneficial outcomes (AUCEA 2006).

The elements referred to in the negative in the above statement do occur when a university undertakes engagement activities. If a university truly engages with its community it will be consulting with citizens, and the partnerships that develop may result in community development of some sort. Those outcomes
will more than likely be shared with the community through public relations mechanisms. The construction of this definition could have resulted from a concern that a more encompassing definition, such as iap2, then an increased level of community empowerment could potentially impinge upon university autonomy. Goddard (2000) suggests that universities may be concerned about losing their “autonomy” if regional agendas are developed by regional stakeholders, as this may have an impact on the management and funding of teaching and research.

USA-based academic Judith Ramaley (2002) notes that while engagement is still evolving, it is very much a reciprocal activity based upon a shared agenda that provides mutual benefit to all participants. She declares that a fully realised university-community relationship should have a common agenda and share responsibility, risk and reward, power and resources with the community. It should create ‘extraordinary community-based/service-learning opportunities for students … [that are] open and responsive to the interests and concerns of their students and of the community’ (Ramaley, 2002, p. 3).

Community concerns in relation to goals and outcomes also need to be recognised. The Ramaley (2002) perspective is underpinned by a strong commitment to the ideals of democracy, public participation, and civic responsibility. I contend that this view has strong accord with the iap2, as depicted in the *iap2 Public Participation Spectrum* shown in Table 2-4. While these views are harmonious with US cultural perspectives around engagement, they also have value within the Australian context. The iap2 approach moves from *inform*, the lowest level of engagement, to *empowerment*, where the final decision-making is placed into the hands of the public, particularly in relation to matters that affect the public. Although there is a strong correlation between the terms engagement, consultation and participation, engagement is a more encompassing, equitable, relationship-oriented practice.

Increased knowledge should enable the emergence of trust and the development of meaningful UCE and interaction with the community in
mutually beneficial ways (Temple, Story & Delaforce 2005). They assert that Engagement should have strong community connectivity, so that the needs of the community are identified, considered and responded to, and this could result in partnership activities. Universities need to be increasingly conscious of community interest in them, and in turn, they need to be able to develop and sustain that interest. This could be achieved ‘...through scholarship and outreach or engagement to strengthen community life and community capacity to identify and solve problems’ (Ramaley 2002, p. 6). Winter and Wiseman (2005) note engagement also functions as a marker for university identity that provides a foundation for research and teaching. It should include a commitment to equity and accessibility, and provide social and economic infrastructure benefits to local and regional communities. These elements have strong resonance in relation to this study, particularly in light of its regional profile that is discussed in Chapter 4.

In order to develop a culture of Engagement, trust and the sharing of knowledge among those involved is vital. Clarke (1994) recognises the importance of these elements by adapting the Johari Window (Diagram 2-3) in relation to public participation processes. Luft & Ingham originated the Johari Window in 1955 as a counselling technique to assist in the process of learning about oneself. It has four quadrants: the open, the hidden, the blind and the unknown. Clarke (1994) argues that an objective of public participation is to reduce the size of the unknown quadrant through the use of agreed and appropriate communication techniques. For this model to succeed, all participants must genuinely commit to a free and open dialogue that will result in an increased level of trust between all parties. I have adapted the Johari Window to suit the UCE context, and to demonstrate that sharing knowledge assists in the reduction of “unknowns” and should result in strengthened university community relationships.
The size of the unknown quadrant, on the bottom right of Diagram 2-3 should reduce, as people gain a better understanding of each other, their needs, aspirations, work practices and culture through increased knowledge sharing, transfer or exchange. Increased knowledge is a key element of Engagement, and Engaged Scholarship in particular.

2.4 Engaged scholarship

In 1990, Boyer wrote a groundbreaking report for the Carnegie Foundation, “Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate” when he first mooted the idea of Engaged Scholarship. He was prompted to reconsider the notion of scholarship in the USA at that time because in the second half of the 20th century, higher education had narrowed its mandate to be more in line with the European tradition. Incongruously, he observed that academics had a stronger focus on loyalty to their discipline over loyalty to their university. As ‘... institutions were becoming more open and inclusive, the culture of the professoriate was becoming more hierarchical and restrictive’ (Boyer 1997, pp. 12-3). In summary, ‘Engaged scholarship generates, transmits, integrates and applies knowledge through collaborations designed to contribute to the public good’ (Portland State University 2008, p. 112).

Boyer (1997) identified four elements of scholarship that could be creatively developed by academics to better serve the changing needs of both the community and the university:
• Discovery – through pure and applied research activity
• Integration – through synergy and interdisciplinary connections
• Application – through service to and engagement with the community
• Teaching – through formal and informal interactions

Ramaley (2005, p. 3) supports Boyer’s four-fold approach to scholarship because it moves the relationship between the university and the community from the expert-centred ‘classic triad of research, teaching and service’ to a model of partnership with community. Boyer (1997, p. 75) argues strongly in favour of engaged scholarship, noting that a professional academic should recognise that ‘... teaching is crucial, ... integrative studies are increasingly consequential, and that in addition to research, the work of the academy must relate to the world beyond the campus’. Building on Boyer’s theory, Cox (2006) argues that each dimension of Boyer’s understanding of scholarship requires a series of actions: goal setting; selection and application of means and method; and reflection and dissemination of the results. According to Cox (2006, p. 125) the scholarship of engagement includes active and interactive elements and ‘...it becomes the scholarship of engagement through its active and interactive connection with people and places outside of the university … In contrast traditional approaches to scholarship are driven only by the development of theory within institutions.

Engaged Scholarship manifests through teaching and learning, research and discovery, and community service activity and has many advocates. According to McNall et al. (2008) the scholarship of engagement would be better legitimised and supported as a scholarly pursuit if university-community research activities were viewed as opportunities for “engaged” research that could have a longitudinal horizon. Finkelstein (2001) notes that a barrier to engagement could be the perception that engaged research is less scholarly than traditional research. While she argues for no distinction, either implicit or explicit, between traditional and engaged research she suggests that appropriate recognition and reward structures to reinforce UCE activity could
be useful. The OECD (2007) premise that ‘...transversal mechanisms that link teaching, research and third task activities and cut across disciplinary boundaries...’ are paramount and this fits well with Boyer's notion of Engaged Scholarship.

The necessity to recognise, support and reward engagement has wide support. Incentives for those undertaking engagement activities are important as they can provide both reward and recognition for the activities and the outcomes. Thus appropriate quantifiable performance measures need to be established ‘as part of a systematic, consistently monitored tracking system’ (Scott & Jackson 2005, p. 3). Such tracking can also enable a system of quality management and continuous improvement to be instituted. Slamat (2010) is also in favour of engagement support systems, rewards and incentives to support the development of an engagement culture 'to invigorate scholarship to ultimately become community engaged scholarship'.

The need for UCE continued to build and strengthen during the 1990s, and is consciously embraced to varying degrees in universities around the world. However, while many universities identify Engagement as a university priority in their mission or strategic plans, Boyer (1997) suggests this is often lip service because it is rarely assigned equal merit with research or teaching activities. There is evidence to suggest that his observation still has traction twenty years later as revealed in Chapter 5. Similarly, the OECD (2007) recognises that 'traditional academic values give little weight to engaging in local communities'. To overcome this Howard (2007) argues in favour of the "engaged university" that has an integrated strategy linking itself with government, industry and the community. His vision for an "engaged university" is one with ‘... its sleeves rolled up, working in partnership with its local community to solve real-life problems' (Howard 2007, p. 99).

Finally, there is a need for the development of new university models and responsiveness for embedding engaged scholarship into university academic practice ‘... and for capturing social investment, social pertinence and social relevance’ (Duke & Moss 2009, p. 35). It is also important to recognise three
elements of Engaged Scholarship are inter-connected and work best when there is a strong emphasis on co-operative development and mutual benefit [coupled with] an intentional balance between teaching, research and engagement activities (2005, p. 2).

The three elements of Engaged Scholarship: engaged teaching and learning, engaged research and discovery, and engaged community service, provide a means of achieving this and they will now be explored.

2.4.1 Engaged teaching and learning

Engaged learning and teaching programs respond to individual and community needs and opportunities and links to specific learning goals and experiences for students. Programs are designed and managed in partnership with communities, and are socially inclusive and globally and locally relevant (AUCEA 2008).

Engaged teaching and learning links student academic activity to the “real world” by integrating disciplinary knowledge into communities – local, regional, business/industry or special interest. The development of new knowledge requires a move from ‘…highly abstract and philosophical statements … [to] a real world of budgets, deadlines, office politics…’ (Davenport & Prusak 2000, p. 144). Engaged teaching and learning also strengthens the relationships between higher education and communities. The need to provide connection between the real world and curriculum (Bradley, R et al. 2007); to encourage curriculum development that would include contribution from the community, including students, in activities that are 'collaborative problem-based, interdisciplinary, intentional and respectful' (Brukardt et al. 2004, p. 12); to improve the quality of curriculum and teaching and learning delivery (Buys & Bursnall 2007); and to provide curriculum context (Favish & McMillan 2009) were also identified.

In the Australian context engaged teaching and learning utilises Boyer’s notions of teaching and integration, but in some instances it could also include application and elements of discovery. This could take place as Work Integrated Learning (WIL). According to Orrel, Cooper and Bowden (2010)
WIL provides the opportunity to develop knowledge workers for the knowledge economy by better linking theory and practice because the learning is situated within the act of working. Therefore WIL seeks to develop “work-ready” graduates through a process of integration between workplaces, higher education institutions, government, business and industry. Activities include ‘cooperative education, collaborative education, learning in the workplace, … clinical education, field education [and] service learning’ (Orrell, Cooper & Bowden 2010, p. 4).

The Southern Cross University (SCU) Learning and Teaching Advisory Committee (LTAC) – a sub-committee of Academic Board – recognised that WIL has currency in the higher education sector; however, concern was expressed that its “work oriented” focus is too narrow. LTAC want to better prepare, students as global citizens by embracing a broader mandate, so they coined the term Community Engaged Learning ‘…that would be an umbrella for professional practice (including WIL) and service learning … both of which are about community (Wessell 2009). In late 2009, the SCU Academic Board adopted both the term and the accompanying philosophy. An example of Community Engaged Learning at SCU is the Wilson River Experience Walk (WREW) project that has been sustained over five stages and has 20 partners, including the university (staff and students), the Council, an Elders group, TAFE, schools, government, business and community groups actively involved (Derrett 2008). The WREW demonstrates strong inter-disciplinarity and incorporates multiple perspectives. A key element of the project is that it provides academics, students and community members with shared-learning opportunities. Students also have the chance to “serve” their community and to connect their academic learning with a real-world situations, while the community accrues benefit through the enhancement of the social, cultural, and to some extent, the economic capital of the region (Strom 2009). Arden,

10 LTAC comprises the Director of Teaching and Learning from each school, and representatives from the Library, Information Technology, Performance Quality Review unit, the International Office, Teaching and Learning and the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

11 WREW project see section 4.6.3.
McLachlan and Cooper (2009) stipulate that community-university engagement provides opportunities to share knowledge and expertise, to build social capital and to co-generate learning.

A modern academic needs to be able to "engage" therefore they have to be skillful knowledge explorers who are able to integrate knowledge from different sources, make connections between theory and practice, and 'inspire students' (Boyer 1997). Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) suggest that undergraduate and post graduate students formal teaching and learning activities can be augmented by community-based learning projects and learning events such as community-based guest speakers. Teaching and learning becomes more engaged as the needs of a particular community are better linked to academic learning, and this adds significant value to the student's learning experience. Wessell (2008) has a strong commitment to student engagement activities because they contribute to a broader scholarship of teaching and engagement. Similarly Hart (2007) favours teaching and learning activity that gives students a voice and provides them with collaborative real-world connections and discussion based structured reflection, 'students levels of engagement were influenced by their sense of empowerment' (Hart, S 2007, p. 147). (The engagement practice of collaboration will be reviewed in section 2.5.1). In the USA, Portland State University students

... participate in engaged and transformative learning experiences in which they build the knowledge, skills, values and motivation for making a positive difference in both their own lives and their communities (Portland State University 2008)

Service Learning (SL) is a central tenet of higher education in the USA. It seeks to teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities by integrating community service with instruction and reflection in order to enrich the learning experience. It is ‘the responsibility of educational institutions to bring their resources to impact gaps in community services’ as a service ethic (NSLC 2009). Bradley et al. (2007), Elson, Johns & Taisey-Petrie (2007) and Hart (2007) highlight the community good and civic responsibility elements of
service learning in the USA context. SL aims to increase students civic engagement activity while reducing the distance between universities and their communities. According to d’Arlach, Sanchez & Feuer (2009), a core aspiration of SL is to be transformative - for both the students and the organisations they "serve". Reciprocity is an integral component of SL; it is not about financial gain or exploitation because its main goal is to build the capacity of individuals and communities. Bradley et al. (2007, p. 93) state

...well-designed service-learning projects connect with, reinforce, enrich and enhance what students learn in the classroom by providing them with hands-on opportunities to apply classroom connect and skills in addressing real-world problems.

Service Learning often provides a link between learning and discovery as research undertaken by Hart (2007) indicates. He also identifies that three critical and inter-linked elements are required to provide students with a high quality service learning experience:

- Student voice: power to share in decision-making process
- Service relevance: connection to the student learning projects
- Students' knowledge: sharing of expertise

Furthermore, student levels of engagement with all aspects of the project were influenced by their sense of empowerment in the learning activity or research and discovery endeavour.

Following are some examples of international organisations that seek to facilitate Engaged Scholarship with a strong emphasis on Service Learning. In the USA Campus Compact (2010), was founded in 1985 with offices in 35 states across 1,100 universities and colleges, and provides resources and training and seeks to integrate civic and community-based learning into curriculum. In Ireland CampusEngage (2010) is a network established in 2009 to promote civic engagement activities. It is government funded through the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF 1) and consists of six partners: Dublin City University, National University of Ireland, Galway (lead partner), National University of Ireland, Maynooth, University College Dublin and the University of Limerick. Finally, the South African
Council on Higher Education (2010) (CHE) an independent statutory body established in 1998, established the Council on Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP) model to facilitate collaborative partnerships between universities and community using participatory service-learning activities. The CHESP provides an opportunity for knowledge exchange and shared learning as the university, community and a service provider work together ‘to ensure that economic growth and opportunity are more equitable and sustainable for the partners’ (Council on Higher Education 2010, p. 93).

2.4.2 Engaged research and discovery

*Engaged research is designed, managed and disseminated as a partnership that addresses both academic and community priorities* (AUCEA 2008).

According to Brukardt et al. (2005, p. 10) engaged research provides incredible benefits to the academics that link their work with their communities because ‘they are able to see the impact of their work in the social good’. However Webber-Thrush (2009, p. 1) recognises the communication challenges many research academics face when informing the broader community about ‘all that is being done for the good of the general public in the labs of academia’. Therefore communication is an integral element of University-Community Engagement. While both universities and communities stand to benefit from engaged research, the improved dissemination of knowledge is essential. Gibbons (1994, p. 6) argues that formal and informal channels of ‘…communication in ever new configurations are crucial…’, and research undertaken by Weerts and Sandmann (2008) supports this argument. Their findings revealed that engaged research institutions are better able to support the two-way flow of information and knowledge between universities and communities. In the Australian context Duke and Moss (2009) point to the community service and social capital elements of community-based research that aims to produce positive social change while democratising both the control, and the production of knowledge. This could be seen to be fulfilling Boyer’s notions of integration and application, as well as discovery.
As higher education research activities are expanding away from traditional academic units to encompass new collaborative, and often multi-disciplinary research centres, there is a focus on knowledge production, the 'co-creation, co-ownership and co-use of research knowledge with partners who cohabit its learning region' (Goddard 2000, p. 13). Gibbons et al. (1994) refer to this as Mode 2 knowledge production that is the outcome of an emergent, trans-disciplinary, contextual, problem focused process.

There are a number of impediments to engaged discovery and research activity within a regional context. For instance, Garlick (1998) identifies that historically universities have not had strong research connections with their regions and academic focus is mostly on collegial contribution and recognition that is predominately external to their region. Research activity may also be impinged if academic staff are already working at full capacity in other areas, most particularly teaching. If an institutions research capacity is limited Silka (2007, p. 8) advocates for research that can 'focus on community needs, but be carried out by community members'. She cites the example of high school students undertaking research over the summer holidays under the supervision of an academic or graduate research student. According to Silka (2007) such an approach can be instrumental in shifting the culture of a research university to embrace a broader area of academic responsibility that includes engagement. This approach could also result in a growth in the community’s social and human capital.

While not referring specifically to engaged research activity, Gibbons et al (1994) note the tendency for higher education to view engagement funding as a cost, rather than an investment, and it is likened to some views about the funding of the humanities, specifically the "arts". Also recognising this dilemma, Silka (2007, p. 3) argues that engaged research and discovery requires

‘…a seed grant program that is designed to support engagement experimentation and encourage academic staff to pursue external funding in order to grow engaged research activities within the community’.
2.4.3 Engaged community service

While Engaged Community Service has strong links with Service Learning and both seek to serve the *common or greater good*, they are not synonymous. Engaged Community Service can also exemplify social responsibility that can be achieved through volunteerism, participation, and social justice (Kennedy 2009). Social responsibility may be achieved through University representation as a volunteer on business, industry, and community boards and committees by academic or non-academic staff, current students or Alumni and is distinguished by the sharing of knowledge and resources between academic and civic communities (Campus Engage 2010). Volunteering activities can increase feelings of social inclusion, and student placement or internship activities in the community can promote this, and assist the growth of social capital (Healy 2007). Onyx (2008) recognises that universities serve communities through volunteering, and this provides at least three important contributions: firstly as community builders; secondly as mediators within community networks and thirdly, by building linkages between various communities, including formal organisations and informal community networks.

Universities should consciously empower individuals, both within and beyond the University community, to serve the *common or greater good* by recognising and rewarding such activity. Through conscious Engaged Community Service the University can provide significant support to the social, human and economic development of the local and regional communities within its footprint. Furthermore, Charles (2007) argues that universities can contribute to regional and local sustainability through their own responsible use of resources and through the development of sustainability policies. Improving and increasing community access to University facilities, including budget allocations to cover the associated technical and security costs, is a feature of Engaged Community Service. Dubb (2007) argues that greater community use of university facilities, and student activism with a focus on local issues, are two important ways in which universities can serve their communities, while McNall et al. (2009) are in favour of university involvement in community development activities.
Established by Memorial University, in Newfoundland, Canada, Yaffle is a search engine designed to connect the community with the university and vice-versa, and that exemplifies Boyer’s notion of integration. “Yaffle” is an excellent example of Engaged Community Service that was created to support social, human and economic development, and may or may not have a Service Learning component. According to Greenwood (2009) Yaffle enables better knowledge mobilisation between a variety of domains by linking business, the community and the university in joint dialogue and collaborations. Yaffle provides community members with an “expert register”; easy access to resources provided by academic staff and students; it enables students to find real world work experience or collaboration opportunities with business and community-based organisations who have registered a project or activity (Memorial University 2009).

Varying degrees of overlap occur between engaged community service, engaged teaching and learning, and engaged research and discovery. This is particularly evident in the USA. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse (2009) recognises that service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience; teaches civic responsibility; and strengthens communities. Hart (2007) also recognises the community service nature of service learning that integrates classroom instruction with community service; whereas Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) suggest there is confusion within Australian higher education, where “community service” is often viewed as engagement per se. It is yet to be recognised in Australia because it is not seen by the funding regimes as being ‘…inherently beneficial in terms of scholarly excellence and university rankings ... [therefore a] conception of engaged scholarship that replaces community service is vital ...’

Community engagement is all about helping others - it helps students, community partners, and instructors learn from and about each other and their world. Projects … require tremendous time and energy, but can provide people with a sense of connection to place and to action and pose opportunities to create meaningful, transformative, educational experiences for everyone (Deale 2009).
According to Duke and Moss (2009) if a university wishes to embed engaged scholarship it will need to be “engaged” with its community. In Australia, the current restricted view of scholarship ‘is one that limits discovery to a hierarchy where basic research has come to be viewed as the first and most essential form of scholarly activity’ (Duke & Moss 2009, p. 33). In contrast Engaged Scholarship challenges mainstream academic activities because it involves a bottom-up process that “democratises the research process” to include the knowledge and viewpoints of a diverse array of research partners. Twelve engagement practices, including knowledge, will now be explored.

2.5 Engagement practices

The engagement practices explored in this section, as depicted in the University-Community Engagement Perspective12 are not mutually exclusive, but tend to be interconnected, overlapping and interdependent. They include, but are not limited to: communication, collaboration, reciprocity, embeddedness, connectivity, networks – both formal and informal – and funding. The synchronistic relationship between the various practices and the potential social, cultural and economic capital flow-on effects could provide significant value to communities and universities alike. It is not the intent of this thesis to provide an exhaustive review of each area of Engagement Practice; therefore, the following literature review provides a comprehensive overview of twelve areas of practice.

2.5.1 Collaboration

Collaboration entails working co-operatively. It is an evolving process that is undertaken in the spirit of co-enquiry. Coghlan (2007) argues that its primary purpose is the production of practical knowing that can be embodied into daily actions. According to Deale (2009) collaboration is the key to sustainable engagement; the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (2009) argue that it is based upon a clear vision and involves interdependence between the members as they operate in an environment of sharing and trust. Collaboration is at the heart of engagement and leaders and participants need

---

12 See section 2.1
to be ‘guided through the process of thinking strategically about change, drawing connections among problems and proposed interventions, and identifying the possible effects of their actions’ (Torjman 2007, p. 10). A university-wide commitment to collaborative practice should encompass a multi-disciplinary approach and involve governance and engaged scholarship activities that involve academic and non-academic staff, as well as current students. Alumni could also be included. According to Charles (2007, p. 16) ‘collaborating groups develop shared practices and identities, which allows them to achieve their joint purpose whilst creating bonds between individuals’.

Collaborations can take a number of forms: from casual collaborations and centralised relationships where each organisation learns from the other, to partnerships with other organisations (Kanter 1995). Hart (2007 p. 137) observes that from a service-learning point of view collaboration ‘increases a student’s sense of belonging, self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation to participate’. The same benefits apply to other collaborative engagement activities. Ideally this notion of collaboration would have a strategic alliance that goes beyond the university to encourage and support a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach.

Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) recognise that collaboration is time consuming. It has a long-term horizon and requires high levels of trust. The American Society of Association Executives Foundation (2001b), Buys and Bursnall (2007) and Hawkins 2007 emphasise the importance of shared purpose, and clearly defined common goals and expectations. They suggest that a commitment to common goals is an important collaborative element. Buys and Bursnall (2007) also emphasise that strong relationships are crucial to ensuring the success of collaborative activities. Recognising the importance of shared goals Garlick (1998) states that collaborative relationships can flourish and sustain if they are built upon shared understanding, ethical principles, and a ‘real and close association between people’ (Garlick 1998, p. 57).
Abbey (1997, p. 97) argues against a constant quest for unity, suggesting that a respect for multiple viewpoints, individual and group differences and a respect for ‘... the conflicting loyalties and claims that make a call upon the individual’ is imperative. While Gibbons (2005) does not advocate sameness, he speaks of transaction spaces that focus upon dialogue at the boundaries in order to seek common language, common understanding and commonalities.

Collaboration may suggest shared decision-making and dialogue within a project or activity, but it is an ‘imperfect science [because] contextual factors, such as available times, abilities, commitment and intention of participants’ (Cuthill 2007, p. 13) can impact on collaboration. According to Fletcher (2008, p. 36) true collaboration will only be achieved if community participation is encouraged throughout the research process if there is ‘...a shared understanding of not only the roles and responsibilities of each research team member but also research ethics, protocols, and processes'.

The creative problem solving and knowledge creation elements of collaboration to solve social and economic needs are highlighted by Garlick (1998), Hargrove (1997) and Kearney (2006). Garlick (1998) observes that a sense of belonging, wisdom and creativity all have a role in the world economy because they are basic to human survival and self-fulfillment, while Hargrove (1997, p. 13) suggests that a

…daring combination of people from different specialties to engage in truly collaborative conversations where they “marinate a problem” by thinking and working together on it and then by brainstorming to crack it wide open.

Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) argue that engagement activities are not a singular event, but interwoven elements. Collaboration cannot be forced but builds on the ethos and current knowledge of the group, and may result in dynamic innovation, problem-solving, social and economic development.

Personal relationships may create opportunities for collaborative partnerships to emerge that in turn build social, human and economic capital. As the need for collaboration, both formal and informal, grows and as communities face
greater uncertainty and change, the success of collaboration will depend upon how well the multiple, overlapping and on-going relationships are embedded (Lang 2004).

A study undertaken at the French National Centre for Scientific Research looked at the collaborative work of 3659 scientists. The study established that the scientists undertook more than 7000 actions, and 4000 collaborations each year. However, the study also revealed that '... 5% of the scientists accounted for half the recorded actions' (Jenson et al. 2009, p. 6). Other findings in this study include:

- the strong link between engaged activity and academic productivity;
- randomly chosen active scientists have higher academic indicators than inactive scientists;
- all other things being equal, the probability of disseminating information increases with academic position;
- the better the academic records, such as levels of journal publication, the higher the probability of the scientist being active in industrial collaborations.

*Dissemination activities compel scientists to open up their horizon, to discuss with people having other points of view on their research topics, giving new insights, contacts, which could improve their academic research* (Jenson et al. 2009, p. 13).

The challenge of delivering and sustaining collaborative practices over time was identified in a study involving 58 community partners of Michigan State University. A number of community respondents stated that the activities they were involved in had either not garnered the level of collaboration they had expected at the outset, or the collaboration had not sustained beyond the project (McNall et al. 2009). Gelmon et al. (2009) are in favour of diverse collaborative teams, whose membership includes university leaders and deans, heads of school, and UCE practitioners, as well as community partners. The success of any UCE activity is contingent upon how the university collaborates with and relates to its community. ‘Collaborating groups develop shared practices and identities, which allow them to achieve their joint purpose whilst creating bonds between individuals (Charles, 2007, p
Regardless of the sector, collaboration cannot occur without encompassing ‘the democratic principles of participation, consultation and accountability’ (Shadbolt & Kay 2005, p. 169). And finally, as universities (organisations and governments) continue to adapt in the 21st century, their collaborative relationships will require continual refinement that Ramaley (2002) refers to as evolution through mutual learning.

### 2.5.2 Connectivity

Whether the basis for connectivity is personal or professional, individual or organisational, it needs to be built upon genuine agreement, respect and trust (See Section 2.6.1). Trust is a significant building block for connectivity; its development requires a significant investment of time and energy to build the shared expectations and understandings (Strom 2006). Connectivity usually implies a shared history, recognition of mutual points of reference and interdependence. According to Block (2008, p. 25) ‘…weaving and strengthening the fabric of community is a collective effort and starts from a shift in our mindset about our connectedness’. Working collaboratively and promoting opportunities for mutual and cross-sector learning can also assist in building connectivity because it assists people to overcome their different expectations and understanding – including terminology or vocabulary (2007). 

UCE can involve complex problems that may be difficult to resolve with simple control and command responses. While recognising the importance of opening-up, making connections and working to a shared purpose, Boyce (2008, p. 42) places emphasis on the need to share power and control ‘…so that a power-with approach prevails, rather than power over’.

Taleb (2007) notes the paradoxical nature of connectivity, warning it can be both an organisational strength and a weakness, because problems with one relationship may have repercussions upon another. The ASAE Foundation (2001a) highlights the strong link between emotional connection and the commitment, beliefs, history and similar experiences that people have shared, and will share. They suggest that such connectivity creates opportunities that can result in higher levels of inter-personal or inter-organisational participation. The ASAE Foundation (2001a) also notes that
connectivity is most evident where the bonds between members are powerful enough to function outside of formal meetings, and the importance of knowing fellow members as people, from both a personal and a professional perspective is stressed.

The degree that interpersonal ties translate into organisational connectivity depends upon the inter-organisational **coupling** and whether the organisations are loosely or tightly linked or coupled. ‘Coupling refers to inter-organisational interdependence, the level of mutual commitment between partners, and intensity of alliances ties’ (Lang 2004, p. 90). “Tightly coupled” organisations communicate frequently, monitor their relationship and meet regularly to formalise their reporting. In contrast, “loosely coupled” organisations are typified by constrained communication and limited interaction. Lang (2004) suggests that the more traditional research contracts typify a loosely coupled relationship and their use could impinge upon the emergence of an engagement culture in higher education. However, it is important to see that loosely coupled activities, such as this type of research and many student projects, provide a low risk way of allowing partners to **size each other up**, as staff and specific community, business and industry representatives develop trust and common understandings, that in turn strengthen their personal and inter-organisational connectivity.

### 2.5.3 Relationships

The importance of building effective relationships between individuals, organisations and communities is strongly identified (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal 2008; Bringle & Hatcher 2002; Buys and Bursnall 2007; Garlick 1998 & 2001; Gummesson 1994; Holland 2005; Hung, Seng-Chee & Thiam-Seng 2006; Kanter 1995; Maggs 1999; Muirhead & Woolcock 2008; Scott and Jackson 2005; and Zohar & Marshall 1993). Relationships are intrinsic to Engagement that in turn is inextricably linked to the growth of social, human and economic capital. Relationships can occur at an individual-to-individual, individual-to-organisation or organisation-to-organisation level. Buys and Bursnall (2007, p. 78) recognise that relationships ‘are crucial to the initiation of partnerships, particularly in terms of moving the collaboration beyond the
initial phase’.

When a university is engaging with its community it is best to establish unambiguous relationships by clarifying and clearly articulating intent through the development of clear terms of engagement (see section 4.10) in order to build on-going relationships. Considerable knowledge resides in groups because of the relationships among the members of the group (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal 2008). Social relationships are very important, particularly in the construction of new knowledge ‘…and these relationships help to sustain the community, and learning is sustained if the group is a community of learners’ (Hung, Seng-Chee & Thiam-Seng 2006, p. 40).

Integration and interdependence are also recognised as key factors to establishing and maintaining successful Engagement relationships. (Brukardt 2004, Garlick 2001, Jackson 2005, Maggs 1999, Ramaley 2002, and Temple 2005). According to Maggs (1999, p. 268) enterprises should ‘…seek to understand the nature of their relationships and interdependencies’ with a focus on integration and a holistic world-view. Garlick (2001, p. 119) concurs, emphasising the importance of universities going beyond input-output or trade-based relationships to focus upon building networks, and understanding the interdependencies and relationships that are built around knowledge and information sharing. This idea of interdependency is illustrated by Scott and Jackson (2005, p. 1) who note there is a genuine two-way interaction between a university and community ‘when the university not only contributes to its communities, but the communities’ aspirations are reflected in, and change, the university’.

Kanter (1995) favours taking time to cultivate personal relationships in order to smooth transactions and build connectivity, and recognises that this is a non-traditional Anglo–Saxon value. Furthermore, she argues that as relationships become broader in scope

…it becomes more difficult to put a monetary value on every contribution, allocate costs and benefits, or determine compensation for extra services (Kanter 1995, p. 348).
Shadbolt and Kay (2005) note that collaborative relationships are fragile and generally based on an individuals’ personal and/or professional contacts rather than on organisational relationships. Vetoutsou, Saren & Tzokas (2002) assert that in the business sector, transactional approaches have given way to relationship marketing that recognises the long-term value of relationships. Similarly, universities are looking to build more meaningful relationships with their communities and individual stakeholders.

In Australia, Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) are a form of inter-organisational structure, or co-operative arrangement (DSRD 2008) that can be developed to facilitate engagement and other activity between organisations. From an organisational viewpoint, the suggestion that the establishment of a MOU between two organisations will assist a commitment to UCE to prevail has some merit. However, Zohar & Marshall (1993) caution that forcing such an agreement could repel participation, both internally and externally, because people need the chance to learn to be together to develop trust, connectivity and to build relationships. Kanter (1995) suggests it is important to determine if the two organisations share similar values, philosophies and management styles.

...infrastructure of collaboration that is not a centralised set of initiatives, ... an overarching framework, an agreement about priorities that stimulates many diverse initiatives but then links them so that they result in significant impact (Kanter 1995, p. 379).

Additionally, formal agreements cannot anticipate everything because interpretation can vary according to customs, particularly intercultural factors (Strom 2007). Therefore, organisational relationships should be built through joint activity, such as cross-investment, the sharing of human and physical infrastructure, or by identifying common goals, and a MoU would seek to support and formalise an already evident and mutually supported relationship. A framework assists both campus and community participants to better understand ‘...the give and take, the ups and downs, the fits and starts’ that inevitably occur (Bringle & Hatcher 2002, p. 512). The integrity of each partner needs to be preserved while honouring each party’s growth and purpose, and
higher levels of mutual dependency can lead to healthy interdependency. For example, Southern Cross University has MOU with local governments and regional organisations, while the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) signed an MOU with the Talloires Network in 2009.

### 2.5.4 Reciprocity

Polanyi (1944) believes that people have a natural tendency to reciprocity, and it dominates social behaviour. ‘Where reciprocity rules: acts of barter are usually embedded in long-range relations implying trust and confidence” (Polanyi 1944, p. 61). In the context of UCE, Gelmon et al. (1998) were the originators of the concept of reciprocity – including mutual exchange, mutual benefit and mutual interest – and this notion is often highlighted in the engagement literature (AUCEA 2006; AUCEA 2008; Berreby 2006; Brukardt et al. 2004; Garlick 2001; Gibbons 2005; Muirhead and Woolcock 2008; Ramaley 2002; Temple et al. 2005). Kanter (1995) supports the notion of reciprocity but cautions that balancing mutual benefits can be difficult, because engagement activities are not strict economic transactions but likely to involve complex relationships, across a wide spectrum of players. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse (2009) web-site states that reciprocity is a central component in higher education engagement and in particular the idea that ‘every individual, organisation, and entity involved in service-learning functions as both a teacher and a learner’. A commitment to reciprocity requires a clear statement of intent from each party, to clarify what each party requires, and what each party will deliver in exchange (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2009).

Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) favour mutually beneficial UCE because the combined resources and capacity of the partners can allow for the co-production and co-creation of powerful strategies. Additionally the resultant learning could assist in the solution of global problems or provide a strong foundation for teaching and learning, while delivering social and economic benefits to the community. According to Elson, Johns and Taisey-Petrie (2007) reciprocity occurs when students and community members have both
benefited from their participation in the experience. Gibbons (2005) links mutuality to a two-way orientation and the break-down of many of the old order ways of doing and being. To reinforce this view, he suggests that the (current) terms of Engagement between universities and society are also changing. In the older context, universities considered Engagement to be an outreach practice, whereas in the new context society is speaking back and as a consequence this one-way provision of information and a somewhat limited style of engagement has been altered to include a higher amount of in-reach

Reciprocity can be a double-edged engagement sword in as much as the timing of benefit to each party may not coincide, be immediately apparent, tangible, measurable, or exist. For example, how does a university measure the benefit of contributing to a broad community-based activity when those activities or outcomes are for the common good? Or, how does the small business that accepts a student intern and then incurs a cost associated with student supervision, (such as the lost productivity of the supervisor) benefit from the Engagement? Therefore, it is important to recognise that the benefit of engagement activities may go beyond those that are both mutual and/or measurable for either partner. This is something that needs to be taken into account by universities, from both internal and external perspectives, and by communities, when the terms of engagement are being established.

Ramaley (2002) draws attention to the challenges of measurability and warns that often the partner responsible for the fiduciary and management aspects of the project may try to make the project fit forms that are measurable, rather than respond to the needs of the collaborative group. This highlights the need to acknowledge that partnerships can be tenuous. It is imperative to develop a shared agenda that focuses on reciprocity and creating mutual benefit. If this is not done, Ramaley (2002, p. 9) suggests that the needs of the community may not be met and a world-view could be imposed upon groups ‘that is only familiar and comfortable to some of the participants’. Therefore a reciprocal

---

13 Could also be a practicum, work placement, field studies project or similar
focus is an important part of UCE and Langworthy (2005) puts emphasis upon reciprocity as the underlying principle of Engagement, stating that a university will only be able to have a powerful impact if Engagement works with all the layers of the community towards the same strategic goals. In turn, universities need support from the communities they work with to develop stronger university-community links. Students active in the community can assist in this attitudinal transition particularly if ‘issues of citizenship and the development of a civil society’ (Langworthy 2005, p. 86) are embraced. According to Weerts and Sandmann (2008, p. 97) ‘…a long-term institutional socialisation process that reshapes power relationships with communities…’ allows reciprocal knowledge flow to occur. However, in order to embed reciprocity and a culture of UCE the support of institutional leaders, appropriate rewards systems and organisational structures, and “boundary spanners” are required to facilitate the process.

2.5.5 Embeddedness
Within the context of UCE embeddedness means to be part of, because universities need to become an intrinsic part of their community. This can be achieved through participation in, and contribution to an assortment of strategic, leadership, cross-industry and supportive roles. Furthermore,

...being part of it can be achieved through various personal and/or organisational interactions and relationships, as well as via formal and informal networks (Strom 2006, p. 94).

Granovetter (1985) notes that the concept of embeddedness was recognised, at least from a social perspective, in 1776 by the economist and philosopher Adam Smith. According to Granovetter (1985) Smith recognised that humans had a natural tendency to truck, barter and exchange; however, he argued that this was the extent of influence that social relationships had upon transactions. Granovetter (1985) challenges these transactional, non-relationship oriented views asserting that embeddedness has always had, and will continue to have, an impact upon relationships, including economic relationships. The nexus between embeddedness and engagement is reliant upon a shift in thinking and action, from transactional management to transformational activity and leadership.
Engagement has a strong relationship focus and transformational change will only emerge within organisations and communities if ‘leaders transform that relationship from one of stability to one of enthusiasm for challenge, change, and progress’ (Parry 1996, pp. 26-7). Transformational leadership is both future and change oriented. Transformational leaders are role models who provide inspired motivation and visionary leadership while taking individual differences into consideration. These transformational characteristics have great resonance with Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST), the lens that is used to reflect on Engagement in this thesis. CST will be explored in the following chapter.

Embeddedness in social relationships that work across academic and sector boundaries, can strengthen relationships between universities and communities and ‘demonstrate to society that universities intend to serve the public good’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 13). Embedded relationships tend to ‘involve repeated interactions over long-term horizons and are characterised by co-operation and mutual trust’ (Lang 2004, p. 90), whereas contract-based relationships can be based upon a calculated trust because the relationships are more at arms-length and co-operation is often driven by self-interest. Additionally, reciprocity prevails in embedded relationships, as people tend to influence those they have direct contact with, and in turn are influenced by them. Embeddedness could remove or reduce myopia, and the potential dangers associated with working in isolation.

2.5.6 Knowledge
The knowledge environment is not neat and sequential, ‘… [but] far more blended, messier, and more interesting’ (Prusak 2001, p. 1003). A university’s internal knowledge environment comprises academic and non-academic staff and students, while the external knowledge environment can draw from hundreds of thousands of people who are part of the multiple communities-of-practice and communities-of-interest that are located locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. These communities are active in business, industry, government, the community sector and higher education.
Human, cultural and organisational issues are key factors in managing knowledge (Koulopoulos & Frappaolo 2002). It is important to recognise that, particularly from a UCE perspective, the management of knowledge should encompass a University-wide approach. Dalkir (2005) argues in favour of the appointment of specialist staff, such as a Chief Knowledge Officer or Knowledge Manager, and the support of senior management to consciously ‘change the corporate ethos, and the images and values that inform action’ (Dalkir 2005, p. 178). Successful knowledge management requires a framework or a set of guiding principles and this enables organisations to have a balanced approach that incorporates human and cultural aspects as well as technology. Like UCE the management of knowledge needs to align with overall business or organisational strategies (Wong, K & Aspinall 2004). However, a study undertaken by Weerts and Sandmann (2008) recognises that while organisational elements such as leadership, structure, and rewards are important in creating engaged research institutions, they are functionally on the periphery of facilitating a two-way flow of knowledge. Their cases suggest that engagement is fueled by opportunities to shape institutional identity, or by external factors that motivate campuses to play a larger role in their communities or regions and the ‘... two-way flow of knowledge is facilitated by the presence of motivators at the institutional level’ (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, p. 95).

The management of knowledge and UCE are inter-connected. In the UCE environment knowledge is no longer discrete and coherent, but a ‘mix of theory and practice, abstraction and aggregation, ideas and data (Gibbons et al. 1994, p. 81). It is a non-material asset (Goddard 2000) and UCE activities that provide for the production of socially robust knowledge should have relevance and application beyond higher education. The sharing of “insider and outsider” knowledge is a key feature of UCE (Arden, McLachlan & Cooper 2009) as people from different organisations exchange information, expertise and understanding. However, there can be a tendency for higher education to deem that ‘knowledge is pure, disciplinary, homogenous, expert-led, supply driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed and almost exclusively university-based’ (Hart, A & Wolff 2006). Park (2001) and Shadbolt and Kay (2005) note the
intimate link between knowledge and power that could impinge upon the transformation of Australia’s industry-based economy into a knowledge-based economy. Some academics may be reluctant to move to broader participation in the production of knowledge because they may see it as an erosion of their power base. In the context of socially robust knowledge creation, it is important to recognise that ‘knowledge inputs are multifaceted and ... one must give up some autonomy in return for the reduced vulnerability that sharing brings’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 12).

Knowledge management literature identifies two specific knowledge types – tacit and explicit (Dalkir 2005; Davenport & Prusak 2000; Leibowitz et al. 2000; Nonaka, Toyama & Konno 2001; Wong, K & Aspinall 2004). Tacit knowledge is held by individuals and is often intuitive, highly internalised, and can be difficult to articulate. When it is shared with others in conversation, the knowledge can be captured and utilised. In contrast explicit knowledge has already been captured and codified. It has entered the public domain and been made tangible in documents, or audio/visual recordings. Leonard and Sensiper (2002) refer to this as the knowledge spectrum, with tacit knowledge, that is held in people’s heads and bodies and is largely semi-conscious and unconscious at one end of the spectrum, and the explicit knowledge, that is codified, structured and available to all at the other.

*Face-to-face conversations, group meetings and practice forums are better for transferring tacit knowledge, whereas shared lessons-learned data bases, groupware and electronic data interchange are more appropriate for explicit knowledge* (Wong, K & Aspinall 2004, p. 1).

The growth of knowledge has a strong social element that is based on knowledge sharing. Prusak (2001, p. 1002) identifies the premium value of tacit knowledge ‘that cannot be digitised, codified, or easily distributed’. Therefore, its creation requires interaction among individuals, or between individuals and their environments, rather than by individuals operating alone. 'Knowledge is created through interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge, rather than from tacit and explicit knowledge alone' (Nonaka, Toyama & Konno 2000, p. 8). According to Lang (2004) knowledge is not
fixed, in that it can be both explicit, where it is *articulated and codified* as demonstrated through academic knowledge; and tacit, encompassing both formal and informal interactions. Whereas Aslin and Brown (2004) identify four knowledge areas: local, specialised, strategic and holistic, as depicted in Table 2-7. The four knowledge areas are vital to the growth of *socially robust knowledge*. They may be explicit or tacit, exist within the university and/or the community and have relevance in building UCE connections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Area</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Knowledge</td>
<td>Place-based information, that is evident through shared memories, and communicated through local customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised Knowledge</td>
<td>Can be provided from within and outside and is communicated via specialised texts and frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Knowledge</td>
<td>Constructed by administrators, elected members etc; and communicated via plans, laws, reports etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic Knowledge</td>
<td>Constructed by shared visions, aims and derived from connections, communication via shared values principles for example.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2-7 Knowledge areas*  
(Identified by Aslin & Brown 2004)

Holland’s (2005) recognition that universities are no longer the *transmitters of knowledge* but participants in a complex and rapidly changing process of discovery, learning and engagement exemplifies the co-existence of different types of knowledge within and beyond the university. The collaborative development of knowledge provides the community, or specific communities-of-practice or communities-of-interest, with the opportunity to shape research and program development within universities (Garlick & Langworthy 2004; Goldsworthy 2006; Shadbolt & Kay 2005). According to Gibbons (2005) the prevailing contract between science, in the form of the university and society, has been premised on a degree of separation. However, this is being reversed by the increasingly porous nature of society, where society can and does speak back to science, and a new “contract” that encourages the joint production of knowledge by society and science has emerged (Gibbons 2005; Gibbons et al. 1994).

As a consequence, many knowledge-based activities utilise applied research
where the academic is not seen as the expert holder of knowledge but takes on ‘a role of academic as a facilitator of collaborative knowledge creation processes’ (Cuthill 2007, p. 15). Ramaley (2005) argues strongly in favour of broader university and community participation in the development of new knowledge, to facilitate increased levels of knowledge transfer to ensure that research investments are more closely aligned with community priorities and needs. Trust is also a critical factor for successful and sustainable KM practice. ‘Building a relationship of trust between individuals and groups will help to facilitate a more proactive and open knowledge sharing process’ (Wong, KY 2005, p. 269). According to Davenport and Prusak (1998) trust must be visible, ubiquitous and start at the top of an organisation.

The business or commercial sector is one significant community-of-interest that can contribute to and benefit from knowledge development activities. In Australia, the B-HERT supports building institutional capacity through the transference of knowledge between universities, industry and communities to develop skills that best reflect the needs of the community/region, and to support physical, human and structural infrastructure development (Goldsworthy 2006). According to Garlick & Langworthy (2004) it is vital for institutions/organisations to be prepared to work together in coalitions to develop shared knowledge. This will enable the building of enterprising regions that work together strategically, are outcome oriented and seek to build connectivity in order to ‘unleash local knowledge and develop new ideas’ (Garlick & Langworthy, 2004, p. 14). This suggests a learning together and knowledge sharing or exchange situation rather than knowledge transfer from the university to the community, as posited by the AVCC 2006 position statement on UCE. Therefore, to promote the transfer of knowledge from the university to those outside, as the means of achieving Engagement, clearly misses the notion of Engagement as an inclusive practice. Furthermore, UCE provides an important mechanism for allowing the community voice to be heard in the corridors of academia, in turn this could provide a valuable contribution into the development of academic knowledge.

Other critical knowledge implementation success factors identified include:
leadership, training and education, Information Technology (IT), organisational infrastructure, and processes (Despres & Chauvel 2000; Wong, KY 2005). However, while high quality IT systems do not create, guarantee or promote KM per se, they are significant enablers of the management of knowledge (Despres & Chauvel 2000; Wong, KY 2005). Some organisations have an ‘input-output’ approach to KM and utilise data, information and knowledge – that may be tacit, explicit, accumulated and embedded – to produce analytical reports, often for clients who are remote. However, the UCE approaches to KM are often dependent upon relationships and therefore have a strong person-to-person focus that is supported by some basic technological knowledge management systems. Refining both the technological knowledge management and the relationship management systems to build the UCE capacity would be advantageous. There is no singular way to undertake knowledge management. It is an evolving practice requiring organisational leadership and, as Davenport and Prusak (1998) acknowledge, it is anchored in the real world of budgets, deadlines, and office politics.

2.5.7 Partnerships
'Effective partnerships require collaboration and mutual understanding of each partner’s interest and needs’ (Gelmon, SB et al. 1998, p. 99). Partnerships can be formal or informal. They can exist between individuals within an organisation, or between an individual and an organisation or be complex inter-organisation collaborative partnerships. Buys and Bursnall (2007) suggest that community partnerships are embedded in the broader notion of engagement. They observe that effective partnerships involving diverse community, business, government and university partners are vital to community growth. ‘Partnerships work best when there are one or two team members with energy, passion, commitment and enthusiasm to keep the project alive’ (Buys & Bursnall 2007, p. 79). The 2007 AUCEA Conference Keynote Presenter, Professor James Powell, the founder of the UPBEAT programme, said that UPBEAT has successfully facilitated more than 200 partnerships between business and the university sector. The UPBEAT website <http://www.upbeat.eu.com/about/> states that “UPBEAT is the result of a pan-European study to explore how HEIs can maximise the impact of
university outreach programmes on business and communities ... We are keen to share and refine that recipe by encouraging the implementation of UPBEAT at a policy and practitioner level to enable our partners to secure a better return on their outreach investment”. UPBEAT has provided the following tools for users of this approach to academic enterprise:

- A project evaluation tool
- A structure for continuous improvement and progress
- Real world benefits through academic research
- Business skills for academics to create sustainable projects

UPBEAT goes beyond economic benefits, with project initiator James Powell declaring that social and cultural outcomes are equally as important.

...with business and community partners, universities can become real drivers of creative change in developing socially inclusive projects, which are truly fit for purpose in the global knowledge economy’ (Powell 2008, p. 1).

He also states that through mutually beneficial partnerships universities can help to create the confidence in local business and communities that in turn can result in successful social and business enterprises. According to the Weerts and Sandmann (2008) study referred to previously, community partners expect to have a level playing field in regard to governance and management of the partnerships, and they also expect the university to bring their intellectual and fiscal resources to the table. Community partners want partnerships to be "equitable but not equal". (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, p. 94).

Buys & Bursnall (2007) and Hawkins (2007) emphasise the importance of having clearly defined partnership goals and expectations, and ‘partners may need to frequently revisit goals and objectives as they evolve and change over time’ (Buys & Bursnall 2007, p. 83). In turn, this assists in building networks of trust that can help ‘...in making sense of the complexity that is intrinsically part of the complex web of partnerships’ (Hawkins 2007, p. 158). As a result of
these complex webs, partnerships may need to operate as a *commons or meta organisation*\(^{14}\) that works holistically in order to achieve the project outcomes. Such an encompassing and inclusive approach melds with Kanter’s (1995, p. 195) perspective that suggests engagement should

...involve businesses working in partnership; build civic collaborations; and taking responsibility for its community; rather than having the somewhat paternalistic connotation of an “arm’s length noblesse oblige” (noble favour).

Hawkins (2007) also notes that some organisations, or departments within an organisation, may have a propensity to be less connected than others. They are more self-contained and therefore less familiar with the notion of cooperation. The success of partnerships, particularly in complex situations, may hinge upon a small number of individuals who operate informally beyond the more formal or bureaucratic elements of the partnership. Therefore, moving beyond an initial activity or project to sustain engagement over the long-term can be challenging and Brukardt et al. (2004) note that community partnerships require much hard work and are not easy to maintain, particularly after the initial seed-funding or honeymoon period is over.

Partnerships between the practitioner world and the academic and more theoretical world provide an important strategy for dealing with the most serious social and economic and political issues all societies face (Mott 2009). Hart & Wolff (2006) emphasise that for university-community partnerships to be effective, people inside and outside of the academy must be active in them. This approach has accord with Gibbons et al. (1994, p. 167) Mode 2 approach to knowledge production ‘that features trans-disciplinarity; heterogeneity; organisational hierarchy and transience; social accountability and reflexivity; and quality control which emphasises context - and use – dependence’. Therefore, engagement could result from partnerships, depending upon the duration of the relationships, and the levels of trust, mutual respect, and reciprocity.

\(^{14}\) Commons or meta organisations are discussed in Chapter 3
2.5.8 Networks

Networks can be formal, such as regional development boards, or specific UCE engagement bodies such as the international Talloires Network or Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA). They can also be informal, where membership generally remains open and flexible changing over time as needs are revealed. In the UK, Goddard (2000) notes the emergence of regional networks between a wide-array of organisations, including universities, to regulate economic activity. Additionally, networks are not static, and individuals will generally be members of multiple overlapping networks. Welch and Wilkinson (2004, p. 216) state that such networks

...are systems of interconnected exchange relationships among (business) actors and cannot be understood or separated from the relationships that surround them, both internal and external.

Network linkages may start loosely but can develop into alliances, joint ventures and other formal collaborations within and across industry sectors and regions. Most importantly, networks should encourage the sharing of information, ideas and capabilities. Initially, there may be something or someone who acts as a magnet to hold participants together, but regardless of the primary motivation or form they take, networks function as ‘catalysts of collaboration’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 6). Chappell (2010) argues that the retention of networks depends on the “stickiness” of people and resources. In particular, they need to be locally anchored and not able to be replicated elsewhere. Networks can produce a “self-reinforcing cycle of advantage”, and as such the benefits that one network member may gain from a venture could create an advantage for another network member in the long-term (1995). For example, a network member may absorb information and develop know-how beyond their own field of endeavour that they later share with another network member.

Universities need to demonstrate willingness to serve their communities by embedding themselves in social networks and network organisations that involve repeated long-term interaction that is ‘characterised by co-operation and mutual trust’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 13). This embedding, or being part of, enables participants to gain knowledge about the reliability and
trustworthiness of other network members, while building their own network credentials. While embeddedness in networks can be irregular and penetrate to varying degrees, it is generally more achievable where people work with others, either inside or outside of the organisation, with whom they already have established trusted interpersonal relationships (Chimhanzi 2004; Granovetter 1985). Thus embeddedness, connectivity and networks have a synchronistic relationship and as Garlick (2001, p.38) observes, UCE can be built around mutually beneficial knowledge sharing through network activity.

2.5.9 Leadership

Within the context of UCE, leadership can take on multiple forms, it may be hierarchical, project-oriented, transformational, emergent, natural or championed. (Buys and Bursnall 2007; Brukardt et al. 2004; Garlick 2001; Kanter 1995; Parry 1996; Magliocca & Minati 2002; and Silka 2007). ‘Leadership is another key variable that may enhance the institution’s ability to move toward engagement’ (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, p. 82). Their 2008 study of six USA universities and their community partners revealed that leadership was important to promoting engagement in two domains: firstly, by communicating the value of engagement internally and externally; and secondly, by aligning administrative resources and structures to promote engagement.

The visibility of campus executives involved in engagement sends an important signal to external partners about the institution’s commitment to this work. In addition to executive-level leadership, leadership was also important at intermediate levels of the institution, especially among deans. Again, the impact of intermediate leadership on engagement did not go unnoticed by members of the community (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, p. 89).

Chappell (2010) argues for strategic and well-resourced leadership to grow networks and other knowledge sharing activities. Leadership that ensures the alignment of a university’s vision/mission and strategic plans, and its marketing, financial and infrastructure support, with its academic development is essential to enable UCE (Driscoll 2008; McNall et al. 2009; Silka 2007). The OECD (2007) acknowledges that the governance, leadership and
management of universities can constrain, or enable, active engagement. Without a clear association between the importance of “engagement” and university leadership ‘it is difficult to create momentum to get attention at an institutional level’ (Gelmon, S et al. 2009, p. 35). Silka (2007 p. 6) argues that ‘…institutional support is crucial if community engagement is to play more than a "bit role" within a university’. Furthermore, academic leaders, particularly research academics, ‘…need to be able to convey the interconnections ... between teaching, research and engagement’ to demonstrate that UCE can contribute to an academic’s career path, including promotion (Silka 2007 p. 7).

From a UCE perspective, leadership cannot be limited by a person’s hierarchical position, but needs to be evident and active horizontally, vertically and diagonally within the community and the university.

*Engagement is difficult work. It gets to the heart of what higher education is all about and as such, it requires institution wide effort, deep commitment at all levels, and leadership by both campus and community* (Brukardt et al. 2004, p. ii).

In order to establish and then maintain successful UCE a wide variety of leaders are required. Within the university, academic and non-academic staff, current students and alumni may assume leadership roles, while in the community, leaders and potential leaders from diverse communities, such as the health sector and specific industry groups should be identified and supported. Nurturing and enabling leadership is a vital element in the growth of social, human and economic capital. For example, Wafler (2004) argues that emergent leadership can be encouraged through training and development programmes and Ramaley (2002) is a strong supporter of creating leadership opportunities for students. I argue that it is incumbent upon universities, as learning organisations, to provide mechanisms that support leadership growth for students, staff, alumni and the broader community.

Leadership can be demonstrated by ensuring that the right people are working together from the outset; Buys and Bursnall (2007) emphasise that leadership
from the top is important, while Ramaley (2002) emphasises the importance of tapping the natural leadership capacity of group members to ensure that they contribute effectively.

Remember to recognise and draw upon the tacit knowledge that comes from the experience of the community members of the group. They think about and live the issues all the time; other participants from higher education, government or business do not (Ramaley 2002, pp. accessed on-line).

Kanter (1995) values the importance of leader-to-leader relationships, stating that these relationships cannot be brokered by a lawyer or other third party professionals, or a written agreement.

Author of *The Fifth Discipline: the Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*, Peter Senge (2006), identifies the importance of leadership roles within organisations. He argues that a leader should seek to establish a shared vision for those within the organisation or team, to assist them to develop more systematic thinking, and challenge their prevailing mental models. Coghlan and Shani (2005, p. 542) emphasise how important it is ‘to build relationships and trust with people who operate from different mental modes and at different levels’. Garlick (2001) suggests that successful UCE relies upon strong regional and/or community leadership working towards identified priorities.

Regional communities form their own leadership groups by developing strategic plans and connections that focus on their area in a way that is ‘consistent with local requirements and their natural, economic and human strengths’ (Garlick, 2001, p. 22). Universities can increase their accessibility to the community by providing support, as they gain a better understanding of community and regional priorities. The establishment of portals, gateways, and offices of community or regional engagement provide ways into the university that enable community leaders

... to navigate the complexities of the academic world to find the right people and the campus connections they need (Brukardt et al. 2004, p. 4).
The University of Queensland (UQ) Boilerhouse is an example of a gateway or way into the university. According to Cuthill (2007, p. 3) the Boilerhouse has a strong focus on engaged scholarship activities through 14 engagement initiatives that attracted $2m of funding. The Boilerhouse has also undertaken a ‘leadership role in higher education community engagement policy, planning and practice in Australia’. Parry (1996, pp. 26-7) recognises the important change role that leaders can play, noting that ‘leaders transform that relationship from one of stability to one of enthusiasm for challenge, change, and progress’. Whereas Magliocca & Minati (2002, p. 241) state that ‘transformational leadership is about engaging leaders and followers in dialogue about their differences so that group learning may occur’. They argue that the pluralistic or multiple views, needs, values, aspirations and concern for future stakeholders should also be made explicit.

2.5.10 Communication

According to Ramaley (2002) as learning organisations, universities need to develop *new patterns of conversation* and new patterns of information flow to enable newly created information to flow. Communication is at the heart of effective UCE and must encompass two-way communication. Bringle & Hatcher (2002) emphasise that communication strategies, including feedback, are critical. I suggest that *feed-forward* is a vital communication tool because when information is willingly shared, opportunities for UCE many be revealed. For many years communication between universities and communities has largely been one-way – from university to community – with a focus on information giving. Engagement has been seen in terms of linkages, such as internship programs, and had ‘little reverse impact on universities, their organisation or ethos’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 2). Reverse communication between society and science is imperative to develop socially robust knowledge and this requires a different perspective on Engagement. This process needs to be well facilitated. Universities who have engagement as a true core value will invest resources in reverse communication in order to ‘develop skills, create organisational forms and manage the tensions that will inevitably arise when different social worlds interact’ (Gibbons 2005, p. 11).
Svendson (2000) notes that one-way communication has been a spectacular failure and suggests that engagement needs to be a dynamic process where relationships are co-created rather than managed. Additionally, she observes that engagement is often reactive and born out of adversity because *dialogic process* between the organisation and the community has been lacking. Open two-way communication within and between universities and communities can facilitate engagement activity in many ways. Brukardt et al. (2004) argue for a more personable approach favouring productive conversations. Flood (1999) asserts that effective communication helps people to learn about the *unknowable future*, assisting them to become mentally agile and thus better able to deal with change. According to Buys and Bursnall (2007, p. 78) open communication assists in building trust, while providing opportunities for ongoing reflection that should be supported by clear documentation of roles and transparency in planning. Hodgson (1996) recognises that co-ordination and communication are major challenges facing multi-campus universities.

As mentioned previously, clearly defined terms-of-engagement are an important UCE tool. Terms-of-engagement should define the role, the decision-making power and the scope of the consultation or engagement process and help to manage community expectations from the outset (Turner 2002; Scott and Jackson 2005; and Healy 2005). Such statements of intent also establish the Engagement orientation as depicted in Table 2-3. Engagement can move from a lower level one-way process, where the community is informed by a university, to the development of simple linkages, such as student internship programs, to more complex two-way processes that are driven from mutually developed collaborative UCE activity.

### 2.5.11 Funding

The regional impact of universities was noted in a 1999 OECD Report (Goddard 1999) and recognises the emerging third role for universities that would see engagement not only sitting alongside, but also fully integrated within mainstream teaching and research. A 2006 OECD report notes that Australian universities have autonomy in relation to the spending of their Commonwealth block grant funds, and there are no externally imposed
imperatives placed upon them by government to engage (Neller, Hall & Eastall 2006). In early 2006, the Commonwealth Minister for Education suggested that separate *third stream funding*, similar to the UK system might be a possibility for the Australian higher education sector. In response to this suggestion the Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee (AVCC) put forward a proposal seeking third stream funding to support active engagement by the university sector with business, government and communities to benefit all through ‘the mutual exchange of knowledge, skills and services’ (AVCC 2005). The AVCC proposal was not supported, third stream funding was not forthcoming, and a subsequent Minister for Education, declared at the AUCEA Conference in mid 2006 that ‘universities should already be engaging as part of their teaching and research delivery’ (Bishop 2006).

According to the OECD Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have long seen service to the community as part of their role, yet this function is often underdeveloped, ‘…few countries have encouraged this type of activity through legislation and incentives’ (OECD 2007, p. 15). Duke (2008) recognises that while scientific frontiers are being stretched, collegial and community engagement is being diminished. ‘The imposition of research performance based funding regimes in universities means that the traditional view of academic scholarship in this area is changing to a very narrow and individualistic one’ (Duke & Moss 2009, p. 37). The UK’s Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) provides 75% core funding and 25% competitive funding for Third Stream, Knowledge Transfer and Innovation activity, that strengthens society and the economy through wealth creation and improved quality of life, and could be adopted or adapted (Wedgwood 2006). The 2008 Australian Review of Higher Education does not support the notion of third stream funding, stating

...engaged teaching and research should be the norm in universities ... [and] given the integral nature of this engagement a separate funding stream is not desirable ... (Bradley, D 2008, p. 169)

Bradley (2008) recognises the valuable role of UCE beyond the more traditional teaching and research approach, and recommends that block
funding for teaching and research should be increased to facilitate greater UCE. However, she does not elucidate how this could be achieved. Although a proponent for having UCE criteria built into university operating grant formula and program specific funding allocations, Garlick (2001) cautions against using this as a motivator. He suggests that inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional co-operation should be encouraged and supported by effective strategic and financial management systems coupled with

...a greater concern to match student-learning outcomes to regional labour market needs, and support and encouragement for staff to engage with regional stakeholders (Garlick, 2001, p. 40).

The key to accessing funding goes far beyond federal government higher education contributions for teaching and research, to include potential funding from state and local government, as well as business and industry. Such collaborations ‘will either fail or flourish based upon local commitment and support, and the strength of the on-going relationship’ (Longley 2005, p. 96). The USA based Kellogg Foundation (1999) recognises this, observing that engagement is not free – it costs. The Foundation favours engaged institutions that enter into resource sharing, and integrated and inter-disciplinary UCE activities. In the USA internal funding is available for University-community projects (McNall et al. 2009) and additional finding can be secured through networks and advocates. Fletcher (2008, p. 42) argues external funding for ‘fiscal and to a certain extent human resources’ could be provided through endowments and scholarships related to partnerships and participatory action research and other UCE activities.

Whereas Australian governments encourage universities to support the development of their regions, Gunasekara (2006, p. 15) notes that conversely they provide little incentive to achieve this, ‘...arguably, in the design and funding rules for national grants, there is some disincentive’. As Muller (2010) observes, there is still a need to find robust ways of identifying the funding of university community engagement.
2.5.12 Functional structure

Functional structure is identified as an engagement enabling and facilitation method (Bringle and Hatcher 2002; Flood 1999; Garlick 2001; Kanter 1995; Lin 2001; Longley 2005). Functional structure includes strategies, policy and procedures that are

...forms of co-ordination, communication and control ... a set of rules and procedures that span an action area (Flood 1999, p. 125).

The functional structure should define the action area and encourage, support and reward UCE, incorporating ES as integral to developing and sustaining a culture-of-engagement. Kanter (1995, p. 343) supports the development of ‘mechanisms – structures, processes, and skills – for bridging organisational and interpersonal differences and getting value from the relationship’. Additionally, she suggests that project teams are ideal for building bridges and provides opportunities for increased contact between people from all levels in each organisation and this allows impediments to be identified and resolved, and this increases the chance of success.

From an internal perspective, the provision of a clearly defined engagement framework could assist those within the university to better understand UCE. Many good mutual outcomes can be achieved through low-key engagement activities that are conducted on a day-to-day basis, including: voluntary membership of staff on community groups or committees, networking, mentoring, speeches and friendship and advice that could be a springboard for larger scale projects. Garlick (2001) argues in favour of a quantitative engagement framework and analytical assessment to quantify engagement outcomes and assist those allocating resources, both within and outside the university. Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) concur about the importance of measurement noting that because it can vary between organisations (i.e. a university and a particular community). When negotiating engagement activities it is imperative that a measurement agreement be negotiated at the outset in order to fulfill the purpose of the activity (Barr 2009). Economic and social imperatives are driving community, regional and university change. To
ensure their own survival and prosperity, regionally based universities will need to develop functional structures that enable them to engage with both their regional communities and those beyond their locale.

It is clear that these engagement practices are not an exhaustive list, nor are they mutually exclusive activities that occur in isolation, as they tend to be concurrent and interlinked. The choice of *practice* will depend upon many factors including personal preference, and the type of activity or project. What is clear is that all engagement practice is underpinned by values, and based upon trust and ethical behaviour, and these will now be explored.

2.6 Values

Human values can be expressed in many ways. They are subjective and variable and may have a personal, organisational or cultural basis. The Talloires Network is an international values-based higher education organisation established in France in 2005. It is a collective of individuals and universities who are committed to promoting the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education. Eight Australian universities, and the AUCEA are Talloires Network members (Talloires Network 2009) and member organisations recognise that universities do not exist in isolation from society or the communities they inhabit, but ‘carry a unique obligation to listen, understand, and contribute to social transformation and development’ (Talloires Network 2005). Higher education values can be expressed through university and community learning alliances that provide civic virtue (Ramaley 2002, citing Dahl 1995).

…both knowledge of the public good and the sustained desire to achieve it … universities must be significant players in creating such public spaces and in generating and modeling civic responsibility … both on and off campus (Ramaley 2002).

Universities can undertake a civic role by contributing to effective democratic governance in their communities that can have an impact upon the wider political and cultural leadership of their regions. According to Goddard (2000) this can be achieved through the activity of ‘autonomous academics … working within networks of trust’ between universities and their communities.
Networks of trust can contribute to the sustainability of relationships beyond connected individuals by establishing shared values, philosophies and goals. This provides a strong basis for on-going collaborative partnerships ‘because business conditions change rapidly, the basis for collaboration must be more enduring than a transitory opportunity (Kanter 1995, p. 336). The underlying strength of any engagement activity lies in the establishment of a foundation that is built upon values such as trust and ethical practices. Such a foundation enables engagement practices to develop and bear fruit.

2.6.1 Trust
Trust could be described as a subjective experience. Levels of trust usually follow pre-existing relationships that are developed over long periods of time, and it is vital for establishing and maintaining healthy and productive relationships. Genuine trust is based on the belief that the people share common goals and values and will not act in self-interest or at another’s expense. In contrast to this, a calculated trust can prevail when relationships are more at arms’ length, and in these circumstances co-operation is often driven by self-interest (Granovetter 1985; Lang 2004; Welch & Wilkinson 2004). Trust takes time to nurture and is a vital ingredient in developing successful collaborative partnerships.

Empathy and understanding of community partners’ frames of reference is important in fostering good relations and breaking down barriers arising from different institutional contexts (Buys & Bursnall 2007, p. 82).

Garlick & Langworthy (2004) note that as trust diminishes communities are demanding greater transparency and evaluative mechanisms to provide greater assurance. This has resulted in a greater emphasis on governance models that embed connections between a wider range of stakeholders. Paradoxically trust may be less likely to be achieved when it is explicit, because it needs to result from …

…shared experience, the opportunity for authentic interaction, persistent identity, reciprocal disclosure, testable expectations, and experience to suggest that the ‘test’ will be passed (ASAE Foundation 2001b, p. 8).
Trust does not just happen. The emergence of trust requires a significant investment of time and energy that in turn can build the shared expectations and understanding that enable the creation of social capital. In turn, social capital is built upon peoples’ relationships that are supported by ‘good humour, tolerance and respect of one another’s cultural/institutional difference, and sensitivity to one another’s needs …’ (Lang 2004, p. 84). In turn, trust is built and it is a ‘pre-requisite for loyalty, innovation, and long-term co-operation’ and assists the development of true interdependence, a key to building profitable and sustainable relationships (Svendson, A 1999, p. 2).

2.6.2 Ethics
Ethical behaviour manifests at individual, organisational and community levels (Coghlan 2004; Coghlan and Shani 2005; Denzin & Lincoln 2003; Fals Borda 2001; Flood 1999; Garlick 2001; Kearney 2006; Magliocca & Minati 2002; and Stake 2003). A concern for ethics and a spiritual belief in an ethical future under-pins the work of Churchman, the main founder of the Critical Systemic Approach. According to Flood (1999, p. 22) although Churchman’s work was sometimes criticised as being esoteric ‘...he still impressed on the minds of many researchers ... whether they can justify their choices and actions’. Whereas Coghlan (2004) argues that ethical behaviour involves authentic relationships and the values and norms that flow from them, Kearney (2006) and Stake (2003) both argue in favour of establishing a strict code of ethics or ethical principles. However, the emergent nature of research and engagement activity can make it difficult to identify all issues at the outset (Coghlan and Shani 2005), therefore utilisation of ethical principles to guide UCE could assist if or when dilemmas arise. Strong supporters of transformative and ethical leadership, Magliocca and Minati (2002) suggest that stakeholders need to make distinctions between professed and practiced ethics.

*Ethics-in-practice develop through the habits and culture of various contexts of business operation that are directly influenced by organisational leaders. ... Leadership ... creates the barriers and holds the keys to the resolution of an emergent ethic of sustainable development* (Magliocca & Minati 2002, p. 240).
The engagement context is the final area of Engagement to be explored in this chapter.

2.7 Engagement context – community, region, university

The first decade of the 21st century saw considerable global change in the higher education sector. Universities no longer have relatively secure funding from their national government, an organisational structure that can continue to support individual academics research and scholarship, or a predictable, identifiable and readily accessible group of school leavers as prospective students. An OECD Report (1999) noted that this changing environment does not support the traditional ethos of academic self-management and discipline-based collegiality. UCE is a new agenda that cannot be ignored.

The autonomous teaching and research activities of publicly funded universities are coming under increasing pressure from governments and their electorates. The agenda has moved from a desire to simply increase the general education level of the population and the output of scientific research; there is now a greater concern to harness university education and research to specific economic and social objectives. Nowhere is this demand for specificity more clear than in the field on regional development (Neller, Hall & Eastall 2006, p. 9).

The OECD notes that context of regional development has switched and now has a more indigenous, or local, place-specific development focus on building regional skills, entrepreneurialism and innovation (OECD 2007). According to Davis (1999, p. 134) the placement of a University campus within a region or sub-region can impact significantly upon its community, from an educational, economic, social and cultural perspective. Increasingly, today’s global economy requires universities to interlock with the community, they need to do more than just be there. The concept of interlocking with the community, via individuals, organisations or in a general sense is a key Engagement element. While not specifically related to higher education, Carson (2001) supports the idea of interlocking or engaging with community to develop ideas and concepts in order to encourage collaboration and broader ownership.
Turner (2002), Scott & Jackson (2005) and Healy (2005), stress the importance of managing community expectations from the outset. The university’s intent needs to be clarified and clearly articulated in terms of engagement by defining the role, decision-making power and scope of the consultation or engagement process. Such statements of intent also establish the UCE orientation and whether it will be a one-way or two-way process, involve reciprocity and mutual partnerships with an emphasis on mutuality, or if the results could ultimately be integral to a universities UCE policy and subsequent activity.

Gibbons (2005) declares that the fundamental terms of the prevailing social contract between universities and society is changing. It is clear that UCE cannot be a one-sided relationship. It needs to be reciprocated and universities need to make their institutions more accessible by removing perceived barriers, to enable communities to embrace all that a university has to offer. Langworthy (2005) puts emphasis upon reciprocity as the underlying principle of UCE, stating that a university will only have a powerful impact if engagement is reciprocal and all the participants work towards the same strategic goals. Enterprises should ‘…seek to understand the nature of their relationships and interdependencies’ (Maggs 1999, p. 268) with a focus on integration and a holistic worldview. Garlick (2001) also recognises the importance of interdependency and emphasises the importance of networks, and relationships that are built around knowledge and information sharing. Genuine two-way interaction exists between a university and the community ‘when the university not only contributes to its communities, but the communities’ aspirations are reflected in, and change, the university’ (Scott & Jackson 2005, p. 1).

2.7.1 Community
A community is not a singular entity and could be more readily described as being amorphous. For instance, community can be a broad term used to define groups of people who may be connected by geographic location (community of place), similar interest (community of practice), and community of affiliation or identity (such as industry or sporting club) (Department of
Sustainability and Environment 2009); or as a specific group of people who all hold something in common (Audiences London 2008). Winter & Wiseman (2005) suggest the meaning of community is a malleable term that can have local, regional, national, or international connotations, and may include a variety of communities. They can be formal and informal, and an individual will occupy multiple communities that often overlap or have "fuzzy boundaries" (Onyx 2008).

The rich diversity of human communities have also been described as ‘…organisms inhabiting a common environment and interacting with one another’ (NOVA 2009) to geographic, cultural, anthropological, or professional points of view. Concomitant with a "living organism" metaphor, communities evolve rather than being pre-designed per se. They could also be seen as clusters of humankinds whereby an entirety could be described as one, Australians for example. Of course, how humankinds and communities are viewed will depend upon an individual’s experience, which in turn, will impact on how they engage (2006). Social glue is another feature of communities that is realised through formal and informal social structures, financial structures, and diversity by age, gender, and economic activity (ASAE Foundation 2001a).

Driscoll (2008, p. 141) encourages the development of ‘…new understanding, new skills, and different ways of conceptualising community’. Sociologist Gerard Delanty (2010) recognises this and argues that increased levels of individualism and globalisation have revived modern societies yearning for the idea of “community”. Communities were traditionally a social phenomenon about ideas of belonging and solidarity, where the search for meaning, recognition and collective identity, is expressed politically, spatially, culturally, locally, and face-to-face. However, the modern notion of community could be described as being more tenuous. It can be transnational, one-world and virtual, featuring a fragile communicative bond that is transcendent and does not necessarily equate with particular groups or places (Delanty 2010).
From a higher education perspective the Kellogg Commission (1999, p. 11) suggests community ‘...has many different definitions extending from the neighbourhood in which the campus is located to the world’. Community can, and does, mean anything from a university’s own staff, students and communities-of-practice, to civic organisations, schools, townships, citizens at large and “the people” in general (Council on Higher Education 2010). A sense of community can be determined by measuring how connected people feel to an organisation, and how this sense of connectivity is linked to participation. Any community, including a university community, has internal factions and differences ... spheres of isolation too, where one part of the community has little idea of what the other is doing, and vice versa ...' (Hart, A & Wolff 2006, p. 126). A university that responds to its community, in all its shapes and forms, is what the Kellogg Commission (1999) defines as an engaged institution. It is also important to recognise that what constitutes local can vary and for ‘...different individuals within the institution, their “local community may be very different in scale' (Charles 2007, p. 10). Therefore, all of the communities within any community will be different for every university and the importance of a university defining its own community is highlighted as a key characteristic for an engaged institution.

The notion of community is no longer just territorially located, small-scale or built upon a sense of belonging. It is now more flexible, and based around the social networks of individuated members and '... an expression of communicative forces ... part of a global world' (Delanty 2010, p. 158) where communities-of-interest (Col) and communities-of-practice (CoP) could be described as social networks. ‘Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly’. (Wenger, E. (2006) "Communities of Practice" Retrieved 13 April 2010, from <www.ewenger.com>). Wenger (1998) argues that communities-of-practice are dependent upon mutual engagement and patterns of meaning, and they are established, in the broader context of negotiation, via language and social relations and require both interpretation and action. However Wenger (2006) notes that not everything called a community is a CoP. For example, a neighborhood is often
called a community, but is usually not a CoP, in some circumstances it could constitute a Col. Goddard (2000) recognises the unique characteristics of CoP as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and through regular interaction learn how to improve their practice (Wenger 2006). They do not require homogeneity, nor are they an idealised view of 'community', but arise out of the mutual engagement that creates relationships between people. The focus is on participation and is depicted by collective learning that is created over time 'by a sustained pursuit of shared enterprise' (Wenger 1998, p. 45). A CoP allows people with like needs to link together and transfer tacit knowledge from one person to another (Leibowitz et al. 2000). They can be both formal and informal, therefore some CoPs are formally organised while others are more fluid. Unlike a Col or a geographic community, they involve shared practice and interaction ‘... and the ability to undertake larger or more complex activities and projects through co-operation, bind people together and help to facilitate relationship and trust' (Smith 2003-2009).

Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2008, p. 28) state that groups form beliefs about what works and what does not, and this '... collective knowledge is synergistic, and greater than the sum of each individual’s knowledge, ... [and] is over and above the knowledge residing in each individual member (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal 2008). Charles (2007, p. 14) argues strongly in favour of collective interaction through largely informal and self-organising CoP that focuses on ‘...learning as a fundamentally social, experiential and situated process’. Smith (2003-2009) conurs, noting that CoP are self-organising systems that support the generation of social capital, and these connections create ‘... knowledge exchanges, information flows, alliances and innovative business structures’. An increase in social capital leads to more innovation and a faster growth of the knowledge economy (Chappell 2010). The concept of CoP includes both explicit and tacit elements that may never be articulated and ‘... includes language, tools, documents, images, symbols, well-defined roles, specific criteria, codified procedures, regulations and contracts that various practices make explicit for a variety of purposes' (Wenger 1998, p. 47).
Distinctive in all this is the idea that this culture of joint working should transform customary boundaries within and between university academics on the one hand and community and voluntary sector contributors on the other. In a community of practice different expertise is recognised, accountability is reciprocal and learning is mutual (Hart, A & Wolff 2006, p. 137).

According to Hart & Wolff (2006) a CoP approach is more organic and anthropological and uses empirical data from successful collaborations or partnerships based on mutuality in order to conceptualise and cultivate future partnership activity. The CoP concept has been used '...to think about management, collaboration and learning beyond the corporate world—for social and community benefit' (Hart, A & Wolff 2006, p. 128). It is also used to develop partnership or collaborative activity that may also involve "boundary crossing" or a "blurring" or cross-over between roles (Brukardt et al. 2004). Wenger (2006) also acknowledges the notion of boundary crossing and notes that ‘...the very characteristics that make communities of practice a good fit for stewarding knowledge: autonomy, practitioner-orientation, informality, crossing boundaries, are also characteristics that make them a challenge for traditional hierarchical organisations’.

In a CoP the members undertake similar work, have a shared domain of interest and competence (Wenger 2006). A CoP is sustained over a period of time and because members share language and understanding this enables knowledge to be exchanged and created as members interact and learn together. In contrast, a Col does not involve shared practice (Smith 2003-2009). It is a representative group of people, who work together to build shared understanding, and to identify solutions to resolve a particular issue or problem. The strength of a Col is the temporary and diverse nature of collective creativity that provides great potential for innovation and transformation. Therefore, those who are part of Col may come together temporarily to ‘...enable mutual learning through the creation, discussion, and refinement of boundary objects that allow the knowledge systems of different CoPs to interact...’ (Fischer 2001, p. 4). Table 2-8 recaps the internal characteristics of COP.
Table 2-8 Internal characteristics of communities of practice
(Source: Wenger, 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Where coherence is achieved through mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>As an emergent process that is built over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>Is part of the social landscape and may need to be bridged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality</td>
<td>Is apparent through the social structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing</td>
<td>The learning experienced through interplay that builds competence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summarising, communities are comprised of varieties of people who are themselves members of multiple communities that are en-meshed within an even larger system (1993). Conti (2006) suggests that an organisation operating in an open system seeks to exchange values with its various communities by opening itself up to and interacting with them. This is the basis for Engagement, but they caution against assuming that a particular CoI or CoP represents an all-encompassing community-wide view. From an Engagement perspective this complex web of communities, and systems and subsystems may at times require an individual to choose the membership of one community over another when making decisions. And finally, Hung, Seng-Chee and Thiam-Seng (2006) acknowledge the link between communities and knowledge growth. They suggest that communities are formed to pursue shared goals or ideals that result in the construction of knowledge and the formation of social relationships that help to sustain the community. In turn the learning is sustained if the group is a community of learners and CoP interaction ‘...forms a foundation for externalising an individual's tacit knowledge into organisational knowledge’ (Wong, K & Aspinall 2004, p. 97).

2.7.2 Region

According to Charles (2007) region is not a straightforward issue, and the notion of region differs between Europe and Australia. The different population densities and geographic landscape of Europe has resulted in the notion of a "city-region" – that is, a city surrounded by a rural hinterland. These regions may also share an historic cultural identity or be a bureaucratic...

---

15 Knowledge see section 2.5.6
construct, whereas in Australia, regions are not usually connected with a particular city but primarily located in geographically large non-metropolitan areas. They are often a bureaucratic construct, for example the 55 state-based regions across Australia that form the Regional Development Australia network (DSRD 2008). Regions can also be intra-state, national or pan-national, such as the Pacific region and have economic, geographic or administrative functions (Dore & Woodhill, 1999; Johnston 1993) and be managed from top-down or bottom-up approaches. Dore & Woodhill (1999) define regionalisation as a top-down approach to regional management, where government attempts to create a means for more efficient programme management, but does not devolve power from either a central administration to regional managers, or to the community itself. In contrast, regionalism is described as a bottom-up approach and regional communities are more engaged. If this is the case they have a greater influence over, and can participate more directly in the decision-making that impact on their region and their future.

From a regional perspective, universities are not discrete entities because their field of engagement can include many complex, overlapping and nested regions, all of which could ‘...contribute in developmental terms to the university’s region’ (Charles 2007, p. 11). Garlick and Pryor (2002) recognise the strong link between universities and regions, particularly if they share priorities and engagement in order to grow knowledge and understanding. While the OECD (2007) notes that higher education engagement with its regions is becoming more widely acknowledged, it also notes that it is still patchy. Regardless of how regions are determined, be it geographically, economically or politically, it is vital for a university to have an understanding of how its region sees itself in order to engage with it in a meaningful and mutually beneficial way. Beer, Bolam & Maude (1994, p. 194) suggest that ‘regionalisation in Australia has suffered from the strength of the state government on one hand and the weakness of local government on the other’. Universities, through UCE activities, are well placed to augment the work of local government. One way that this could be achieved is through collaborative partnerships with one or more local governments to strengthen
regional identity and develop regional initiatives for mutual benefit. When addressing the international or global aspects of regions, it should be noted that while a university may be regional on the basis of its physical location, its challenge ‘is to be a catalyst in connecting its region to global regions through teaching, research and assistance with economic, social and cultural co-operation’ (Moses, 1999, p.103). Such co-operation should also assist policymakers and regional leaders to determine what regional economic and social outcomes might be achieved through a deliberate whole-of-region engagement strategy. Similarly, Charles (2007) recognises the spatial scale and importance of regional engagement to address local interests and local needs.

McLeod, McFarlane and Davis (1997, p.1302) assert that as institutions of the knowledge-economy, universities can provide resources to support the economic and social survivability of regions. With this thought in mind, Southern Cross University (SCU) is physically and strategically positioned to be able to contribute significantly to the North Coast of NSW and the southern Gold Coast, Queensland through a variety of collaborative process with key regional, business and industry, and government stakeholders. However, SCU’s historic and territorial embeddedness (Goddard 2000) in one part of the region, that is Lismore and the Northern Rivers area, could impede a whole-of-region approach to engagement. ‘Universities do not have just one region, but many, overlapping and nested, used at different times and for different purposes, according to historical contingency and evolving patterns of interaction (Charles 2007, p. 11).

From a different perspective, Bonne-maison (2005) and Selander (1996) highlight less favourable aspects of a regional focus. Bonne-maison (2005) argues that territorial or regional planning may represent a prop that enables operational unity for its community and as a consequence, become a distinct world system. He warns that an increase in territorialism can ‘lead directly to exacerbated nationalism, tribalism and ethnicism with their defacto outcomes, including exclusion and purification’ (Bonne-maison 2005, p. 114). Universities need to be mindful of these contradictory possibilities, and while the negative
consequences may not be extreme, the detrimental effects could hamper engagement processes between the diverse communities-of-interest within a region. Selander (1996) cautions universities against becoming too embedded in their geographic region because it may reduce their connections beyond their physical locality. He posits the difference between a university and a regional university, suggesting it may be better to develop a partnership with a region rather than establishing a specific alliance. While recognising the importance of university-region links, Goddard (2000 p. 6) argues that universities must ‘remain autonomous institutions with allegiances to multiple territories rather than specific regions’.

The OECD emphasises that universities must do more than simply educate and research to play an effective regional role. The OECD recognises that regional engagement can enable graduates to find work and remain within their communities, therefore building stronger university-community linkages. 

*This has implications for all aspects of these institutions’ activities – teaching, research and service to the community and for the policy and regulatory framework in which they operate* (OECD 2007, p. 11).

The importance of universities in regional development, including economic and social development is a relatively recent phenomenon and ‘…cannot be treated as a line on a resume … [the] emphasis needs to be on mutuality and on broad, systemic and on-going involvement, rather than mere ad hoc activities … [they] would be seriously remiss if they do not embrace regional engagement as a strategic priority’ (Gunasekara 2006, pp. 5-6). Thus, Garlick and Pryor (Garlick & Pryor 2002), writing in the Australian context, argue that mutually beneficial regional development will only occur the university-region engagement is active and purposeful, and includes linking the knowledge and learning capacity of the university with the priorities of the region that it is located within.(Garlick & Pryor 2002). While the OECD (2007, p. 12) identifies the reciprocal nature of community university relationships, and states that ‘a thriving region creates an environment in which higher education can also thrive, helping institutions to attract and retain staff and students’.
2.7.3 University

In his seminal book, Scholarship Reconsidered, Ernest Boyer (1990) argues that Engaged Scholarship is a key purpose for universities. As this literature review indicates, many authors echo some or all elements of Boyer’s view (Coghlan 2004; Duke & Moss 2009; Finkelstein 2001; Gelmon, S et al. 2009; Gibbons et al. 1994; Gunasekara 2006; McNall et al. 2009; Muirhead & Woolcock 2008; OECD 2007; Winter & Wiseman 2005). This review has also highlighted that many elements can impact upon the “university context”, such as its physical location i.e. metropolitan or non-metropolitan, the maturity of its community relationships, the culture of the organisation. In addition to these the strength or dominance of a particular individuals “tribal” connections within and beyond the institution can also have an influence.

In recognition of the role of Engaged Scholarship in higher education, the OECD (2007) states that OECD countries are putting considerable emphasis on the role universities can play in meeting regional development goals, by nurturing the unique assets and circumstances of each region, particularly in developing knowledge based industries. As key sources of knowledge and innovation, higher education institutions (HEI) can be central to this process, particularly by contributing to a region’s comparative advantage in knowledge-based industries, and to its human capital base. They can also help to generate new businesses, by contributing to tax revenues and by providing content and audience for local cultural programmes. Further evidence of the growth of UCE was revealed in a study of Victorian universities, ‘…community engagement is increasingly being embedded in mission statements and overall university direction, while some institutions are developing distinct community engagement policy and strategies’ (Winter & Wiseman, 2005, p.2).

There are a number of major themes: engagement in teaching and learning, research, economic, social and cultural development, professional, business and industry links, and pathways between schools and universities. Interestingly, the idea that learning or knowledge development is a shared experience appears to challenge the Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee (AVCC) 2006 position on engagement which declared that the transfer of
knowledge emanates from the University, rather than being a shared exchange, growth and/or development of knowledge. Coghlan argues that this is because ‘sharing the power of knowledge production with the researched subverts the normal practice of knowledge … as being the primary domain of researchers’ (2004, p. 23).

A university cannot be seen as being singular; it is a complex mix of the multiple layers and sub-systems that are enmeshed in an even larger social system that is also a complex mix of the multiple layers and sub-systems. Hillier & Rookesby (2005) refer to these sub-systems as tribes. Each tribe can be broken down into a number of tribes within the tribe and these can also be described as humankinds. Our membership of these groups has other impacts as our brains and behaviour have been coded in response to previous learned experience within the tribe (Berreby 2006). Waldrop (1994) notes that generalised tribalism, particularly humans’ propensity for conquering rivals, can impede connectivity. Therefore, this could have a detrimental impact on higher education’s pursuit of University-Community Engagement and Engaged Scholarship. For example, within the University seven often overlapping and inter-connected tribes that co-exist – the academic, non-academic, student, alumni, campus, union, and council. Hillier & Rookesby (2005) note that humans occupy multiple tribes and these interact with and influence each other. Therefore, human social relations are simultaneously being structured and influenced by these different social relations. The academic tribe comprises a number of sub-tribes from Tutor to Professor. Additionally senior academics, such as the Vice Chancellor and an Executive Dean may also belong to the executive tribe. Individual academics identify with a discipline-based tribe and other academic tribes such as Academic Board. The terms of academic employment places them into full-time, part-time or fixed-term contract tribes. The growing tribe of casual or precarious workers (Lipsig-Mumme 2005) have no guarantee of any tribal membership within the university beyond one semester.

Similarly, the student tribe can be divided into multiple sub-tribes from undergraduate or post-graduate. They may also be members of other tribes
that are based on their mode of study, according to how they pay their fees or on the basis of their citizenship or Australian residency, deeming them to be local or international students. Once a student has graduated they become a member of the Alumni tribe and post-graduate students are often quasi members of the academic tribe, taking on roles such as tutor and research assistant. The non-academic or administration tribe ranges from support staff to director level, and is also divided into departmental tribes such as IT or marketing. The University council is a particularly interesting tribe that brings an array of people together to oversee the governance of the University – and comprises members of diverse multiple other tribes from business, political, academic (including staff and student representation), education and community arenas.

In addition to the basic tribal elements mentioned above, an individual’s engagement could be impinged by where they live, because of their attachment to one “community” or campus of the University; their membership in a union; and their self-selected friendship tribes, and formal and informal networks, alliances or coalitions could add further complexity. Therefore, when seeking to engage and enable UCE it is important to recognise that ‘the membership of overlapping human-kinds’ (Berreby, 2006, p191) or diverse tribal membership, both within and outside of the university, will impact on individual views. As previously indicated, such overlap has the potential to create conundrums or conflict, because at some time it may require an individual to choose the membership of one tribe to dominate over another. This is an engagement challenge that needs to be recognised and managed.

In the past, universities have generally kept the community at arms length and this has manifested as the ‘town-gown persona’ (Garlick 1998, pp. 23-4). Perhaps this is because universities have viewed themselves as being quite separate from the physical community they inhabit. Therefore the current notion of UCE requires academics to step outside of their traditional tribal confines to relate with, respond to and exchange ideas and information with others, internally and externally. They are also expected to provide leadership or follower-ship as required, thus becoming active members of other tribal
groups. There are generally significant barriers left over from internal and external perceptions of the campus as an *ivory tower*, and those barriers must be addressed in order to allow authentic community partnerships to develop (Driscoll 2008).

From an Australian higher education sector perspective, the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) has been working since 2004 to help to support, develop and facilitate a culture of UCE. Since the University of Western Sydney hosted the first AUCEA national forum there has been rapid growth in the UCE agenda. In July 2009 AUCEA had 34 member universities committed to sharing and creating knowledge about community engagement. AUCEA’s vision is to be: ‘the leading inclusive national forum for the discussion and development of university-community partnerships, encouraging collaboration, innovation, the exchange of knowledge and the scholarship of engagement’ (www.aucea.org.au 2009). To develop a shared understanding and to better enable a UCE agenda, AUCEA (2008) defined the following nine principles for the Engaged University:

1. University community engagement is based on a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and expertise between universities and communities

2. The university produces graduates who are ethical and engaged citizens

3. The university engages with its communities to create a more accessible, outward reaching and inclusive society

4. The university identifies its communities by acknowledging community values, culture, knowledge and skills, and works with those communities to develop a mutually beneficial agenda

5. Engaged research is designed, managed and disseminated as a partnership that addresses both academic and community priorities
6. Engaged learning and teaching programs respond to individual and community needs and opportunities and links to specific learning goals and experiences for students. Programs are designed and managed in partnership with communities, and are socially inclusive and globally and locally relevant.

7. Community Engagement is embedded in the governance, operations, budget, curricula, plans, policies and life of the university.

8. Engaged universities articulate their mission, culture and values for the community, and regularly reflect on these in the context of community conditions and partnerships.

9. The University and community work together to monitor partnerships, measure impacts, evaluate outcomes, and make improvements to their shared activities (AUCEA 2008).

AUCEA embraces a collaborative and strategic approach to UCE and provides opportunities for dialogue, knowledge sharing and research.

2.8 Conclusion – encapsulating engagement

Boden, Epstein & Kenway (2007, p. 17) have a “high-order” view of UCE, claiming that teaching and research are only worth doing if they contribute in some way to the communities socio-economic well-being, and they recognise that ‘…generating these effects also requires us to work with others’. The undertaking of a range of UCE activities, whether on a regional or community basis, or with a particular industry or stakeholder group, is not a simple task. It will most likely require a significant whole-of-system cultural change, both inside and outside of the university. As this chapter reveals, the UCE arena is highly complex and features the following characteristics:

- Supports human, social and economic capital development
- Undertakes Engaged Scholarship that embraces a multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary approach integrating teaching and learning, research and discovery and community service for the common good.
• Provides a functional structure to support university-wide Engagement practices that involves community partners in authentic relationships and collaborations
• Encourages knowledge creation, reciprocity and connectivity
• Supports open communication and leadership, and recognises and rewards Engagement activity
• Supports regional, community and/or community-of-interest growth and development
• Incorporates values such as trust and integrity

Engagement cannot be a one-sided relationship, it needs to be reciprocated and universities need to make their institutions more accessible by removing perceived barriers, which will enable communities to better access higher education. Despite wide recognition of many of the benefits of UCE, the South African Council of Education posits

_Why, then, is the imperative of community engagement regarded as radical, risqué and anything other than taken-for-granted? That community engagement is so regarded suggests an epistemological ambiguity in the knowledge project of our universities – an ambiguity, the literature suggests, common with other higher education systems_ (Council on Higher Education 2010).

Perhaps, in the Australian context, higher education “cultural change” could be engendered by engaging students more in community activities, embracing issues of citizenship and the development of a civil society in the curriculum (Langworthy 2005). As previously indicated, Campus Compact in the USA, Ireland’s CampusEngage, and South Africa’s CHESP experience all have a strong focus on a Civic Engagement approach to UCE, which is youth oriented with a strong emphasis on social responsiveness. Citizenship is a form of connectedness that is learned through active relationships that nurtures social responsibility and has a focus on the complimentary aspects of Service Learning projects that incorporate social assistance and human development (Kennedy 2009). In addition, organisational and community energy in the form of alignment, synergy, growth and fulfillment, as identified
by Haythorne & Laberge (2002) could have a positive impact upon UCE. According to Haythorne & Laberge (2002) alignment gives direction and clarity; growth provides a capacity to learn and renew; fulfillment is where the interaction provides tangible and intangible rewards; while synergy involves trust, relationships, collaboration and sharing information through authentic communication. These are integral elements of Engagement.

This review of Engagement related literature reveals that Engagement is not a singular or fixed activity per se, but a complex mix of elements that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. These elements may overlap, intersect or occur in parallel. While the Engagement literature reviewed highlights the complexity of the engagement environment and has a strong praxis orientation that provides a broad understanding of the ‘parts that make up the whole’, it lacks a strong theoretical base. It was this search for theoretical substance that resulted in the emergence and inclusion of Chapter 3. In this chapter a number of theoretical constructs including Chaos/Complexity Theory and Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) are explored. They provide other perspectives to underpin and inform the study, and a greater depth of resources to address the research questions.
Chapter 3: Examining theory

Chaos is ubiquitous, but not always recognised

(Lorenz 1995, p. 68)

Passing in and out of chaos again and again is yet another ubiquitous feature of families of dynamical systems

(Lorenz 1995, p. 75)
3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an account of my journey exploring the following theoretical approaches: Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory, Systems Thinking, Action Research and Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST). As the content literature into Engagement, community and regions was explored and reviewed, each area clearly revealed their holistic, interconnected and complex nature. This revelation is synergistic with many of the fundamentals of Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory, Systems Thinking, Action Research and Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST). While elements of these theoretical perspectives can be quite abstract – particularly Chaos Theory, they are compatible with Engagement in general and University-Community Engagement in particular.

When exploring the Engagement literature as detailed in the previous chapter, I read an article by Svendson (1999) that argued strongly in favour of adopting a Systems Thinking (ST) approach in order to enhance organisational relationships and other activities. He argued that ST is both dynamic and adaptive, and from an organisational perspective it can assist in the identification of opportunities and the development of innovative solutions. This supports the development of relationships and trust between participants within and beyond the organisation. This inclusive, systemic and interconnected perspective resonated, so further exploration of ST was undertaken. Byrne (1998, pp. 157-8) argues that

\[ ... a researcher can never really be happy with the idea of social science as a contemplative exercise. The knowledge has to be of some use. ... [and] also provides a means of informing our approaches to a changing world. \]

I concur with Byrne’s sentiments, and as previously stated, the intent of this thesis is to contribute to the broader body of knowledge and understanding of Engagement. This knowledge will assist SCU, our regional community and the higher education sector, as well as those who were travellers on the journey with me. The formal and informal reflective elements of our Engagement experiences have provided my co-participants and myself with learning opportunities to better understand the notion of Engagement. This reflection
also provided an opportunity to assess how SCU currently engages and its value or otherwise to ourselves, our organisation and/or community. This assisted our on-going learning and enabled us all to engage more effectively. It is important to recognise that CST builds upon the characteristics described above.

As a biographically situated researcher it is vital that each stage of my theoretical journey be included in Chapter 3 because each area reviewed is an intrinsic part of the “research holon”. The holonic perspective – that is an intrinsic component of CST – argues that elements can be simultaneously “individual” and part of something bigger. For example, I am simultaneously an engagement facilitator, a member the SCU engagement team, and a member of the SCU staff – each is a holon in and of itself. The notion of ‘holons’ is discussed in Section 3.7.1 and illustrated in Diagram 3-5.

CST also shares many elements of both Systems Thinking and Action Research. Similarly, Critical Theory and Grounded Theory also possess elements that are synergistic with Chaos/Complexity and CST. As a consequence, I now share this part of my learning journey, and note that many of the chaordic elements of this research activity are encapsulated in the following quotation.

...Uncertainty, surprise, hate, wonder, speculation, love, joy, pity, pain, mystery, beauty, and a thousand other things we can’t yet imagine. Life is not about controlling. It’s not about getting. It’s not about having. It’s not about knowing. It’s not even about being. Life is eternal, perpetual becoming, or it is nothing. Becoming is not a thing to be known or controlled. It is a magnificent, mysterious odyssey to be experienced (Hock 1999, p. 24).

3.2 From Chaos Theory to Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST)

In non-complex terms both Chaos Theory and Complexity Theory could be described as being the antithesis of predictable orderliness. The literature reveals they are variously attributed as being complex, messy, chaotic, non-linear, emergent, adaptive, spontaneous, dynamic, evolutionary, interdependent, temporal, interconnected, cyclic and reciprocal (Byrne 1998;
Cilliers 1998; Di Caprio 2002; Fitzgerald 2002; Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002; Flood 1999; Gleick 1987; Hock 1999; Kira & van Eijnatten 2008; Jackson 2000; Lorenz 1995; Minati & Pessa 2002; orgmind.com – accessed 2008; Rasch 2000; Rihani 2002; Seel 2005; Stacey 1992; van Eijnatten & Putnik 2004; and Waldrop 1994). This attribution has great congruence with Engagement as revealed through my review of engagement literature in Chapter 2. It is also supported by my own experience. Engagement is often messy and layered in complexity and is very often about bricolage, the patching together of complex multiple relationships and partnerships, which in turn creates greater levels of complexity as partners look to match their values, needs and expectations.

*Complexity theory explains the vastness of inter-relatedness and emergence in which people are immersed. It is beyond full comprehension, ... and purports to explain why human understanding will forever be enveloped in mystery (Flood 2001, p. 141).*

References to Complexity Theory, Chaos Theory, Complexity/Chaos Theory vary. Sometimes they are referred to separately and at other times they are coupled. Jackson (2000) asserts this is because the theories originated in a variety of fields so there is no one single accepted theory. However, he argues that there is a certain familial resemblance between a variety of theories that ‘give rise to an aspiration for a more general theory’ (Jackson 2000, p. 321). The relationship between Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory, and Chaos/Complexity Theory will now be explored.

### 3.2.1 Chaos Theory

Chaos Theory has multiple perspectives. Chaos Theory was first used in different fields of the physical sciences to describe similar results emerging from the study of chaotic behaviour. It is usually narrow in scope, referring to ‘the mathematics of non-linear dynamic behaviour in natural systems’ (Jackson, 2000, p.321). Chaos is ‘intently unpredictable, ... non-deterministic, ... a combination of order and disorder ... constrained, bounded instability’ (Stacey 1992, pp. 63-4). Chaos has an overall pattern. For example, snowflakes are both the same and different. Each snowflake is recognisable as a snowflake and categorised thus; however, when examined, each
snowflake has been affected by its surrounding environment to create its own unique pattern. Therefore, placing people, business or snowflakes into categories is qualitative rather than quantitative. Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002b) declare that Chaos is a *cosmological perspective* and they make a distinction between the common connotation of chaos\(^{16}\) that is variously described as utter confusion, an unfathomable mess or the complete absence of order. They note that the dynamical patterns inherent in many situations can sometimes be mistakenly dismissed as chaos and therefore, something that should be disregarded. However, they argue strongly that it has great value and has actually ‘served as a catalytic agent for the meta-praxis we now refer to as Chaos\(^{17}\)’ (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 404). They concur with Gleick (1987), an early explorer of Chaos Theory, declaring that Chaos

\[
\text{\ldots is neither a model nor a theory, but a lens on which to view the world, \ldots [that] is essentially a meta-praxis – a fundamental way of seeing, thinking, knowing, and being in the world (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 404).}
\]

While the Chaos ThinkTank suggests that

\[
\text{Chaos is the science of chaords – complex dynamical systems in which nothing ever happens quite the same twice, and yet enough happens in a tidy enough way to preclude complete and utter havoc (Orgmind 2006).}
\]

So where did the notion of Chaos begin? Poincaré, the 19th century French philosopher of science is credited with introducing the idea of non-linearity. Taleb (2007) describes Poincaré as a prolific essayist and a great mathematical thinker. According to Taleb (2007, p. 177) Poincaré predicted that error rate grows the further forward into the future one is seeking to predict because ‘the prediction is dealing with dynamical systems and non-linear multiplier affects’ thus limiting predictability. While Jackson (2000) attributes Poincaré as the founding father of Chaos and Complexity Theory, he notes that it was only in the 1960s and 1970s that the serious investigation of unpredictable behaviour in complex systems began. The birth of Chaos

\(^{16}\) Use of lower case ‘c’ as suggested by Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002b)

\(^{17}\) Use of upper case ‘C’ as suggested by Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002b)
Theory is usually linked to the publication of Edward Lorenz’s findings in a meteorological journal in 1963 and his discovery is commonly referred to as the *Butterfly effect* (Lorenz 1995). The metaphor being: that a single butterfly flapping its wings, might produce an insignificant change in atmospheric conditions today, that could have an impact on weather conditions on the other side of the world tomorrow. ‘The essence of chaos theory [is]: that small changes in a system can have large and unexpected consequences’ (Maugh 2008, p. 20). This is called *sensitive dependence* (Gleick 1987; Lorenz 1995; Jackson 2000; and Fitzgerald 2002). Perhaps it was the butterfly’s apparent frailty, as well as its lack of power, that made it ‘a natural choice for a symbol of the small that can produce the great’ (Gleick, 1987, p. 15).

Research into Chaos continued, and in the late 1970’s a group of multi-disciplinary academics at the University of California Santa Cruz Institute sought to discover what they could about an ‘ignored scientific *niche* known as non-linear dynamics’ (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 403). The sciences of complexity are characterised by an ‘ever changing, interlocking, non-linear, kaleidoscope world’ (Waldrop 1994, p. 333). Chaos is not just a theory that defied the accepted ways of working in science, but is also a method. ‘It is not just a canon of beliefs but also a way of doing science’ (Gleick, 1987, p.38). This assertion could be extended to embrace Engagement, and perhaps all human interactions. According to Gleick (1987, p. 39) Chaos provides ‘new hopes, new styles, and, most important, a new way of seeing’ and is internally unpredictable (Stacey 1992). While Taleb (2007, p. 197) suggests 'Chaos theory needs to help us to learn the limits of what we can't know'. The leap from Chaos to Complexity is not a leap at all, as complexity is an intrinsic element of Chaos.

### 3.2.2 Complexity Theory

‘*Complexity theory appreciates the world as a whole, comprising many, many inter-relationships expressed in endless occurrences of spontaneous self-organisation. The great extent and dynamic nature of the interrelationships and spontaneous self-organisation means that it is only possible for us to get to grips with some things and only those that are local to us in space and time*’ (Flood 1999, p.
According to Hock (1999, p. 27) ‘... complex connectivity allows spontaneous order to arise ... [and] characteristics emerge that cannot be explained by knowledge of the parts’. The notion that the whole is experienced as being greater than the sum of its parts is accepted as a key element of Complexity (Byrne 1998; Flood 1999 & 2001; Hock 1999; Kira & van Eijnatten 2008; Rihani 2002; and Seel 2005). Waldrop (1994) argues that the world is caught up in a non-linear web of incentives, constraints and connections. While Hock (1999) observes that embracing Complexity allows the organisation of society to be based upon nature’s inter-connected and holistic way of organising. He and Jackson (2000) suggest that an adherence to Complexity thinking acknowledges the inadequacy of specialisation, compartmentalised linear-thinking, and control and command approaches. In the context of organisations Kira and van Eijnatten (2008, p. 751) argue that if Complexity is defined as the 'simultaneous uniqueness and integration of system elements', it provides a foundation for the emergence of solutions as new challenges arise. They note that un-learning or dissipation of adopted behaviours is an intrinsic part of Complexity that can also be described as an emergent process.

Waldrop (1994, p. 147) citing John Holland, one of the founding academics at the Santa Cruz Institute, suggests that complexity is not stable but 'always unfolding, always in transition ... [and] characterised by perpetual novelty'. Similarly, Cilliers (1998) observes that it cannot be readily defined and is an elusive concept at both qualitative and quantitative levels. Citing Luhmann (1985) he notes that 'complexity entails, that in a system, there are more possibilities than can be actualised' (Cilliers, 1998, p2). He suggests that because complex systems are usually associated with living things, such as humans and social systems, they generally include non-linear feedback loops and involve complex relationships that can be distorted by analysis.

Pribham (1996, p. 41) poses the question – which is more complex - the brain, the social system, or the universe? He suggests that the answer to this is
elusive because a clear definition of Complexity is required. Pribham (1996) also states that Complexity exists on a micro-level with emphasis on the intricacy of internal structure, as well as a macro-level that embraces the system as a whole. Haken (2002) suggests that at a microscopic level society is comprised of humans, while at a macroscopic level it is defined by various phenomena, such as the development of language or the formation of social groups. These 'macroscopic structures are not imposed on the system from outside by specific means, rather they evolve via self-organisation' (Haken 2002, p. 4). In recognising how people deal with Complexity, Taleb (2007) suggests that humans tend to learn and cope with the precise (micro) more readily than the general (macro) because the level of complexity is reduced. Perhaps people are overwhelmed by the level of choice evident in so many aspects of life and thus steer towards simplification rather than learning to embrace Complexity.

Hock (1999) observes that Complexity is the study of complex and adaptive systems that exist with just enough self-organisation on the edge of chaos. Unlike imposed systems such as hierarchies, organisations that operate as complex adaptive systems are self-organising. They co-evolve and are sensitive to their environments and operate across multiple interdependent levels as the following quotation indicates.

*Organisations become what they are as a result of myriad interactions occurring inside the organisation, outside the organisation, and at the borders between the organisation and its environment* (Cunha & Cunha 2006, p. 840).

Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002a) describe self-organisation as a self-making capacity that allows higher order structures and/or functions to emerge through dynamic interactivity. Unexpected variety and novelty in the form of spontaneous self-organisation can result from this dynamic behaviour. It is spontaneous because what emerges is not predictable (Cilliers 1998) (Chaordic Commons 2001) (Haken 2002) (Seel 2006). Self-organising behaviour will flip between positive and negative feedback that in turn produces simultaneously unstable and stable conditions. The order that emerges is changeable, diverse, and unpredictable ‘because it results from
details of dynamics that are inherently unknowable to the human mind’ (Flood 1999, p. 103). According to French (2008) starting at the same point within complex adaptive systems will not produce the same result each time. As a consequence, this lack of certainty means that complex self-adapting systems need to embrace open systems thinking in order to cope with the rapid rate of change, boundary shifting and phase transitions that are common place.

Non-linearity is acknowledged as another key element of Complexity (Byrne 1998; Cilliers 1998; Di Caprio 2002; Flood 1999; Gleick 1999; Lorenz 1995; Minati & Pessa 2002; and Rihani 2002). According to Lorenz (1995, p. 207) a non-linear system is one in which ‘alterations in an initial state need not produce proportional alterations in subsequent states’, while Di Caprio (2002) states there are infinite non-linear behaviours within complex systems that are constantly changing. Gleick (1987) is more open to the notion of alteration of change within non-linear systems.

...[N]on-linear systems generally cannot be solved and cannot be added together. ... Non-linearity means that the act of playing the game has a way of changing the rules’ (Gleick 1987, p. 23-4).

Rihani (2002) observes that Complex Adaptive Systems are a non-linear phenomenon that often result in the appearance of emergent properties that would not have been recognised within a linear framework. According to Rihani (2002, p. 6) Complex and Complexity ‘refer to certain systems that have large numbers of internal elements that interact locally to produce stable, but evolving global patterns’. Interactions between these systems need to be supported by the ability to adapt and manage complex behaviours. Like other social phenomena these have strong accord with Engagement.

3.2.3 Chaos/Complexity Theory

Byrne (1998) identifies that Chaos/Complexity Theory, as he labels it, is not time reversible and has three components: non-linearity, realism and evolutionary processes that are fundamentally dealing with past events. It is a systemic account of the social world that is neither aggregative or reductionist because it ‘provides a way of relating the macro and the micro factors’ (Byrne
The far-from-equilibrium (FFE) behaviour of Chaos/Complexity is also recognised as a key feature (Brahms 2002; Cilliers 1998; Fitzgerald 2002; Orgmind 2006; Seel 2005; and van Eijnatten 2002). Byrne (1998) suggests the world is composed of a set of nested systems that are subject to an interaction effect. This effect is a result of constantly occurring interactions between the multitudes of non-independent elements that are subject to changing form. As a consequence the landscape itself can change in response to these changing elements. Smith (2003, p. 322) suggests that by adopting the emergent principles of complexity and chaos 'a culture of interdependence, and other desirable behaviours, will be fostered'; however, it is important to acknowledge that new patterns of behaviour cannot be imposed, they need to emerge. Thus it is incumbent upon the organisation to create a climate that supports and enables emergence. Within the context of Engagement, where the multiplicity of possibilities can overwhelm, a framework that enables the emergence of a culture of Engagement could be beneficial. Such a framework would provide signposts to assist those on the Engagement journey, while recognising and embracing the non-linearity and complexity that is inherent.

Another crucial element is not the incremental change along a continuum, which is quantitative, but the radical change of form that qualitative change brings. Byrne (1998, p 130) points out that 'in a non-linear world we are always dealing with the reality of the transformation of quantity into quality'. Jackson (2000, p. 81) asserts that Chaos/Complexity claims to be the science of the global nature of systems, and is relevant to diverse disciplines such as meteorology, chemistry, geology, evolutionary biology, economics and management. While Fitzgerald (2002) holds no illusions that this new science is the be all to end all for organisational practitioners, she suggests that Chaos can be regarded as the science of twenty-first century management until a more powerful lens on reality emerges. Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002a) argue that splitting chaos and complexity fragments the new science. They claim that Complexity theory is not confirmable and cannot be attributed to the work of any particular person, group or institution. They embrace the notion of complexity and generally use the term within the context of a chaordic system,
rather than as a separate element or theory, stating ‘we are convinced that Chaos enables the development of a rich array of models and theories including one aptly named complexity’ (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 405). Table 3-1 lists the various elements or features that are referred to by various scholars in relation to the integrated theoretical perspectives relating to Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory and Chaos/Complexity Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements/Features</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complex mathematic concept</td>
<td>Taleb 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both theory and method</td>
<td>Gleick 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmological perspective &amp; meta-praxis</td>
<td>Fitzgerald &amp; van Eijnatten 2002b,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-disciplinary</td>
<td>Fitzgerald &amp; van Eijnatten 2002b, Gleick 1999, Collen 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolutionary</td>
<td>Byrne 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaos &amp; Order</td>
<td>Fitzgerald &amp; van Eijnatten 2002b, Stacey 1992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-1   Elements/features of chaos theory, complexity theory, and complexity/chaos
### 3.2.4 The Chaord

The emergence of chaordic thinking had its genesis in the 1970s and is attributed to Dee Hock, the founding CEO of VISA International the first truly international credit card. The VISA organisation was founded in 1970 as a non-stock, for-profit membership corporation. VISA is a holding company that owns nothing in its own right. VISA operates on chaordic principles and is held together by its functioning parts, the banks that are the member organisations. In 1999 Hock noted that VISA operated in more than 220 countries, through 20,000 member financial institutions. It was accepted at more than 14 million merchant locations, with 600 million consumers and produced an annual sales volume of US$1.25 trillion. While each bank utilised VISA there is no centralized management system, each bank also functioned within its own organisational framework. Therefore Hock (1999, p. 191) declares that the VISA system is truly chaordic because ‘*No part knew the whole, the whole did not know all the parts, and none had any need to*’\(^{18}\).

Like VISA International, higher education “engagement-oriented” organisations such as the international Talloires Network and the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) could also be termed “chaordic”, because they are not-for-profit, member-based organisations that own nothing in their own right. University members of each organisation agree to support the charters of these organisations but continue to operate within their own organisational framework. This notion is being applied as a normative framework because it defines a way of developing a culture-of-engagement within higher education. It does this by bringing universities from diverse cultural, political, economic and social situations together to work toward defined and shared common goals.

In the early 1990s, long after his retirement from VISA, Hock (1999) read a book about Complexity and Chaos and immediately recognised the synergies between those concepts and his own approach to organisational

\(^{18}\) Italics are authors emphasis.
management. Frustrated by the long string of adjectives being used to describe complex, adaptive, evolving, non-linear, self-organising, dynamic, holistic systems, including organisations; he mused over the notions of chaos, complexity, order and connectivity, seeking a word to describe the concept. Hock came up with the concept of the Chaord, see Table 3-2 below, being an amalgam of chaos and order that exemplifies that 'all things, even life itself, are a seamless blending of chaos and order' (1999, p. 3). In similar vein, Losada & Heaphy (2004) recognised the existence of both/and thinking when they coined an amalgam of complex and order, complexor to describe something that is poised between order and disorder.

| Chaord          | 1. Any self-organising, self-governing, adaptive, non-linear, complex organism, organisation, community or system, whether physical, biological or social, the behaviour of which harmoniously blends characteristics of both chaos and order. 
|                 | 2. An entity whose behaviour exhibits observable patterns and probabilities not governed or explained by the rules that govern or explain the constituent parts. |
| Chaordic        | 1. The behaviour of any self-governing organism, organisation or system that harmoniously blends characteristics of order and chaos. 
|                 | 2. Patterned in a way dominated by neither, chaos or order. 
|                 | 3. Characteristic of the fundamental organising principles of evolution and nature. |

Table 3-2  Defining chaord and chaordic
(Source: Hock 1999)

When addressing the link between Chaos and Complexity Rihani (2002, p. 7) notes 'Chaos and order combine to produce a state of self-organised Complexity' that can, paradoxically, be simultaneously chaotic and orderly with neither dominating but 'existing in the phase between order and chaos' (van Eijnatten 2005). This is the essence of chaordic thinking. Citing Kauffman (1993), Rihani (2002, p. 7) notes that 'by altering connectivity and the local rules that dictate how elements interact, order, chaos, or organised Complexity can be created and observed'. Complexity is in fact encompassed within Chaos as part of a chaordic system.

A constitutional hallmark of the chaordic system ... consists of a multiplicity of interacting components. The greater degree of complexity, the less the behaviour of the system is amenable to prediction. Not the same as complicated, although the two attributes are often confused' (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b)
According to Getzendanner (2005) the word Chaordic signifies the linkage between these two elements, *chaos* and *order* and embodies the *harmonisation of opposites*. The Chaos ThinkTank (Orgmind 2006) suggests that the recognition of chaordic thinking contradicts the long-held dualism that chaos and order are either/or opposites, instead they assert that they are ‘inseparably entwined aspects of the very same coin of reality’. In the spirit of chaordic thinking this definition of Chaordic has also emerged.

*The complex, dynamical, non-linear, co-creative, far-from-equilibrium systems we know of as an organisation is chaordic in its essence, that it is both chaotic and orderly at the same time – an entity in which nothing ever happens quite the same twice, and yet enough happens in a tidy enough way to preclude complete anarchy* (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b).

Diagram 3-1 provides a graphic representation of the narrow chaordic band that lies between chaos and order and removed from control. ‘Command-control’ constraints have dominated social, economic and political life for centuries (Chaordic Commons 2001; Flood 1999; Garlick 2004; and Jackson 2000). Hock (1999) observes that the control and command method of social management is largely a result of the Industrial Age and is widely applied to organisations. He completely rejects the notion of control and suggests that life, including the business or organisational elements, is not about controlling.
To enable the emergence of chaordic thinking Hock (1999) contends there is a need for new organisations and new concepts. The Chaordic Alliance, a not-for-profit organisation, was founded by Hock and others, including Joel Getzendanner, Peter Senge and the Kellogg Foundation to create conditions that enable the ‘formation of practical, innovative organisations that blend competition and co-operation to address critical social and environmental issues’ (Hock 1999, p. 324). The Chaordic Alliance has developed a six-lens Chaordic Design Process. This is an open process and no participant has superior or inferior rights. It is designed to build a shared purpose and principles, combined with the right people, an effective concept, and a proper structure that allows a highly focused and effective practice to emerge. It is during the concept phase that old patterns of behaviour, those dominated by an individual’s inner world, are most likely to re-emerge. Hock (1999) warns that the shift from conceptual thinking to an operational reality can be most frustrating, and I argue that this notion has relevance on the establishment of a culture-of-engagement in higher education. Hock (1999) argues that chaordic thinking enables an organisation to increase its diversity and complexity and break free of the constraints, such as unnecessary rules and regulations that alienate and dishearten. Kira and van Eijnatten (2008) also recognise that this shift into organisational ways of doing, such as their operational design and management practices, can be difficult to achieve.

In Europe and the United Kingdom, others, including Fitzgerald, Seel and van Eijnatten are also working on the development of chaordic approaches to organisational and social development. Van Eijnatten (2004) acknowledges that while chaos and complexity have their roots in the hard sciences they have been adapted to suit the social sciences and organisational management in particular. Chaordic thinking could assist people and organisations who, in the 21st century, are faced with increasing and compounding levels of complexity. This manifests as 'inconsistencies, contradictory demands, and dilemmas in decision-making' (van Eijnatten

---

19 The Chaordic Alliance encourages the development of a "global community" through the building of chaordic organisations. The six-lens process and other resources are available at: www.chaordic.org
2004, p. 430). Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) will be discussed at length later in this chapter. Systems Thinking, Disciplinarity and Action Research are now explored in some detail; and Grounded Theory and Critical Thinking will be touched upon briefly. As a *bricoleur* each of these perspectives and Chaos/Complexity have influenced my theoretical and methodological journey.

### 3.3 Systems Thinking

In the late 1940s, Ludwig von Bertalanffy developed Systems Theory (ST). He wanted to encourage humans to behave as citizens of the world and work in a way that involved interdependence and interaction while embracing cross-disciplinary co-operation. He was looking ‘to find and produce a *bridge* between all the many different sciences to enable a more holistic approach’ (Mulej et al. 2004, pp. 50-1). According to Flood (1999) Open Systems Theory had a profound influence on organisations and influenced the shape of organisational management and theory in the 1950s and 1960s. This influence continues to be exerted today, including through Chaordic Systems Thinking.

A Systems Thinking approach implies a focus upon the whole and not just the constituent parts. This means there is a connectedness within or between systems and this is also central to Engagement because it places the organisation within a web of relationships ‘that define and shape it’ (Svendson, 2000, p. 5). In addition to this, ST is dynamic because it acknowledges that individuals are actively involved in constructing reality, while creating a shared understanding of each other's beliefs and values. Jackson (2000, p. 2) suggests that a ST approach respects

> … the profound interconnectedness of the parts and concentrates on the relationships between them, and how these often give rise to surprising outcomes - the emergent properties.

Relationships, trust, and interaction are just some of the elements of ST that feature in the literature (Conti 2006; Haythorn and Laberge 2002; Jackson 2000; Jambeker 1995; and Svendson & Laberge 2005). Conti (2006) notes that because humans have social relations with others, intelligence and a
capacity for thought and choice, the supra-systems from which they operate are socially purposeful and should not be thought of as being mechanistic. He stresses that such relationships and thinking can merge with ST to facilitate an organisation’s ability “to do the right things and do them right” …’ (Conti, 2006, p. 298). ST is also dependent upon authenticity and ethical behaviour and these are precursors to building trust, and trust is essential for the building of strong, reciprocal and sustainable relationships. Similarly, and as already noted in Chapter 2, effective relationships are critical for successful Engagement and for enabling whole-of-system change. Relationships require care and respect so that they may be developed in the first instance and then be maintained over the long term. It is clear that relationships are an intrinsic element of ST. According to Svenson and Laberge (2005) relationships are built, within and outside organisations by a continuous adaptation of organisational culture. This connection and interaction with others assists the identification of opportunities and innovative solutions. ST requires the ability to see the interdependencies and ‘locate leverage points to influence further actions’ (Jambekar 1995, p. 37) to enable organisational transformation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems Thinking (Holistic)</th>
<th>Un-systems Thinking (Traditional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness, multiple &amp; divergent perspectives</td>
<td>Closeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interconnectedness</td>
<td>A single viewpoint system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Simplicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergent and non-linear</td>
<td>No process for making new attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synergy, synthesis</td>
<td>No new attributes resulting from relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole, holism, big picture</td>
<td>Part &amp; singular attributes only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking, interaction &amp; interplay</td>
<td>No mutual influences, linear orientation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-3 Systems thinking versus un-systems thinking
(Source: Mulej et al. 2004 & Jackson 2000)

Table 3-3 summarises some of the key differences between ST (holistic), and un-systems thinking (traditional) as identified by Mulej et al. (2004) and Jackson (2000). Conti (2006, p. 297) also embraces ST noting that nature has a passion for interaction, ‘… a system from one perspective is sub-system from another perspective – and a supra-system from yet another’, therefore recognising that systems are neither linear or mutually exclusive, but layered
and inter-connected. ‘[M]any people discovered or rediscovered a version of 
the systems approach through the popularisation of Chaos and Complexity 
theory’ (Jackson 2000, p. 4).

3.3.1 Inter-disciplinarity

In the 21st century, the propensity for a non-systems approach or narrow 
specialisation in academic studies continues to prevail. While this approach may achieve good results they ‘tend to be limited inside the areas of single 
specialised disciplines, rather than [being] inter-disciplinary and/or trans-
disciplinary’ (Mulej et al. 2004, p. 51). Specialisation is particularly evident in 
the higher education sector, where academic research activities tend to be 
focused on a singular discipline that may or may not have local/regional 
applicability. If this is the case, it could raise questions among regional 
community stakeholders as to the value a University might add, beyond 
simple economic input. Such specialisation could also impact on an 
academic’s ability to be holistic and flexible in order to become engaged and 
attuned with their community, CoI and/or CoP, by conducting research that is 
‘regionally relevant and globally significant’ (Baverstock 2006). A singular 
focus could also be an impediment to adaptation and change. Bohm (2003) 
notes that various experiments have shown that if people are isolated and 
have little external stimulation, their ability to make adjustments beyond the 
narrow confines of their known environment is significantly reduced.

From an organisational perspective, such narrowness could affect some 
academics’ ability to embrace and/or develop new engaged ways of thinking 
and being. Colleen (2002) argues that disciplinarity should be a productive 
activity and encompass a creative, conscious, dynamic, decision-oriented and 
meaningful development. He emphasises the need for working beyond the 
context or confines of a particular discipline. Jackson (2000, p. 100) declares 
that, like complexity theory, ST is legitimate because it ‘works between 
disciplines, filling the gaps left by more conventional approaches’ as systems 
co-evolve within their contextual environment. Complexity increases as the 
new becomes embedded in the system and the inter-relationships between 
the contributing disciplines develop, to reveal new knowledge that is a direct
result of the 'complexification of disciplines' (Collen 2002, p. 291). According to Webber-Thrush (Webber-Thrush 2009) Complex problems are difficult to resolve from a singular disciplinary perspective therefore they can only be tackled in an interdisciplinary way. In recognising the complexity of many research situations Collen (2002) identifies five forms of disciplinarity, as summarised in Table 3-4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Form</th>
<th>Level of Complexity</th>
<th>Nature of Relationship</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mono              | 0                   | Within a discipline    | • A singular focus or perspective  
|                   |                     |                        | • Acts in parallel with others  
|                   |                     |                        | • Does not communicate or share knowledge  
|                   |                     |                        | • Is internally oriented |
| Multi             | 1                   | Among Disciplines      | • Has some uni-lateral examination  
|                   |                     |                        | • Includes a collection of views but is not integrated |
| Inter             | 2                   | Between disciplines    | • An inter-related knowledge domain  
|                   |                     |                        | • Includes collaboration  
|                   |                     |                        | • Recognises & values multiple perspectives |
| Trans             | 3                   | Beyond disciplines     | • Has an integrated systems thinking approach  
|                   |                     |                        | • Develops complex relationships  
|                   |                     |                        | • A common ‘language’ is fostered  
|                   |                     |                        | • Include positive & negative feedback loops |
| Meta              | 4                   | Above & encompassing disciplines | • Boundaries between disciplines dissolve  
|                   |                     |                        | • Paradoxically combines the above 4 forms  
|                   |                     |                        | • Is a highly complex but emergent “whole” |

Table 3-4 Understanding cross-disciplinarity  
(Source: Collen 2002 pp. 285-292)

The relational nature between the different levels of disciplinarity, and the corresponding levels of complexity is shown in Diagram 3-2. The size of the boxes are designed to demonstrate the increasing or decreasing levels of complexity, while the varied lines between each level – from solid to fine dots, is designed to demonstrate the degree of permeability between the discipline silos. Many of the boundaries that have dissolved to some degree during inter and trans discipline activities have disappeared completely at a meta-disciplinarity level because meta-disciplinarity works above all disciplines. In short, meta-disciplinarity does not unfold in a linear way, but is a ‘more systematic, complex, integrated, … and advanced form of mono-disciplinarity’ (Collen 2002, p. 292).
Waldrop (1994) argues that open-minded multi-disciplinary discussion, such as that encouraged and facilitated at the Santa Cruz Institute, allows real expertise from various areas and disciplines to connect and be built upon. Engaged Scholarship could encompass inter-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary and meta-disciplinary approaches and could be used to compliment the CST lens approach. Mulej et al. (2004) and Jackson (2000) support cross-disciplinary activity and suggest that when it is coupled with ST it would achieve greater sustainability and mutual understanding than the traditional over-specialisation or Conventional Reality (CR) (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b).

### 3.3.2 Other perspectives on Systems Thinking

Also emerging from the exploration of ST literature are several other perspectives: Systemic Thinking, Soft Systems Thinking and Soft Systems Methodology. Flood (1999) acknowledges the impact Peter Senge’s book *The Fifth Discipline: the art and practice of the learning organisation* had in bringing Systemic Thinking to the headlines when it was first published in 1990. He argues that Senge provided a substance and an appreciation ‘of our connection to a wider whole, [enabling us to] … meaningfully understand ourselves by contemplating the whole of which we are an integral part’ (Flood
This strand of Systemic Thinking is known as System Dynamics and relates specifically to learning organisations. As previously mentioned, Senge (2006) has links with the Chaordic Alliance and his non-traditional approach is described by Jackson (2000, p. 148) as a 'heady brew ... a strange mixture of new age mysticism, the notion of organisational learning, and conflated systems thinking and system dynamics'.

Ackoff, Churchman, and Checkland are also identified by Flood (1999) as systemic thinkers. In summarising the work of Ackoff, Flood (1999) notes that he moved away from operational research, to undertake research into the mess that characterised many corporations and the purposeful systems they had developed to deal with their systems of interacting problems. By the 1980’s Ackoff had ‘consolidated his ideas in a participatory approach to planning, labelled interactive planning’ (Flood 1999, p. 21). The work of Churchman, the main founder of the Critical Systemic Approach, incorporated a vision of systemic wisdom, a concern for ethics, and a spiritual belief in an ethical future. Flood (1999, p. 22) suggests that while Churchman’s work may be criticised as being esoteric, ‘he still impressed on the minds of many researchers the recurrent systemic question of whether they can justify their choices and actions’. Flood (1999) also draws attention to the work of Checkland, an action researcher who focused attention on systemic thinking and the importance of other systemic frameworks such as complexity theory; open systems theory; soft systems approach; and critical systemic thinking, noting:

Each one yields different and potentially valuable insights. Together, they offer diversity and strength [that is] vital to our ability to cope with an exceedingly complex world (Flood, 1999, p. 18).

Jackson (2000) regards Checkland's Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) as a highly developed approach and notes that SSM encourages the expression of different viewpoints and makes it explicit that alternative perspectives can be compared and contrasted. SSM has three foci: social systems, political systems and action research, and these elements are of great importance to Engagement.
The social context of a study should not be forgotten and Raiteri and Cambini (2002) argue that the utilisation of a systems approach ensures its inclusion. It is important to note that these different contexts, be they social or political, ‘can lead to a substantial modification of the use of existing structures and processes’ (Byrne 1998, p. 165). This may have an impact upon the social system. However, when viewed from a systemic perspective human systems are seen to be emergent rather than actual as a system of meaning. Therefore, to appreciate systemic thinking

… requires learning and understanding about emergent systems of meaning and the moral dilemmas that emerge when they interplay through human interaction (Flood 2001, p. 137).

A number of areas of weakness in relation to some ST approaches have also been identified (Flood 2001; Jackson 2000; and Kemmis & McTaggart 2003). According to Flood (2001) a key concern regarding the Bertalanffian approach to ST, is that it has its basis within a biological framework that does not incorporate ‘social affairs, such as cultural activities, political trading and power struggles’ (Flood 2001, p. 137). While Jackson (2000) notes there has been a tendency by some to err on the side of a hard-systems approach that is more applicable in a technology situation, because it pre-supposes that objectives/goals can be defined unilaterally. He suggests this is difficult to achieve within human-based systems because pluralistic views often prevail, particularly in problem situations, where people do not necessarily share values and interests. And finally, Kemmis & McTaggart (2003) argue in favour of the individuals within systems, through the adoption of a participant perspective. They warn that some systems theorists tend to view practice from the outside, seeing it in terms of social groupings, and note that ‘the relationship between system and life-world is a crucial constituent of the phenomenon of modern society’ (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003, p. 369). The commonalities that exist between the various ST perspectives and Chaos/Complexity abound, and it is clear that CST has emerged from a number of overlapping and inter-connected parent disciplines, including Action Research.
3.4 Action Research

Like CST, Action Research (AR) is an emergent methodology, in that the goals, plans, actions and methodologies are revised continuously throughout the research process. AR concerns

...research in action, rather than research about action ... [it is] concurrent with action and a sequence of events and an approach to problem solving (Coghlan 2004).

Dick (2001) argues that change and understanding are synonymous with AR, as the notion of action is akin to change and research to understanding. Therefore, AR has the two-fold aim of taking action, and creating knowledge or theory about that action (Dick 1997; Fals Borda 2001; Coghlan 2004; and Kemmis & McTaggart 2003). These aims have great resonance and applicability in the context of Engagement and there are also many parallels between engagement and AR as highlighted by this quotation:

...[AR is] mutually collaborative, values good interpersonal relationships as a nexus to problem solving and the adoption of change; strives to make the best possible use of resources in the workplace; challenges the epistemological basis to practice; and seek to address power and boundary relationships (Watts & Jones 2002, p. 233).

Additionally, Reason and Bradbury (2001) argue that adopting an AR perspective could re-invigorate universities, as it would reduce the fragmentation of knowledge, by focusing on the whole and this would assist in the creation of a more global and connected academia in the 21st century. Palshauger (2001) states that AR is based in the specific, and as a consequence its approaches need to be flexible and, where possible, collaborative and developed over time to suit each situation. While a rigid structure should not be established for AR projects Palshauger (2001, p. 217) cautions there is a need to ‘establish a procedure by which continuous interpretation and evaluation of practical outcomes is undertaken’. The AR Cycle has four phases: plan, act, observe, and reflect. Diagram 3-3 highlights the cyclic, reflexive and interactive spiral, and the emergent learning that informs each new stage.
Dick (2001) contends that being responsive to the research situation and alternating between action and critical reflection is a key element of AR. The process and methodology are adjusted as the researcher’s understanding grows. A key AR feature is broad participation and this has congruence with CST. Coghlan (2004) argues that the democratic, collaborative and partnership nature of AR results in both action and research, unlike traditional research approaches where the focus is on the creation of knowledge. In its purist form, AR seeks to engage all members of the system being studied to participate actively in the cyclical (action) research process. According to Dick (2001) the key purpose of AR is to bring about participative change; however, he argues
that such participation is more easily said than done, therefore, it is vital for the action researcher to establish relationships and negotiate roles and processes sensitively. In addition to being cyclic and emergent, AR is problem-oriented, collaborative, flexible, social, egalitarian, empowering, participative, democratic and integrated (Coghlan 2004; Dick 2001; Fals Borda 2001; Kemmis & McTaggart 2003; Palshauger 2001; and Watts & Jones 2002). Green (2002) argues that while AR is concerned with specific generalisations about a particular situation, Action Researchers are required to make professional judgements in response to their explorations. Therefore, while AR generalisations are neat and may not be immediately transferable, they can help gain insights and build a deeper understanding into the complexity of a particular situation that may also have applicability elsewhere.

3.4.1 Action Research and role conflict
A significant challenge for Action Researchers is in understanding that role conflict may arise through the multiple roles of participant/researchers and other participants. While the Action Researchers role expectations, role influences and role behaviour need to be understood and clarified, it is clear that ‘these roles do not form a continuum but ... provide the basis for role ambiguity and role conflict’ (Coghlan & Shani 2005, p. 536). This can be a major issue as, for example, role conflict could arise when a researcher is faced with the need to comply with two simultaneous role expectations. Differing expectations regarding researcher roles by the researcher, the organisation, or the co-participants could result in role ambiguity and uncertainty about role requirements.

Action Researchers do not undertake a singular role and Rusaw (as cited by Coghlan and Shani, 2005) identifies six common action roles: experts, brokers, gatekeepers, liaisons, stakeholders and champions. The cyclic nature of the inter-related relationships, expectations, influence and behaviour of Action Researchers, coupled with personality, interpersonal and organisational factors could have an effect upon Action Researchers, and other participants, at any time, as Diagram 3-4 demonstrates.
While Coghlan and Shani (2005, p. 542) support the importance of relationship building and trust, they argue that Action Researchers have to be mindful that they are working with people ‘who operate from different mental modes and at different levels’ which can impact upon the AR process. Skaret, Send and Roberts (2001), whose AR is primarily within the business sector, state that broad participation is a key element. They also note the need to work with the people who have the knowledge about specific issues and the ability to make the necessary improvements. AR is about:

… creating new insights and organisational improvements through close and intense work with practitioners [and] using our theoretical knowledge and practical experience to engage in a course of action (Skaret, Send & Roberts 2001, p. 2).

Kemmis & McTaggart (2003) strongly support the notion of AR as a shared experience and determine that AR is best conceptualised in collaborative terms, as AR is both a social and an educative process; however, they acknowledge that AR can often be a solitary process of systematic reflection, as I found was often the case in this study.

### 3.4.2 Action Learning Action Research (ALAR)

Zuber-Skerrett (2001) stresses an important link between Action Learning (AL) and AR, because both are cyclical and iterative processes of action and reflection on, and in action. They are centred on learning from action, and take action as a result of this learning. A conscious coupling of AL and AR to create an ALAR approach is based on the assumption that no one person, or institution, is the repository of knowledge. According to Dick (2001b) ALAR
recognises that the expansion of knowledge (learning) is a shared, problem-oriented and cyclic experience. ALAR can be adapted to fit a variety of situations because it is flexible and can readily be integrated with other processes and methodologies. While AR includes learning through the reflective process, Zuber-Skerritt (2001, p. 1) argues that a key difference with ALAR is that the learning elements are always made public, through the publication of reports, academic papers and theses. This results in research that is ‘more systematic, rigorous, scrutinisable, [and] verifiable’. Therefore, knowledge-sharing beyond the active participants, is an ALAR hallmark,

... action learners and action researchers ... are also personal scientists themselves, able to create “grounded theory” based on their own inquiry. They are open to critique, refutation and change. Their inquiry is emancipatory and “system oriented”. They are ... “critical friends” who support one another in “symmetrical communication”, leading to mutual respect and synergy (Zuber-Skerrrett 2003, p. 361).

3.5 Grounded Theory
Glasser and Strauss developed Grounded Theory in 1967 and it is qualitative in its approach. Grounded Theory is built from empirical data, unlike quantitative research which tests previously formed hypotheses. They claim that research should be self-contained, independent and dictated by a researcher’s interest. It should also be unprejudiced and anchored in everyday behaviour/action. According to Glasser (1998) a basic tenet of Grounded Theory is that all is data. The constant comparison between the various data sources, such as books, observations, one's own biases 'or whatever else may come the researchers way' (1998, p. 8) is the central principal of this method. He suggests that preconceiving the data can restrict the generative elements of the study and, as a consequence, the theory that emerges from it.

Zuber-Skerrett (2001) asserts that Grounded Theory is both contextual and iterative because it can generate theoretical knowledge as it samples grounded theory. This occurs by alternating and interacting the various phases of discovery as they become evident through the contextual
information and data. The Grounded Researcher needs to let the data emerge in its own right, regardless of the mode of delivery, and the data 'induces meaning as it is happening' (Glasser, 1998, p. 9). Charmaz (2003) notes that like the action-oriented methods, Grounded Theory research processes are cyclical and continue over the research duration, and the data collection informs and refines the theoretical analysis. Grounded Theory, like Action Research, is simultaneously an insider view and a process of discovery (Zuber-Skerrett 2001; Kemmis 2003; Coghlan 2004; and Park (2001); Dick asserts that it is best to ‘anchor your understanding firmly to information you collect' (2001a, p. 22). The elements of Grounded Theory are congruent with Chaos/Complexity, Chaordic Systems Thinking and Engagement.

3.6 Critical Theory

Habermas’ Critical Theory seeks to combine three principal approaches: systems theory, life-world perspectives and action theory. Critical Theory identifies the importance of the participant perspective Kemmis (2001). Habermas challenged the systems theorists arguing that the individual had not been taken into account. Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) describe Habermas as a social theorist and suggest his theory emerged because he felt that humans had been reduced to taken for granted social outcomes by many research approaches. The focus of post-Enlightenment science research was on the how and the form of enquiry and ignored the substance and the human elements. Habermas' emancipatory argument was that these approaches ignored the relationships that affect human life and maintained the existing power relations.

Kemmis (2001) argues that Critical Theory espouses a systems/life-world perspective that provides a way of understanding participant perspectives from two, often competing, viewpoints. Firstly, from the context of the systems they operate within; and secondly from the (specific) context of the participants own particular life-world. An individuals’ life-world is shaped in three ways, firstly, through processes that develop their identity and capacity, secondly, through social integration and relationships that form and develop and finally, through processes that emerge from shared cultures and discourse. Kemmis (2001)
also notes the combination of different life-worlds, coupled with different systems an individual may operate within, could create conflict at multiple levels, at an individual level, between individuals, or between an individual and an organisation.

In order to clarify the role of a system in the context of Critical Theory, Kemmis (2001) argues it is important to recognise the notion that a social whole is an illusion, because there are no whole societies, states or systems. They are … inter-woven, interlocking, overlapping networks of social relations that galvanise power and discourse in different directions and in different ways in relation to the personal, social and the cultural realms (Kemmis 2001, p. 99).

Habermas (1994) favours communicative action that takes place through common language, shared cultural forms, traditions, routines and the like to achieve mutual understanding.

Zuber-Skerrett (2001) notes that the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory focuses on transformational change by the principles of symmetrical communication. Symmetrical communication demands information equity across an organisation regardless of position. It also encourages empowerment and an emancipatory approach as people learn to become critical. Each Critical Theory perspective has congruence with Engagement, Chaos/Complexity and CST while resonating within the contexts of Systems Thinking and Action Research.

### 3.7 Chaordic Systems Thinking

*CST is much more than human relations. It's about consciousness and understanding, about connectivity and also about dissipation. Letting old things intentionally fall apart in order to let new things emerge, ... because there is discontinuity in it that allows for the new p 460 (Wafler 2004b).*

Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) encompasses Chaos and Complexity and uses Chaos as a metaphor for change (van Eijnatten 2004). It is a way of looking at reality that recognises that systems are complex, non-linear and dynamic. Van Eijnatten (2007) emphasises that although CST draws from
Chaos/Complexity it is not a theory, but a mechanism for assisting organisational change that is still very much an “emergent” way of thinking and doing.

The European Chaos/Complexity in Organisations Network (ECCON), which has been active since 1999, is expanding the development of CST. A number of European university members, including Eindhoven (Netherlands), the University of Applied Social Sciences (Switzerland), Nottingham Trent University and Cranfield University (United Kingdom), are conducting research in this area.

ECCON aims to connect researchers interested in exploring the Chaos and Complexity ‘lenses’<www.chaosforum.com/docs/nieuws/index_eng.html> ECCON also has individual members from non-European universities including the National Chengchi University (Taiwan), and the University of Minho (Portugal).

According to van Eijnatten (2005), one of the key CST proponents and researchers, CST is best described as a lens and a way of thinking about or approaching the design of complex organisational systems. CST adopts the science of Chaos/Complexity and recognises the importance of flow as opposed to a fixed structure, to better engage and inform human interactions within learning organisations. This element provides a strong point of connection to UCE. CST also enables a better understanding of the discontinuous growth that often manifests in complex systems as cycles of growth and contraction (see section 3.7.2).

CST links to this study on University-Community Engagement (UCE) because there is considerable congruence between Chaos/Complexity and Engagement. Neither is static, and both are complex and constantly dynamic. The five principles of CST are applicable to UCE. Consciousness encourages awareness; Connectivity recognises interdependence, and Dissipation and Emergence encourage cycles of breaking down and innovation. The principle
of *Indeterminacy* is probably the most difficult concept for conventional thinkers to embrace. This principle argues that the future is obscured by dynamic complexity and therefore cannot be determined, known, or predicted in advance.

Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten (2002a) and van Eijnatten (2004) offer CST as a new paradigm for working life, based on a *holonic* approach. Some people might exhibit resistance to this way of doing and being because it is unconventional. Van Eijnatten (2007) recognises this resistance. He suggests encouraging people to view CST as a "lens", a way of viewing the world could ameliorate this, and he also advises that this approach might make it easier for them to accept CST as a normative change approach.

### 3.7.1 Holons

Holons and holistic thinking are chaordic concepts (van Eijnatten, 2005). A holon is 'an entity existing as a whole in its own right, and as part of a greater whole system, simultaneously and into perpetuity' (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002a, p. 416).

![Diagram 3-5 Low complexity holons](Source: van Eijnatten 2004 – citing Wilbur 1996)
From a CST perspective, a system can contain individual and collective or aggregated holons within it. Holons can have both vertical and horizontal dimensions. According to van Eijnatten (2005) the vertical dimensions demonstrate the holonic depth or capacity of an individual or an organisation to operate at different levels, and the horizontal dimension demonstrates its aggregated width or level of complexity. An example of aggregated depth is the collection of academic work-units that may exist within a university. According to van Eijnatten (2004, 2005) individual holons possess both an exterior surface that is materially based, and an interior surface that is consciousness. Holons exist both individually and collectively. An organisation is a collective-holon that comprises multiple individual and aggregated holons.

From an organisational perspective the holonic environment comprises the interior characteristics, such as the individuals' ways of doing and being or mental models, as well as the exterior characteristics that is the organisations functional structure and activity patterns. The interior of the collective mind is evident when individuals exchange and share with others, and this may result in 'a collective world view or commonly shared meaning' (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 434) typified by mutual understanding and cultural fit. The organisational mind is the exterior or holonic capacity of the organisation that is exemplified by what is intrinsically understood by organisational members as truth. Chaordic thinkers seek to optimise holonic entanglement by nurturing relationships 'among all holons' (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 344) across an organisation.

When organisations are viewed from a holonic perspective the mutuality of interaction is seen as important. This is because the mutual parts or people within have an ability to influence the whole, just as the whole can influence the individual parts. Holons are not sub-systems of a super-system, but entities that are wholes and parts at the same time (Wafler 2004a). The richness of CST is

… the combination of functionalist and interpretative types of social theory, the integration of exterior and interior domains, … the fusion of holistic and holonic perspectives, the hybrid of horizontal and vertical systems … (Kira & van Eijnatten 2008, p. 749).
CST is a systematic way to look at reality that embraces the complex, dynamic and non-linear aspects of systems that thrive in far-from-equilibrium conditions (van Eijnatten, 2004). CST recognises the discontinuous but inter-connected patterns of growth/decline occur over time as depicted by a Sigmoid Curve. Diagram 3-6 depicts the marketing product life cycle (Kotler et al. 2003; Lamb et al. 2009) which is a common example of a Sigmoid Curve that resembles the trends in the lifecycle of many living things or phenomena (van Eijnatten 2005). CST is a systematic way to look at reality that embraces the complex, dynamic and non-linear aspects of systems that thrive in far-from-equilibrium conditions (van Eijnatten, 2004). CST recognises that discontinuous but inter-connected patterns of growth/decline occur over time. Diagram 3-6 depicts the marketing product life cycle (Kotler et al. 2003; Lamb et al. 2009) and demonstrates the inevitability of decline if “bifurcation points” or change opportunities are not pursued. This is a common example of a Sigmoid Curve that resembles the trends in the lifecycle of many living things or phenomena (van Eijnatten 2005).

### 3.7.2 Discontinuity in Chaordic Systems

Discontinuous patterns are a key feature of chaordic systems. This can manifest as either increased complexity if embraced; or decline if a growth opportunity is resisted. A system operating in a stable environment is at equilibrium and the patterns are linear and the change is incremental. Whereas relative instability, or far-from-equilibrium (FFE) conditions can create non-linear patterns and herald transformative change as ‘the system
becomes very susceptible to external variations’ (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 430). Paradoxically, it is this very instability that will enable the system to become more elastic and emerge from its current context as a new order. According to Cilliers (1998) equilibrium, symmetry and complete stability mean death. Complex systems operate under FFE conditions and require a constant flow of energy to change, evolve, survive and resist entropy. FFE conditions can ‘have an unsettling effect on many, and undeniably one has to develop certain skills to cope with these conditions, but to yearn for a state of complete equilibrium is to yearn for a sarcophagus (Cilliers 1998, p. 122).

The chaordic environment is not neat and sequential. It is an iterative process of transformative change between old thinking, old doing to new thinking, new doing it is not orderly or predictable, as changes may occur concurrently, consecutively, lag or leapfrog. The system oscillates between new and old ways as change opportunities arise. If new thinking/doing is adopted then new behaviour will emerge. Many different attractors can simultaneously have an effect on a chaordic system. Attractors are the forces or conditions that manifest as repeated patterns of behaviour. While they operate within clear boundaries, they are not always exactly the same. Attractor effects can have a fractal dimension. This means that change may appear to be gradual at a macro level, but it is likely to be very apparent at a micro level. For example, introducing a regional engagement strategy is likely to be less keenly felt university-wide, than it is by an individual academic. Particularly if that person has to incorporate different delivery mechanisms into their teaching and research practice, and they lack the requisite knowledge or skills.

An area of influence is known as an attractor basin, and this surrounds each attractor. Multiple attractors exist within an attractor landscape as depicted in Diagram 3-7. The impact of attractors can lead organisations to the edge of chaos (Cunha & Cunha 2006) and chaordic thinkers argue that this provides opportunity for growth and renewal. The bifurcation point is the point at which the chaordic system starts to change. It will frequently and irregularly oscillate between the new and old modes until the new ways are absorbed into the system, or culture of the organisation known as the orgmind.
According to the Chaos Thinktank ‘there is a need to learn how to help the resistors to escape the attractor basin of the status quo’ (Orgmind 2006) to enable and/or embrace new ways of doing and being. Therefore, appropriate training should be provided to assist the development of skills as well as the emotional and volitional elements that are crucial if organisational change is to be achieved (van Eijnatten 2004). The volitional element is the individual’s desire for and willingness to embrace change, rather than to resist it. If new thinking and doing emerges then the system will have transformed and as a consequence it will move to a higher level of complexity and coherence.

### 3.7.3 In favour of Chaordic Systems Thinking

Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002) argue that the use of the term Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) assists in diffusing the negative connotations that the word Chaos conveys to more traditional or Conventional Reality (CR) thinkers. While they note that virtually all systems could be described as being chaordic, they use the term in relation to organisational systems that have been ‘intentionally designed to sustain … an optimal dynamical balance in what Chaos refers to as far-from-equilibrium (FFE) conditions’ (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 407). This approach is only beginning to emerge from
its infancy; consequently its proponents are often derided as being risky or
foolish. However, CST enables organisations to 'thrive in the turbulence and
flux of the global marketplace' (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 407). The
eyearly adopters, those people who willingly embrace new products or new
ways during the introduction phase of the lifecycle, will pave the way for a
veritable influx of emulators.

CST is simply put a powerful and empowering art of thinking,
seeing acting, and being in the organisation and in the world that is
practiced as a matter of course by a growing number of those who
have donned the lens of Chaos and grasped the quintet of
principles presumed to be operating behind the perceived surface
of complex, dynamical, non-linear, FFE entities ranging from the
lowliest amoeba colony to the universe itself (Orgmind 2006).

Chaordic thinkers have identified five precepts of CST – consciousness,
connectivity, indeterminacy, dissipation and emergence (Chaos ThinkSite
2006; Fitzgerald 2002; Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002; Kira & van Eijnatten
(2008); van Eijnatten (2005); van Eijnatten & van Galen 2002; and Wafler
2004). These are in contrast to the CR precepts of materialistic, reductionist,
determinist, preservationist and interventionist (Fitzgerald, 2002 and van
Eijnatten 2005). A comparison between their defining properties is provided in
Table 3-5.

According to Fitzgerald (2002) CST is a meta-praxis that is a principle-
inform ed way of seeing, thinking, knowing and participating in the world that
goes beyond usual structures and interventions to incorporate the greater
whole in the development of solutions towards a shared vision.
### CST Worldview | Defining Properties | Conventional Reality Worldview | Defining Properties
---|---|---|---
Consciousness | There is no separation between consciousness and matter. The interior aspects, the mind is fundamental, the essence and omega of existence | Materialistic | Proposes that reality is only those things that exist through the 5 senses.
Connectivity | Encompasses interdependence and holons where the “whole” and the parts cannot be separated and everything is connected to everything else. | Reductionist | Breaks complex beings/entities down into component parts in order to “understand”, and attempts to predict higher-order complexity by looking at lower-levels of detail.
Indeterminacy | The future is obscured by dynamic complexity and therefore cannot be predicted or known in advance. | Deterministic | Assumes predictability in a linear way, argues that the future is decided by initial conditions.
Dissipation | The capacity to operate in F-F-E conditions and accept the notion that things can change at the point of bifurcation, while simultaneously maintaining core identity. | Preservationist | The notion of maintaining equilibrium or the status quo by enforcing rigid structures and control and command.
Emergence | Both the differentiation into many, and the integration as one, by recognising the advance towards higher orders of coherence and complexity. | Interventionist | The mistaken notion of conventional reality (CR) that constant monitoring can control or eliminate chaos.

**Table 3-5 CST and conventional reality (CR) worldviews compared**
(Source: Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2005)

### 3.8 The Chaordic Lens

The five principles surrounding each lens that constitutes the Chaordic Lens will now be detailed, and these will be used to reflect on this research in Chapter 5.

#### 3.8.1 Consciousness

According to Waldrop (1994) most of our mental models are not conscious. He argues that consciousness is created from feedback from the environment. Like AR thinking, this feedback or direct experience enables learning that results in adaptations and consciousness-raising. The Chaos Thinksite (Orgmind 2006) suggests that consciousness is the ground state or
fundamental source and the essence of all that exists. Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten (2002b, p. 405) describe consciousness as being beyond the human individuals realm or personal reality, it is 'an intrinsic quality of the universe and every chaordic system contained therein'. Fitzgerald (2002) refers to this as Big Mind or Universal Consciousness, and an individuals’ consciousness as little mind.

Consciousness is largely ignored or considered controversial by CR managers. They favour a control and command approach because peoples’ intentions and thoughts are unobservable phenomena (van Eijnatten 2004). However, Fitzgerald (2002, p. 345) argues that no amount of logic, planning, reason or technology can enable people to know the unknowable ; therefore, it is better to see that 'the future is a wave of potential existing right here and now on the vast sea of Consciousness'.

CST deems consciousness to be the organisational mind, that is the holonic capacity of an organisation and all that 'the tacit members of an organisational system hold commonly as “truth”...' (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 434). Chaordic organisations are said to be those that seek to transform themselves from within. This is achieved by operating on the edge of chaos to enable the dissipation of current and no longer useful ways of doing/being, to embrace the new ways that emerge. By moving to a different level of consciousness, a new world that allows the emergence of what ought to be can be realised (Hock 1999).

### 3.8.2 Connectivity

The notions of connectivity and connectedness have wide recognition within and beyond Chaordic Systems Thinkers (Baraldi and Bocconcelli 2001; Barnacle 2001; Bohm 2003; Chimhanzi 2004; Davies 2001; Fitzgerald 2002; Garlick 2001; Gibbons 2005; Latham 2001; Mudej et al. 2004; Passfield 2001; Svendson 2000; van Eijnatten 2004; Waldrop 1994; Zohar and Marshall 1993; and Zuber-Skerrett 2001). As identified in the previous chapter, inter-personal and inter-organisational connectivity are a cornerstone of Engagement where 'everything is connected with invisible sensitivity' (Waldrop 1994, p. 66).
From a CST perspective, connectivity supports the notion that the universe is one, consisting of ‘a single unbroken and unbreakable pattern of relationships in which no “thing” can exist or event can occur independently of the whole’ Fitzgerald (2002, p. 343). It also encompasses the myriad parts of the whole including observers. Thus the observed and the observer are both part of, and connected to, the whole. Orgmind (2006) and Fitzgerald (2002) argue that connections are strengthened by activity between elements and a lack of activity diminishes the connection. Connectivity is about minimising boundaries (van Eijnatten 2004) and this is crucial to an organisation’s ability to be change-ready as new patterns of relationship and interactivity occur (Seel 2006). A Chaos-informed approach takes more personal commitment, time and energy because its focus is on the orgmind and it requires ‘deeper consciousness, more holonic capacity and greater connectivity’ (van Eijnatten & van Galen 2002, p. 395) than more conventional systems.

The idea of connectivity is a counterpoint to the Newtonian view of physics and the material world that is based upon an either/or way of thinking that has diminishing relevance in the 21st century, as multiple ways of doing and being are emerging. Acceptance of this notion provides a strong argument for embracing the quantum physics both/and way of thinking that is known as the Principle of Complementarity (Zohar, 1993 p. 20). This has strong accord with CST. Similarly, the Chinese Yin/Yang symbol depicted in Diagram 3-8, illustrates the entwined duality of both/and thinking. Zohar (1993) suggests this duality demonstrates a sense of connectedness, and recognition of a powerful new model for how we see ourselves, both as individuals, and as members of wider group(s). While Pribham (1996) maintains that it is not necessary to make either/or choices, but argues for an acceptance of the paradox through organisational operating specifications.
3.8.3 Indeterminacy

‘An old map is useless when the terrain is new’ (Stacey 1992, p. 4). According to CST, the future is new terrain, unknowable and cannot be determined in advance. Indeterminacy is determined in the moment – as the past, the present and the future are all tied-up in the moment – that is, the now. Therefore, it is best to prepare for surprise rather than seek to predict certainty (Orgmind 2006). Waldrop (1994, p. 177) suggests ‘prediction helps you seize an opportunity or avoid getting sucked into a trap’ and emphasises the need to think ahead and respond to feedback, rather than work doggedly to pre-determined plans. Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten (2002a) argue that indeterminacy attests to the non-linearity of cause and effect, and Stacey (1992, p. 63) concurs, recognising that 'clear cut connections between cause and affect are lost in the unpredictable unfolding of events'. However, while future actions and events cannot be determined, they are sensitively dependent upon initial conditions.

The Chaos notion of Equilibrium has its basis in determinacy, and determinacy assumes linear predictability that underpins CR. In CST, equilibrium is referred to by its new science term, death, signifying the things that remain unchanged as time advances. Indeterminacy thrives in FFE conditions where organisational infrastructure and systems are buffeted by 'a constant throughput of energy' (Seel 2006, p. 4). This enables fluidity and resilience to be maximised and makes emergence possible. Chaordic thinkers suggest that proponents of CR use strategic plans to determine the future because they seek linear control. However, this does not allow or accommodate the inevitable and ubiquitous butterfly effect or emergence. Stacey (1992) suggests there is a need to review vision and plan prescriptions.
because they are a blatant attempt to be deterministic which is impossible. Instead he prefers to look for patterns and focus upon strategic intent. This is achieved by being flexible and clear about the outcome.

3.8.4 Dissipation

‘Creating the new inevitably involves destroying the old’ (Stacey 1992, p. 95) and this creatively encompasses both dissipation and emergence. Dissipation is the inverse of emergence. Chaordic thinkers recognise this and understand that organisations are in a constant state of flux between emergence and dissipation and operate at their best when pushed to their limits. Drawing from Chaos Theory, this limit is the point of bifurcation and these change opportunities provide a moment of choice that if taken, allow dissipation to occur. Gleick (1987), citing physicist Joseph Ford, states that evolution is Chaos with feedback and the universe is both randomness and dissipation. Dissipation is intentionally letting the old and no longer useful things fall apart in order to enable new things to emerge ‘because there is discontinuity in it that allows for the new’ (Wafler 2004b, p. 460).

Dissipation purposely allows a system to disintegrate in such a way that it enables the emergence of a 'new enterprise at a higher order ungoverned by the past' (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 347). When dissipation is intentional, the chances are high, albeit not guaranteed, that the system or organisation will grow as new ways of doing and being emerge. Dissipation signifies the capacity of a chaordic system or organisation to operate in FFE conditions so that it falls apart at the point of bifurcation, while simultaneously maintaining its core identity (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002a). In contrast, the CR management approaches of materialism, reductionism, determinism, preservation and intervention attempt to resist dissipation by controlling their organisations through the design of structures that maintain their cherished systems (Fitzgerald 2002).
3.8.5 Emergence

Consciousness is the essential substance of reality; second, that given absolute Connectivity of the universe, there exists no thing in itself separate and apart from the whole; and finally that the intrinsic Indeterminacy of experience stems from the dynamically complex, non-linear nature of the universe. Put them all together and you get Emergence (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 345).

Emergence is a phenomenon that has high recognition among proponents of Chaos/Complexity, Systems Thinking, Action Research and CST (Bonifacio 2002; Bonne-Maison 2005; Cillers 1998; Colleen 2002; Crutchfield 1994; Fitzgerald 2002; Flood 1999; Goldstein 2001; Hock 1999; Jackson 2000; Orgmind 2006; Seel 2005; van Eijnatten 2004; Waldrop 1994; Wheatley 2006; and Zohar 1993). According to Seel (2005) emergence is the key quality of complex systems. While emergence cannot be forced or controlled per se, it can be facilitated by rich, diverse and unconstrained conversations that enable creative and adaptive change to emerge from ‘apparently disconnected or even irrelevant thoughts and sensations’ (Seel 2005, p. 3). According to Stacey (1992) the breaking down of symmetries is essential for enabling new order or new ways to emerge.

As previously identified, FFE conditions lead to emergence (Goldstein 2001) and Chaos thinkers argue that emergence is stifled by CR management systems that seek to exert illusions of control such as rules, regulations, and various other devices within their organisations. When systems operate in FFE, they are moving through patterns of instability as the previous order or stability is broken down. According to Stacey (1992, p. 81) while spontaneity may create an opportunity for new ideas to emerge, ‘unexpected behaviour may prevent it moving through the phase transition’. Waldrop (1994) noted that emergence has its genesis in FFE environments and generally exemplifies messiness as complex systems incessantly organise themselves into patterns.
Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten (2002a) recognise that emergence originates in dynamic interaction and can result in higher-order systems. Intrinsic emergence is identified as behaviour or responses that cannot be modelled at the outset but results in a 'deep modification of a system's structure ... to require the formulation of a new model of the system itself' (Minati & Brahms 2002). Chaordic systems exhibit a quality of the whole rather than individual parts within. The Principle of Emergence

... is a quality of whole (holon) that is not present in any of its parts. ... Emergents arise through the process of auto-poesies – a term referring to the inherent ability of a chaordic system to bring about its own evolution to ever-higher, ever-more complex orders of being (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 345).

Finally, Bohm (2003) argues that it is not inconceivable that something we believe categorically today could well be proved wrong tomorrow, as new information emerges and we move ‘toward infinitely ascending orders of differentiation, coherence and complexity' (Fitzgerald, 2002 p. 345). The dissipation/emergence elements that are identified on the Chaos Thinksite are not dissimilar to the concept/structure lenses as defined by Hock (1999) and previously described. According to Wafler (2004) CST focuses on the internal elements of an organisation, and seeks to achieve organisational renewal by ‘furthering human understanding as well as self-determination' (2004b, p. 458).

3.9 Chaos/Complexity and CST – more than doing

As previously noted, utilising a Chaos-CST approach 'is not something one "does". Rather it is a way, and a very powerful way at that, of seeing, thinking and being in our inexorably chaordic world' (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 348). There is congruence between CST and complexity as they build upon the same set of assumptions. From a broader perspective CST – like Engagement – could be seen as a meta-theory in as much as it encompasses a variety of models and theories.

We do not claim that traditional science is useless; rather we regard it as being incomplete. ... Using the CST lens will produce quite a different kind of knowledge for a different purpose, i.e. it
produces integrated knowledge about integrated wholes - instead of fragmented knowledge about isolated parts – [it is] not for predicting the future, but for a better understanding the present' (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 435).

Sustainability from a CST perspective is not static but dynamic and complex. It is in a constant state of becoming at individual, group, and societal levels and these levels interact and materialise concurrently. Fitzgerald (2002) refers to it as a systems ability to maintain its core interior when faced with environmental turbulence and flux. Kira and van Eijnatten (2008) argue that the notion of sustainability refers to two inter-twined ideas. It can refer to ecological or environmental sustainability, or it can refer to the work or organisational sustainability that incorporates human, social and economic elements, and these may also include ecological or environmental factors. Citing Docherty et al. 2008, they note 'the worldview on sustainability demands the development of a working life in which human, social, economic and ecological resources are allowed to prosper' (Kira & van Eijnatten, 2008, p. 744). They also recognise the difficulties associated with such a shift in the way organisations undertake their operational design and management practices.

The Chaos Thinksite (Orgmind 2006) argues that the perpetuation of the clockwork metaphor for organisations is fundamentally wrong. There is a need to recognise that organisations are non-linear complex, dynamical, FFE chaordic systems, and to manage them as such. Therefore, the Chaos Thinksite recommends undertaking a chaordic approach to organisational management and development as a means of unlocking and creating whole-system sustainability. To be sustainable, organisations need to focus beyond their own organisation and their own employees to include their '...business partners and societal stakeholders and the natural resources that are affected' (Kira & van Eijnatten 2008, p. 745). A nexus between sustainability and complexity exists, with the former relying upon the competency of the distinctive yet integrated human resources within organisations to function as effective teams. The application of chaordic thinking seeks to move people,
and thus organisations, from a command and control practice and mindset. This enables them to become transformative, emergent and evolving through self-organisation, inter-connectedness, complexity, organisational learning, and interdependence (Fitzgerald 2002; Goldstein 2001; Hock 1999; Orgmind 2006; and van Eijnatten 2004). This is a more participative approach that has a focus on shaping predefined goals to find ways of embracing spontaneous emergent learning and organising (Kira & van Eijnatten 2008). Organisational sustainability can only be achieved if organisations are seen as chaordic open systems because most work situations involve a dynamic interaction between a multiplicity of players and resources at multiple levels within and between multiple organisations. CST 'emphasises that systems flow or change naturally' (Kira & van Eijnatten, 2008, p. 747). The open, dynamic, evolving and participative elements of the chaordic approach are synergistic with Engagement and their utilisation would enable, support and enhance UCE.

The inherent complexity of CST practices mean that the results are seldom generalisable and thus non-imitative. However, others may witness the benefits of CST practices and seek to adopt a CST approach. Therefore, there is a need to recognise that it is an emergent process that has to be appropriate within the context of each particular workplace or situation. As van Eijnatten (2004, p. 438) observes ‘more action research is needed in order to validate the new lens as a main co-ordination mechanism’. The Chaos Thinksite (Orgmind 2006) encourages others to don the Chaordic lens in order to trigger a profound shift in the design and transformation of organisations. ‘CST is, simply put, a powerful and empowering art of thinking, seeing, acting, and being in the organisation and in the world’. The final word on the emergence of CST is from the creator of the chaord Dee Hock (1999) who observes quite simply that organisations are in a constant state of becoming.

3.9.1 Communication and Leadership
Two other areas of significance are communication and leadership. Communication within the chaordic organisation is based around dialogue. Dialogue enables meaning to flow between participants (Wafler 2004a) ‘... in order to move beyond one individual's understanding, to make explicit and
build collective meaning and vision’ (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 435). Dialogue instantly explores four different stages: reception, interpretation/perception, assumption and conclusion. It is about people thinking together, increasing their mutual understanding and growing both connectivity and the holonic capacity of their organisation/community. ‘Its aim is to explore assumptions and rules, on which both individual and collective behaviours are based’ (Wafler 2004a, p. 455). Van Eijnatten and Hoogerwerf (1999) coined the word multilogue in order to take dialogue onto a larger platform. Multilogue defines the dialogue or communications that go beyond an organisation or a community in the form of ‘a comprehensive, dynamic event in which groups of different stakeholders dialogue with each other’ (van Eijnatten 2004, p. 435). The sharing of dialogue (and multilogue) is an emergent, dynamic and generative processes that is integral to the growth of a ‘learning organisation … of which all stakeholders are inseparable parts’ (ibid). Additionally Magliocca and Minati (2002, p. 248) stress the need for dialogue that encourages an ‘understanding of the same event from multiple viewpoints’, rather than debate which they suggest is adversarial.

Similarly, leadership in chaordic organisations is emergent and according to van Eijnatten (2004) the roles of individuals are not fixed but highly flexible and may vary according to the project. Goldstein (2001, p. 1) notes the emergence of informal leaders ‘represents an unanticipated innovation in an organisation’. He observes that while emergent leadership exists in CR organisations, it is generally informal and not officially sanctioned. Hock (1999, p. 73) states that leadership in chaordic systems and organisations is not about the concept of superior and subordinate that prevails in control and command management systems, but chaordic leadership enables ‘…leadership in, up, around, and down this world so badly needs, and dominator management it so sadly gets’. In a chaordic organisation an agreed purpose or intent and principles supports the emergence of multiple leaders.
Fitzgerald (2002) argues that leadership in chaordic organisations is about managers having the courage to relinquish the usual control mechanisms in order to liberate their enterprise. She highlights the leadership and dialogue link and encourages open dialogue between people, rather than monologue, that is often one-way, and usually top-down.

3.9.2 Black Swan Thinking
The following account of the Black Swan provides an enlightening perspective on the effect of unknowns. Prior to non-Aboriginal settlement in Australia white swans were the only swans known to exist in the world. However, the discovery of Australia also heralded the discovery of the Black Swan – a previously unknown and completely unpredicted expectation. A Black Swan circumstance has low predictability and high impact, not unlike the Butterfly Effect, although 'we prefer to act as if they don't exist' (Taleb 2007, p. xviii). Additionally he recognises the messiness of reality and notes that Black Swan thinking typifies what we don't know, rather than what we do know. And he suggests we need to

...rely less on top-down planning and to focus on maximum tinkering and re-organising opportunities ... Tinker as much as possible and collect Black Swan opportunities (Taleb 2007, p. xxi).

The emergent nature of Chaos/Complexity, AR and CST encourages exploration of the unknowns or Black Swan thinking, and provides a natural and complimentary combination for reflecting on Engagement. Byrne (1998, p. 161) declares every PhD student should embrace Chaos and Complexity 'not for reasons of fashion or even legitimate career building but because this is the way the world works and we need to understand that'.

Diagram 3-9 provides a visual summary of the theoretical perspectives explored in this chapter, and it also shows the natural nexus between Chaos Theory and Complexity Theory to result in Chaos/Complexity. Chaordic Systems Thinking shares many elements of both Systems Thinking and Action Research, and Critical Theory and Grounded Theory also possess synergistic aspects with both Chaos/Complexity and Chaordic Systems Thinking.
3.10 Conclusion – from theory to methodology

This chapter has revealed that the emergent nature of Chaos/Complexity, Action Research (AR) and Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST) actively encourages exploration of the unknowns or Black Swan thinking. This notion of exploring the unknown has traction with much that occurs within the Engagement environment. Therefore, it is not anomalous for these concepts to be used in this thesis as I reflect upon Engagement and UCE practice at SCU in particular. The use of Chaos/Complexity is supported and encouraged by Byrne (1998, p. 161) who declares every PhD student should embrace these perspectives ‘... not for reasons of fashion or even legitimate career building but because this is the way the world works and we need to understand that’.

This chapter has explored Complexity Theory, Chaos Theory, Chaos/Complexity, Systems Thinking, Action Research, Chaordic Systems Thinking, Grounded Theory and Critical Theory. Communication and leadership were also investigated from a chaordic perspective. Diagram 3-9 provides a visual representation of the theoretical journey. The following chapter will establish the AR context, and the various methodologies that are used in this study and have congruence with CST.

The multiple converging perspectives and themes that were revealed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 support my use of CST and the Chaordic Lens in particular. This lens provides an additional mechanism for reviewing the data that emerges from this study in order to answer the research questions and build upon existing knowledge and understanding. Like Chaos/Complexity Theory, the Engagement environment is highly complex and interconnected; therefore, applying Chaos/Complexity and CST perspectives to the research questions it is clear that the emergent data will have to be reviewed holonically, that is, both individually and as part of a whole. For example, Question 3 asks how a culture-of-engagement could be embedded. Accordingly, when answering this question using CST principles, the views of individuals and the collective views of groups will need to be taken into
account as neither is considered to be more important than the other. This view is highly compatible with the approach put forward in the Williams Data Analysis Tool that is used to review data and is described in Chapter 4. CST principles also encourage the notion of developing flexible frameworks to guide, rather than rigid and prescriptive rules, and this is well suited to the Engagement context.

In recognising that CST is unconventional in its approach, van Eijnatten (2007) suggests that encouraging people to view CST as a "lens", or a way of viewing the world could assist. He also advises that this can make it is easier for people to accept this type of approach to organisational management as normative change. While the fluidity of CST can create discomfort for those who are wedded to more conventional ways of thinking and doing, I determined it would be included in this thesis. As I had read a considerable amount of Engagement literature I wanted this thesis to explore and consider University-Community Engagement (UCE) from a totally different perspective in order to see what emerged. And in true CST style I did not know at the outset what I would find along the way.
Diagram 3-9  A summary of the author’s theoretical & methodological journey
Chapter 4: Research, methodology and research environment

The use of multiple methods in qualitative research 'reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomena in question'

(Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p. 5)
4.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in the previous two chapters has unveiled a strong synergy between Engagement as a meta-practice, and Chaos/Complexity. This chapter builds on the synergy and describes the ontology, epistemology and methodology used in this qualitative research thesis. It also provides information about Southern Cross University (SCU), its regional footprint, and the Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) to describe the research context. Details of the three Action Research (AR) areas of engagement and the research process are also provided, in addition to the research methods used to gather information, these being: Action Research; semi-structured reflective interviews; internal and external documentation and my journal. All of the data gathered will be viewed through the three data analysis tools: the Summary Documents, the Williams Data Analysis Tool, and the CST Chaordic Lens.

The Summary Documents and the Williams Data Analysis Tool are often used with AR as they provide opportunities to explore patterns and emergent themes (Berg 2001), and the Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT) also encourages the user to puzzle over non-conforming data and other exceptions. The CST Lens emerged during the literature review and it was decided to use it as a method of analysis to:

- reflect the Chaos/Complexity ontological perspective that underpins this thesis;
- provide an opportunity to view the data from another perspective;
- recognise complex environments;
- assist in determining whether CST approaches could enable engagement practice.

In true AR fashion the iterative cycles within and between the three areas of engagement activity overlapped and in some instances were concurrent. They were not orderly but inclined to be messy and at times interconnected. Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) argue the need to accept the plurality of perspectives and suggest that these different perspectives should be
“triangulated” against one another to provide a multi-faceted perspective, which will, at the very least, provide an inter-related perspective. The data analysis in Chapter 5 will be presented sequentially, with the analysis of the Summary Documents first, the WDAT second, and the CST Chaordic Lens will be presented last. Reflections and the subsequent learning that emerged from the AR cycles will also be reported.

While the areas of engagement provide a situational context for this research, it is important to note that context is also affected by other factors such as political, social, regional and community characteristics. An individual’s personality and perceptions, workplace experiences and their life-world or tribal connections, discussed in Chapter 2, can also add to the complexity of context (Coghlan & Shani 2005; Duke & Moss 2009; Favish & McMillan 2009; Gunasekara 2006).

In re-capping, the questions of enquiry to be examined in this thesis are:

1 How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?
2 How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?
3 How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

It is hoped some answers to these questions will emerge in the data analysis, and that this will assist SCU, whilst also contributing to the higher education sectors body of UCE knowledge. The findings and analysis may also assist the community at large.

4.2 Qualitative Research
According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 5) the qualitative researcher is a maker of quilts.
The quilter stitches, edits, and puts slices of reality together. This process creates and brings psychological and emotional unity – a pattern – to an interpretive experience.

They argue that quilt making is a self-reflective process that changes and adapts its form in response to specific contexts within complex situations. The study for this thesis simultaneously explores and contextualises academic literature in relation to the following areas of study. Engagement, including its principles and practices (such as connectivity and relationships), the contexts of region and community, the context of the university sector, SCU and the perspective of an embedded participant/researcher. To add further context, I commenced employment for one day per week as an Engagement Facilitator at the Coffs Harbour campus in 2005, and was awarded an SCU PhD Scholarship in January 2006 to undertake this research.

This qualitative research thesis is emergent in nature, and as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) note, qualitative research has three interconnected activities that define it – the ontology, the epistemology and the methodology. According to Heron and Reason (1997, p. 10) ontological questions are about the nature of reality; and epistemological questions are about the nature of knowing and methodological questions are ‘about how to know and what sorts of injunctions to follow’ in order to gain knowledge of the world. The ontology underpinning this thesis is Chaos/Complexity Theory, it was chosen because Engagement is intrinsically complex. The theoretical framework will provide a means of identifying the nature or reality of Engagement within the complex higher education environment. The epistemology cannot be separated from the ontology because the research area abounds in complexity, interconnectedness and participative activity. Therefore, in order to gain knowledge about Engagement in the context of this study, the epistemology is participatory.

The participatory worldview allows us as human persons to know that we are part of a whole rather than separated as mind over and against matter, … it allows us to join with fellow humans in a collaborative form of enquiry (Heron & Reason 1997, p. 2).
The merging of different research techniques to create another research paradigm is recognised by Guba and Lincoln (2005), they note a *blurring of genres*, as research methodologies begin to interbreed and different theoretical rubrics emerge that are often informed by, and/or inform, other methodologies. They acknowledge that the Participatory/Co-operative paradigm put forward by Heron and Reason (1997) is transformative and has an emphasis on collaborative action enquiry that is embedded in communities in order to produce co-created findings. Therefore, this thesis utilises Action Research (AR) as an epistemology and a methodology, and is underpinned by Chaos/Complexity Theory.

In embracing the notion of “complexity” other theoretical notions such as Systems Thinking, (Section 3.3) and Engagement, particularly UCE (Section 2.3) are also utilised. To some extent Quantum Thinking and tribal, or life-world perspectives have also influenced the research process and activity. From a methodological perspective, the research findings are examined through the reflexive elements of AR, and three data analysis matrices – Summary Documents; WDAT; and the CST Chaordic Lens – that have emerged from Chaos/Complexity Theory. Table 4-1 summarises the research enquiry paradigm from ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>General Description</th>
<th>The Research Enquiry Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontology</td>
<td>Nature of reality or way of being</td>
<td>Chaos/Complexity Theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology</td>
<td>Nature of knowing, or way of questioning</td>
<td>A participatory AR approach that utilises the qualitative research concepts of the “bricoleur” and the “bricolage”, this is underpinned by Chaos/Complexity Theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Way of examination or analysis</td>
<td>Reflexive AR cycles and three analysis matrices: Summary Documents, Williams Data Analysis Tool, and the CST Chaordic Lens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4-1 The research enquiry paradigm*

This research is timely because Engagement – be it community engagement, university-community engagement, regional engagement, or another variety all together – and the need to engage, is of vital importance to the higher education sector. Latham (2001, p. 41) acknowledges the importance of
timeliness and urges the researcher to ‘be mindful of the times in which we live and the relevance of our research to those times’.

4.2.1 The Research Paradigm

Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 29) state that post-modern research is typified by AR and participation that focuses on ‘more local, small-scale theories fitted to specific problems and particular situations’ and this is often the case when seeking to enable Engagement within a regional context. It is also important to note that according to Zuber-Skerritt (2001) the expansion of knowledge (learning) is a shared experience and that participant reflection is an intrinsic element of such research. This research seeks to formalise the reflection and learning aspects of Engagement, including participant perspectives. As this research utilises AR, the reflective and learning elements into Engagement provided both the participant/researcher and co-participants with multiple learning opportunities to:

- better understand the notion of Engagement;
- assess how they currently engage – be it from an individual; University/school/centre; or business/government/community group perspective;
- assess the value or otherwise of Engagement, to themselves, their organisation and the community;
- reflect on the resultant feedback that may assist their learning and enable them to ‘engage’ more effectively.

The interactive and systemic nature of qualitative research results in the need to continually assess and make adjustments throughout the research process to ensure a holistic approach. The research intent is to focus on participant actions, perceptions, and reflection on the what; the how; and the why of Engagement at SCU. Internal and external viewpoints are incorporated into the findings as they manifest within the University as well as through the strategic, and functional or operational activities of the AR activities. It is important to recognise that this complex environment is also affected by a milieu of underlying social and political systems.
4.2.2 The Qualitative Researcher

In the previous chapter the potential for role conflict for Action Researchers was identified because of differing expectations, role ambiguity, and mental modes (Skaret, Send & Roberts 2001). Like the Action Researcher, the AR data is contextually embedded and interpreted, and it provides the basis for validation through the conscious and deliberate enactment of the AR cycle. The Action Researcher is immersed in the research setting (Coghlan 2004). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) urge the biographically situated researcher to be aware that each phase of their work is affected by both ethics and politics. Ethical issues apply throughout the entire research process, from the interview, to the field texts and on to the development of the research text (Clandinin & Connelly 1994). Qualitative research is endlessly creative and interpretative because information is constantly being managed and interpreted by the researcher. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) argue that while there is no interpretative truth, the researcher develops a field text during the creative process; thereafter, as the writer-interpreter, this evolves into a research text or working document, prior to completion as a public text or thesis.

According to Coghlan and Shani (2005) the emergent nature of AR can make it difficult to identify ethical issues at the outset. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Action Researcher to ensure that ethical principles guide their work and that when dilemmas arise ‘the [action] researcher must face and resolve in the context of each particular action research project’ (Coghlan & Shani 2005, p. 538). Within an AR context ethical behaviour is built on authentic relationships, shared values and norms. I have been mindful of my role as both researcher and researched and have sought to create an environment whereby any potential conflict is prevented before it arises. However, as revealed in Section 5.9 it is not always possible to predict how a situation will unfold. A key element of the participatory nature of AR is that it ‘encourages the development of a critical consciousness that assists in the development of an individual participants’ ethical responsibility and moves them from a narrow self-oriented focus to a broader 'common good' perspective’ (Cuthill 2007, p. 5). The study utilises a variety of qualitative inputs to establish
various means of embedding an enduring and sustainable culture-of-engagement within SCU, between SCU and its various communities, and to some extent, those communities beyond its regional footprint.

4.3 The Research Journey
The nexus of Chaos/Complexity Theory supports the participatory approaches of Action Research (AR) and the content literature in the areas of Engagement also supports the use of AR. The role of the participant researcher will vary according to the needs of the community and the research activity. Open communication and engagement builds trust (Buys & Bursnall 2007; Duke & Moss 2009) and networks of trust within and between organisations are based on working towards common goals (Hawkins 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Line</th>
<th>Literature Review</th>
<th>Action Research Projects</th>
<th>Other Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Engagement Including engagement practices Community &amp; Region Systems Thinking Action Research Qualitative Research Grounded/Critical Theory Quantum Thinking Etcetera</td>
<td>Coffs Council 2 Student Interns Engagement Audit ASLaRC Skills Up-Date</td>
<td>PhD Ethics Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>CHCC Creative Industries Development</td>
<td>Bellingen Council 1 Student Intern IRG Lismore</td>
<td>Semi-structured Interviews Document Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>+ IRGs Tweed Gold Coast &amp; Coffs Harbour</td>
<td>Further compilation Analysis of Findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2 The author's time-line of inter-connected and iterative action research and thesis related activities
Table 4-2 presents the thesis journey as a sequential process; however, it was a “messy”, iterative and interconnected. The arrows on this table seek to indicate that my review of the various theories explored in Chapters 2 and 3, and the AR activities did not occur in isolation – as each informed and was informed by the others. Earlier I referred to the Guba and Lincoln (2005) notion of the “blurring of genres”, and there was considerable “blurring” between my dual roles of Action Researcher and ORE facilitator. However, while I was aware of the potential for conflict, I deliberately chose not treat the roles as mutually exclusive activities, I reasoned that learning from one area could provide valuable knowledge elsewhere, because each informs and can be informed by the other.

4.4 A little about SCU & the ORE
Southern Cross University (SCU) has a strong “teaching and learning” focus that is historically connected, and its research specialties are plant conservation genetics and geoscience, as well as phyto-chemistry and pharmacology, children and young people, and marine ecology. There are also emergent research clusters in health and well-being, and regional and economic development (SCU-Research 2010). SCU emerged over 23 years prior to its legislation in 1994. Initially established in February 1970 as the Lismore Teachers College, September 1971 saw it became the Lismore College of Advanced Education. In 1989 it became a member of the newly constituted networked University of New England. However, the network was dismantled in 1992 and SCU was legislated by an act of the NSW Parliament in October 1993 and commenced operation on 1 January 1994 to serve the north coast region of NSW (SCU-History 2008). In 2008 the SCU student population was 15,560 with a full-time equivalent (FTE) load of 9,392.6, and in 2009 there were 930 FTE staff, combining 343 academic and 587 non-academic staff (SCU-PQR 2008). The Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) was established in July 2005 to facilitate Objective 4 of the University’s Strategic Plan (2005-10):

*SCU will take a prime role in the intellectual, economic, environmental, social and cultural development of our region* (Clark, P 2005, p. 2).
In order to support the growth of UCE the SCU Strategic Plan (2005-10) placed regional engagement firmly on the agenda and this commitment was strongly reinforced in the Strategic Plan Mid-term Review in 2008. The Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) was established in 2005, as detailed in the previous chapter, and Regional Engagement was given prominence on the front page of the SCU website <http://www.scu.edu.au/index.php> and in 2006 a two-year Regional Engagement Functional Plan 2006-08 (REFP) was developed.

Initially the ORE was a work-unit\(^{20}\) within the Graduate Research College (GRC). The GRC established the ORE because a need was identified. ‘The research budget was used to support [the ORE] and try to make a start … it has snowballed … it’s not where we’d like to be, but it has progressed’ (15-IP 2008). In July 2005 the ORE had 1.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff comprising: one full-time academic, one three day per week engagement officer, and a one day per week administration assistant (finance) based at the Lismore campus. In November 2005 a one-day per week Engagement Facilitator was appointed at Coffs Harbour, and in May 2008 a two-day per week position commenced at Tweed-Gold Coast. As at August 2009, the ORE has 3.0 FTE staff across the three campuses. The ORE is responsible for facilitating engagement activities, ORE staff are members of regional boards, networks and community groups and seek to grow capacity by working with others within and outside the University, particularly in key fields of education, ageing, environmental management and climate change, health and human sciences, arts, social development, tourism, law and business (Office of Regional Engagement 2009c). The ORE also undertakes MoU negotiation, liaison and monitoring roles between the University and 16 local government and regional organisations, and oversees informal partnership activity with nine other community and regional organisations.

\(^{20}\) At SCU a “Work Unit” is a school, centre, department or office that has budgetary responsibility, such as the ORE, the International Office or the Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian People.
4.5 The Regional Footprint

Since its inception in 1994, the Southern Cross University *regional footprint* has extended across the North Coast of NSW – encompassing the Mid North Coast (MNC), and Northern Rivers (NR) regions of NSW. In 2009-2010 SCU expanded into southeast Queensland with the opening of a new campus located at the southern end of the Gold Coast. The population of this metaregion is growing. Between 2001–2006 the population of the North Coast of NSW increased at a growth rate of 1.2% p.a. compared to the NSW state average of 0.8%. At July 2009 the MNC had a population of 268,949 (id demographics 2009) and the NR 238,711, a total of 536,427 people living between Taree and Tweed Heads, an overall distance of 530 kilometres. The Gold Coast has a very high population growth with an increase of 3.55% between 2006 and 2007 (Business Gold Coast 2009) and a population of 472,281 (id demographics 2009) people living within a 70-kilometre distance.

In late 2006 the NSW State Plan was developed, following consultation with the business and broader community. ‘The State Plan aims to strengthen regional economies and facilitate increased business investment in rural and regional NSW’ (AEC Group 2008). Both the Mid North Coast Regional Development Board (MNCRDB) and Northern Rivers Development Board (NRDB) have been working with key business and industry stakeholders to facilitate a transformation of the region’s economic base (AEC Group 2008; Strom 2008). To underpin this activity, the MNCRDB released a MNC Green Paper in 2005 and a Regional Economic Profile (REP) (AEC Group 2008) in 2008, while the NRDB similarly developed a Working Paper for a Regional Industry and Economic Plan (RIEP) in 2003, the RIEP was developed during 2005 with the aim of being pro-active ‘rather than respond to issues and opportunities for growth as they present themselves in the development of a RIEP’ (Northern Rivers NSW 2005).

In order to grow a sustainable regional economy, the importance of developing economic diversity and high value employment opportunities is strongly emphasised by both the MNC-REP and the NR-RIEP. The
‘expansion of educational opportunities with links to industry throughout the region is encouraged’ (Northern Rivers NSW 2005, p. 16). Furthermore, while the provision of *hard infrastructure* such as transport and high speed broadband are economic enablers, the development of *soft infrastructure* such as knowledge development through research is vital and Southern Cross University already contributes, and can continue to contribute to this. An opportunity mooted in the NR-RIEP (p. 23, 2005) is that ‘the region should explore its potential to be classified as a *Disadvantaged Region*, under the Disadvantaged States Act to assist its claims for additional financial assistance’. The university could investigate this opportunity.

Small and micro business dominates the regional economy. A business survey conducted as part of the development of the MNC-REP revealed that while businesses range from small home-based business to multi-national corporations nearly three quarters qualify as *small businesses*, with a turnover well below $2.0 million per annum. MNC survey respondents identified a number of key issues including – the training and development of existing staff, finding appropriately skilled staff and gaps in available trade, TAFE and university courses. They also identified that business growth would be better supported by structured sector networking, improved access to seminars covering issues faced by small business and access to people with trade related skills, finance and business skills, and marketing and sales skills.

While the NR has a slightly smaller population and a smaller geographic area than the MNC, it has a stronger economy. One clear demonstration of this disparity is the labour force participation rate, which is 39% for the MNC and 50% for the NR. Both areas have significantly lower labour market participation than more mature or broader based economies, for example, capital cities and metropolitan areas like the Gold Coast, which generally have a labour force participation rate of 65-66% (Northern Rivers NSW 2005). The largest contributing sectors of the Northern NSW regional economy is across the following industry sectors: Retail, Health & Community Services, Education, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Accommodation, and Culture
and Recreation (AEC Group 2008; Northern Rivers NSW 2005). The MNC-REP links closely with the NSW State Plan that ‘aims to strengthen rural and regional economies and facilitate increased business investment in rural and regional NSW’ (AEC Group 2008). SCU was a partner in the development of the NR-RIEP, and facilitated a series of consultative industry round-tables, and had some involvement in the MNC-REP. SCU will have an opportunity to contribute to industry and regional development activities that will flow from the NR-RIEP and the MNC-REP through the Regional Development Australia Boards established in July 2009.

4.6 Action Research areas

Three areas of Action Research inform this study: an Internal Activities including the Internal Reference Group (IRG), four Local Government projects, and two Aged Services Learning & Research Centre (ASLaRC) collaborations, as shown in Diagram 4-1.

The Internal Reference Group (IRG) was a direct outcome of a Deliberative Jury process undertaken at the Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Tweed-Gold Coast campuses of SCU in May 2006. This process involved the active participation of internal and external stakeholders, and its purpose was to seek ways in which a culture-of-Engagement could be enabled within SCU, as well as between SCU and its regional community. The outcomes assisted in the development of SCU’s Regional Engagement Functional Plan (REFP). The Jurors comprised a randomly selected mix of academic and non-
academic staff who heard evidence from an internal and an external panel of Expert Witnesses. The internal witnesses were the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Head of ORE, while the external Expert Witnesses included business/industry leaders and community representatives associated with each campus.

According to Fisher (2006) post Jury feedback from external Expert Witnesses indicated that understanding of the challenges facing SCU had changed as a result of their involvement, while feedback from Jurors indicated that staff appreciated the inclusion of external people because it provided them with the opportunity to hear their points of view. According to Garnett (2004) participation is the key element of the Deliberative Jury method because it adds depth and width to the decision making process. Garlick (2001) argues that engagement with key players and organisations assists in raising awareness and encourages collaboration between local stakeholder and industry groups and the university. Carson & Gelber (2001) suggest a key element of the deliberative process is the implementation of Jury recommendations, they caution that if this does not occur, then it is incumbent upon the decision makers to publicly provide sufficient grounds to explain why this is the case.

4.6.1 Internal activities – Internal Reference Group (IRG) & Audits
As indicted in the previous section, one key recommendation emanating from the Jury process was the need for an on-going internal consultation/engagement group (Fisher, K. 2006), this was enacted through the establishment of a university-wide IRG. The first meeting was convened in March 2007 and since then the IRG has met in Lismore on a quarterly basis. The IRG was established to provide a means of communication and a referral function for engagement across the University (Strom et al. 2007). The Head of each Work Unit was asked to nominate an IRG representative to be the contact and conduit between their Work Unit and the ORE, in addition to other work units and the broader community. IRG members were also required to gather, filter and disseminate information and opportunities to
other people in their Work Unit, particularly academic staff. It is important to note that some IRG members represented work units that operate on more than one campus therefore, inclusive inter-campus communication mechanisms are vital. In order to be effective the IRG, like the Jury, should be empowered to make recommendations that will be seriously considered by their Work Unit head and where appropriate, the University executive.

During 2007 it was clear that there was limited engagement by IRG members beyond Lismore campus. As a consequence, in September 2008 all staff located at Tweed-Gold Coast and Coffs Harbour campuses were invited to be part of their own campus-based IRG. In order to strengthen a one-University approach to engagement the first annual Engagement Showcase was held in October 2008 via videoconference across the three campuses to demonstrate and encourage inter-campus and indeed, whole-of-university engagement activity and best-practice (Office of Regional Engagement 2009a). The second Showcase was held in June 2009 and attended by the Vice Chancellor, and throughout 2009 quarterly IRGs were conducted at each campus. I was an active participant at the IRG’s.

The Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) undertook University-wide Regional Engagement Activity Audits in 2006 and 2008. Garlick (2001) emphasises the importance of taking baseline audits as a means of establishing the range and impact of engagement activity that is being undertaken by academic and non-academic individuals. Such audits can assist in building a profile of organisational activities; increase stakeholder understanding of organisational breadth and diversity; provide a means of evaluation; and build collaborative relationships and support within an organisation (Elliot, Sandeman & Winchester 2005; Garlick 2001; LaBerge & Svendson 2000; Svendson, A. 1999).

In 2006 25 work units located within four organisational units were identified and asked to participate. Audit participants were asked to identify their activities, regional partners and the impacts of their engagement. An electronic Audit pro-forma was used to record the information and as a
prompt, examples of regional engagement activities were included to assist participants. Completion of the Audit was linked to 1.5% of the individual work units funding for 2007. In 2008 the number of work units increased to 36 within six organisational units and no financial incentive was linked to the Audit completion.

4.6.2 Aged Services Learning & Research Centre (ASLaRC)

The Aged Services Learning and Research Centre (ASLaRC) has been used to inform this thesis because ASLaRC had its genesis in the community and I was part of the team associated with its emergence. In 2000, the Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC) identified several key sectors that underpinned the local regional economy including education, and health and aged care. This region covers the Coffs Harbour, Bellingen and Nambucca local government areas. Councillors and senior staff met with the SCU executive in 2001-2002 to identify and support opportunities that were mutually beneficial to each organisation and the community (Strom, 2006).

A cross-disciplinary, cross-sectoral group emerged in 2002 and resulted in the establishment of the ASLaRC, a collaboration between SCU, CHCC, the University of New South Wales (UNSW), and public and private health sector providers. However, it was three years before significant external sponsorship was attracted from Bananacoast Credit Union (BCU) to enable the establishment of the inaugural Foundation Professor. Meanwhile, on-going discussion or multilogue between the partners revealed a high level shared consciousness around the health needs of ageing citizens. It was clear that these needs could only be met by a broad quality of life (or wellness) approach that required inputs from other sectors in addition to health and aged sector organisations. Consequently TAFE, developers and local service clubs were invited to join the collaboration.

Between 2002 and 2004 two significant achievements were the establishment of the University of NSW Rural Doctors Training School in Coffs Harbour

21 At this time I was a Councillor with the Coffs Harbour City Council, a member of the Health Care Working Party and working with Marketing & Community Relations at SCU.
(2002), and Southern Cross University commencing delivery of the Bachelor of Nursing programme at its Coffs Harbour campus (2004). In early 2005 the Foundation Professor commenced and continued to build on the strong connectivity within and beyond the Aged Care and Aged Services. A number of ASLaRC partnerships emerged, including the following collaborations: the Skills Up-Date programme, and the Yarrawarra Aged Care development project. I was an active participant in both Areas of Engagement. The action and learning associated with both of these AR activities will be addressed in Chapter 5 in the Report on Action #3.

4.6.3 Local Government (LG)

The establishment of positive, effective, and productive relationships with local government is a key whole-of-University engagement strategy that is overseen by the ORE. SCU’s collaborations with local government include internships, scholarships, case study research, field trips, mentoring, and conferences. ‘Partnerships can be formal via Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) or informal, and may also include collaborative funding applications and project management’ (Derrett 2008a). SCU has 15 formal MoU with local government, regional and community organisations, and businesses as well as partnership activities with 11 other organisations across northern NSW and south-east Queensland (Office of Regional Engagement 2009c). Since its establishment in 2005 the ORE has facilitated a number of projects and on-going activities with its MoU partners. For example, the University formalised its relationship with Lismore City Council (LCC) in 2003 and with Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC) and Bellingen Shire Council (BSC) in 2008 through the establishment of MoU.

I was a co-participant in four LG engagement activities, three with Coffs Harbour City Council and one with Bellingen Shire Council. These AR activities form the basis of this research and many of the AR participants were also interviewed. A synopsis of each project is provided below. In addition to data drawn from the aforementioned AR projects, I also refer to the Wilson River Experience Walk (WREW), a Lismore-based collaborative project in which I did not participate.
Coffs Harbour City Council:

- **2006 2 x Student Internships – Economic Development Unit:**
  Two final year undergraduate Bachelor of Business students participated in a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) project with CHCC. The project was a double weighted unit and the students were to complete 300 hours of work on their project. They were co-supervised by the CHCC Economic Development Manager and me.

- **2007 Creative Industries – Arts & Cultural Development:**
  The collaborative team working on this project included a number of CHCC staff: the Arts and Cultural Development officer, the director of Regional Gallery, the Museum and the Bunker Cartoon Gallery; and the manager of the Library. Two SCU researchers were involved, a SCU PhD Alumnus undertook the literature review, and a recent SCU graduate, who had also been involved in a WIL activity with Bellingen Shire Council (see below), undertook the primary research. I analysed the data and authored the final report “Creating Creative Industries: Creative Industries profile for the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area”.

- **2008 The Cultural Trails collaboration – Arts & Cultural Development**
  This AR activity emerged from the Creating Creative Industries project. The Cultural Trails project involved extensive collaboration and/or liaison between four CHCC departments – Arts and Cultural Development, Economic Development, the Heritage Office, and four CHCC cultural facilities: the Jetty Theatre, the Regional Gallery, the Bunker Gallery and the Coffs Museum). Other project collaborators included visual, literary and performing artists, commercial galleries and cafés, the Coffs Coast Tourism Association, and staff and students from SCU, including myself as project facilitator.
Bellingen Shire Council:

- **2007 1 x Student Internship – Camp Creative**

A final year undergraduate Bachelor of Social Science (Community Development) student undertook a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) project, which involved assessing the impact of *Camp Creative* on Bellingen for the BSC. The project was a double weighted unit and the student completed 300 hours of work on the project. The student was co-supervised by the BSC Tourism Manager and me.

### 4.7 Research Methods

This Qualitative Research study uses multiple research methods in order to gain a more in-depth understanding (Denzin & Lincoln 2005) of UCE and to provide an opportunity for many perspectives to be revealed. Welch (2001, p. 67) observes that Qualitative Research ‘… is not a “one person” band pushing back frontiers of ignorance and the unknown but, rather, a process of co-creation: researcher with participant in the generation of new knowledge as explicated through human experience’. In recognising this notion of co-creation I chose to employ a variety of research methods for data collection in
order to view the world of Engagement, particularly University-Community Engagement, through “multiple lenses”. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) encourage accessing the same story from different points of view to assist in the 'crystalisation' of data. Table 4-3 summarises the research gathering methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>Involved iterative, cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection that included learning and review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>Provided an opportunity to record and reflect upon my participant/researcher role, and perceptions on the journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Conducted with a cross section of participants who had previously been, or were at the time of interview, active in one of the three UCE activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Review</td>
<td>Both internally and externally generated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-3 Research gathering methods employed

4.7.1 Action Research
Action Research (AR) was chosen as a way of doing (epistemology) and a way of examining (methodology) because it is flexible and responsive, and encourages curiosity and questioning. What action has been taken? What happened as a result of that action? What did we learn? What action will we take now? AR is about continually testing assumptions. My own work (and life) philosophy has a strong action learning orientation, and AR is a natural extension of my style. It also fits the OREs approach to facilitating a culture of Engagement at SCU. The link between taking action and creating knowledge means that my learning has been iterative and applied throughout, and the AR cycles of – plan, act, observe and reflect – are appropriate for the highly interactive UCE arena. The iterative nature of AR allowed for the inclusion and testing of tacit and explicit knowledge, and a complex mix of layered, concurrent, inter-connected, and messy cycles across the three activity areas as illustrated in Diagram 4-3.
The three areas of AR depicted in Diagram 4-3 were undertaken between 2006 and 2009. The three Local Government AR activities took place between 2006 and 2008, the IRG was established in 2007 and operated throughout the duration of this research, and the ASLaRC AR activities referred to in this thesis were undertaken between 2006 and 2009. As indicated in Diagram 4-3, the key elements of AR were an intrinsic element of these projects, and this was from both individual (myself as a co-participant) and team-member perspectives. Coghlan (2007, p. 70) refers to AR as
“insider research” that can have a two-fold effect. Firstly it involves real events that need to be managed within real time frames; secondly, the findings can contribute to knowledge beyond the organisation, in this instance, through the production of this thesis. Insider researchers are already immersed within their organisations and this distinguishes it from an external research approach. The knowledge gained is generated from the researchers observations and learning, and reflection upon those experiences and their 'experimenting in real life situations' (Coghlan 2007, p. 294). This notion was congruent with my own experience across these three activity areas, as I was in a constant conscious cycle of “plan, act, observe/review and reflect” upon my actions and/or the actions of the group in order to progress the projects. While the projects occurred more or less in parallel it is important to note that the AR cycles were not regular and predictable and each project experienced times of intense activity interspersed by times of limited or negative activity.

4.7.2 Reflective Journal

According to Swepson (2001) personal reflections or journals offer the opportunity to compare thoughts and feelings at different times throughout the research process. Dick (1997) contends that a reflective journal enables the researcher to record their learning on the journey. This assists in the thesis preparation because it identifies emerging interpretations, refinements and changes in methods, and a review of different literature, related to both the content and the methods. Reflection also connects our experience and feelings with our intuitive senses and makes those lessons available to us because they have been made explicit (Cartwright, T. 2007). Williams and Harris (2001, p. 101) cite three advantages of documenting the reflection process. Firstly, they suggest that recording things in real time, rather than as a recollection allows the researcher ‘to compare what seemed important at the time with what was actually important later; [and] avoid inaccurate memories’. Secondly, on-going reflection is intrinsic to the AR process and deliberate documentation enables the emergence of accurate, valid and relevant data (Buys & Bursnall 2007). Finally, structured reflection is more effective because it enables busy people to take time to think in a fairly
focused way that separates the act from the observation thus encouraging the researcher to look out into the wider environment. They observe that noting what did not occur might be as important, or perhaps more important, than noting what did actually occur. Reflexive comments, both mine and other participants, are used in Chapter 5.

Action and reflection are the key elements of AR process (Costello 2003) and the reflection after the action is the intellectual journey that leads to theory building (Kumar & Sankaran 2007). On-going reflection was a feature of my research activity and much of this has been in the form of mind maps, diagrams and other models, some of which I have included in my thesis. Diagram 4-4 is an example of my reflection upon the inter-relationship between AR and Engaged Scholarship.

![Diagram 4-4 Developing a 'culture-of-engagement'
(Source: The author’s Reflective Journal 2007)]

### 4.7.3 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative research includes AR, participant observation (including reflection), an assessment of documentation and semi-structured interviews. Whereas Dey (1993) suggests that the latter can be a grey area for some, Clandinin and Connelly (1994, p. 420) support the use of research interviews because they 'provide a frame within which the participants shape their accounts of their experience'.

167
A combination of purposive sampling and expert sampling was used in the selection of interviewees. 'A purposive sample is often (but by no means exclusively) a feature of qualitative research, where the sample is chosen on the basis of typicality or particular characteristics sought' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007, pp. 114-5). Trochim (2006) recommends using purposive sampling where sampling for proportionality is not the primary purpose, as is the case in this study. Sample size is not necessarily an issue and according to (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007) in Qualitative studies, smaller sample sizes may suffice, particularly if they are representative, and other data sources are also used. This is the case in this thesis. Trochim (2006) notes that the use of non-proportional quota sampling is less restrictive because

...you’re not concerned with having numbers that match the proportions in the population. ...This method is the non-probabilistic analogue of stratified random sampling in that it is typically used to assure that smaller groups are adequately represented in your sample (Trochim 2006).

A pool of 46 potential participants – academics, non-academics, and students, from SCU as well as business, industry, local government and community members from across the “Regional/Community” – were approached to partake in a semi-structured interview. Thirty-four were from the Deliberative Jury and six each from the Local Government and ASLaRC activities. Twenty–eight letters of invitation were sent to potential members of SCU, of these, twenty-three participated fully, however, one SCU academic was involved in the Jury and ASLaRC activity, and is therefore counted in the latter group. There was an ORE observer at each Deliberative Jury. An ORE colleague attended Lismore and Tweed, while I attended the Coffs Harbour Deliberative Jury.

Two of the “Regional/Community” people were unable to take part, one from Coffs Harbour and another from Tweed Heads. All others responded promptly to telephone and email communications, with the exception of one local government person. All summary documents were released and four participants made minor changes. The variation in response timeliness
between “University” and “Regional/Community” interview participants was very noticeable, with academic staff in particular requiring more follow-up emails and phone calls. The different response rates could have a cultural basis; however, the difference could not be attributed to levels of busyness, because it could be argued that the workloads and time pressures of those outside the “University” are not less onerous than that experienced by those within. Thirty-eight interviews were conducted between June 2007 and March 2008, representing an overall response rate of 83%. The response rate of those invited to take part in the “University” was 68% and the response rate of the “Regional/Community” was 86%. Through the interview process participants revealed their perceptions and understanding in relation to:

- engagement and the need for the University to engage;
- engagement opportunities and challenges;
- engagement as part of/not part of teaching and learning, and research;
- community and region;
- their own engagement experience.

The interviews were recorded, with permission, and while the list of predetermined topic areas guided the process, many 'unscheduled probes' occurred to clarify or learn more about a particular issue (Berg 2001). This less structured approach provided people with the chance to 'express themselves more freely and thus have greater voice both in the research process and in the research report' (Fontana & Frey 1994, p. 368). I was mindful that a close rapport between interviewees and myself could influence the study or result in lost objectivity (Berg 2001). In order eliminate or reduce undue “researcher” influence or bias during the study, the pre-interview, interview and post-interview processes, participants were given ample opportunity to withdraw, review, clarify, or provide feedback and correction. All Summary Documents were emailed to participants unless otherwise requested. Interview participant signatures, verifying the release of the material, were required on release forms which could be submitted in hard copy or electronically. In June 2009 the findings chapter was sent to all participants who could be contacted; five responded, with one internal participant requesting a minor change. A copy of all correspondence has
been retained and a summary of the 6-step participant interview and review process, details about the ethics approval process and interview related procedural matters are in the appendices.

4.7.4 Document Review

A number of internally and externally generated documents and reports were also analysed to provide further data and other perspectives for this study. Table 4-4 provides a list of the documentation reviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Reports and Documents</th>
<th>External Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SCU Strategic Plan 2005-10</td>
<td>1. AUQA Review 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Consultation for Regional Engagement Plan 2005-10</td>
<td>2. Review of Higher Education 2008 (Brad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. VoiceProject SCU Staff Survey Report 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Academic Application Promotions: Levels B-D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. SCU Benchmarking Survey 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4 Summary of documents reviewed

4.8 Analysis Matrices

Costello (2003, p. 47) argues for the use of multiple sources; continual assumption testing; the seeking of exceptions; and particularly ‘...the willingness to challenge your own ideas’. To facilitate this process three analysis matrices were used to analyse the data emerging from the research material: the Summary Document compilations (see Appendix A-2), the Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT) and the (CST) Chaordic Lens. Each tool drew upon data from the AR cycles, my reflective journal, the semi-structured interviews and the documentation. The Summary Document framework was shaped to some extent by the areas to be explored that were included in the Interview Guide and Checklist (Appendix A-2), mention of this was also included in my application for Ethics Approval. The Summary Document framework was also applied to data collected through the AR cycles. However, I did not become aware of the Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT) until much later in my research journey. This was then applied to the data that
had been collected. Using the WDAT with its emphasis on puzzling over non-conforming data, and the holistic approach of CST, provided a more comprehensive review of the findings than the Summary Documents alone would have delivered.

4.8.1 Summary documents
As befitting Action Research (AR) and qualitative research activities, Summary Documents were compiled to capture the broad characteristics of each iterative AR cycles – being the internal activities, and the ASLaRC and Local Government projects. As stated in Section 4.7.3, Summary Documents were compiled from transcripts of the semi-structured interviews with participants who had been active in the ASLaRC and Local Government projects in addition to some of the Jurors and Expert Witnesses who had participated in the 2006 Deliberative Jury. Internal and external documents were reviewed, and my Reflective Journal also provided additional input, including my observations of the AR activities. The accumulated data was read, interpreted, clustered and analysed to identify themes, patterns and shared meaning. The emergent patterns are described in Chapter 5. While this pattern analysis removed the outlying or non-conforming data it is important to note that this data was not lost because it was explored using the Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT).

4.8.2 Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT)
Bob Williams (2007) is an Action Researcher and Systems Thinker; therefore, his Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT) has great applicability to an AR study. This tool encourages the user to consider the generalisations and exceptions, as well as the contradictions, and missing or surprising data. It is a reflective method that encourages the user to look beyond the patterning, ‘… to puzzle over the data rather than pattern the data’ (Williams 2007). He acknowledges the work of Russian psychologist and social constructivist, Vygotsky (1896-1934) who postulated that we learn from two different practices. Patterning, where we fit current events into past events, and puzzling, where we seek explanations about why the current event does not fit
into past events, or even other current events (Williams 2007). Williams argues that puzzling over the outlying or non-conforming data increases the potential for learning and deepens understanding. The WDAT does more than identify issues, it also encourages the user to explore the generalisations and exceptions that are revealed in the raw data and to analyse these observations by asking: How? Why? So What?

Therefore it is important to ‘...consider the similarities and the differences of the experience with other experiences; and their significance by asking: "How can I use that understanding?" …’ (Williams & Harris 2001, p. 105). As indicated this tool encourages curiosity and looking beyond the obvious through the exploration of contradictions in data as well as missing data and any surprises that may emerge. WDAT (see Table 4.5) uses a mix of observation and dialogic exploration to approach the data. This is achieved through the use of “thought provokers”, and questions to prompt internal/external dialogue between team members or with one-self. The questions are: “What? How? Why? So What?” and this is followed by puzzling over the emergent material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessing the data: ... <em>Thought provokers</em> ...</th>
<th>Questions: ... <em>To prompt internal/external dialogue</em> ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalisations and Exceptions “...usually ...but”</td>
<td>What? – Observation of raw data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions “...on one hand ... on the other...”</td>
<td>How? Why? – Analysis of observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing and Surprises “...I'd expected ... but ...” and, “... I didn’t expect ... but ...”:</td>
<td>So What? – Significance of observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4-5 Summary of the WDAT approach to data analysis*

For example, drawing from the material in Appendix A-3, the following generalisations and exceptions in the raw data were observed:
I would usually expect to see the emergence of partnerships as a key element of UCE but the exception to this was the notion that UCE should be for the common good.

The data questioning process revealed the following insight. When seeking to grow UCE through partnership activity there should a greater focus on leadership and recognition that social and/or community outcomes were as important as individual outcomes. In puzzling over this it is clear that UCE partnerships will work when personal/professional and organisational benefits are required in order to contribute to the common good. Therefore, all of these perspectives need to be considered when establishing UCE partnerships; organisation to organisation “mutual benefit” will not suffice, individuals also need to derive benefit.

It is important to recognise that while the data that is “puzzled” over may only represent a minority respondent view, it does, nonetheless, provide valuable information. AR also encourages the exploration of divergent thinking and Costello (2003) and Dick (1997) both recognise the importance of patterns. They also encourage discussion about all data, and ‘if there is agreement then the researcher seeks the exceptions and if there is disagreement the search is for explanations’ (Dick 1997).

4.8.3 Chaordic Systems Thinking
As discussed in Chapter 3, Fitzgerald and van Eijnatten (2002) recognise that virtually all systems could be described as being chaordic – that is, they argue in favour of having a balance between chaos and order. However, they use the term in relation to organisational systems that are intentionally designed to operate in far-from-equilibrium (FFE) conditions. As previously noted, they argue that CST enables organisations to 'thrive in the turbulence and flux of the global marketplace' (Fitzgerald & van Eijnatten 2002b, p. 407).

I will consciously don the Chaordic Lens as an additional means of reflecting upon and reviewing the data that has emerged from this study. To re-cap, chaordic thinkers have identified five precepts of CST – consciousness, connectivity, indeterminacy, dissipation and emergence. CST has a holistic perspective, as it seeks to see, think, know and participate in the world.
beyond the usual structures and interventions to incorporate the whole in the development of solutions.
A Chaos-CST approach 'is not something one "does". Rather, it is
a way, and a very powerful way at that, of seeing, thinking and being
in our inexorably chaordic world (Fitzgerald 2002, p. 348).

In addition to the Summary Documents and the WDAT the research findings
were also reviewed using the core principles of CST as discussed in Chapter
3 and these are summarised below in Table 4-6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consciousness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind and matter are one – an unbroken “wholeness”; the OrgMind that is also an organisations holonic capacity; the <strong>shared truth, knowledge and understanding</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connectivity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The universe is one – a single unbroken and unbreakable pattern of relationships in which no “thing” can exist or event occur independently of the whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indeterminacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The future is a “wave of potential” unknowable in advance and therefore cannot be determined. Indeterminacy seeks patterns, focuses on strategic intent, and embraces the notion of spontaneous organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissipation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The universe is a dissipative structure, which perpetually cycles through a process of “falling apart” then coming back together again. Intentional dissipation does not guarantee the emergence of new ways, but it does increase the likelihood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergence is an intrinsic attribute of complexity that is adaptive and exemplified by “messiness” and creativity. While it cannot be modelled at the outset or controlled per se – it can be facilitated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-6 The core principles of chaordic systems thinking

Diagram 4-5 encapsulates the analysis tools used in this study of UCE that are described in this chapter and utilised in chapter 5. It is important to note that the data analysis did not happen in isolation, as each method of analysis informs and is informed by the others.
4.9 Conclusion – Toward the findings

The value of this in-depth study of one university is that it provided an opportunity to plan, act, observe and reflect on iterative cycles of action. The work of the ORE is not a “back-drop” to this thesis, it is integral to it. As an Action Researcher and an ORE team member I had a strong involvement in all of the engagement activity areas referred to in this thesis, with two exceptions, the Wilson River Experience Walk and the Lismore and Tweed-Gold Coast Juries. The integration of deep reflection that is an inherent element of AR allows the learning to 'simultaneously inform and create changes' (Burns 2007, p. 11). AR outcomes do not result in one-size-fits-all solutions that can be generalised or transferred. However, this learning can inform new plans and their subsequent actions and supports the development of models and other resources that could possibly be used and/or replicated in other contexts. This chapter has detailed the qualitative research methodology and research methods employed in this study and their natural connectivity with Engagement, and Chaos/Complexity. The information gathered will be used to explore the notion of University-Community Engagement and the resultant findings will help to shape the answers to the research questions, and to establish new knowledge and future research opportunities.
Chaordic processes are not about a closed circle and no participant has superior or inferior rights. Rather they are built upon the notion of a clear shared purpose and principles, combined with the right people, an effective concept, and proper structure, that allows a highly focused and effective practice to emerge because ‘...human spirit, commitment and ingenuity will be released. ... [and that results in] an ever widening and ascending spiral of complexity, diversity, creativity and harmony ... evolution’ (Hock 1999, pp. 13-4).
5.1 Introduction

This chapter sourced data from the three Action Research (AR) areas of engagement – internal activities, and the ASLaRC, and Local Government projects as described in Chapter 4. Data was also drawn from the documents referred to in Chapter 4\(^{22}\), semi-structured reflective interviews with internal and external participants, and my journal. A number of reflections from my journal are included and they appear in the lilac boxes throughout this chapter. The evaluation and analysis of engagement attitudes and understanding that are revealed in this Action Research (AR) study provide a means of learning how to enable a culture of engagement and increase levels of University-Community Engagement (UCE).

As indicated in Chapter 4, the data was analysed utilising three different tools:

- Summary Documents – to identify patterns and themes\(^ {23}\);
- WDAT – to puzzle over outlying or non-conforming data;
- CST Chaordic Lens – to view things from a “chaos/complexity” perspective.

The learning that emerges from the data analysis and the Action Research cycles is reported in this chapter and will inform the answers to the thesis questions.

1. How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?
2. How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?
3. How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

In addition to revealing participant attitudes and understanding of UCE in this chapter, I also introduce engageEnable©, which emerged as a direct result of the analysis of the findings of the study, and draws on Chaos/Complexity Theory, in particular CST.

---

\(^{22}\) See Table 4-2

\(^{23}\) See Appendix A3
I developed engagEnable© as a dialogue and diagnostic method to provide people with a UCE framework that would enable the emergence and development of a university-wide culture-of-engagement. Diagram 5-1 provides a visual representation of the data sources and the methods of analysis that are used.

To re-cap on Engagement as explored in Chapter 2, I emphasise that Engagement is a meta-lens that encompasses all the elements of engagement and engagement practices, including Engaged Scholarship. Engagement can be either formal or informal, it involves interactive, reciprocal, two-way relationships that are built upon trust, connectivity and shared meaning. Engagement practices are many and varied, including collaboration, leadership and partnership activities. UCE is Engagement activity that specifically links a University with individuals and communities, including business, industry, social and cultural groupings and governments, within and beyond its region. UCE is generally realised through Engaged Scholarship and Community Service activities.
5.2 Evidence of university-community engagement

In 2008 an external review of SCU was conducted by the Australian Universities Quality Audit (AUQA) Review (2008) and an SCU Staff Survey was also commissioned, and both reviews made reference to UCE. While the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Audit of Southern Cross University (2008) reviewed student experience and internationalisation, some engagement was reported, albeit from the perspective of student engagement specifically through internships and volunteer placements. The AUQA Report (2008) recognised the active work being undertaken by the University in relation to engagement with local communities, and it stated that regional engagement could be strengthened by building stronger links with Alumni, especially in relation to student placements and internships. Such activities are clearly UCE-raising opportunities. Following the AUQA review SCU Human Resources (HR) developed a Workforce Planning Guideline for all work-units that identifies regional engagement as a value add activity (Mossfield 2008); however, some documentary inconsistency is evident. The University Academic Promotion Guidelines, were also developed by HR, they did not refer to engagement per se, but suggested that evidence of ‘leadership and service’ could be provided to support a promotion application (Voice Project 2008). The 2006 Audit referred to in the Report on Action & Learning #1 acknowledges this inconsistency24. The necessary follow-through required to enable a culture-of-engagement has not permeated the functional structure of the University. The lack of a consistent shared language and a university-wide workload model demonstrated this UCE enabling short-coming. One senior academic noted there is a disparity between workload models in relation to engagement from discipline to discipline. Another academic advocated for engagement-related study leave provisions, engagement included in workloads, and engagement activities factored into promotion and recruitment requirements, as well as other rewards, such as the Vice Chancellors recognition scheme (16-IP 2008; 34-IP 2007).

24 See page 194
In May 2008 the SCU Office of Human Resources commissioned a Staff Survey (Voice Project 2008) to assess management and human resource practices. It was distributed to 1371 employees and elicited a 58% response rate. The survey managers stated that this was a good response rate compared to the responses from the 16 other Australian higher education institutions that had commissioned a Voice Project staff survey. The survey addressed six categories, including purpose, people, and participation, and 36 sub-categories, including organisational direction, leadership, workload, wellness, and regional engagement. Almost half of the 795 SCU respondents determined that regional engagement was not applicable to their work and 25% viewed regional engagement favourably. According to Voice Project (2008) this is on a par with findings at other Australian universities. The survey also revealed that 13% of respondents indicated that strong regional and community engagement is a core value of the University. Attitudes to Engagement were measured against two scales: progress and passion. The findings revealed that SCU staff exhibited a medium impact on progress and a low level of passion in relation to engagement (Voice Project 2008).

Looking beyond SCU, while UCE is on the agenda of most universities, it is not yet embedded into Australian higher education thinking and doing. This is despite the work undertaken by Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance Inc. (AUCEA), and other engagement academics, professionals and practitioners’ nationally and internationally. AUCEA seeks to diffuse an understanding of UCE through a number of means, including making representations to government and Universities Australia (formerly the AVCC), and through its annual conference and bi-annual e-journal. Some advancement of UCE into higher education consciousness was revealed in the Review into Higher Education: Discussion Paper (Bradley, D. 2008a) when it acknowledged engagement. The paper stated that current policy, funding, and regulatory environments did not support the full range of actual and/or potential engagement activity, including knowledge transfer. It also suggested that appropriate funding streams to better support engagement should be considered. This view was strengthened in the Review into Higher Education: Final Report (Bradley, D. 2008b) where UCE was recognised as
an integral component of teaching and research activity. The report recommended that higher education resources should to be increased to facilitate it; however, no indication of where these resources could be sourced was provided.

This chapter reports on the “action and the learning” that emerged from the different engagement activity areas that have provided rich data for the study. This chapter includes four reports on action and learning: The 2006-2008 Engagement Activity Audits; The Internal Reference Group; ASLaRC activities and Students engaging in Local Government projects. Each report addresses the following questions:

- What action was taken?
- What happened and what did we learn?
- What action was then taken?

While the action reported was iterative and included multiple layers of parallel and overlapping cycles, the reports highlight the key learning and provide a truncated and somewhat linear narrative of the action.

- REPORT ON ACTION & LEARNING #1 –
  The 2006-2008 Engagement Activity Audits

What action was taken?

In late 2006 the ORE conducted the first University-wide Engagement Activity Audit to ascertain the levels of University-Community Engagement activity within the University’s regional footprint.

What happened, and what did we learn?

The Audit revealed that since “engagement” had been identified as a key strategy in the 2005-2010 Southern Cross University Strategic Plan, the level of transformation towards an organisation-wide culture of engagement was limited. Respondents to the 2006 audit reported a total of 372 engagement activities, ranging from having a guest lecturer at an under-graduate class to complex multi-partner collaborations. Engaged Scholarship activity accounted for 27%, and this was comprised of Teaching and Learning 13% and Research 14%. There was a strong focus on Professional and Community Service-oriented engagement, such as the use of University facilities and staff involvement on community committees. This accounted for 58% of the total
promoted engagement activity. In general the reported collaborative engagement activities occurred within a work-unit, rather than being inter-disciplinary or trans-disciplinary (Strom 2007b, pp. 1-2).

**Key Learning:**

The post audit reflection revealed the following “learning”:

1. Despite the guidance provided in the audit pro-forma, some respondents were still uncertain as to what constituted a regional engagement activity.
2. Most work-units require some professional development to maximise their understanding of regional engagement issues as they relate to the University’s core activities of teaching and learning, and research.
3. Engagement activities impact on workload models, staff incentives and public access to University resources.25
4. The University needs to develop a strong communication strategy.

The 2006 Audit established engagement benchmarks and a second University-wide audit was proposed for November 2008.

**What action was then taken?**

The ORE improved internal UCE and communications by undertaking the following activities:

1. establishing the IRG in early 2007, with representatives from each work-unit being nominated by their head;
2. developing a ‘Getting Engaged’ professional development program to be conducted in late 2007;
3. working with various work-units, teams and individuals as required;
4. attending the Vice Chancellors’ quarterly forum, as well as faculty, school and other organisational or work-unit meetings;
5. improving communications by:
   - Distributing the ORE Update, a monthly email communiqué to all staff showcasing internal and external engagement activities. The update encourages staff to access the ORE’s website and places emphasis on the ORE’s availability to assist work-units and individuals to develop their engagement skills, or to facilitate or enhance their engagement activities.
   - Improving accessibility of the ORE website for internal and external use.

---

25 While the ORE is aware of these impacts they are beyond the ORE’s mandate. HR and the DVC are addressing the first two elements and the outcomes will need to be communicated to all staff – via the different work-units; Public access to University facilities is generally dealt with on an individual campus basis, and external use may be negotiated through various work units.
users, providing regular updates to identify, demonstrate and celebrate UCE, including activities with partners, such as local government, community organisations or business.

c. Working with the University Media and Communications work-unit to highlight University’s key areas of engaged activity and expertise, particularly to the external community;

d. When developing and negotiating Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with local government and regional organisations, the ORE is to ensure that areas of mutual interest and clear statements of shared intent are established at the outset and revised on a regular basis.

In addition to the ORE’s UCE communication activities the Vice Chancellors’ Weekly Update to all staff provided information on a variety of matters and was a significant internal engagement communication tool. Additionally, the Vice Chancellors’ Staff Awards provided an opportunity for the recognition of Engaged Scholarship activity and the further enhancement of a culture of engagement.

Our VC understands and practices engagement, ... and he knows how it can be used to the advantage of the University. He’s a practitioner, [and his] weekly newsletter demonstrates that – sometimes it’s personal, sometimes it’s formal and demonstrates leadership (16-IP 2008).

The ORE determined to conduct a second Regional Engagement Activity Audit in late 2008.

What action was then taken?

In November 2008 a second Engagement Activity Audit was undertaken. The audit pro-forma and accompanying material was reviewed and modified in response to feedback from the 2006 audit. While the 2006 audit was linked to 1.5% of the individual work-units 2007 funding, there was no financial incentive linked to completion of the audit in 2008.

What happened, and what did we learn?

The 2008 response rate was reduced to 47% of all work-units compared to 96% in 2006, and the need for professional development was again identified; however, the “Getting Engaged” training program that the ORE developed and offered to all work-units in late 2007 attracted a poor response.

While the number of work-unit responses decreased in 2008, the actual level of reported engagement activities increased; Engaged Scholarship activities accounted for 38% of all reported activity. This was comprised of Engaged Teaching and Learning 29% and Engaged Research and Discovery 9%. While this increase was pleasing, a
level of confusion about what constituted engagement activity was still apparent, despite guidance material being provided with the Audit document. It is important to acknowledge that the level of UCE is likely to be higher than has been reported.

**Key Learning:**
The key learning for the ORE from the 2008 Audit is:

1. The ORE is a small work-unit with 3.0 FTE staff across the Tweed-Gold Coast, Lismore and Coffs Harbour campuses in 2008. While the ORE actively supports the development of a culture-of-engagement it cannot and should not “do it all”, because the key to creating a culture-of-engagement is that it permeates the whole organisation.

2. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the ORE to continue to facilitate and enable engagement awareness through various activities, including the Internal Reference Groups (IRGs), a monthly e-newsletter and its website.

3. The ORE is also responsible for facilitating and monitoring the University’s Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with local government, regional and other organisations.

4. While the ORE team ‘serves as a gateway to encourage the exchange of information, ideas and issues between the academy and the wider community’ (Strom 2009d) the creation of a university-wide “culture-of-engagement” requires greater organisational and management support than the ORE is able to provide.

The following actions could assist the creation of a university-wide “culture-of-engagement”:

1. Clarifying and embedding the notion of “University-Community Engagement” and Engaged Scholarship:
   a. Inclusion of **Engaged Teaching & Learning** practices in all undergraduate and post graduate programs.
   b. Ensure **Engaged Research & Discovery** activities are linked to local and regional communities.
   c. Provide **Community Service** for the betterment of our communities and to support the common good.

2. Consistent use of language in relation to Engaged Scholarship in all documentation.

3. Ensure provision of “soft” infrastructure, such as:
   a. UCE allocation for all staff workloads (including fixed-term and casuals);
b. UCE knowledge, understanding and/or experience, as a key recruitment requirement;
c. UCE activity as key criteria for achieving promotion.

4. Support the establishment of an on-going UCE identification, enabling and reporting framework.

5. Recognise and reward ‘Engaged Scholarship’ activity.

As indicated above, if staff workload models do not specifically acknowledge and sponsor engagement as a way of doing, being and becoming the level of Engaged Scholarship activity is unlikely to increase. This issue is also identified in Report on Action & Learning #2. The key to enabling a culture-of-engagement to emerge and flourish across Southern Cross University is through the provision of the “soft infrastructure” mechanisms outlined above.

What action was then taken?
The above findings and action plan were presented at the Vice Chancellors Forum in March 2009 and a third audit was planned for 2010. There has been some preliminary discussion regarding the establishment of a collaborative partnership with the Performance Quality Review (PQR) work-unit to better audit and report on UCE.

Report on Action #1 – Engagement Activity Audit

The Audit did not include any input from external stakeholders. However, all external participants interviewed for this thesis indicated that engagement within and beyond their own workplaces was an integral component of their work. In contrast, only 30% of the internal participants specifically identified engagement activity as a key element of their work, but 61% indicated that they undertook UCE as an extra activity when required; and the remaining 9% consciously resisted the unequivocal acceptance of Engagement as a good thing.26

The findings that emerged from the semi-structured interviews revealed that all participants exhibited an awareness of some of the different elements of Engagement. This level of awareness could be attributed to a number of factors:

1. A large number of Internal Participants and External Participants (58%)

26 See section 5.4.1.
had participated in the Deliberative Jury in 2006 and their interest in, and an understanding of Engagement was piqued as they gained a better understanding of Engagement.

2. The interview process encouraged people to focus, and thus increase their sense of consciousness about Engagement.

3. The ORE’s on-going activities, such as facilitation of various activities and projects, quarterly IRGs, audits, and monthly ORE update have increased awareness.

4. The majority of the External Participants have had a long-term relationship with the University and/or with ORE staff through their involvement in one or more projects or activities.

5.3 Patterns and themes as revealed in the Summary Documents

As described in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.8.1) Summary Documents were compiled to capture the broad characteristics from my observation and reflection during each of the AR cycles, as well as from the data gathered from the semi-structured interview transcripts. Chart 5-1 provides a visual representation of the emergent patterns and themes emanating from the combined Summary Document data gathered in this study; the levels of support are indicated on a percentile basis, from internal, (blue) external (red), and combined (yellow) perspectives. The following key themes were identified:

- Relationships
- Leadership
- Access – including knowledge
- Communication
- Student focus
- Mutual benefit

The combined data disclosed recognition of the interconnected and interdependent nature of Engagement. Those external to the University appeared to place a higher value on engagement activity and the opportunities that could ensue from it. While the reflective element of the AR cycles revealed that participant notions of engagement were typically implicit.
rather than explicit, this was particularly noticeable amongst the external Local Government participants. In contrast, a number of IRG members, although highly conscious of engagement, did not implicitly connect it to their own work.

Chart 5-1 summarises the themes and patterns that emerged through the use of words, such as “relationships” and “leadership”. For example, Summary Documents of all external participants — that is, 100% of those interviewed and/or observed in the AR Cycles — emphasised the importance of “relationships” in Engagement. By contrast, only 45% of internal participants interviewed and/or observed referred to the importance of “relationships”. As an institution with a very strong teaching orientation, it is surprising that more internal participants did not identify relationships as an important area. It appears that academic staff are primarily interested in academic content, and most of their thinking revolves around teaching and learning rather than research or engagement activity.

The current teaching arrangement means that academics are flat out teaching, they see their academic role as primarily being a teacher – whereas it should be teaching, research and engagement (15-IP 2008).

The one area of exception was student focus, 43% of the participants within the University who were interviewed and/or observed identified this as an
important area, compared to 30% of those outside. This indicates that UCE was not yet an intrinsic part of SCU; according to one ORE facilitator, it was often seen as a “bolt on”. He noted that some people dread the idea of engagement because

\[ \text{… they don’t understand the nature of integration … this may result in a natural resistance, particularly if it is seen to interfere with their carefully structured world (17-IP 2008).} \]

For engagement to be embedded, it needs to be an intrinsic part of research and discovery, teaching and learning, consultancy and other entrepreneurial or community-based activities of the University. Another major challenge identified as having a detrimental effect on UCE development was the need for clarity regarding what the University counts as important and what it would recognise and reward. ‘In the past it has been research first, teaching second and regional engagement if you’re lucky’ (34-IP 2007). Each emergent pattern will now be explored in detail.

### 5.3.1 Relationships

From a CST perspective the importance of *unbroken patterns of relationships* or connectivity within and beyond an organisation is vital. This notion was expressed as the need for a *common thread* (31-EP 2007) of engagement to be *woven* into the fabric of the organisation (4-IP 2007), and it was identified by a number of participants.

\[ \text{There should be a “thread of engagement” … from the University strategic plan right down to day-to-day business … the accountability … and the reporting mechanisms need to be clearly identified for this [engagement] to be successful. … [At the moment] it’s a bit of a mish-mash (11-IP 2007).} \]

The ORE’s role was to facilitate relationships within the University, as well as between the University and its multiple communities, and the ORE page on the SCU website highlighted this.

\[ \text{The team at the Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) serves as a gateway to encourage the exchange of information, ideas and issues between the academy and the wider community. The team at ORE works closely with our regional communities - from individuals and community based organisations, to business and government at all levels (Office of Regional Engagement 2009b).} \]
The need for an ORE and its role as a conduit (13-IP 2007) within the university and out into the community was acknowledged by participants and largely supported. While recognising the expertise that existed within the ORE, one internal participant suggested that its primary role was to understand the constantly changing priorities, relationships, needs and demands within the community and the university in order to ‘...create connections and let the community know what we have available that might be of benefit to them’ (5-IP 2007). A suggestion that ORE focus on establishing connections, start-ups and seeding rather than recurrent activity was put forward because ‘the ownership needs to be with those in the appropriate discipline [area or areas]’ (16-IP 2008). This notion also emerged through the ORE’s AR cycles and as a consequence the ORE established a key focus on enabling and facilitating connectivity and relationship development to encourage broader UCE.

Relationships manifest in many ways. For instance, they may be individual and/or collective, formal and/or informal, and intra-organisational and/or inter-organisational in nature. The importance of relationships was seen as an integral component of UCE by all the external participants who were interviewed or observed during the course of this study. In contrast, only 43% of those within the University placed a significant value on relationships. This disparity needs to be better understood. For instance, an individual’s personal characteristics could have a positive or a negative impact upon their attitudes towards relationships and engagement. Similarly, the characteristics of organisational connection individuals may experience are likely to differ according to their stature as an employee or an outsider. For example, it is easier to attribute importance to an idea, such as UCE, when one is not directly beholden to an organisation. From an individual’s perspective the success of relationships may also depend upon their level of confidence and professional abilities, and how they are managed, from an organisational perspective.

The development of two-way organisational relationships that may involve multi-disciplinary project teams that could include a cross-section of community stakeholders (32-EP 2007), was put forward as a means of
sustaining engagement between the University and its community over the long-term. A University executive (14-IP 2008) suggested that relationships with the University could manifest in different ways. It may be built upon an existing relationship where there is connection, because of personal chemistry or a common interest. However, he cautioned that some people might be highly protective of such a relationship and not let anyone else in which could limit the on-going development of engagement from a broader University-wide perspective. Alternatively someone may approach the University with a good idea that may or may not bear fruit.

… but from an engagement perspective, how easily those outside are able to track their way through the University is a very real measure of the University’s commitment to regional engagement (14-IP 2008).

Since its emergence in 2002 the Aged Services Learning and Research Centre (ASLaRC) has established and maintained relationships with a significant number of public and private sector collaborative partners. Principally, the partners exhibited a high level of connectivity that resulted from shared intent, extensive cross-sector networking and interdisciplinary engagement. Their relationships were based on the mutual respect and trust that has built up over a significant period of time (Strom 2009a). However, several of the external partners noted that the benefits associated with the ASLARC relationship did not extend to the University, where a lack of flexibility and responsiveness had hindered a number of opportunities. For example, a community based NFP organisation that had a strong relationship with ASLARC, approached the University with a mentoring partnership proposal to establish a programme. The programme would provide 2-3 selected students with the opportunity to undertake a 6 month structured program in professional case management in the aged services. While it was not proposed that the programme be part of the students course work, the NFP felt it would provide students with invaluable workplace experience. This opportunity was not realised and this example clearly illustrated the lack of a university-wide culture-of-engagement that was needed if SCU was to become an “engaged institution” (Garlick 2001; Kellogg Commission 1999; Ramaley 2005).
The idea of “mutually beneficial relationships” garnered strong support; however, several external ASLaRC participants also recognised that balancing this with their own organisation’s needs could be challenging at times. One participant suggested that some people come to engagement looking at what the other party can do for them, rather looking at how they could add and create value. Therefore, he argued in favour of nurturing relationships and being “…selective in the partners you engage with (36-EP 2007). The need to build trust, and relationships, “…all the things that are basic in business, these skills need to be developed … and at the same time that provides a lot of skills and benefits to the community’ (38-EP 2007) was highlighted. In considering these perspectives it is important to manage expectations in relation to UCE activity and the notion of mutually beneficial relationships, by placing emphasise on the fact that those benefits may not occur at the same time, or necessarily in the same way, and they may fluctuate over time (Strom 2009b).

Relationship development in the YACL – Seeking a way to bridge the gap project was slow because many of those involved did not have a shared history, or if they did, it was on occasion a hindrance to the progression of the project. Many of the Aboriginal people were cautious; particularly the Elders, some of whom would automatically shutdown if someone from the government were present. One participant said this was because a number of Aboriginal people associated with the project were members of the Stolen Generation and their memories of authority and institutions impacted their ability to trust people associated with those types of organisations (Strom 2009b). Consequently trust was very slow to build, and when it did emerge it was generally on a person-to-person basis, and transferability to others could not be assured or assumed. As the YACL – Seeking a way to bridge the gap report revealed, Aboriginal people place high value on social and cross-cultural liaison to assist in relationship development (Cartwright, C. 2008). While suspicious of government and other non-Aboriginals on occasion some of the Elders and other Aboriginal people active in the project recognised that many non-Aboriginal people working with them were not authoritarian, but
genuine in their desire to work with them and valuing their knowledge (Strom 2009b).

Fifty eight per cent (58%) of external people involved in the Local Government projects specifically identified that the formal elements of relationship development were important and could assist in building a sense of connectivity between the University and its many communities. In Australian formal agreements, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), between the University and various organisations, for example, local government or regional entities, while essentially symbolic, were deemed important because they quantify the partners’ engagement relationship to better ensure their long-term sustainability. According to one external participant this was particularly important when working with local government because it is tied to four-year electoral cycles. In developing an MoU

… you’ve set the strategic direction, established the networks, [and] determined how you’re going to engage, … so the MoU provides a small degree of protection’ (32-EP 2007).

This notion supported the deliberate engagement strategy of the SCU Vice Chancellor (2004-2009) to establish MoU with local government, regional organisations and other entities, such as the North Coast Institute of TAFE and the Talloires Network. One internal participant identified that the connective nature of a MoU was ‘very positive because [it] integrates the institution into the community’ (5-IP 2007). And finally

MoUs can help strengthen relationships, if they add value for each organisation, and they can also build [each organisations] credibility beyond the region’ (36-EP 2007).

Ideally, a MoU should be a statement of shared intent; however, it is also important to recognise that it is not a legally binding document. Each MoU should be individually created to suit the needs and aspirations of each signatory, and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure currency.

The Cultural Trails Collaboration is an excellent example of an AR project that was at times fraught with relationship and communication challenges. The communication matters will be discussed in Section 5.3.4. The Cultural Trails
Collaboration was funded by the Arts and Cultural Development area of Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC), and its shape changed over time, with new partners being added along the way. As indicated in Chapter 4, four different CHCC departments were involved as well as the creative industries, the tourism association, and the University – being the ORE and some students. This increased diversity put pressure on existing relationships, and had to be recognised and managed to ensure that peoples different needs and expectations were considered in the AR cycles.

In addition to the specific engagement activities, such as those discussed above, the participation of university staff on external boards was identified as another relationship building opportunity,

*We need people with clout representing the University on regional boards – people who know people and can leverage and have credibility within the University* (15-IP 2008).

This was reinforced by one executive academic who argued that there is a strong need for University representation on government, regional, industry and community boards. Different people need to drawn into the mix, ‘otherwise it's an ineffective and inefficient kind of engagement’ (34-IP 2007). In recognising that some of those representing the University may not have the power to commit the University to a project it is vital to have a feedback mechanism in place. Similarly, external representatives on university boards and advisory groups can also build and strengthen relationships. They can assist in the development of project scenarios and the building of collaborative teams to support their involvement and participation. From an internal perspective the Internal Reference group (IRG) is an example of internal relationship development activity.
The Internal Reference Group (IRG) was established in March 2007, with its purpose to increase internal awareness of University-Community Engagement (UCE) activities through discussion and communication to assist the realisation of the university’s strategic vision for UCE with its region. Each work-unit appointed a representative to act as a communication conduit between the IRG and their respective work-unit; therefore, IRG participants have a two-way knowledge-sharing and feedback role with others at the IRG meetings and also within their own work-units. In short the IRG was established to:

- foster UCE;
- better enable internal engagement communication and the sharing of ideas;
- facilitate inter-disciplinary UCE.

Ramaley (2002) notes that it is important to put systems in place, such as regular internal dialogue through IRGs and other mechanisms, to encourage holistic thinking by building internal relationships, individual and work-unit connectivity, reporting mechanisms, and trust.

High levels of frustration became apparent within the IRG, particularly with longer serving academic staff who voiced concern about the lack of support from senior management for UCE activity. While a number of IRG members were conscious of the need for better internal engagement, a discussion at one IRG revealed that despite the strategic statement of intent a culture-of-engagement had not yet been absorbed into the University, particularly from an academic perspective. This report will review the following three issues that were identified by the IRG as being significant barriers to UCE:

1. IRG refinement;
2. academic workloads;
3. professional development.

**IRG REFINEMENT**

*What happened, and what did we learn?*

By early 2008 a member of the ORE team observed that the IRG based at the Lismore
Campus was not developing beyond “show and tell” activities and basic information sharing. Following the initial surge of interest at IRG meetings in 2007, by mid 2008 attendance had largely become a “self-selecting” process and the ORE noted a degree of passivity, particularly in relation to agenda setting and leadership. While those participating in the Lismore IRG were enthusiastic, attendee numbers were diminishing and links with the other campuses was virtually non-existent.

Key Learning:
1 To encourage greater member participation and “ownership” the group needed to take more responsibility for their engagement.

2 The notion of “self-selection” is not a problem. If seen from Wenger’s Communities of Practice (CoP) perspective self-selection is evidence of moving from prescribed relationships to the development of two-way organisational relationships. The emergence of self-organising groups provides a means of sustaining engagement between the University and its community over the long-term. This avoids the danger of relying on an individual and their relationship with others to sustain connectivity and engagement. This also provides for succession planning, ‘…managers need to plan for engagement succession by taking other team members with them to meetings and activities, … to encourage the people they are engaging with to build a broader field of trust beyond one individual’ (30-EP 2007).

3 From a university-wide perspective it was apparent that the Lismore-based IRG was not serving the Coffs Harbour and Tweed-Gold Coast campuses; therefore, more localised action was required to meet the challenges inherent in building connections between staff across the three campuses, and the different needs of each campus.

What action was then taken?

It was decided that group members, rather than ORE facilitators, would chair the meetings on a rotational basis and the ORE would continue to organise the venue and distribute email invitations. Campus specific quarterly IRGs were established, and an annual University-wide Engagement Showcase, linking all three campuses via videoconference would be introduced.

What happened and what did we learn?

While subsequent IRG meetings in Lismore have not been large in number, an increased level of vigour and enthusiasm is very noticeable. Other people have been
invited to attend and this included an academic from the Teaching and Learning unit who did a presentation on community engaged learning, including work-integrated learning. It was interesting to observe two long-term employees of the University (both located at the Lismore campus) meet for the first time – one is an environmental scientist and the other a historian. After listening to each other’s engagement stories about their projects in Timor and Thailand, they recognised that there was an opportunity to work together on their respective projects, albeit from different perspectives. They had made a connection and stayed behind after the meeting to confer about the possible joint engagement activities.

The Coffs Harbour and Tweed-Gold Coast IRG’s were established and the members were particularly enthusiastic, especially at the annual university-wide engagement showcase. Members at all IRG’s argued for the development of a web-based UCE repository, such as a Blackboard, that could assist them in reviewing and reporting of projects and possibly used as a discussion forum. Some IRG members were keen to learn from other online reporting methods at other universities such as at UWS and others indicated that the 2009 ORE Review provided them with an opportunity to raise issue of UCE reporting/recording.

Poor communication within work-units was also revealed at another IRG, where it was revealed that three work units had separate relationships with one external partner – all without knowledge of the others (Pratten 2009).

**Key Learning:**

1. IRG members need ready access to information and knowledge about UCE to assist them to better engage and the following issues were identified:
   - Centralised UCE communication coordination including maintenance of web-based resources.
   - Annual reporting system to collect UCE information from staff including a consistent format for recording UCE activity on the blackboard site (Office of Regional Engagement 2009a).
   - Ability to access UCE related information through established University reporting systems, such as those used in Performance Quality Review (PQR).
   - Link with the existing Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) to determine levels of UCE, or at least who is being spoken to.

2. At the Coffs Harbour and Tweed-Gold Coast campus IRG’s some attendees
were surprised to enjoy and learn from the UCE experience. Some people had attended because they had been cajoled or thought it was expected of them, with one Coffs Harbour attendee stating … Engagement seems like a good thing to do, and Sue really talked me in to attending … it’s all very interesting … I’m just not sure how it relates to my work as a casual academic (Office of Regional Engagement 2009a).

3. The level of enthusiasm exhibited at the two smaller campuses was also more apparent at the university-wide IRGs via videoconference. It is clear that those not located at the “parent” campus were keen to make their mark.

What action was then taken?

The ORE determined to continue to support the IRG’s at each campus to guide the on-going development and function and to realise the potential of the IRG’s to evolve into a truly dynamic communication broker and UCE facilitator that can respond to a range of opportunities, both internal and external, ultimately resulting in the improvement of SCU’s relevance to its constituent region. Three of the ORE team noted that while the IRG’s were still a work in progress, some benefits were becoming apparent.

Through IRG conversations, we have been able to better streamline the multiple and separate relationships which different work-units have with particular community partners. This has allowed us to offer more support and human resources to the partner in a united and coordinated way. It is also demonstrated in the ongoing conversations happening on each campus to find multi or inter-disciplinary projects that are designed to directly benefit each constituent region (Francisco, Pratten & St Vincent Welch 2009).

ACADEMIC WORKLOADS

What happened and what did we learn?

Academic staff argued that the lack of inclusion of UCE in workload models for example, demonstrated that senior staff lacked commitment to UCE. One academic indicated her work-unit had removed engagement related activity from the workload model several years ago. This reduced that school’s involvement in a range of industry and community boards and organisations. She also noted that the high level of casual or short-term fixed contracts for teaching “related delivery only” impacted on the school’s ability to engage internally or externally (Office of Regional Engagement 2008a).

Key Learning:

1. Workforce casualisation is a growing issue for Australian higher education. The
2008 AUQA Report noted that the continuing high level of sessional staff could impact on the University as ‘sessional staff may not be able to commit to maintaining ongoing professional development and scholarship’ (AUQA 2008, p. 10). These comments highlight the negative impact that a high level of staff casualisation can have on the delivery of the University’s strategic direction, particularly the development of a University-wide culture of engagement.

2 The University staff employed on a casual, or short fixed-term contract often have strong linkages into the community and/or particular communities-of-practice. These linkages could provide opportunities to strengthen the University’s external connectivity, and if nurtured they could provide significant input into Engaged Teaching and Learning and Engaged Research and Discovery activity.

3 A local government employed participant suggested that a lack of practical engagement experience by some senior Council staff limited the value they placed on engagement, or their ability to recognise that some people – including themselves – may require assistance in learning “how to engage” (LGov#1 2008). This scenario could also have applicability in the higher education context.

4 Discussion within and beyond the IRG’s suggests that many academics and senior management recognise that the inclusion of UCE in workload models varies from discipline to discipline (16-IP 2008). This concern is further supported by the findings of the 2008 SCU Engagement Activity Audit that revealed that the ability to undertake engagement activity could be negatively impacted by current workload models (Strom 2007b) as described in Report on Action #1.

5 In addition to appropriate workload models, the need for engagement related study leave provisions, the factoring of engagement activities into promotion requirements, and other rewards, such as the Vice Chancellors recognition scheme, is required to grow a culture-of-engagement (16-IP 2008; 34-IP 2007) was identified.

**What action was then taken?**

I provided the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) with written and verbal feedback regarding the importance of including UCE, and Engaged Scholarship activities in particular, into workload models as part of the academic workload review in early 2009. I also emphasised the need to develop a university-wide shared understanding
of UCE principles and language, because the material presented at a review presentation generally referred to “service”. There was no mention of engagement related activity beyond that.

**What happened and what did we learn?**

Input to the DVC from a wide-variety of sources, including my feedback and significant lobbying by the Union meant that the allocation of work was a central tenet of the 2009-10 Enterprise Bargaining (EB) process.

**Key Learning:**

According to the 2010 EB document ‘…the University and its employees recognise the value of flexibility in workloads formulation in order to take account of the diversity of disciplines, study courses, research and commercial activities, and the complexities and variances of different delivery modes, a resolution that is still a work in progress. The University and its employees acknowledge the changing nature of academic work and remain committed to effective and efficient teaching and learning processes that produce quality outcomes for students’.

**What action was then taken?**

Following a recommendation of the 2010 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, a University Workloads Working Group (UWWG) will be established to develop a university-wide workload formula framework, and will be dissolved when the University Executive approves the framework. In the interim, staff workloads will be allocated on the basis of formulae developed at the work-unit level, and workloads will be annually monitored and moderated by the UWWG ‘…to ensure an equitable allocation within organisation units and across the University’.

**UCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**What happened and what did we learn?**

A lack of understanding on “how” to undertake engaged teaching and learning, particularly if work integrated learning is not explicitly part of the curriculum, was revealed through the IRG. Casual and new academics in particular identified this as an issue in the 2006 Engagement Activity Audit, however, the “Getting Engaged” training program that the ORE developed in 2007 attracted a poor response.

**Key Learning:**

1 Discussion about this suggested that some people do not want to admit that they don’t know “how to engage”, one IRG member suggested we call it professional development rather than training.
Collaboration between the Teaching and Learning unit and the ORE could accelerate academic understanding, particularly in relation to work-integrated learning.

What action was then taken?
To assist my research and to help increase UCE understanding I invited IRG members and other small groups of academics from each campuses to test engagEnable© – my dialogue and diagnosis tool.

What happened, and what did we learn?
I conducted three engagEnable© workshops with academic and non-academic IRG members. One workshop was held at each campus. Four to six participants attended each workshop and this interaction provided different inputs and allowed me to refine the tool in on-going cycles of action, reflection and learning.

Key Learning:
1. Feedback from the preliminary engagEnable© workshops indicated that the tool helped workshop participants to clarify their understanding of the various elements of Engaged Scholarship, from both internal and external perspectives.
2. The free-flowing dialogue about engagement also proved to be informative. As one participant noted, it helped her to better understand the work of colleagues located in an office just up the corridor but not within her work-unit.
3. I refined engagEnable© as a result of these interactive sessions and the “measurement mode” column was also added.

What action was then taken?
In April 2010 I was invited to join a team to develop a post-graduate Community Engagement unit that will be available as part of the SCU Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice. The focus of this programme is being broadened from teaching and learning to include Community Engagement. Academic staff will be encouraged to undertake the programme as part of their professional development.

Report on Action & Learning #2 – Internal Reference Group

Reflecting on today’s IRG discussion about the importance of relationships to enable UCE I noticed that a number of people agreed it was a good idea ... but ... (there’s so often a but) ... they seemed reluctant to put the effort into relationship development. Maybe some of them didn’t want to seem too enthusiastic because they thought it could result in them having to do more work in this area.

My Journal, April 2009
5.3.2 Leadership

Internal and external leadership by universities was identified as a key UCE practice in Chapter 2, section 2.5.9. The data revealed that leadership did not necessarily mean direct leadership by a university, although that could have been the case in some instances. The data also referred to the nurturing and enabling of leadership through the development of mechanisms that support leadership growth for students, staff, alumni and the broader community. Wafler (2004b) is a strong advocate of leadership training and development programmes, and the Graduate College of Management is already supporting leadership development by delivering leadership programmes to local government, which could be expanded and delivered to those active in UCE activities within and beyond the University.

The notion of the University as a regional leader was supported by 93% of external participants as being an essential element in building stronger, more resilient and connected communities, while only 26% of those within the University supported this idea. Academics can provide key leadership in our society, by providing the community with

... new ideas, new management techniques, new everything, ... there should be an 'ideas group' within your university so that individual people within University get the opportunity they need to speak in a broader forum, which is good for their own personal development and gives new ideas to the whole community (19-EP 2007).

The chasm between internal and external perspectives has the potential to impact negatively on the University, as the high expectations of those outside are not reflected in the delivery, thinking or consciousness of those inside. An executive academic stated that leadership was not a top-down mandate, but about collaborative partnerships ‘... and facilitating in a stewardship capacity’ (34-IP 2007). An executive manager stated that when working at another university, he had experienced the university determining ‘this is where we should go’, however, he observed that there was nobody behind, the region was not following. He cautioned that in regional areas people could perceive
the University as arrogant if it assumed leadership; therefore, it should facilitate rather than lead.

*It needs to listen first and then say – we can help with that – and then head off in that direction* (14-IP 2008).

An external stakeholder with a long association with the University suggested that the University could demonstrate leadership by showing ‘...that it is engaging and working together [with others] on a regional agenda’ (26-EP 2007).

It should be noted that people inside the University tend to focus *more within, than without*. The idea of providing leadership, either in the community or the region, clearly demonstrates an outward focus that was not generally front-of-mind with the majority of internal participants, particularly the academic staff, as identified in the *2008 SCU Engagement Activity Audit* (Strom 2009d). Perhaps this is a result of the tribal or cultural aspects of academia that has traditionally focused on a discipline area within higher education, rather than with the general community or even a particular non-academic community-of-interest or an academic community-of-practice. In contrast, people external to the University looked beyond the internal or cultural impediments that may exist within the University. They placed a strong emphasis on a more holistic approach towards community and regional development that includes regional leadership by the University. ‘The University absolutely has a strong leadership role to play’ (35-EP 2007). One EP linked regional leadership by the University with increasing the potential for regional growth (31-EP 2007) while another made a case in favour of ‘stimulating the minds of people by informing them of research findings’ (21-EP 2007).

Those within the University who supported the University playing a leadership role argued in favour of adding value and facilitating, rather than doing or leading specifically. So, why is there a resistance to leadership from those working within the University? It could be a continuing manifestation of the town-gown chasm (29-IP 2007) or because proactive leadership is hard, and requires a significant and sustained investment of time and energy. It takes time to build the relationships and trust, time to negotiate complex
collaborations with multiple communities-of-interest, time to develop shared goals and intention, and time for the right projects to emerge, develop and come to fruition. Leadership is a long-term investment in the future, the future of the University and the future of the community, both separately and together.

Reflecting on this gap between perspectives, the key is on how leadership is undertaken. Chapter 2 looked closely at leadership as a key UCE practice, and leadership in universities can take multiple forms — it can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal as well as within and beyond. Clearly the University’s leadership can manifest through engagement activities such as networking, partnering or undertaking key projects to address emerging issues in the region (32-EP 2007). To engender a culture of UCE, leadership needs to be dispersed, both within and beyond the University. In response to comments of this nature the ORE placed an emphasis on establishing and then maintaining clear and open communication to strengthen relationships, internally and externally, to assist in the building of UCE within and without.

In order to advance UCE, universities have to move beyond thinking about themselves in isolation from their communities, to embrace holonic thinking or a CST approach, by recognising that their institutions are part of the whole. There is an opportunity for the University to provide a leadership role,

… it’s more about involvement with key people, by providing leadership in some initiatives [and] … participating in others (38-EP 2007).

If a community is emphatically seeking leadership, universities need to better understand their community’s values and aspirations to creatively, proactively and structurally find a means of enabling and fulfilling this need. Active leadership is also a strong means for communicating and demonstrating connectivity with the community, or communities-of-interest, ‘… it’s got an intellectual capacity, through staff and students, [that] can stimulate the local community to think a little bit more worldly’ (21-EP 2007). The notion of a university’s obligation to engage and connect with the community it resides within was also raised.
When a University establishes a campus within a particular community then the University should be actively involved in that community at all levels and their staff should be involved at all levels – at a school level, at Council, and in the community – the thread of the University should be flowing through our community and that’s what I’d see as true engagement (19-EP 2007).

The 2008 Regional Partnerships Benchmarking Survey looked specifically at the University’s leadership in relation to regional partnerships and alliances and 90% of respondents revealed a high level of expectation, deeming leadership by the University to be either important (36%) or essential (54%). The findings revealed their expectations were not fully realised as respondents rated the University’s leadership performance to be extremely high (14%), high (36%), medium (45%) and low (5%) (Australian Regional Tourism Research Centre 2008).

One external participant stated that the University has an opportunity to show leadership by becoming more integrated with the community, and in turn this will help the disparate components of the community to become better integrated (21-EP 2007). There are many opportunities for the University to provide leadership within the region because there are many issues to be addressed. For instance, through its strong Environmental program the University

...could be a leader regarding global warming – the expected economic impact, the environmental impacts and the impacts on key industries (23-EP 2007).

Another external participant suggested that the University could play a leadership role by providing public comment about public policy or key social and political issues, while simultaneously being proactive and adding value by working with community, environmental and regional organisations, and local government ‘to assist in the development of regional strategies and other issues of regional significance’ (24-EP 2007). The University does not have to do directly but it could lead by strengthening existing regional networks.
5.3.3 Access – knowledge and facilities

The need for the community to have more access to the knowledge and expertise within the University, and its facilities was reiterated. The sharing of knowledge could enhance community capacity and build social capital by informing community members about ‘something exciting and new that has come out of the University. It’s a matter of pride … the University is not standing still’ (1-IP 2007). As a knowledge centre, the University should share the knowledge it gains through its research to the benefit of the local community (25-EP 2007) but it should also be open to learning from different views (2-IP 2007). The University could also make its accumulated knowledge more readily available through an accessible repository in the Library or on its website. Such access could support regional development (38-EP 2007); draw disparate groups in the community together (31-EP 2007); and reduce the University’s apparent isolation from the community (26-EP 2007).

A University is a place to go and share ideas, …it has a particular look and sound, … We need a place to share ideas, and this could dovetail with an Alumni Chapter Lounge … it would still be under the University brand, and [would provide a place to] think, solve problems, research and share – over a coffee … (25-EP 2007).

There was concern that engagement activity with a strong business orientation was inappropriate because it would only provide commercial advantage to those who are able to pay for the knowledge (3-IP 2007). Similarly, another internal participant argued that the University should be growing knowledge for the greater good, by ‘…shaping and offering spaces
for innovative ideas with our research, have speakers come here, and being involved in the intellectual life of the community’ (1-IP 2007). These views are in accord with Holland (2005) who recognises the importance of universities participating in knowledge development within and beyond the confines of the university.

The collaborative nature of knowledge development was also well recognised. The majority of internal participants (57%) favoured engagement that provides mutual benefit at a personal, professional, or organisational level, rather than the noble notion of serving the greater good. This could be a reaction to the pressures caused by the decreased public funding of universities, the increased competitiveness for a shrinking pool of funds, and the push towards self-funding, particularly for research centres that has resulted in a more commercial approach to knowledge development. The importance of shared knowledge development and exchange was also identified. By engaging with the community the University can learn from the community, and as a consequence the University’s teaching will be more relevant to society, students, employers and the wider community.

*The University benefits from engagement activities because it gains knowledge and experience to attract students because it will be teaching what is really current* (28-IP 2007).

According to Wenger (1998) a Community-of-Practice is ‘… group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly’. The IRG is congruent with Wenger’s (1998) definition of a community-of-practice, because this group of people share a passion for engagement and they meet regularly to share their UCE knowledge and experiences with other group members, so that they can learn how to improve their engagement practices. While the IRG provides staff involved in UCE an opportunity to exchange tacit knowledge relating to engagement experiences, there is a need to develop a central repository of UCE related material that is readily accessible to staff, students and the community. From an internal perspective, the expected rollout of the University Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that had been
tested by the Office of Development and Alumni was problematic for the ORE, particularly from a language and confidentiality perspective. One respondent indicated a strong reliance on personal communications and noted that knowledge could be more easily transformed and applied to her work if university-wide communication were streamlined and the University’s staff intranet-site was improved to be more clearly navigable (ORE#3 2010). It is clear that both UCE and KM have many tacit elements that need to be linked to a framework in order to be made explicit.

While the ORE houses some explicit knowledge on its website, and in various journal articles, reports and other documentation, the team recognises that the lack of a shared ORE-wide database and knowledge repository created challenges because each facilitator had developed individual databases and KM systems. The external facilitation of UCE would be enhanced if information such as ‘… metric data on institutional operations, [and] individual work-unit capacity to reach out, design and deliver effective partnerships’ (ORE#2 2010) were readily available. Valuable tacit knowledge about community culture, expectations and understanding can be gained through the development of ‘ … local external relationships, including local government and community networks, local resources (newspapers, magazines), “corridor talk” etc …’ (ORE#1 2010).

**Whose knowledge …**

Knowledge is provided to students through the delivery of under-graduate and post-graduate programs, and the University is paid one way or another to deliver this service. The broader community or a particular community-of-interest may have access to knowledge through commissioned research or consultancy activities. However some of these are constrained by commercial-in-confidence clauses, so the notion of ‘sharing’ knowledge that may ‘add value’ to the community creates a conundrum for the University because not all knowledge can be made freely available.

*My Journal – February 2008*

In addition to improving access to knowledge, the need for the University to improve its accessibility to those outside in order to meet the demands and expectations of the community, was raised by 45% of all participants. A need
to *demystify* the University was also identified (13-IP 2007) with the suggestion that improved community access to the university staff, students and/or facilities could assist. Other accessibility perspectives identified were: signage, both on and off campus; increased use of university facilities by external organisations; improved community access to information; the need to learn *how to engage*; and the involvement of community members on university advisory panels.

In order to improve visual accessibility, signage was advocated as a means of achieving this while promoting the notion of a *university town* to the broader community. One Coffs Harbour based internal participant expressed her ongoing frustration. ‘There is nothing in town. As I said at that jury thing … when you go to Lismore there’s a sign on every roundabout’ (10-IP 2007). Similarly a Lismore-based internal participant advocated the use of signage as a tangible means of denoting the University’s activities more broadly. She also asserted that while the University may be active within certain communities, limited numbers of people were aware of the activity, or the University’s involvement. There is a need to put it out there to remind people that the University exists (3-IP 2007). On-campus signage also needs to be improved because visitors often become lost and confused (1-IP 2007) when they visit a campus for the first time.

And finally, External Advisory Panels (EAPs) were put forward as an appropriate UCE “access” mechanism that simultaneously builds engagement and improves course relevance (8-IP 2007; 34-IP 2007). According to one internal participant, the EAP membership should include commercial, scientific, and corporate community representatives, and meet twice a year to provide course guidance (8-IP 2007). The ASLaRC fulfills the above criterion but it also goes beyond that to bond the academic and professional areas of the aged services sector.
In this report two Aged Services Learning & Research Centre (ASLaRC) action research activities are described – a Skills Up-date programme, and YACL – Seeking a way to bridge the gap – a project to develop a model to deliver culturally appropriate Aboriginal aged care and service delivery. I was a member of the ASLaRC Advisory group 2004-09.

**SKILLS UP-DATE PROGRAMME**

*What action was taken?*

In 2006 the ASLaRC Advisory Group identified the need for a skills development and capacity building programme for staff currently working in the Aged Care and Aged Services industry, or for those wishing to seek employment in the sector. As a result a *Skills Up-Date* project team comprising participants from the Aged Care industry, Aged Service providers, the Mid North Coast (MNC) Division of General Practice, and SCU was established. Discussion with the CEOs from aged care facilities and aged service providers in the Coffs Coast region re-affirmed the view that there was a significant gap in the business and staff management skills of registered nurses working in middle and senior management positions.

As project team leader, the development of a proposal detailing curriculum requirements, delivery mechanisms and a business plan was my responsibility.

*What happened, and what did we learn?*

I presented the proposal to the SCU Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) and the Executive Dean (Faculty Health & Applied Science) to gain their input and support. They agreed to meet 50% of the Skills Up-Date programme establishment costs. However, their support was contingent upon:

1. gaining external funding to 50% project value;
2. ability for project to be self-funding including repayment of University investment in start-up.

To enable the development of this project other funding would need to be sourced. Discussion with industry representatives indicated they would be happy to provide in-kind support for programme development.

*What action was then taken?*
A discussion between a MNC Area Consultative Committee (ACC) staff member and myself indicated that the ACC had identified the same skill shortage and I was encouraged to apply to the Sustainable Regions funding programme.

The Executive Officer of the ACC was very supportive and asked me to develop an initial draft – in accordance with their guidelines – and to present to the Sustainable Regions Committee (SRC) at their next committee meeting. Following the presentation the informal feedback from the committee members present was positive. However, their formal feedback – which included comments from members not at the presentation – indicated they required further refinement of the “Up-Skill” programme, particularly in relation to the time-line and cost (income & expenditure) details.

Following further input from the ASLaRC advisory group, sector representatives (including letters of support) and ACC Executive Officer, the submission was revised to accommodate the requests.

What happened, and what did we learn?

The Sustainable Regions Committee rejected the application for the following reasons:

1. Teaching programs should be ‘core business’ of the University and therefore should not attract funding from SR program.

2. The project did not meet criteria regarding ‘increased employment’ because there were only 3 direct employment outcomes directly associated to the project. Training and skill development of the aged care, aged services sector was not viewed as important as immediate employment outcomes.

3. Lots of other applications from the private sector better met the criteria.

The rejection was completely unexpected and the comment regarding University “core business” indicates a lack of understanding on how a University is funded by Government. The “Up-Skill” program is not an undergraduate or post-graduate program but a skill development and capacity building project for the Aged Services sector, and as such it is an addition to the University’s “core business”.

Key Learning:

---

27 Area Consultative Committees operated under the federal Department of Transport and Regional Services, and consisted of politically appointed committees and staff who were responsible for administering the Regional Partnerships and the Sustainable Regions programmes.
1. When funding is sought from outside the ‘normal’ University funding areas there is a need to better articulate what the University sector is funded, particularly during the development, application and presentation process.

2. Need to build stronger relationships between University and various government agencies, committees and personnel.

**What action was then taken?**

Subsequent discussion with the ACC Executive Officer (EO) revealed the need to gain financial support from sector representatives in addition to their letters of support. Further refinement of the “Up-skill” programme and the time-line and costing to better meet the Regional Partnerships (RP) programme guidelines were also required. I then drafted a submission.

**What happened, and what did we learn?**

In late 2007, the submission was developed and progressing, however, following the December 2007 federal election – the ACC’s were disbanded and the Regional Partnerships and Sustainable Regions programmes were axed amidst accusations of “pork barrelling”.

**Key Learning:**

While this 18-month process clearly demonstrated the vagaries of these types of political processes, over which we have little control, it clearly demonstrated a lack of understanding about how universities “work” particularly in relation to their funding model. This reinforces the need for much stronger University-Community Engagement to

1. demystify the higher education sector;

2. define and explain the “core business” aspects of University including what the government funds universities to do

3. to identify other areas of activity that can generate economic, social and community development, that may or may not be funded directly by government.

**YACL – SEEKING A WAY TO BRIDGE THE GAP**

**What action was taken?**

28 This Report on Action draws from my Reflective Journal and “Seeking a way to Bridge the Gap – A scoping study to identify the preferred Aged Care service model for older Aboriginal people in Mid North Coast NSW” (Cartwright, 2008).
In 2002 the need to provide culturally appropriate aged care and support services for older Aboriginal people\textsuperscript{2} was identified by one of the Elders of the Yarrawarra Aboriginal Corporation (YAC). In 2004 YAC purchased a former motel site at Moonee Beach (10 kilometres north of Coffs Harbour on the NSW Mid North Coast). They planned to renovate and refurbish the motel to make it suitable for the delivery of a range of on-site and off-site flexible care services to older Aboriginal people. While the Moonee Centre for Aboriginal Aged Care began as a YAC initiative it also had the support of the Coffs Coast Future of Ageing, in partnership with regional community, education and business organisations.

As a consequence, Yarrawarra Aboriginal Aged Care Ltd (YACL) was formed to further develop and manage this project. The Moonee project collaborators were Yarrawarra Aged Care Ltd (YACL), the Enterprise and Training Company Ltd (ETC)\textsuperscript{29}, and QCare Australia Pty. Ltd\textsuperscript{30}. In 2005, the ASLaRC was invited to join the collaboration and at the end of 2006, ASLaRC was contracted to undertake a scoping study on the health and care needs of older Aboriginal people in the region. The study was funded by the Department of Health and Ageing and as part of my work with ORE at SCU I was appointed as the Project Manager.

**What happened, and what did we learn?**

In early 2007 YACL secured funding for 12 months from the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) to conduct an Aboriginal older persons social support programme. This programme provided a practical and genuine entrée to this divergent community.

During 2007-08 the ASLaRC undertook community engagement with the Gumbaynggirr people and the Yaegl nations, including the Banbia, Ngaku, Gabi, Gumbula and Mudgai peoples, as well as Aboriginal community organisations and individuals. Many informal get-togethers were conducted with various combinations and permutations of the aforementioned groups. There was some concern in the early stages of the project that a long-term rift between the different clan groups, who would be the beneficiaries of the project, could be problematic. However after 12 months of workshops and other shared activities the “relationship healing” as a result of their involvement, was evident. At the report launch, the various Elders all gathered for morning tea and I saw some of them “yarning together”, some were

\textsuperscript{29} At this time I was Chair of ETC – a Not For Profit company working in employment services, training and business development.

\textsuperscript{30} QCare is a private provider of Aged Care Services.
hugging, others were crying. It was a very emotional scene to be privy too, and an unintended but welcome project outcome. I recall saying to one of the other AR participants, ‘this is just wonderful – anything else that comes out of this project is a bonus’ (Strom 2009b).

The need to address the lack of culturally appropriate care for older Aboriginal people brought these groups and individuals together, and many of these people had not spoken for more than 20 years. It was clear that a shared need can overcome a lot, and the joy and pleasure these people derived from their “reconciliation” was an unexpected and welcome project reward.

The study also identified the need to engage with the 12 existing providers of Aged Support service for older Aboriginal people from across the Coffs Coast area31. While all providers – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – were invited to the two Mapping and Gapping workshops, only representatives from 5 groups attended, the other 7 organisations were kept in the communication and consultation loop.

**Key Learning:**
A number of informal discussions occurred with Elders, health providers and community care workers and it was apparent that

1. many Aboriginal people were suspicious of formal bureaucratic structures and formal interviews, therefore, discussion had to occur at culturally appropriate places and times. The Aboriginal care workers were often a valuable conduit between the Project Team and the older Aboriginal people;
2. a number of new relationships were established, and existing relationships were strengthened at the informal “bush tucker” lunches held with elders and others. It was at these events that the most revealing knowledge was gathered – by observation or conversation.

**What action was then taken?**
The scoping study “Seeking a way to Bridge the Gap – A scoping study to identify the preferred Aged Care service model for older Aboriginal people in Mid North Coast NSW”, authored by ASLaRC’s Professor Colleen Cartwright was completed in mid 2008. The recommendations reflected the clearly stated needs of the Aboriginal people – Elders, other older people, health and support workers who had collaborated with the other project partners to determine the most culturally appropriate care for older Aboriginal people.

---
31 Coffs Coast comprises the Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, and Nambucca local government areas.
The key recommendation was to establish a new and innovative “Home Away From Home” (HAFH) service model for respite care that would complement the existing community care packages available. The report clearly stated that the innovative HAFH packages were designed as a culturally appropriate means of providing older Aboriginal people with aged care service for day respite, crisis respite and step-down respite. The HAFH approach included a strong focus on the importance of kin and extended family, and the development of Aboriginal care workers and support staff. The report also acknowledged that the cost of such a service would be a major consideration, it would require flexibility to introduce, and take time to achieve the skill development and the social, cultural, and economic development outcomes.

**What happened, and what did we learn?**

The report was submitted by YACL to the Department of Health and Ageing (DH&A) and the “Home Away From Home” service model was not accepted. While DH&A asked us to take an innovative approach it was clear that the flexibility required in order to support the development of a new care package was not considered to be worth the investment required to establish, and maintain, until it was viable.

**Key Learning:**

The health and social challenges faced by Aboriginal people is well documented in the general media and in academic literature. So while the scoping study did not bring about any immediate or large-scale change, change has occurred:

1. The Moonee site was not yet fully realising its potential, however, it was providing a focal point for the development of culturally appropriate Aboriginal aged care and aged support services.

2. The cultural chasm between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal “ways of doing” created many challenges, but the dogged persistence of the YACL Chair and a couple of other key players had born fruit.

3. The NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) continued to fund the Aboriginal older persons social support programme.

4. In 2008 10 Community Aged Care packages were made available to YACL. These places were auspiced by one of the collaborating partners, QCare Australia Pty. Ltd., and an additional 10 places were made available in 2009.

5. Skill develop was occurring as Aboriginal workers began to be trained and employed.

---

*Report on Action & Learning #3 - ASLaRC*
5.3.4 Communication

The need for open, clear two-way communication was identified by 40% of all participants.

*While the University is not big, there seem to be all these barriers to direct communication – it’s a pity because people love the University– and want to tell what’s on their mind – and staff don’t often have the opportunity to listen (25-EP 2007).*

The high expectations of external participants regarding engagement in general and communication in particular were exemplified in the following observations. While the Vice Chancellor was intent on improving communications and engagement so that they be conducted in a business-like and professional manner; it was observed that ‘many staff do not share his understanding and intent … many senior people do little other than pay lip-service to the idea that regional engagement is a core activity’ (23-EP 2007). The language of Universities alienated people who were unfamiliar with it, and made them less willing to engage.

* … talking to people about the issues they’re interested in and giving expertise in a language they can understand … that would build rapport and confidence (21-EP 2007).*

Poor communication skills were sometimes an issue because ‘the strongest academic people are not always the strongest communicators’ (12-IP 2007). Therefore clear communication about UCE, including the use of shared language is required to guide university staff, including academics, and the general community. Communities-of-practice and communities-of-interest can also assist academics to engage more effectively (5-IP 2007). The development of effective networks and being able to respond to the community is also very important (33-IP 2007). One external participant observed that the University is very strong in environmental research but the academic staff do not inform the region about what is happening. The sharing of knowledge through clear and unambiguous communication channels would assist regional environmental management practices and could also result in the emergence of opportunities for regional businesses (23-EP 2007).
Building and maintaining trust is intrinsic to successful engagement and communication. Trust in the University and its engagement with community can easily be eroded. By way of example, one external participant reported being invited to attend a regional forum some years ago, and the universal comment from senior academics and business people in attendance was ‘...“that was a sham … to make it look like the University was doing something” … to recover from those forums takes a lot of effort’ (23-EP 2007). Conversely, as trust is built it allows discussion and dialogue to grow and that ‘may result in “agreeing to disagree” and accepting other peoples point of view, rather than a focus on winning’ (12-IP 2007).

Sometimes you have to take people [in the community] on the journey and a big part of that is trust – engagement is like sponsorship … people will put their trust (or money in the case of a sponsorship) in a person they trust (30-EP 2007).

The high level of casualisation\(^{32}\) of academic staff was cited by some participants as having an impact upon a university’s ability to engage, especially at smaller campuses. Internal participants based at Coffs Harbour and Tweed-Gold Coast (23% of all internal participants) identified that the high numbers of casual academic staff at their campuses impacts on intra and inter work-unit communication, relationship development and team building, that in turn impacts on the work-units’ ability to undertake UCE. One academic-work unit reported that only 6 of their 24 academic staff are on permanent appointments, and casuals were only employed to teach. That results in a limited number of people available to attend meetings or ‘...represent the University on various groups’ (10-IP 2007). The high level of casual staff could have a detrimental impact on engagement because

\[\text{... they don’t belong [to the University] in the same sense, so if you don’t belong it’s not your responsibility, it’s their responsibility, the people that make these policies (13-IP 2007).}\]

From a different perspective it was argued that the employment of casual academic staff provides engagement opportunities because these staff may also be research students who engage and communicate with the community

\(^{32}\) Casualisation refers to casual/sessional staff, and those employed on fixed term contracts (e.g. semester, teaching only) as opposed to on-going employment.
through their existing links and research activity; or business people or professionals who teach for the University and bring their ideas and contacts with them. ‘In a sense this is engagement too, and can certainly lead to further engagement in lots of cases’ (7-IP 2007). While acknowledging the benefit of this embedded connection, it is vital that casual staff be informed of the University’s commitment to engagement, and it should be included in their workload agreement, and appropriate induction and training should also be provided.

An internal participant observed that newly appointed casual academic staff usually have an initial connect and passion for their work at the University. However, after a couple of years this is often followed by a subsequent disconnect, as they become negative if the hard work they have done has not resulted in a permanent appointment.

I’ve seen over time people of varying levels of ability, not always, but several times [it has] ended in really bad blood between those individuals and the institution (12-IP 2007).

I have also observed this phenomena and note that many of these negative experiences are often communicated widely and can have a detrimental impact on relationships within and beyond the University.

5.3.5 Student connection

While teaching and learning, and research were clearly recognised as core University business, the specific need to connect with students was recognised by 34% of participants. ‘They are our customers, [our] clients’ (10-IP 2007) and the University’s number one engagement activity. Another way of connecting students with the community is through families hosting international students; ‘…this links the University with local community, [and] gives those people the chance to meet someone from a different culture as well’ (4-IP 2007).

According to the students interviewed for this thesis, community awareness of engagement activities, such as student internships, needs to be promoted within the business and student communities. They emphasised the value of
undertaking an internship because of the benefits to their study and future employment, and the self-growth opportunities it provides. Student activity in the broader community can also be an engagement enabler that helps to build linkages and trust, as well as human and social capital. However, students would require some engagement training and in some instances scheduling difficulties within their courses may have to be resolved (27-IP 2007). One student worked on two research projects, firstly through a field placement\textsuperscript{33}, and secondly as a remunerated research assistant for the ORE.

Both projects added to my field of study [and] have been really positive for me, because of the community development focus of the qualitative and quantitative research, and the overlap [between my studies and the `work`] was perfect (29-IP 2007).

All Local Government participants recognised the value of connecting and engaging with students as a means of building engagement.

---

\textbf{– REPORT ON ACTION & LEARNING #4 –}

\textbf{Students engaging in Local Government projects}

As indicated in Chapter 4, I was a co-participant in four local government engagement activities that form part of this Report on Action #4 and strong “student” involvement was common to each activity. There were three AR projects with Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC): Student Internships; Creative Industries research; and Cultural Trails Collaboration, as well as a student internship with Bellingen Shire Council (BSC).

\textbf{CHCC Student Internships}

\textit{What action was taken?}

In 2006 two final year undergraduate Bachelor of Business students participated in two different Work Integrated Learning (WIL) projects: Buskers Festival research and an Art & Cultural Market Feasibility Study. They were co-supervised by the CHCC Economic Development Manager (EDM) and me. Participation in the CHCC internship was not a given, it was a selective process, five students applied for the positions and were interviewed by the EDM and me.

\textit{What happened, and what did we learn?}

---

\textsuperscript{33} This student was undertaking a field placement that is similar to an internship, as part of a Bachelor of Social Science.
Both the students completed 300 hours on their projects that included writing a report for CHCC. The EDM was particularly impressed with the quality of work and the initiative shown by the student undertaking the Buskers Festival research. She was ultimately satisfied with the work of the other student who was less “professional” and required more “supervision”.

**Key Learning:**

1. The WIIL unit statement did not include supervision guidelines for the workplace supervisor.

2. As the EDM noted, the University needs to recognise that it is a sign of goodwill when organisations agree to take on student interns. Therefore, workplace supervisors should be provided with appropriate supervision, guidance and backup if necessary (30-EP 2007).

3. In order to acknowledge this goodwill and to support the external supervisors of student interns an engagement orientation programme could be provided for our engagement partners. The adapted Engagement iap2 spectrum and other engagement-enabling methods could be used to scope the project, activity or internship supervision role at the outset. This would ensure that a clear and shared intent was developed, and it would also build trust and stronger connectivity between those involved.

4. Students appreciated the selection process and noted that it added realism and was beneficial because it helped them get in touch with the process, to learn and apply this experience elsewhere and build their confidence (27-IP 2007).

**What action was then taken?**

I provided closer monitoring for the student who required more supervision and made recommendations to the unit co-ordinator to ensure that:

1. the unit guidelines were updated to include guidance and support for workplace supervisors;

2. student orientation in the unit to emphasise the need for professional behaviour;

3. workplace supervisors were provided with more support;

4. recommended to the Unit Coordinator that a “selection” process be

---

34 See section 2.3.1
introduced for all WIL projects.

**CHCC Creative Industries Research**

*What action was taken?*

In 2007 a six person collaborative team was involved in this community-based research project that comprised CHCC staff: the Arts and Cultural Development Officer, the Director of Regional Gallery, Museum and Bunker Cartoon Gallery; and the manager of the Library. Two SCU researchers were active on the project, a SCU PhD Alumnus undertook the literature review, a recent SCU graduate undertook the primary research, and I analysed the data and authored the final report “*Creating Creative Industries: Creative Industries profile for the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area*”.

*What happened, and what did we learn?*

The project team worked well, and there was seamless interaction and support between CHCC staff. They readily shared their knowledge, understanding and opinions with other team members, particularly the field researcher. From a community perspective the field researcher noted that many people were willing to participate in the research because they trusted the University and/or perceived some sort of prestige associated with its involvement (29-IP 2007).

**Key Learning:**

1. Each project team member expressed value in the project because it was about identifying an emergent sector and capacity building, and the potential growth would support their own area of work.

2. A number of respondents expressed some antipathy towards Council, because the community was not always consulted and if they were, they never received any feedback (Strom 2009c). The University’s involvement assisted them in making a decision to participate.

*What action was then taken?*

I mentioned the “trust/antipathy” issue to the CHCC “client” and suggested that Council needed to take this issue seriously, and to consciously develop ways to overcome this, particularly when undertaking their community engagement and consultation activities.

*What happened, and what did we learn?*

---

35 Prior to graduating this student had been an intern for a WIL activity with Bellingen Shire Council.
The research was completed, analysed and the report submitted to Council. While the CHCC “client” and the project team were very happy with the report it was unable to gain traction within Council. The report recommendations were superseded by other Council priorities, with only one recommendation acted upon – the Cultural Trails Project (see below).

**Key Learning:**

1. While CHCC made an investment in this project (via one department as lead client) the silo-based organisational structure that exists did not necessarily result in on-going action, possibly because that is dependent upon the support of others who were not part of the collaboration.

2. Local government thinking is project based. This is exemplified by the selection of the report recommendation to undertake a cultural/tourism activity (the Cultural Trails collaboration). This project was a finite singular activity rather than a broad-based, and potentially more complex Creative Industries sector development project.

3. Student feedback indicated that this community-based experience added significantly to her academic experience and she suggested that research is intrinsic to quality teaching. “We need to get new knowledge through research – [the University] can’t just keep teaching for teachings sake … knowledge gained through research is a key element of teaching and learning at a University” (29-IP 2007).

4. Community concern about Council’s community consultation and engagement activities is still prevalent.

### CHCC Cultural Trails Collaboration

**What action was taken?**

As indicated above this activity emerged from the *Creating Creative Industries* project. The Cultural Trails project was undertaken in 2008 and it involved extensive collaboration and/or liaison between four CHCC departments – Arts and Cultural Development, Economic Development, the Heritage Office, and four CHCC cultural facilities: the Jetty Theatre, the Regional Gallery, the Bunker Gallery and the Coffs Museum. Other project collaborators included visual, literary and performing artists, commercial galleries and cafés, and the Coffs Coast Tourism Association; as well as SCU students, a project co-ordinator and myself as project supervisor.

**What happened, and what did we learn?**
The breadth and diversity of this collaboration meant that the project was constantly changing shape and form, and this often impacted on project coordination. However, it also added richness to the process, and built trust between the various collaborators as the project changed to accommodate different requirements and input. The project co-ordinator was sometimes challenged by the “chaordic” nature of the project and this occasionally had a detrimental impact upon her work.

The students provided the original music for the DVD soundtrack that was produced as part of the ‘Cultural Trails Project’. Overseeing their involvement was challenging because they were located at the Lismore Campus and were therefore physically remote from the project for most of the time.

**Key Learning:**

1. It’s good to have a framework, but it should not be too rigid so that change – or Chaos Theory’s bifurcation points – cannot be accommodated.

2. While many perspectives add richness, they also have to be “managed” in a way that allows people to feel respected and valued, even if their “idea” is not ultimately utilised.

3. As project supervisor I could have provided more structure, but I chose to maintain an arms length approach operationally, although I did increase the de-brief opportunities to allow the project co-ordinator and the project to emerge.

4. A budget allocation should have been included that allowed the students to be part of a “whole-of-group” session in the beginning stages of the project. This could have eliminated some of the isolation issues and better engaged them in the project.

**BSC Student Internship**

**What action was taken?**

A discussion between the Bellingen Shire Council (BSC) Director of Corporate Services and me in 2006 revealed BSC’s lack of knowledge about the impact of Camp Creative, a creative arts summer school that had been held in Bellingen, on the Mid North Coast of NSW, every January since 1986. The Director was keen to involve a student in a community-based research project and I liaised with the School of Arts and Social Sciences Field Studies lecturer to identify an appropriate student.

A final year undergraduate Bachelor of Social Science student majoring in
Community Development undertook a Field Studies unit by undertaking community-based research to assess the impact of Camp Creative on Bellingen, particularly from a BSC perspective. The student was co-supervised by the Bellingen Shire Council (BSC) Tourism Manager and the Field Studies Co-ordinator. I played a peripheral role in this project.

What happened, and what did we learn?
The student completed 300 hours of work on the Field Studies project over the summer of 2006-07. Over a 2-week period in January 2007 she interviewed attendees, volunteers and tutors, as well as local business people, community members and BSC staff. Prior to that the student had to develop a survey – in consultation with both of her supervisors and the Camp Creative Committee.

The subsequent report demonstrated the high social, cultural and economic value of Camp Creative to the Bellingen community. When the report was formally presented to Council the Mayor acknowledged the calibre of the work and its importance. Bellingen has a number of signature cultural and social events and the Council then wanted similar studies undertaken for some of the others, such as the July Jazz Festival.

Key Learning:

1. The intensity of the interview timeframe was limited to 2 weeks, which put considerable pressure on this student. Fortunately she was able to cope; however, a less capable student may not have been able to achieve this. The project should have been more closely mapped and other interviewers should have been involved to ease the burden.

2. This report created a “demand” that the University was not in a position to meet, as BSC made requests for more Field Studies students to undertake other community-based research activities. The majority of students undertaking the Bachelor of Social Science study by distance education and are therefore not domiciled in the local region. The Field Studies unit is an elective and not all students choose to undertake it. The similar unit in the Bachelor of Business programme (discussed above) is also an elective and not all students elect to undertake it.

Report on Action #4 – Local Government

As indicated, one person worked on two of these local government projects. In the first activity she was an undergraduate student on a field studies (WIL)
placement and with the second activity she was a graduate and a remunerated research assistant.

Both projects added to my field of study have been really positive for me, and because of the community development focus of the qualitative and quantitative research, and the overlap [between my studies and the 'work'] was perfect. Even in my current work environment a few positive comments have been made about the fact that I have worked for the University (29-IP 2007).

5.3.6 Mutual benefit and reciprocity

The importance of mutual benefit was highlighted and engagement was deemed to take place when 'two people or two organisations meet and agree to participate in a project or to exchange ideas, to the mutual benefit of both parties' (30-EP 2007). ‘Business people will put their time into the University if they believe they’re going to get something out of it, … [and that] their input is going to be respected and its useful’ (23-EP 2007). Participants agreed that relationships and interactive processes – such as partnerships, might occur on a community, regional, national or international basis.

Who are the partners? Who are they serving? Who should they be involved with? And why? And who can add value to what they’re [the University] doing and how they [the University] can add value to what their partners are doing (36-EP 2007).

Successful engagement initiatives are dependent upon open and inclusive processes. One internal participant highlighted a successful engagement initiative that had occurred at another institution, where the University had brought an industry group of 8-12 business people together for lunch with the VC and members of the executive and discipline heads. ‘We would tell them … you are important to us, [this is] where we are from, where we are, where we’re heading, and [this is] how we need you to help us, and how it would be of mutual benefit’ (34-IP 2007). That engagement activity resulted in strong financial support. When the University accepts sponsorship from an external organisation, or undertakes partnerships or joint ventures there are certain expectations that need to be met. Such arrangements have to work for both parties’ otherwise poor outcomes are likely.
You have to identify all of the advantages, or the gains or benefits to both sides, and then seek to reach a point where those benefits are sustained enough so that both parties can reasonably commit to the success of the process, rather than a begrudging connection, … begrudging connections do more damage (14-IP 2008).

In addition to reviewing the themes and patterns as revealed in the summary document compilation, the WDAT\textsuperscript{36} advocates puzzling over the outlying or non-conforming data because this often provides potential learning and a deeper understanding of what is happening.

\begin{quote}
While the University has a stated strategic intent to engage, it’s obvious this is not being reflected or actioned in practice. It seems those charged with the responsibility to make it happen are unwilling or unable to do it – and I find this “gap” between intent and realisation (or at least the establishment of appropriate policy and procedures to enable realisation) both puzzling and frustrating. How can an organisation’s culture change if the very tools required to support it don’t exist? My Journal, October 2008
\end{quote}

5.4 Puzzling over outlying or non-conforming data as revealed by the Williams Data Analysis Tool

As described in Section 4.8.2, WDAT is specifically designed to encourage researchers to look beyond data patterns to review non-conforming data to deepen understanding and learning. Williams (2007) argues that outlying data is not there by chance, its purpose is to encourage puzzling over its significance. In puzzling over the data revealed in this study the following outlying or non-conforming ideas emerged.

- Assumption that engagement is a good thing
- Notion of social responsibility and obligation
- Students as free labour
- Clustering and bridging of disparate groups to grow regionality
- Communication overload
- Ignorance in UCE leadership
- Professional isolation

\textsuperscript{36} See example of tool in Appendix A-3
While only identified by a minority of respondents these issues are worthy of analysis and consideration because they could assist in answering the research questions, particularly in relation to how a culture of engagement could be embedded at SCU.

### 5.4.1 Assumption that UCE is a good thing

One internal participant expressed concern at the use of the term engagement because it ‘implies a seat at the table … and being active in the process …[but] does not automatically imply decision-making’ (24-EP 2007). This comment highlights the need to clarify the terms of UCE so that people know the parameters of their participation including their ability to influence, shape or participate in the decision-making. I suggest that my adaptation of the iap2 Engagement Spectrum\(^{37}\) could facilitate this clarification process. Two internal participants questioned the assumption by the University that the community would want to engage with it. It is important to note that their view of engagement focused almost exclusively on the challenges associated with compulsory student practicum. In challenging the categorical assumption that UCE is a good thing one academic stated:

> *It seemed to me right from the outset that there was this implicit acceptance that … engagement was a good thing. It was good for the university and the community would welcome it … [it is] not a valid assumption …* (6-IP 2007).

The University is funding driven and ‘… has an obvious agenda to get bums on seats…’ (6-IP 2007) and this was creating an oversupply of nurses in the region. This nurse educator argued that compulsory nurse practica\(^{38}\) were an unwelcome form of engagement that was causing significant stress in the hospital system. It was impacting on the relationship between the University and hospitals and not enhancing the student learning experience. This view cannot be ignored because the success of any academic programme is dependent upon graduate satisfaction. In addition to this, if a University partner is pressured by the presence of students undertaking compulsory “work placements” then that issue must to be addressed. When universities

\(^{37}\)See section 2.3.1

\(^{38}\) The compulsory nature of nursing and teaching placements are regulatory and determined by government or other compliance authorities outside the University.
engage with their communities they have to ensure that they are responsive to community conditions (AUCEA 2008b). The partners need to work together to review the system to ensure that the mutual interests of the hospitals, the University and the students are better served. This will make sure that the quality of the undergraduate experience, and those active in the clinical working environments are not compromised. It may also encourage the emergence of post-graduate or research activity. In short, the UCE will be transformed from the assumption that it’s a good thing, to a lived reality that it is a good thing.

The analysis of this non-conforming data has a synergistic link with the Report on Action & Learning #4\textsuperscript{39}. In particular, the vital role of the workplace supervisor and the potential for additional pressure that “student interns” in a workplace can create. As this theme was explored further these internal participants suggested that other communities-of-practice might not want to engage with the University, because they may perceive that they would not gain any benefit from the engagement. They suggested that a reticence to engage may also emerge if the needs of a particular industry sector were not being met, or if the burden or risks associated with the engagement activity were too great, and this could exacerbate a niggle of disconnect. Quite clearly, such disconnect between the University and the community, or more specifically a community-of-practice, could be detrimental to sustaining engagement, not only with that specific community-of-practice but it could also have flow-on effects to others. While this concern relates to compulsory work placements, it is not a matter that can be ignored in the broader context of UCE, or in relation to any University-sanctioned student workplace activity.

5.4.2 Notion of social responsibility and obligation

Unlike other countries such as Ireland, South America and South Africa, the notion of social responsibility and civic obligation does not have traction in the context of UCE in Australia; however, this issue was raised by some of the external participants. One businessman, and members of the ASLaRC

\textsuperscript{39} See section 5.3.3
advisory board argued that universities have a social responsibility to share knowledge, to inform the broader community, and to advocate or lobby on behalf of the people located within its geographic region (25-EP 2007; 37-EP 2007; 38-EP 2007). While one local government employee suggested that the prestige and status of being part of a government funded “elite” organisation brings obligations, it was argued that the University could demonstrate active leadership and social responsibility through the development of ‘organic groups around a specific problem’ (25-EP 2007).

The University has an intellectual obligation to be active in the community and to take a leadership role. The University is the most important organisation to provide leadership in this part of the world where there is a complete leadership vacuum (23-EP 2007).

The expectation that the knowledge within the university will be used to lobby, advocate and/or lead the region to alleviate social and economic pressure cannot be ignored. It needs to be acknowledged by the University, and in collaboration with its regional partners in local government, regional organisations and business that a clearly articulated strategy and action plan should be developed and communicated to the community through the various communities-of-practice and communities-of-interest. The AUCEA (2008b) position paper emphasises that UCE directs teaching and research activities toward the critical issues that shape and effect the future of local, regional national and international communities and this transforms and expands the capacity of higher education. This view epitomises the notion of social responsibility.

5.4.3 Students as free labour

One student raised a concern that the University should ensure that businesses and others in the community do not abuse students when they undertake Work Integrated Learning (WIL) or internship projects by seeing them as “free labour”. While she recognised that student interns could be a valuable resource for a lot of under-funded organisations, she suggested that ‘...this could be a problem if those organisations relied on the students to undertake their work (29-IP 2007). A senior academic noted that in order for an internship to be worthwhile it needs to be well established and students
should get the same sort of care as that provided during their academic contact with the University. Otherwise it is in danger of being cheap labour (8-IP 2007).

WIL or student internship activity should not be confused with Service Learning (SL)\textsuperscript{40}. As previously discussed, SL aims to increase a student’s civic engagement activity while reducing the distance between universities and their communities; the activity undertaken by the student is in a volunteer capacity. Whether a student is participating in a SL or WIL activity it is vital that the roles, responsibilities and expectations of each player – the student, the university and the business or community based organisation – be clearly established and agreed to. A system of follow-up, feedback and review also needs to be established to deal with any issues that may arise.

5.4.4 Clustering and bridging to grow the region

The University does not have the resources – human or financial – to engage with every community-of-practice or community-of-interest across the north coast of NSW. One executive academic suggested that the clustering of Local Government Areas (LGAs) and other communities-of-practice would strengthen the University’s regional approach to social and economic development. Thereby the University could increase the effectiveness and management of its engagement by establishing three sub-regions or clusters. The concept of the University interacting with clusters of nominated people would enable an exchange of ideas, generate discussion and highlight areas of commonality. From a University perspective, an overall picture of the region would emerge and ‘we could see where they coincide and how we could progress … rather than just responding to individual local government agendas’ (34-IP 2007).

In recognising the work of Putnam (2000) and Beugelsdijk and Smulders (Beugelsdijk & Smulders 2003) this cluster approach would see the University establish open networks that would create a bridge between often-disparate

\textsuperscript{40} See section 2.4.1
entities. Repeated interactions facilitated by the University would assist in building trust and shared understanding that could in turn result in significant UCE and/or community-to-community engagement activity that was both cross sector and interdisciplinary. By linking and building such opportunities the University could strengthen its teaching and learning and research and discovery activities and the resultant collaborative partnerships would assist to build community capacity to benefit the broader community.

Engaged research, teaching and learning, produce knowledge outcomes and products that are valuable assets for both academia and the public interest. This expands the role of higher education from a passive producer of knowledge to an active participant in collaborative discovery activities that have diverse and immediate benefits to a variety of stakeholders (AUCEA 2008b).

5.4.5 Communication overload

Holtz (2004) observes that the only reason we communicate with people is to influence them, and those involved in UCE seek to promote and facilitate the notion of engagement to their colleagues and communities alike through their communication activities. While communication was clearly identified as a pattern or theme, discussion at an IRG suggested that communication overload could be an impediment to UCE. This is because people seek to filter all but what is perceived to be absolutely necessary (Office of Regional Engagement 2009a). Therefore, when developing a UCE communication strategy, it is vital to be aware of and to effectively manage communication “noise” in the UCE arena. According to Holtz (2004, p. 179) “…it is getting harder and harder for people to manage workplace communications…” therefore it is incumbent on the organisation to help employees to manage this, particularly in large organisations such as universities. Those entrusted with communication responsibility within an organisation should be responsible for streamlining communication methods, such as hardcopy and electronic newsletters, websites, emails, messaging, and intranet, as well as face-book, twitter and other social networking sites. It is also imperative to ensure that there is a consistent use of a common UCE language.

---

41 See section 5.3.4
5.4.6 UCE leadership ignorance
The importance of leadership was identified as a pattern. The observation of a local government participant in relation to the challenge of getting support from the senior people in the organisation with little or no engagement experience could also have applicability in the context of higher education. As UCE is a relatively new discipline it is unlikely that many executive and senior staff would have had direct involvement in this area. Therefore, this lack of practical engagement experience could limit their understanding and value of engagement, and impact on their ability to ensure that their organisation makes the transition from UCE strategy, policy, to UCE practice.

5.4.7 Professional isolation
While recognising the advantages of University staff being part of the region and part of the community, one internal participant suggested this could have a downside corollary. Their physical isolation could also manifest as professional isolation because they do not see ‘that the sector as a whole is changing, and every institution in the sector is changing’ (14-IP 2008). This disconnect or minimal engagement with staff in other universities means they are not able to benchmark against other institutions, either within their own discipline area, or across a range of issues.

In a city environment, … there are so many other universities … there is so much cross-fertilisation, interaction and linking between institutions that the perceived norm changes over time. … [Whereas at a] stand-alone regional university [it is] possible to disconnect from that process, … it leaves you set with an understanding of sector norms and expectations that can actually be a bit historical, rather than move with the times (14-IP 2008).

Puzzling over the outlying data has added depth to the analysis and prompted me to view things from a different perspective. This data has demonstrated various forms of resistance and disconnect, and highlighted the importance of establishing and maintaining effective two-way communication and support mechanisms, to build an understanding of UCE and to nurture, and sustain long-term internal and external relationships. The data will now be viewed

---

42 See section 5.3.2
through the “chaordic lens” to see if that also adds value to the analysis.

5.5 The view through the Chaordic Lens
As indicated in Chapter 4, I have consciously chosen to wear the Chaordic Lens as a means of reflecting upon and reviewing the data that has emerged during this study. CST provides a holistic perspective that is underpinned by five precepts: consciousness, connectivity, indeterminacy, dissipation and emergence. This research clearly demonstrates the capacity to accommodate these precepts.

5.5.1 Consciousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mind and matter are one – an unbroken wholeness; the OrgMind that is also an organisation’s holonic capacity – the shared truth, knowledge and understanding (Extract from Table 4-5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The internal and external data sources, including the reflective element of AR, revealed a pattern of high engagement “consciousness” – or awareness – that is mainly implicit rather than explicit. The data analysis also revealed that although internal participants are conscious that UCE is a University strategic priority, this consciousness has not been translated into passion and subsequent action. As a result a low level of UCE is evident. The outright resistance and/or slow adoption of UCE activity is a direct result of the lack of engagement related organisational infrastructure that does not universally recognise and reward UCE. This impedes the transformation of high levels of consciousness into fully realised UCE practice that is required to enable SCU’s stated engagement policy to be fulfilled. From an external perspective there was a very high level of engagement consciousness, particularly among the Local Government participants. This is likely to be a result of an increased emphasis on community engagement and citizen participation in the local government arena over the past decade, particularly in relation to planning issues.
5.5.2 Connectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The universe is one – a single unbroken and unbreakable pattern of relationships in which no “thing” can exist or event occur independently of the whole (Extract from Table 4-5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From a CST perspective the importance of unbroken patterns of relationships or connectivity within and beyond an organisation is vital. This notion was expressed as the need for a common thread (31-EP 2007) of engagement to be woven into the fabric of the organisation (4-IP 2007), and it was identified by a number of participants.

There should be a “thread of engagement”, … from the University strategic plan right down to day-to-day business … the accountability … and the reporting mechanisms need to be clearly identified for this [engagement] to be successful. … [At the moment] it’s a bit of a mish-mash (11-IP 2007).

The ORE facilitated engagement activity within the University, and between the University and its multiple communities, and the ORE page on the SCU website highlighted a strong connectivity focus.

The team at the Office of Regional Engagement (ORE) serves as a gateway to encourage the exchange of information, ideas and issues between the academy and the wider community. The team at ORE works closely with our regional communities - from individuals and community based organisations, to business and government at all levels (Office of Regional Engagement 2009b).

The need for an ORE and its role as a conduit (13-IP 2007) within the university and out into the community was acknowledged by participants and largely supported. While recognising the expertise within the ORE, one internal participant suggested that its primary role is to understand the constantly changing priorities, needs and demands within the community and the university in order to “…create connections and let the community know what we have available that might be of benefit to them’ (5-IP 2007). A suggestion that ORE focus on establishing connections, start-ups and seeding rather than recurrent activity was put forward because ‘…the ownership needs to be with those in the appropriate discipline [area or areas]’ (16-IP 2008). This notion
also emerged through the ORE’s AR cycles and as a consequence the ORE has a key focus on enabling and facilitating connectivity to encourage broader ownership and by facilitating relationship development.

Connectivity within and beyond the University could manifest in different ways (14-IP 2008). It may build upon an existing relationship where there is connection, because of personal chemistry or a common interest. This participant also cautioned that some people might be highly protective of such a relationship and not let anyone else in which could limit the on-going development of engagement from a broader University perspective. However,

... from an engagement perspective, how easily those outside are able to track their way through the University is a very real measure of the University’s commitment to regional engagement (14-IP 2008).

The importance of having a tangible means of connectivity was put forward. The notion that universities are separate from the community, rather than connected with the community was identified, and engagement training and enabling processes were proffered as solutions. The suggestion that current demands on staff needed to be taken into account was also raised, ‘[engagement] needs to be lean enough for people not to see it as ‘the straw that broke the camel’s back’, [but] ... enough to get somewhere significant’ (34-IP 2007). This enabling process could also be augmented through

...the provision of a community section on the University web-site on “how to engage with the University and who to contact” would be helpful, along with some examples of engagement and details of various community contacts and regional organisations (26-EP 2007).

The internal and external nature of Engagement was identified by 65% of participants. Internally, engagement could occur across work-units and involve staff and students, while external connections could involve staff and/or students engaging with the broader community or specific communities-of-interest.

Mutual benefit and reciprocity demonstrate the interdependent and holonic elements of connectivity. In order to build holonic depth and breadth, relationships need to be nurtured across the organisation. The importance of
mutuality from a holistic perspective also needs to be recognised, because each person has the ability to influence and shape the whole. Holistic and integrated thinking was also evident. Both internal participants and external participants acknowledged that if the University engages and connects with others it is beneficial, because it assists community growth from social, economic and cultural perspectives and enables people to be exposed to other ideas and viewpoints, ‘… we’re all part of one community and need to move forward, together if possible’ (30-EP 2007). One regionally active external participant emphasised the need for University staff to continue to practice professionally, to remain connected to their own specialty area and not lose touch (26-EP 2007). Additionally, they need to seek opportunities to undertake research that adds value to their teaching, to the region, and beyond.

However, the thread of connectivity can be tenuous and very often the difference between effective and ineffective engagement is one or two people.

The glue that actually makes engagement work is so fragile, … you lose one key person … [and] quite often that’s it, it’s all over, because there simply isn’t that same commitment (22-EP 2007).

Therefore, to sustain internal and external connectivity, team members could be involved in each other’s projects, in order to expand networks and maintain engagement while building relationships and trust.

### 5.5.3 Indeterminacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The future is a wave of potential unknowable in advance and therefore cannot be determined.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indeterminacy seeks patterns, focuses on strategic intent, and embraces the notion of spontaneous self-organisation (Extract from Table 4-5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to CST, the past, the present and the future are all tied up in the present moment and the future itself is unknown potential. As highlighted in Chapter 3, section 3.6, we should endeavour to prepare ourselves, and our organisations, for surprise rather than seek to predict certainty. This notion is probably the most difficult lens to embrace, as current management practices
and western ways of thinking and doing place emphasis on determining the future, rather than allowing for the future to emerge through spontaneous self-organisation. Similarly, determining engagement can also be difficult because it can be ‘nebulous and difficult to define categorically’ (14-IP 2008). As previously identified, engagement should be woven (3-IP 2007) or embedded into the organisation through interaction (1-IP 2007) that is supported by a decision-making framework (11-IP 2007) rather than determined by strict prescription.

In recognising the indeterminate nature of engagement, the ORE has encouraged the development of active broad-based partnerships with the community, particularly through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) at a range of levels.

The University needs to identify how it can be of use [to its community], to be open to ideas and up to date with the issues and what’s important to the community, or groups within the community. It also needs to be open to communicating with the community and committed to working in partnerships (28-IP 2007).

Organisation-to-organisation relationships, such as a MoU, have provided a formal connection and outline a process to encourage discussion and dialogue between individuals and sub-units of each organisation. Over time this builds trust at individual and inter-organisational levels that, in turn, provides opportunity for the emergence of shared projects and activities. Such an approach is not about the University being directive, rather it is about it embracing a two-way equitable approach that is engaging because it helps, assists, or guides, while working towards mutually beneficial win-win situations (7-IP 2007).

In order to develop a culture-of-engagement between the University and its various communities, enabling activities and devices such as a dedicated person to work on community partnerships can help ‘to pave the way and keep the project going – it’s not reasonable to expect that individual lecturers can do this without support’ (37-EP 2007). This is the role of engagement facilitation units such as the ORE. A framework to guide the development of
engagement plans and activities across the University is important because a
one size fits all approach is an inefficient and ineffective use of resources, and
‘specificity and strategy [may] vary from one discipline to another, … the
opportunities are not the same for each of them’ (34-IP 2007).

Determining what constitutes engagement, and how it can be measured and
subsequently rewarded was also raised (14-IP 2008). This participant also
observed that while the University introduced a five-year strategic plan in 2005
that included regional engagement as a key strategy, it had been difficult at
that time, and subsequently to develop indicators to measure this activity. It
was implicit in the University budget to reward regional engagement, but the
stages of engagement need to be reflected in a reward strategy. In
recognising that things are different in different areas it is apparent that
different engagement, measurement, recognition and reward strategies may
need to emerge for different discipline areas.

5.5.4 Dissipation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The universe is a dissipative structure, <strong>perpetually cycling through processes of falling apart and then coming back together again.</strong> Intentional dissipation does not guarantee the emergence of new ways of doing, being, and becoming within a system or organisation, but increases the likelihood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Extract from Table 4-5).

The enmeshing, oneness and inter-changeability of the five elements of CST
are exemplified in the symbiotic relationship between dissipation and
emergence – emergence and dissipation. As noted earlier in this chapter a
culture-of-engagement has not yet been absorbed into the orgmind of the
University, particularly from an academic perspective. In assessing the
adoption of a culture-of-engagement it was clear that a willingness to adapt
and **adopt the new**, by allowing the old and no longer useful to fall apart had
only been embraced by some individuals. It had not been embraced from an
organisational perspective.

One area requiring dissipation was the one-campus orientation that was often
apparent (10-IP 2007). The dissipation of internal barriers, to eliminate or
reduce the silo mentality within the University should be encouraged (15-IP
2008) to ensure a whole-of-organisation involvement (32-EP 2007) and a
removal of entrenched attitudes and ‘the uphill battle of territorialism’ (33-IP
2007) between campuses. However one external participant noted it is
important to recognise that organisational size can have an impact and that
needs to be taken into account.

… It is easier to achieve [internal engagement] in smaller local
government areas (LGAs) because the management team is
smaller, the line numbers are smaller, therefore it is more
accessible … the difficulty comes with sheer numbers (32-EP
2007).

The dissipation of resistance to UCE could be encouraged through the
development of better engagement criteria and guidelines, measurement
mechanisms, recognition and rewards (5-IP 2007; 11-IP 2007; 14-IP 2008;

Engagement is a facilitation role and [as such] it’s hard to measure
… it’s about building a climate and that can’t always be causally
linked to a dollar value … you might be able to extrapolate
information from it – [and it’s something that] partnership can

It is clear that a major challenge affecting the development of an engagement
culture is the need for clarity regarding what the University counts as
important. One University executive noted that the development of
engagement indicators has proven to be a struggle (14-IP 2008). There was a
suggestion that this needs to be resolved because rewarding research and
engagement are important elements for growing both the University’s
academic capacity and its relevance to the region (15-IP 2008). As previously
discussed, the narrow focus of current workload models needs to dissipate.
Workload models should be expanded to include ES activity because this is
necessary for embedding a culture-of-engagement into the University (7-IP

The ability to change appeared to be problematic. It is evident that there was
some apathy (10-IP, 2008), reluctance, or inability to accept that bifurcation,
or change points, and the subsequent cycles of dissipation and emergence
are natural phenomena. As noted in Chapter 2, (section 2.2) the Johari
Window highlights the importance of increasing people’s knowledge and understanding by reducing the unknowns. Therefore it is not unreasonable to assume that the instability associated with entering the unknown, or operating in a far-from-equilibrium environment, could prevent the emergence of change. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge and understanding, coupled with a fear of letting go, could prevent the breaking down of the old as a mechanism to allow evolution to occur.

The SCU Staff Survey (Voice Project 2008) identified that 29% of respondents across the sector indicated that change was not handled well by universities. This resistance could be reduced if people were encouraged to accept that dissipation is not something to fear, but a natural part of evolution, innovation and renewal. In the context of this study the acceptance of dissipation could be facilitated by empowering staff to determine their own ways of engaging ‘within the context of a framework’ (32-EP 2007). A framework or guidelines would reduce ambiguity and encourage ownership of a process or project and assist in building a commitment to Engagement (18-EP 2007), and help to reduce the fear of change or dissipation. CST embraces change opportunities or bifurcation and dissipation as a natural part of life and something to accept, rather than something to fear or resist. An acceptance of this CST premise would enable the emergence of a culture-of-engagement as UCE knowledge and practice improves.

### 5.5.5 Emergence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergence is an intrinsic attribute of complexity that is <strong>adaptive and exemplified by messiness and creativity</strong>. While it cannot be modelled at the outset or controlled per se – emergence can be facilitated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Extract from Table 4-5).

Emergence is active, often messy, and can manifest in a multitude of ways. It can occur through innovation, resourcefulness, originality, inventiveness, cleverness, ingenuity, or artistic endeavour. The overlap and interconnectivity between Emergence and the other elements of the Chaordic Lens was evident in much of the material that has been examined. It is important to
acknowledge that the level of UCE consciousness has been raised, if not fully realised. Many instances of connectivity and relationship development have also emerged as well as some recognition of the value of an engagement facilitation unit to support the University’s strategic engagement intent. However, a significant resistance to the dissipation of the old to allow the emergence of the new, particularly from a functional structure perspective, is also evident. While emergence cannot be rigidly determined, a structure to underpin and support it could be of assistance.

Emergence is dependent upon strong relationships, a high degree of trust and a clearly articulated shared intent; the Wilson River Experience Walk (WREW) is an example of facilitated and collaborative UCE. The WREW project emerged out of a MoU between SCU and Lismore City Council (LCC) and sought to build mutual benefit. This on-going partnership has been sustained over five stages and exhibits very strong connectivity through the active involvement of 20 partners, including the university (staff and students), the Council, an Elders group, TAFE, schools, government, business and community groups (Derrett 2008b). The WREW also demonstrates strong inter-disciplinarity that is built upon shared knowledge and incorporates multiple perspectives. This has been achieved through sustained and active dialogue between individuals and multilogue between the partners and other community organisations, to further strengthen and build community connectivity.

A key element of the WREW project is that it enhances the social, cultural, and to some extent, the economic capital of the region (Strom 2009a). High levels of trust have been established over time, and the shared intent of those involved, to improve the Wilson River bank environment, and document and share stories and history of the river from both Aboriginal and settler perspectives. The merit of the WREW relationships and partnership activity was recognised when it was awarded a commendation for outstanding achievement at the 2008 national Business Higher Education Round Table (B-HERT) awards. The Honourable Julia Gillard, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations gave an
address at the awards and emphasised the important role that engagement, including partnerships between higher education institutions and business and industry, can play in breaking down the walls that often surround universities (Office of Regional Engagement 2008b). Diagram 5-2 provides a visual summary of the findings of the analysis as viewed from a CST perspective.

5.6 Value of using Chaordic Systems Thinking

It is evident that CST does add some value as an analysis tool, particularly because it encourages holistic and interconnected thinking, however its true value is more likely to be realised as a mechanism for cultural and organisational change.

5.6.1 CST as a method of analysis

The Chaordic Lens is a CST construct, and as a method of analysis it provides the user with a means of understanding the challenges and limitations of conventional “control and command” style thinking by
encouraging holistic and inclusive thinking. Focusing through each lens allowed me see the same data from multiple perspectives, and a strong “thread” of interdependence was evident. Using the chaordic lens revealed a form of nebulous patterning, that is, while a sense of pattern was evident the porous boundaries were indistinct and imprecise. One pattern revealed that a command and control approach cannot determine outcomes because UCE operates in a constantly changing environment. This is particularly important in the context of collaborative partnerships that have been established to ensure that the power is shared and all knowledge – regardless of the source – is of value. A strong common thread was the express need for a UCE framework that provides some structure while encouraging flexibility and opportunities for self-organisation. This demonstrates an intrinsic understanding of CST. The value of establishing and strengthening relationships as a means of allowing the new to emerge was also identified and an understanding by some of the symbiotic relationship between dissipation and emergence was also evident.

5.6.2 CST as a mechanism for cultural change

This research identified that there is a strong synergistic link between CST and Engagement, as both require holistic thinking and action. This link offers a creative and inclusive way to build knowledge and expertise that could in turn contribute to University, community and regional capacity. CST encourages planning for possibility rather than being categorically definitive. As previously indicated, CST’s loose approach is at odds with Western culture’s dominant control and command methods of organisational management, therefore, a significant cultural shift is required. The challenge we face is to let go and go with the flow, to employ the colloquial. This is not to suggest that chaos should prevail, rather an embracing of chaordic thinking – whereby a clear intent is supported by a system or framework. Such a framework enables the creative and sometimes chaotic to emerge so that it can be tamed and utilised, thus providing a sense of order, and therefore, UCE could also be guided or facilitated by an enabling framework. However, such a framework

---

43 See section 3
should not be rigid, thereby recognising the Chaordic notion of indeterminacy\textsuperscript{44}. The framework should provide a creative mechanism for emergent activity to be both understood and realised, and quantified and qualified.

While outside the context of UCE the following example demonstrates that Chaos thinking is being embraced in a more conventional quarter. USA academic Phillip Kotler argues that a new business framework or guidelines is necessary to deal with the problems brought on by the World Financial Crisis (\textit{Chaotics 2009}). The Kotler and Caslione (2009) book \textit{Chaotics: the business of managing and marketing in the age of turbulence}, states that new mindsets and strategic behaviours need to be created and implemented in order to cope with periods of heightened turbulence, chaos and uncertainty. Their premise that ‘the current era of heightened chaos and turbulence is new’ (2009, p. 3) could be argued, however, the need for business to develop a management framework and system that is able to deal with chaos is not arguable. A CST approach enables this by coupling chaos with order. Kotler and Caslione (2009) acknowledge that the Lorenz butterfly effect\textsuperscript{45} can have a profound impact because of our increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependent global world. As a consequence, they have developed a \textit{Chaotics Management System} to encourage business to recognise and ‘to exploit the opportunities created by chaos – and they refer to these as chaos inflection points\textsuperscript{46}’ (Kotler & Caslione 2009, p. 75). In this thesis chaos inflection points are referred to as change opportunities, or by their Chaos label, bifurcation points. As universities regularly engage with business, Kotler’s \textit{Chaotics Management System} could herald a change in business thinking as management students use this text. This would impact on Engagement activity business-to-business, business-to-customer, business-to-community and business-to-university.

Like the business sector, those working in higher education could also benefit

\textsuperscript{44} See section 3.6
\textsuperscript{45} See section 3.2.1
\textsuperscript{46} Italics author’s emphasis
from a framework to assist them to deal with the heightened turbulence and chaos of our globalised world. To assist people to better understand the engagement context and enable the emergence of a culture-of-engagement I designed a UCE enabling framework. The emergence of this output was not something I envisaged at the outset of the study. I had falsely assumed that the University’s adoption of a strategy to engage would have been operationally supported and implemented.

5.7 Introducing engagEnable dialogue and diagnostic tool

While this research has identified pockets of UCE, the findings detailed in this chapter revealed that a low level of UCE was evident. In particular I reiterate the following points:

1. The university-wide 2006 and 2008 Engagement Activity Audits showed low levels of Engaged Teaching and Learning (13%) and Engaged Research (14%)\(^{47}\)
2. The 2008 Staff Survey indicated that only 13% of staff members acknowledged engagement as being a central part of the University’s activities
3. A lack of shared understanding about what constitutes UCE and how it can manifest
4. A lack of framework to build a university-wide culture-of-engagement

My own observations as a biographically situated Action Researcher support these facts. My reflection on this low level of commitment to UCE across the University, particularly the reluctance by academics to embrace Engaged Scholarship (ES) resulted directly in the development of engagEnable dialogue and diagnostic method.\(^{48}\)

engagEnable has a holistic focus. It was developed to link specifically with the “core business” of the University – that is: teaching and learning, and research that would also support the broader “community context” of social, human and economic capital development.

\(^{47}\) See Section 4.6.1
\(^{48}\) See Table 5-1
As reported in Report on Action & Learning #3\(^{49}\) **engagEnable** was tested through the SCU Internal Reference Group (IRG) and workshops were conducted at each of the university’s three campuses. Feedback from participants at the preliminary workshops with academic staff indicated that **engagEnable** helped to clarify the various elements of UCE. The free-flowing dialogue between participants also proved to be informative. As one participant noted, it helped her to better understand the work of colleagues located in an office just up the corridor.

I have presented the concept at two conferences, including the *CampusEngage Conference* held in Dublin, Ireland in June 2009. While the Irish engagement context is different to the SCU or Australian context\(^{50}\), delegate feedback recognised that it could be useful ‘…if it was modified to suit the Irish context, **engagEnable** could be very useful for strengthening our student engagement’ (Strom 2009). Workshop participants at the 2009 AUCEA Conference were interested in its potential as a measurement or auditing tool. **engagEnable** was also used to inform the development of the Central Queensland University Strategic Plan 2011-14 [http://content.cqu.edu.au/FCWViewer/getFile.do?id=42537] which has a focus on Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research, and Engaged Community Service. **engagEnable** is also included in the Appendices of this plan.

As identified by Wafler (2004a)\(^{51}\) dialogue is about people thinking together to build connectivity, increase mutual understanding, and grow the holonic capacity of an organisation. **engagEnable** supports the emergence of self-organisation by incorporating internal, external, sustainability and personal elements and is designed to facilitate dialogue and diagnosis while growing understanding about UCE. It is important to emphasise that **engagEnable** is not a “tick the box” process, the emphasis is on dialogue. In applying CST principles as a mechanism for change, I was conscious of the need to develop

---

\(^{49}\) See pp 215-6

\(^{50}\) As discussed in section 2.3

\(^{51}\) See Chapter 3
a framework that was flexible enough not to stifle creativity, autonomy or the emergence of self-organisation, while being structured enough to provide some sense or order and commonality.

The internal categories featured in engageEnable relate to the University and they are: teaching and learning, including student connectedness within and beyond the University; research and discovery; and community service. The external community assets of social capital, including cultural and political elements, human capital and economic capital\(^{52}\) are also addressed. It is important to note that the internal and external elements are not mutually exclusive but tend to be integrated, overlapping and/or synchronised, and they can affect both the University and the broader community. engageEnable also encompasses sustainability elements, and individual perspectives on relationships and connectivity. It is unlikely that all elements included in the method will be addressed in any single engagement activity, but if the level of engagement diagnosed is minimal, then engageEnable provides indicators to encourage greater UCE consciousness. It can assist the engager to make sense of this complex environment, and to facilitate their engagement journey. engageEnable ‘... helped me to learn the ability to see the connection between these things’ (34-IP 2007). Diagram 5-3 illustrates the Engaged Scholarship context that underpins the engagement-enabling method.

![Diagram 5-3 Context of engaged scholarship](image)

\(^{52}\) As discussed in section 2.2
Rather than being prescriptive, **engagEnable** provides a list of “dialogue prompts” addressing each sub-context area. These questions are: Does this activity…? How? So what? Each sub-context, such as teaching and learning, has a series of questions to ask in relation to an existing or potential UCE activity. For example,

- **Does this activity improve/change the content of an existing study unit or course?** Select yes/no.
- **If “Yes” discuss and record how it improves/changes the content of an existing study unit or course.**
- **So what does this mean?**
- **What measurement mode will you use?**

**engagEnable** can be used by individuals or with a staff member and their work-unit supervisor. However, it works best if it is used in a group to help enable a broader understanding of other peoples’ perspectives and thus improves intra work-unit or inter-work-unit engagement. The active participation of work-unit members in exploring UCE activity together is vital to developing a shared understanding and it can also facilitate the development of a shared vision. This should assist in the embedding of a culture-of-engagement at an individual work-unit level and contribute to bringing about a whole-of-system change across the University.

**engageEnable** has been designed to trigger UCE dialogue and diagnosis, it can be used for project negotiation, work-unit and team building activities, and as a mechanism to review an existing project, identify new areas of activity, or facilitate project design. **engageEnable** could also be used to record UCE, provide evidence about the type of engagement activity undertaken, or on an individual basis, for workload negotiations, performance review and promotion applications.

To support a wider use of the framework, an **engageEnable CD** will provide easy access to the complex and diverse array of knowledge covered in this thesis and it will provide **engageEnable** with an academic development
The CD is intended as a knowledge sharing device, and an education and training tool to be used in conjunction with the **engageEnable** dialogue and diagnosis method and the **engageEnable** workshops. The CD will utilise an interactive, web-like format that will provide an easy means for exploring the key elements of CST in relation to UCE. The provision of a highly visual front-page will allow the user to decide their own terms of engagement with the material utilising an interactive and hyper-linked format. A power-point storyboard of the **engageEnable CD** outlining the information that will be included on the professionally produced CD is available in a sleeve behind the Appendices.

In summary, **engageEnable** recognises the complexity of UCE in general and Engaged Scholarship (ES) in particular, and is flexible enough to allow for emergence and self-organisation. As indicated, dialogue is used as a means of openly exploring this complex and uncertain environment in order to stimulate the emergence of UCE opportunities and grow a culture-of-engagement. **engageEnable** is designed to empower individuals and work-units, to assist them to clarify their engagement intent, while providing an opportunity for reflection. If facilitated appropriately, this reflective activity could also reveal cross-disciplinary or cross-sector opportunities for collaborative UCE.
### University perspective<sup>53</sup> – Teaching & Learning, Research & Discovery, Community Service …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the activity …</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>How? … So what?</th>
<th>Measurement Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching &amp; Learning</strong></td>
<td>Improve/change the content of existing study unit or course?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead to the creation of a new study unit or course?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance the student learning for an existing study unit or course?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide student-to-student relationship or networking?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide student-to-academic or student-to-community member mentoring?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connect academic learning to practical experience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide professional development for academics &amp;/or students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research &amp; Discovery</strong></td>
<td>Build on existing knowledge? (your own or your work-units)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build on existing discipline knowledge?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create new knowledge in the discipline area?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform others of the learning?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide further research opportunity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Service</strong></td>
<td>Encourage community access to University resources – physical and human?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build relationships between the University and the community, or a particular community-of-interest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serve the <em>common or greater good</em> of the community?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>53</sup> *Increasing the depth of University-Community Engagement provides greater benefits to teaching and learning, discovery and research, and also serves the community.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the activity ...</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>How? ... So what?</th>
<th>Measurement Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including Cultural &amp; Political elements)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build community capacity and/or encourage greater community cohesion?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve community connectivity, relationships and networks?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve people in the experience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect or influence the community or a particular community-of-interest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance or build cultural awareness and understanding?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide an opportunity to assist community understanding of policy or strategic planning matters?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide an opportunity to influence community based, regional organisations or government on policy and/or strategic planning?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge and utilise knowledge, skills and attributes that exist outside of the University?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the knowledge capacity of those outside the University?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage those outside the University to undertake further education and/or knowledge/skill development?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and encourage retention of graduates within the region?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide direct benefit to the local economy through financial input?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide indirect benefit to the local economy through sharing knowledge or intellectual capital?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect broad business and industry sectors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directly or indirectly contribute to job creation and/or investment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54 **Communities are better served** from social, cultural, economic, or human perspectives as a result of high quality, sustained and connected levels of University-Community Engagement.
### Sustain-ability – organisationally & environmentally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the activity …</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>How? … So what?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have the organisational infrastructure (i.e. workload allocation) structure and/or resources (human &amp;/or financial) to support it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide stimulus for innovation and creativity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and encourage sustainable practice?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Support inter-disciplinary or inter-organisational activity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect or improve the natural environment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance or improve the built environment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Personal Perspective – Relationships & connectivity\(^{55}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the activity …</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>How? … So what?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With self</td>
<td>Support my personal values?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance my own workplace experience?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide me with professional and/or knowledge/skill development?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allow me to contribute to the University and the community/region?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With others</td>
<td>Involve collaboration or partnerships within my work unit(^{56})?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involve collaboration or partnerships with other work units?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involve collaboration or partnerships with other universities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involve collaboration or partnerships with community, regional, national or international organisations?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{55}\) Personal Perspective concerns relationships and connectivity with oneself and with others – are key elements of engagement, and networks, collaborations and partnerships are an integral to enhancing UCE and building and strengthening community capacity.

\(^{56}\) Work-unit = school, centre, department.
5.8 Multiple hats – a personal experience

I will now address an area of challenge I faced as an embedded biographically situated researcher. As identified in Chapter 2\textsuperscript{57} overlapping humankinds (Berreby 2006) or tribal memberships (Hillier & Rookesby 2005) can result in role conflict (Coghlan & Shani 2005), particularly if a researcher is faced with simultaneous role expectations. Between 2004 and 2008 I was a Board member with a local Not-For-Profit (NFP) organisation and it was well known by my Board colleagues and senior management at the NFP that I worked at the University. Prior to my joining the Board the organisation had an existing relationship with the University as a provider of under-graduate scholarships.

This NFP had a publicly stated commitment to re-invest some of its surpluses into the community, and it was in this context that conversations between the NFP and senior representatives of the University took place. As the link I was present at the initial discussion but not active in the development of the subsequent proposal. When it was presented to the Board in late 2006 I reiterated that I worked for the University although not for the department putting forward the proposal. Some time after the Board had agreed to support the proposal, a human resource matter arose, and the aggrieved employee raised allegations of undue influence on my behalf in relation to the funding of the University proposal. The ensuing conflict and investigation was arduous and tested Board relationships and trust, and it was clear that personality issues, interpersonal factors and politics were at play. However, Board members had always been aware of my dual roles and I continued to have their full support. Following this incident, and to avoid any similar occurrences, the Board established more rigorous disclosure and meeting procedures for Board members.

This situation highlighted the conundrum and challenges associated with working in a paid or volunteer capacity in small local and regional communities, as well as

\textsuperscript{57} See section 2.7.3
overlapping role expectations, the power of personality conflict and the politics of inter-relationships. From a role-expectation perspective, as an engagement facilitator with SCU, one of my key roles is to establish relationships, build linkages and seek opportunities for collaborative or partnership activity. As a Board member of a NFP I was expected to act in the best interest of the organisation and had a legal obligation to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. While the juggling of hats can be a challenge, good governance practices, such as clear open dialogue, appropriate disclosure systems and meeting procedures should reduce the effects associated with role conflict. However the same cannot be said of personality conflict and the politics that can accompany inter-relationships, particularly in relation to power.

The pain of politics…

The pain and anguish I feel at having my integrity, reputation and ethic smeared and my motivation challenged is immense. I have committed myself to making a difference for my community for more than 20 years … very often to my own detriment.

I have to remind myself this is obviously personal politics, the Board have re-elected me as Chair, so they are supporting me … I just want this be over? (My Journal – July 2007)

***

I woke up this morning and felt a lightness of spirit … then I realised … it’s finally over. My Journal – August 2008

5.9 Conclusion – engaging complexity

Whole-of-system change can be difficult to achieve and as one external participant who works for a regional organisation observed, real change in UCE will only be achieved through a long-term strategic focus, and conscious engagement. ‘Such strategies, looking closely at – why, who and how – can lead to … partnerships and shared outcomes that are determined through business and action plans’ (36-EP 2007). UCE is intrinsically complex, it enables a diversity of viewpoints to be heard and the University needs to engage with the community in order to learn from the community. An internal participant suggested that it is essential for both the University as an institution, and those individuals within, to engage. Firstly,
because SCU is a regional university and secondly, because ‘...it’s embedded in our strategic plan, it’s about the people we live, work and play with, within our physical (regional) footprint’ (16-IP 2008).

The 2008 SCU Staff Survey (Voice Project 2008) revealed the low number of staff who indicated they value engagement and this demonstrates the notion that change is being resisted. The move towards a culture-of-engagement might be a cultural shock for many University staff, so it is important to recognise the potential resistance to cultural change and ‘provide people with some sort of value or benefit that the change would bring to them’ (1-IP 2007). A number of internal participants were conscious of the need for better internal engagement. In recognition of this, and in response to comments elicited from the 2006 Deliberative Jury and the 2006 Engagement Activity Audit, the IRG was established in early 2007, to better enable internal engagement communication and the sharing of ideas and to facilitate inter-disciplinary Engaged Scholarship activity. As indicated in the Report of Action & Learning #2 the IRG success thus far has been limited but it is evolving. One IRG member argued for more internal dialogue about engagement, and while it may not be immediately apparent where that conversation will lead, convincing people that the conversation is worthwhile is important.

... People [need to] see that engagement is part of the genesis – a process that totally focuses the University’s strategic direction in relation to its core activities (34-IP 2007).

In summary, this review of data utilised three different tools – Summary Documents, Williams Data Analysis and the Chaordic Lens. While a high level of engagement awareness was apparent it has not been embedded into the culture or holonic capacity of the University. UCE is neither commonly shared, nor intrinsically understood as evidenced through the prevailing individual mental models. As shown in Table 5-2, the Summary Documents and the CST lens each identified seven themes or areas of convergence. While the WDAT also identified two of these “areas” – leadership and communication, it should be noted that
they were viewed from a divergent perspective. It is clear that both leadership and communication are key elements to building an effective and enduring culture-of-engagement at SCU. The notion of convergence and divergence around the same areas epitomises complexity. The WDAT also identified three additional areas of divergence. All data gathered and analysed will inform the answers to the research questions in Chapter 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes/Outlying Data</th>
<th>Summary Documents</th>
<th>Williams Data Analysis Tool</th>
<th>Chaordic Lens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convergence</td>
<td>Divergence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft infrastructure (eg framework)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual benefit</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement &quot;good&quot; assumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clustering &amp; Bridging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-2  Key areas of convergent and divergent data

As Boyer (1990, p. 77) acknowledges, the world beyond the University has become more crowded, less stable and increasingly interdependent. He argues that this increased complexity requires more information and understanding, therefore academic scholars need to embrace a team approach as they mindfully and
… skillfully explore the new frontiers of knowledge ... [and] also integrate ideas, connect thought to action and inspire students.

An increased focus on connectivity within and beyond the University – be it individual-to-individual, individual-to-work-unit, work-unit-to-work-unit, individual-to-organisation, work-unit-to-organisation, or organisation-to-organisation should assist this embedding process. engagEnable® is designed to facilitate this process. Engaged Scholarship, through Engaged Teaching & Learning, Engaged Research & Discovery, and Community Service can enhance the core business of the University while building the capacity of its broader community, including communities-of-practice and communities-of-interest.
Each advance in knowledge may only serve as a temporary resting point, but ultimately should function as a portal to further knowledge and insight.

(Bohm 2003, p. 6)
6.1 Introduction

University-Community Engagement (UCE) – specifically Engaged Scholarship – is an intrinsically fundamental element of higher education. The focus of this chapter is on how the literature reviews and the findings of this research can be synthesised to provide a means of consolidating a culture-of-engagement at SCU in particular. However, other universities and organisations beyond the higher education sector could also benefit from the learning. In this chapter the

- research questions are answered;
- implications the research has on literature are discussed;
- study limitations are identified;
- areas of new knowledge are shown;
- opportunities for further research are identified;
- recommendations for improving, embedding and enabling UCE will be revealed.

6.2 Answering the research questions

1. How do internal and external stakeholders associated with Southern Cross University understand and/or perceive University-Community Engagement?

The data reveals a level of UCE awareness and understanding for both internal and external stakeholders, and some recognition of the interconnected and interdependent nature of engagement. UCE is seen as a relationship-based activity that involves collaboration, partnerships and networks, and the development and sharing of knowledge. However there is a disparity between the views of people within the university and those without. A 2008 staff survey revealed that only 13% of staff valued engagement, and it is generally viewed as an extra, rather than a core element of their work. In contrast, external participants place a significantly higher value on UCE, particularly in relation to social responsibility and community development. They also see relationships as being an integral component of UCE, while less than half of the internal participants
placed a significant value on them. However, the School of Tourism & Hospitality Management did report strong professional and industry relationships, including a 13-member Advisory Board that meets twice per year. These members also participate in the *Professor for a Day* program, giving lectures and sitting on Professional Development in the Workplace panels (Strom 2007b, 2009d).

While an understanding of the value of UCE is evident in a number of proactive pockets within the University, it generally relies upon the goodwill of an individual academic and/or their natural ability and propensity to engage. Internal participants who understood the value of UCE expressed concern at the lack of enabling infrastructure, such as: an "engagement" allocation for all staff workloads (including fixed-term and casuals); UCE activity as key criteria for achieving promotion, and the necessity for UCE knowledge, understanding and/or experience, as a key recruitment requirement. In order to actualise UCE, these issues will need to be rectified.

2. **How is engagement being addressed at Southern Cross University?**

When assessing how engagement is being addressed at SCU it is apparent that despite having an engagement initiative included in the 2005-2010 five-point SCU Strategic Plan, as well as a University-wide Regional Engagement Functional Plan and a regional engagement facilitation unit (ORE), the overall UCE activity identified across the University is still haphazard. The relatively low level and type of reported activity gathered in the 2006 and 2008 *Engagement Activity Audits* (Strom 2007b) highlights this unsystematic approach. They divulge that Engaged Scholarship accounted for 27% of all reported regional engagement activity in 2006 and 38% in 2008. Much of this increase in 2008 was attributed to the reported activities of two schools, the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management’s extensive student internship programme, and the range of Teaching and Learning, and Research and Discovery activities undertaken by the Centre for Children and Young People/School of Education (Strom 2009d). There was little evidence of inter-disciplinary or inter-campus activity, beyond that
directly associated with the delivery of teaching. The reported, or readily identifiable levels of external input such as course advisory groups, appears to be minimal.

Engagement is not currently a part of University core business. As identified in Chapter 5, and noted above, Engagement activity across the University is currently haphazard, and generally occurs on an individual basis, or within some work-units. A silo or discipline-based mentality appears to prevail, as there is very little evidence of inter-disciplinary or trans-disciplinary activity. Two exceptions are the Wilsons River Experience Walk (WREW) project and the Aged Services and Learning Research Centre (ASLaRC). They are excellent examples of collaborative UCE that have endured and grown over time. The WREW is an inter-disciplinary project that incorporates a strong element of Community Service and student engagement that strengthens the students’ learning experience by linking the theory based learning with practical initiatives. One academic involved in this project noted that activities of this nature contribute to a broader scholarship of teaching and engagement (Wessell 2008). The ASLaRC has built relationships within the Aged Services and Health sectors and undertaken many Engaged Research activities, often utilising the skills of SCU post-graduates. According to one external participant, the organisations and individuals involved in the ASLaRC are deriving mutual benefit and learning from many of these applied research activities that have contributed to the social capital of the region (36-EP 2007). However, these two examples are anomalous rather than the norm.

In July 2009 a three-person review panel, comprised of a senior academic, a Performance Quality & Review staff member and an external stakeholder conducted a Review of the ORE. The panel was asked to assess and comment on matters pertaining specifically to the ORE, such as:

- The ORE’s capacity to facilitate and monitor SCU’s strategic plan regional engagement Objective 4 across its campuses.
- The effectiveness of the ORE’s planning processes and outcomes; and its
efforts to keep abreast of good practice nationally and internationally.

- Any other matters which could enhance the contribution of the ORE to the University (Office of Regional Engagement 2009d).

Discussion during the review revealed that other matters such as management, policy and practice issues outside of the mandate of the ORE, were impacting on engagement at SCU. The panel received 7 written submissions and conducted 26 personal interviews with internal and external stakeholders, and many of the findings of this research were provided to the reviewers to assist them in their deliberation. Although the review was undertaken in July 2009, the report, not released until early 2010, determined that

The ORE hosts an inspired leader, and the team, though poorly resourced, have lots of enthusiasm and commitment for the task at hand. … The governance structure of the University acknowledges formally the ORE and thereby holding accountable key individuals for ensuring University Strategy in this area is realised (Panel Review 2010).

However, the report did not recognise UCE as a predominately academic activity, or have a focus on Engaged Scholarship. The following recommendation is clear evidence of that lack of appreciation as there is no mention of any academic schools or research centres.

The Executive should ensure that the ORE leadership position formally works with the Heads of the University Units like the Development Office, Teaching and Learning and Student Support, Human Resources, the International Office, Public Relations and Marketing. Perhaps organisationally the University should establish a Public Affairs Directorate to house those activities (Panel Review 2010).

3. How can a culture-of-engagement be embedded at Southern Cross University?

Engagement is not a simple $a + b = c$ equation. It encompasses a complex array of activities and many diverse and often inter-connected contexts. There is a need to develop a culture within the University that encourages an acceptance of
emergent change through adaptation and connectivity with others within and beyond the University, as being a natural phenomenon. There is a need to adopt an agreed notion as to what constitutes UCE at SCU and how it can be realised, particularly through Engaged Scholarship activity. This also needs to be clearly communicated and commonly understood.

The embedding of skills and knowledge is a vital element of cultural change. In order to support the emergence of engagement practice, professional development at both individual and work-unit levels, and a shared University-wide understanding of UCE, including Engaged Scholarship is required. This would equip people to utilise the various tools of engagement, as identified and discussed in Chapter 2. UCE workshops and planning sessions would encourage a broader grassroots connection with UCE as a strategic direction of the University and support the emergence of multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary activity as discussed in section 3.2.

A UCE mechanism that strengthens internal and external connectivity and improves communication – utilising strong feedback and feed-forward loops – within and between work-units is required. Such a communication mechanism would provide an opportunity to: strengthen existing UCE activity, establish points of connection, build new opportunities, learn from the work of others and recognise and celebrate achievements. Keynote speaker at the 2009 AUCEA National Conference, Dr Rob Greenwood, highlighted a more elaborate option that is available for use by the University and the broader community.

Dr Greenwood is the founding Director of the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development at Memorial University in Newfoundland, Canada. The Centre sponsors a search engine called Yaffle, specifically designed to connect the community with the university. According to Greenwood (2009), Yaffle enables better knowledge mobilisation between a variety of domains by linking business,
the community and the university in joint dialogue and collaborations. The Yaffle Projects page provides staff and students with an opportunity to showcase their research, teaching and service activity by industry sector, academic department, or location. Similarly the Yaffle Opportunities page identifies prospective research and other opportunities that are seeking collaboration partners. The Yaffle Research Interests page highlights areas of research interest and expertise within the University (Memorial University 2009).

Another area of limited emergence identified in this study is the notion of Disciplinarity, as posited by Collen (2002)\(^{58}\). The WREW project is interdisciplinary in that the integrated collaborative project occurs between disciplines, specifically Tourism, History and Creative Arts. In short, Collen (2002) argues in favour of working between, beyond and above discipline boundaries in order to fill the gaps left by conventional academic approaches. This is an area that should be consciously encouraged by supporting and funding specific cross-disciplinary ES activities. Additionally a Yaffle-styled resource would also assist in developing the emergence of cross-disciplinary and cross-sector activities.

UCE should be viewed as an intrinsic part of the University’s core business that needs to be consciously embedded into the practice of Teaching and Learning, and Research and Discovery and should also include community service. It should not be viewed as a separate activity. While this view may seem idealistic, the University should seek to undertake UCE that supports the greater or common good. This could be achieved through a range of activities and through the sharing and exchange of knowledge, skill development and two-way communication, as identified by external participants. In adopting an “engaged” mindset the University’s contribution to its geographic region and beyond would be significantly enhanced.

---

\(^{58}\) See section 3.2
6.2.1 Recommendations arising from the research

While UCE is important for all universities and their communities, the data revealed in this research indicates that it is important for this particular non-metropolitan university. To better support its multiple communities-of-interest it is vital that all staff and students at SCU and the broader community better understood UCE so that it can be enabled and activated. Like all universities, SCU possess a vast array of resources – physical, human and knowledge-based. Better utilisation of these resources can provide significant benefit to the community, far beyond the traditional teaching and research activities, and the input of wages and salaries. Benefits can advance the common or greater good and manifest socially, culturally, economically, politically, or in combination.

In summary, there are nine specific recommendations arising from this research that need to be enacted to create a culture-of-engagement at SCU. These recommendations do have a ‘policy and practice’ focus; however, without these changes UCE will continue to be sporadic at SCU. Cultural change will not emerge unless appropriate policies are developed to assist the transition (or transformation) from strategy to realisation. This needs to be initiated as a matter of high priority. All policies, including Human Resource policies, should include the three elements of Engaged Scholarship. From a Human Resource perspective, ES should be a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in permanent and casual staff workload models. Its inclusion in recruitment and promotion criteria, as discussed at length in the previous chapter, should also be ensured.
9 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE RESEARCH:

Recommendation 1: Defining Engagement
Adopt and communicate an agreed definition of Engagement, including Regional Engagement and Engaged Scholarship as detailed in Section 6.

Recommendation 2: UCE Professional Development
Provide UCE professional development for all staff to equip them with an understanding of Engaged Scholarship, and to accept that change is natural phenomena, to better enable and support the establishment of a culture-of-engagement.

Recommendation 3: Communication
Adopt a communication mechanism that is to be utilised by all work-units as an intrinsic element of their UCE strategy and operation. Ensure that Engaged Scholarship activity is recorded, and shared and celebrated as appropriate.

Recommendation 4: Engagement enabling framework
Adopt an engagement-enabling framework to be used by all work-units to discuss, diagnose, determine and measure their ES and UCE activity.

Recommendation 5: Engagement – a way of doing
Recognise and reinforce the notion that Engagement is not a separate activity but a way of undertaking the core business of the University through Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery and Engaged Community Service.

Recommendation 6: Funding for Engaged Activity
Provide funding mechanisms to encourage for Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery activities, and funding or in-kind support for Engaged Community Service activities.

Recommendation 7: Consistent Policy
Reduce ambiguity around UCE by ensuring that all policies and plans enable the functional or operational structures to support the emergence of a culture-of-engagement. This must be well articulated and well communicated and use Engagement language that is consistent with Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 8: Growing internal capacity
1 Ensure the growth of internal engagement capacity by providing: UCE Induction for all existing and new staff.
2 Use engagEnable© for the facilitation, support, training and development of UCE for all work-units, with an emphasis on ES for academic work-units.
3 Undertake regular tracking and auditing of ES activity.
4 Provide financial and functional support to enable cross-disciplinary opportunities to emerge.

Recommendation 9: Growing external capacity
1 Collaborate with regional stakeholders to develop a leadership framework with the University as a key contributor.
2 Continue to build relationships with external people & organisations to demystify the University.
3 Conduct "How to Engage" workshops for external people & organisations.
4 Provide "Workplace Supervisor" training to assist organisations placing students in Community Engaged Learning
6.3 Implications for theory
Reflection upon the data gathered during this research has revealed a number of implications for Engagement Theory, and Chaos/Complexity Theory including CST.

6.3.1 Engagement theory
This review of literature and the data gathered in this research has identified three elements that enhance existing Engagement Theory. Firstly, UCE works best when it is a holistic meta-practice rather than a singular activity in and of itself, and both the WREW and the ASLaRC activities bear testimony to this. Secondly, context is of great importance, be it location based – such as non-metropolitan, metropolitan, national, or international – or viewed from community, social, cultural, political, sustainability or personal points of view. Thirdly, Boyer (1990)\textsuperscript{59} identified four elements of scholarship: discovery, integration, application and teaching. I have reframed them so that Engaged Scholarship is defined as being: Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery, and Engaged Community Service and together they encompass some or all of Boyer's elements. The engagEnable dialogue and diagnostic method\textsuperscript{60} utilises this reframing.

6.3.2 Chaos/complexity theory
This qualitative study reinforces the inseparability of Chaos and Complexity and reveals applicability to UCE in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. As stated earlier, Kotler (2009) recognises the need for new mind-sets and strategic behaviour in times of chaos and uncertainty, and Chaos/Complexity and CST provide an opportunity to allow these new behaviours to emerge. The Chaos/Complexity concept that argues that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts has applicability in the context of higher education. The true strength of a university goes beyond an engaged

\textsuperscript{59} See section 2.4
\textsuperscript{60} See section 5.7
academic or work-unit, to enabling the UCE the capacity of all – within and beyond the institution.

A university environment is chaordic, and the breadth of its academic and non-academic work-units reveals the complexity of its structure. Through UCE activity, higher education’s sphere of influence is ever widening, and can impact on a multitude of complex and often inter-related communities – be they sector or industry based, local, regional, national, and international. If higher education were to embrace Chaos/Complexity concepts in relation to UCE it could have far-reaching effects. As this research indicates, there is strong resonance between engagement and Chaos/Complexity, as both are messy, non-linear, interdependent, and cyclic. UCE activity can be difficult to determine and is often unpredictable because it simultaneously combines order and disorder that often manifest on the edge of chaos (Cunha & Cunha 2006). The engagEnable© dialogue and diagnostic tool applies the Chaos/Complexity and CST principles of chaos and order.

This study does not purport to provide evidence to support the formal or conscious adoption of CST as a management technique at SCU or in other universities, because CST was not used for this purpose. CST was used as one of three lenses to view UCE, and CST principles were used to analysis the data and to build a greater understanding of the messiness that accompanies engaged activity.

6.4 Implications for policy and practice

The study demonstrates a strong synergistic link between Chaos/Complexity and UCE because neither is static or fixed. They are messy, diverse, non-linear and transformative. UCE works best if there is a focus on holistic thinking and principle informed practice that works towards the development of solutions based within a shared vision (Fitzgerald 2002). Over time, change or transformation is inevitable, and this includes relationships and leadership roles.
Applying CST offers a creative and inclusive way to build UCE knowledge and expertise that, if enabled, could develop the capacity of the University, the community and the region. The general resistance within the University to UCE, from both policy and practice perspectives as revealed through this study, indicates that a change in approach is necessary. The importance of clarity in articulating UCE intent and expectations within and between work-units is vital. This should encompass shared meaning and two-way communication, including feedback and feed-forward. Higher levels of UCE awareness and connectivity University-wide should result in stronger relationships and the emergence of trust that in turn would strengthen UCE.

The answers to the research questions, including the nine recommendations, have implications for policy and practice. There is an inextricable nexus between policy and practice, with the former having a strong influence upon the latter, particularly during times of change. It is clear that well-articulated and implemented policy that reflects the strategic intent of an organisation is required to eliminate or at least reduce ambiguity. Many people find it difficult to cope with ambiguity (Vanderzwan 2009), as long as it exists around UCE people will probably remain reluctant engagers or make a choice to default from UCE activity. Clear, well-implemented policy and practice guidelines should assist engagers to reduce ambiguity and build resilience thereby improving their ability to cope with the rapidly changing UCE environment. If there is uncertainty about what constitutes UCE at SCU and workplace policies do not explicitly support its practice then ambiguity and the accompanying resistance or reluctance is likely to continue.

Clear organisational planning and priority setting, and a well-articulated and well-communicated direction that is widely understood are mandatory. This needs to be coupled with an operational or functional structure that supports the stated strategic intent through consistent and accountable management. Policies in relation to workloads including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for executive
and other senior staff, work-unit planning and staff recruitment and promotion need to reflect the strategic intent of the University. While outside the scope of this study, budget implications would also need to be considered, such as seed funding for ES projects, and UCE professional development for academic staff to assist them in embedding an “engaged” approach into their current teaching and research practice.

6.5 Growing internal and external engagement capacity

In order to establish sustainable UCE the capacity of both the internal and the external stakeholders needs to grow. UCE needs to become intrinsically a part of the culture of the University and its region. Significant internal and external behavioural change is required to achieve this. However, change will not emerge of its own accord, enabling structures and activities are required to help to affect this change. As the research findings reveal, there is strong demand from those external to the University, that the University engage more with its constituent region. In fact, successful UCE is dependent upon strong internal engagement capacity, knowledge and understanding in the first instance. This would enable a stronger and more effective external engagement capacity to emerge.

6.5.1 Internal capacity

In order to build internal UCE capacity the following activities should be pursued.

Engagement induction

To establish a shared understanding of UCE and to reduce ambiguity, all current staff, academic and non-academic, tenured, fixed-term contracts and casuals, should attend an UCE induction session. A clearly articulated definition of engagement including a description of the triad of Engaged Scholarship – Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Discovery and Engaged Community Service, within the SCU context should underpin the induction. Similarly, UCE induction should be conducted on an on-going basis whenever new staff members commence employment at SCU.


**Engagement facilitation, support, and professional development:**

My review of existing engagement literature and the research undertaken for this thesis has revealed a need for UCE facilitation and support. This could be achieved through a variety of means including the use of an engagement-enabling method, and conducting professional development workshops that assist people to identify and facilitate UCE opportunities at work-unit and faculty planning days. The dialogue-based tool has been designed to assist university staff – academic and non-academic – to diagnose and evaluate their levels of UCE\(^{61}\) and to establish measures in relation to any current or proposed activities. Rather than being prescriptive, this method provides a list of prompts for each context – University, Community and Personal – and their sub-contexts. It can be used as a professional development method for individuals and groups. Groups can also use it to develop a broader understanding of other peoples’ perspectives, to improve intra and/or inter work-unit engagement. The active participation of work-unit members is vital so that a shared understanding and a shared vision can be developed. The aim of this method is to embed a culture-of-engagement at a work-unit level and to contribute to whole-of-system change across the University through facilitated professional development activity. It is unlikely that all elements identified in the method will be part of any single engagement activity, but if minimal levels of engagement are diagnosed, then the prompts can be used to encourage greater ES activity.

**Tracking and Auditing**

Measurement is an important element of UCE and the engagement-enabling method could also be used to assist with tracking and auditing ES at SCU, and other universities. It could easily be adapted to suit other organisational or sectoral requirements. From an SCU perspective, the method has synergy with the 2006 and 2008 Regional Engagement Activity Audit framework. The ORE could continue to monitor ES and by working collaboratively with the Division of

\(^{61}\) See section 5.7
Research, as they track research activity, and with the Teaching and Learning Unit who are working to strengthen teaching and learning delivery, particularly with Engaged Community Learning (including WIL).

**Cross-disciplinary Engagement**

This research reveals that the breaking down of disciplinary boundaries appears to be problematic, and needs to be ameliorated. As Section 3.2 revealed, research undertaken from the perspective of a single discipline may not have local or regional application. This can limit a university’s ability to engage with its region (Baverstock 2006). In contrast, *cross-disciplinary engagement* that includes a multi-disciplinary approach working among disciplines, an inter-disciplinary approach between disciplines, and a trans-disciplinary approach that utilises integrated systems thinking and works beyond disciplines can result in the creation of new knowledge (Collen 2002). engagEnable was designed to overcome many of the internal and other impediments to UCE that have been identified in this research.

### 6.5.2 External capacity

From an external perspective the following activities would encourage engagement capacity growth within and beyond the University.

**University as a regional and community leader**

In a typically chaordic way, the notion of the University as a regional and community leader is not a case of *either/or* but *how* as discussed in section 5.6. The research findings indicate that 93% of external participants have the view that the University should provide regional and community leadership. That is why this is included in the external capacity section of this chapter. External participants valued the knowledge elements of the University but clearly emphasised the need for the University to have a stronger focus on leadership. The University could undertake a liaison role between government, business, industry and other CoI and/or CoP. As this research indicates, there is some
reluctance within the University to assume this role as only 26% of internal participants identified leadership by the University as being important. While not specifically referring to leadership, in his July 2009 farewell lectures SCU Vice Chancellor Paul Clark spoke with enthusiasm about the important role that universities play in their regions and the importance of regional connection and regional engagement. He emphasised that non-metropolitan regions should seek to extract all the benefits they can from their university. ‘The prize will be reached, in my view, when the University and its region – or regions – are working hand in glove to achieve the things that the people of the region want’ (Clark, P. 2009, pp. 9-10).

Despite the retiring Vice Chancellor’s comment, there is a discrepancy between internal and external views regarding the University as a regional leader. This is problematic and needs to be addressed. Focus groups and workshops, involving both internal and external participants, need to be undertaken to establish the shape and style of leadership that the University would be comfortable in assuming to satisfy the expectations of the regional community.

**Demystify University**

A number of comments made by participants during this research indicate that many people external to the University are confused about the University's role in the community (13-IP 2007). Therefore, there is a need to demystify how SCU in particular, and higher education in general, functions. If the University adopts an ES approach the community will also need to be included in the development of an UCE culture. Improved access to, and use of University facilities for non-University related activities, and increased connectivity and activity between University staff and individuals and various organisations, would also assist the demystification process.
**Conduct “How to Engage with a university” professional development sessions**

Conducting *How to Engage* professional development sessions for external stakeholders could serve a two-fold purpose. By improving people’s engagement skills it could also assist to demystify the University while building relationships, connectivity and trust. The better people beyond the University understand Engagement and ES in particular, the better University-Community *engagers* they will be. As a consequence the social, human and economic outcomes for the community, including business, industry and the University, should be further enhanced.

**Supervisor training at work and in community**

SCU now has an emphasis on Engaged Community Learning for students across all discipline areas through internships, practicum, and other workplace projects and activities. Prior to placing students in the workplace or with a community based organisation it is important to recognise and value the important role that workplace supervisors play. They are a link between academic theory and real world practice, and they are volunteering their time to support both students’ learning and the University. Their valuable contribution should not be taken for granted (30-EP 2007). To acknowledge and respect the knowledge and practical contribution they make, supervisor orientation, training and support in the *academic context* should be provided as a matter of priority. The more engaged supervisors are with the students and the University, the more likely they are to continue to be involved in the future.

**MoU activity and monitoring**

It is not easy to move from the good intentions associated with negotiating areas of mutual interest between the MoU partners and the formal signing of a MoU, to realise emergent opportunities. Therefore, it is vital that MoUs are alive and active and that both organisations have broad engagement across their organisations, including regular reporting of associated activities. As noted in
Chapter 4, the ORE is responsible for negotiating, liaising and monitoring MoUs. The ORE recognises the importance of celebrating MoU activity in order to strengthen existing external relationships and to pave the way for new opportunities, as others see the benefits of Engagement.

**Cluster projects and collaborations**

A major challenge for SCU is the size and spread of its regional footprint, which includes two state governments – NSW and Queensland, 15 local government areas, three development boards, three regional arts boards, three community development councils, two regional organisations of council (for local government), business and industry groups and numerous other regional and community-based organisations. Demand from such a large array of organisations has the potential to place significant strain upon the University’s capacity to meet their diverse needs. Therefore, it is appropriate for the University to provide regional leadership by focusing on the development of *cluster projects and collaborations* around particular sectors or communities-of-interest. Government funding agencies, such as the Department of State and Regional Development (NSW) are particularly keen on collaborative partnerships across sectors. From a University perspective, collaborations provide an opportunity to build ES activity by linking students and academics with business, government and community practitioners in cross-disciplinary projects. The involvement of a spread of stakeholders should build regional connectivity while providing greater resources. The conscious growth of UCE capacity through these identified internal and external activities should benefit the University and the community by building regional holonic capacity.

The internal and external activities required to embed a culture-of-engagement at SCU and beyond were fundamental outcomes of this research are depicted in Diagram 6-1.
6.6 Limitations of the study
I have identified, and attempted to overcome, three limitations associated with this study: Action Research (AR); my role as a biographically situated researcher; and the use of Chaos/Complexity as a theoretical construct and CST as a tool of reflection and analysis.

6.6.1 Action research
Whereas an in-depth AR study of one non-metropolitan university located in regional Australia could be seen as a limitation because it does not result in the construction of generalisable and transferable laws, from an SCU perspective, the AR nature of this study means that some changes to engagement policy and practice in particular have already been absorbed into the University. Much more needs to be done before SCU could lay claim to being an “engaged university”. However, if utilised, the output of this study could inform, shape and influence the on-going development of SCU’s engagement policy and practices and lay the
foundation to embed whole-of-system change or a culture-of-engagement across
the University, as well as between the University and its regional community.

Furthermore, the knowledge gained through this study could also provide benefit
beyond the subject organisation, to assist others active in UCE. The formal
publication and presentation of the findings of this AR study provides thickness
(Stake 2003) to the Australian-based research about UCE. The context and
many issues raised still have currency and are likely to have applicability in other
universities. Therefore, from a broader perspective the findings do contribute to
the body of knowledge pertaining to Engagement in general, and UCE in
particular.

6.6.2 Biographically situated researcher

My role as a biographically situated researcher is both a strength and a
weakness of the research. Its strength meant that I was able to adapt and
change throughout the research, thus it was a transformative process (Heron &
Reason 1997). However, my embeddedness could be seen as a limiting factor
because it could mean that I was too close to the action and this could impact on
my ability to effectively observe and analyse the findings.

The issues described in 6.6.1 and 6.6.2 are not uncommon in qualitative
research activities\(^62\). To help ameliorate these limitations I used several different
methods of gathering data: the AR process, a reflective journal, and the semi-
structured interviews. I also used material that had been developed external to
the study, such as the SCU Staff Survey, the SCU Benchmarking Survey and the
Bradley Review. In addition, multiple methods of data review and analysis were
used: the summary documents and combination summary documents, the
Williams Data Analysis Tool (WDAT) and the Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST)
Lens. The final limitation is Chaos/Complexity and CST.

\(^62\) See section 4.2.2
6.6.3 Chaos/complexity – including CST
Like AR, Chaos/Complexity and CST encompass a holistic approach that seeks to consciously consider and respect multiple perspectives and to recognise that understanding and knowledge will be key outcomes. CST is unconventional in its approach because it challenges conventional “control and command” styles of thinking and doing, and this could be seen as a limiting factor by those unfamiliar or uncomfortable with this idea.

As discussed in Chapter 5 CST does add some value as an analysis tool because of its emphasis on interconnectedness, but I acknowledge that it probably has more value as a mechanism for cultural and organisational change.

While I acknowledge that Chaos/Complexity in general, and CST in particular could be viewed as limiting by some, I believe that they enriched this study and contributed significantly to the creation of the major output of the study – engagEnable. In fact I deliberately used CST principles when developing the engagEnable dialogue and diagnosis tool as a mechanism to enable change, specifically because it is not based on “control and command” principles.

6.7 New knowledge
In terms of new knowledge outcomes I submit two items: Engaged Scholarship reframed in the Australian context; and the engagEnable© dialogue and diagnostic method, including the engagEnable© CD.

6.7.1 Engaged scholarship re-framed
USA academic and scholar Ernest Boyer (1997) first raised the notion of the Scholarship of Engagement in his Book “Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate”; other US academics, such as Ramaley (2005) and Cox (2006) have built upon his idea. This work is acknowledged and cited in Chapter 2.

---

63 See Section 5.6
64 See Section 2.4
re-framed Boyer’s four-fold elements of scholarship — discovery, integration, application and teaching as Engaged Scholarship that manifests as Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research, and Engaged Community Service. I argue that my reframing of Engaged Scholarship as three-fold construct has validity as an original contribution, particularly in the context of Australian engagement literature. At the 2005 AQUA conference US academic Barbara Holland, referred to engaged scholarship or engagement as ‘teaching and research activities that link academic institutions with external communities in mutually beneficial knowledge exchange relationships’ (2005, p11). Cuthill (2007) suggested that the concept of engaged scholarship was drawn from the work of Gibbons et al. (1994) and he described it as being 'applied, trans-disciplinary, collaborative, network driven and directed towards achieving 'common good' outcomes while maintaining high quality research standards' (2007, p2). Muirhead and Woolcock (2008) noted the Australian focus of Engaged Scholarship tended to be on engagement as 'community service'. Duke and Moss (2009) referred to Boyer’s work as Engaged Scholarship but did not specifically define it. The Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) produced a Discussion Paper on University Community Engagement in 2008 that refers to Engaged Teaching and Learning, Engaged Research and Social Responsiveness rather than Engaged Service. However, this document was not accessible until 2010.

From an Australian perspective, when researching the Engagement literature there was little mention of Engaged Scholarship per se and it was not linked, as I have done, as a triad65. It is my contention that Engaged Scholarship manifests through Engaged Teaching and Learning, and Engaged Research and Discovery, and also through Engaged Community Service. Firstly, Engaged Teaching and Learning seeks to enhance student experience by linking theory and practice. This can be achieved directly through various activities in the external community, or indirectly by external representation on various University

65 See Table 6-2
advisory boards and committees. Secondly, Engaged Research and Discovery can involve a healthy exchange of knowledge and information within and beyond the University. The University may seek, acknowledge and utilise knowledge that exists beyond the University and share its existing knowledge with the community, or undertake research activities that support the development of the community and/or the region. Findings emerging from these various activities could be published in appropriate academic journals or presented at conferences and other forums. These activities should be recognised and rewarded. And thirdly, Engaged Community Service constitutes serving the common or greater good through University representation community boards and committees, or by improving and increasing community access to University facilities.

**Engaged Scholarship** is a scholarly activity that:

1. Provides mutual benefit to the university and the community – local, regional, business/industry or special interest;
2. Incorporates an integrated &/or inter-disciplinary approach.

**Engaged Scholarship comprises the following three elements:**

**Engaged teaching & learning:**

1. Links student academic activity to the “real world” by integrating disciplinary knowledge into communities – local, regional, business/industry or special interest;
2. Can be achieved in many ways (e.g. Community Engaged Learning such as Work Integrated Learning, Clinical Placements or course advisory groups);
3. May support the growth of social, and human capital in the community;
4. Utilises Boyer’s notions of teaching and integration, but could also include application and elements of discovery.

**Engaged research & discovery:**

4. Grows disciplinary knowledge while meeting the needs of the community – local, regional, business/industry or special interest;
5. Can contribute to the ‘common good’ of the community and build social and human capital;
6. Is often collaborative, trans-disciplinary, emergent, contextual and problem-focused;
7. Utilises Boyer’s notion of discovery, but could also incorporate integration and elements of application.
Engaged community service:

1. Occurs when university staff or students volunteer and share their knowledge and skills with the community, (e.g. serving on boards and committees);
2. Includes access to resources (eg use of university facilities, or access to knowledge via an “expert register”) to support the ‘common good’;
3. Utilises Boyer’s notion of application, but could also include integration and provide a foundation for discovery as well as an opportunity for learning for students – who are able to link theory with practice (through Service Learning or Community Engaged Learning); as well as for members of the broader community.

Table 6-2 A summary of engaged scholarship characteristics

6.7.2 engagEnable© dialogue and diagnostic method

As indicated in Chapter 5 the **engageEnable© dialogue and diagnostic method** was created in response to the low level of understanding about, and commitment to UCE across the University as identified in this study. I did not want to stifle academic and practitioner autonomy, so I used CST principles to design a method that provided a framework with enough structure to provide a sense of order and commonality, that simultaneously allows for flexibility and creativity.

I reiterate that **engagEnable©** is not a “tick the box” process but a method that can assist the **engager** to make sense of the complex UCE environment, and facilitate their journey. It was purposefully designed to facilitate dialogue while diagnosing existing or potential UCE activities. The **internal categories** featured in **engageEnable©** relate to the University and they are: teaching and learning, including student connectedness within and beyond the University; research and discovery; and community service. The **external community assets** of social capital, including cultural elements, human capital and economic capital are also addressed. **engagEnable©** can be used to:

---

66 See section 5.7
67 See section 2.2
• assist facilitation and involvement in a new project,
• build intra and/or inter work-unit and team-based activities,
• review an existing project,
• identify new areas of activity,
• facilitate project design,
• record UCE activity or Provide evidence about the type of engagement activity that has been undertaken
• provide an individual with a basis for workload negotiations, performance review and promotion applications.

6.8 Further research

The iterative nature of AR means that this research is not finished per se. This thesis simply reports at a particular time. With this thought in mind, the analysis I have undertaken and reported on in Chapter 5 has revealed the following five opportunities for further research. These areas of research could possibly be undertaken at SCU, at another university, or involve multiple universities in a collaborative project.

6.8.1 Relevance and effectiveness of engageEnable©

The primary research area identified is to assess the effectiveness and relevance of engageEnable© and the engageEnable© CD as engagement enabling tools, and a professional development platform. While the preliminary engageEnable© workshops were fruitful, it is apparent that more workshops need to be conducted, particularly across academic work-units in order to ascertain the full impact of this tool. This would involve on-going AR activity.

---

68 See section 5.7
6.8.2 Auditing of UCE activity
A longitudinal audit and analysis of UCE activity, particularly Engaged Scholarship, could be undertaken within a particular institution as another area for further research. At SCU this could build upon the work already undertaken in the SCU 2006 and 2008 Regional Activity Audits. This may or may not involve inter-university benchmarking.

6.8.3 UCE related leadership
This research has revealed that leadership is vital for bringing about a university-wide culture-of-engagement. It is also clear that “leadership” connotes a broad platform, from institutional leadership that ensures the soft infrastructure required to enable the realisation of a strategy is in place, to inspirational leadership that encompasses shared power, divergent and networked leadership models. A multi-institutional study of “engaged leadership” as a mechanism for cultural change through the embedding of UCE would best suit this area of research.

6.8.4 UCE related communication
Communication is also indentified as an area of both importance and concern. Both “shared meaning” and “communication noise” are highlighted as key factors. Communication research could be undertaken in these two areas. Firstly, an audit and analysis of the UCE language used by Australian universities could reveal if a shared language of UCE exists. And secondly, if a clear and effective UCE communication plan was established at SCU, or another university, it could be longitudinally assessed to ascertain if it enabled the growth of a culture-of-engagement. The first research activity would not include AR; however, the latter activity would.

6.8.5 CST as a mechanism for change
I will consciously seek an opportunity to undertake a collaborative UCE project that lends itself to the application of CST principles. I am particularly interested in assessing whether CST can be used as an effective mechanism for change.
6.9 Conclusion – the end is just the beginning

Chaos/Complexity Theory seeks to move society away from the notion of either/or thinking to embrace the inclusiveness of both/and thinking. As previously noted, the word chaord is an amalgam of chaos and order (Chaordic Commons 2001; Hock 1999) that clearly demonstrates that chaordic thinking consciously embraces structure and creative flexibility. As a sub-set of Chaos/Complexity, CST encourages dissipation, whereby people learn to let go of the old and no longer useful, to enable the new to emerge. Assistance, including professional development, would need to be provided to help staff recognise that bifurcation points are dynamic change opportunities (Lorenz 1995). They should not be resisted because they are natural phenomena that enable emergence through adaptation, innovation and connectivity with others. As SCU staff learn about and frame a better understanding of UCE as a meta-practice, a stronger ownership of UCE in general and ES in particular should result. In turn a culture of change at the University should be enabled and supported. The preliminary engagement-enabling workshop experiences undertaken in the course of this study indicate that this could result.

Engagement, like Chaos/Complexity and CST, is inherently complex. CST does offer a new way of looking at, and understanding organisations and the things that organisations do, such as UCE. For example, Chaos/Complexity recognises the ecological nature of society, with its focus on interconnectedness and complexity rather than separation and reduction, and this provides a different way at looking at how organisations such as universities function. The Teaching and Learning Unit now refer to Work Integrated Learning (WIL) as Engaged Community Learning (ECL). ECL is described as an inclusive student learning activity that encompasses Work Integrated Learning or professional development and Service Learning or citizenship development opportunities. The adoption of ECL rather than WIL was proposed by the Learning and Teaching sub-committee
of Academic Board because this broader approach aims to better prepare students as global citizens (Wessell 2009b). This is indicative of the emergence of engaged-thinking within one of the University’s core activity areas. One of the Teaching and Learning Unit staff members has been a long-term engager and active in the WREW project.

This emergent qualitative study has incorporated multiple paradigms including Action Research (AR), Chaordic Systems Thinking (CST), and Chaos/Complexity Theory. As noted in Chapter 1 it is aptly described as a bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). Understanding around UCE in general and Engaged Scholarship in particular has been clarified, particularly within the context of Australian higher education. Chaos/Complexity, CST, AR and the other qualitative methods employed have provided a platform for emergent and reflective exploration and learning, and additional areas of further research have emerged that are in accord with the iterative nature of both Action Research and Chaos/Complexity, including CST. While the findings from this in-depth study apply to SCU in the first instance, they could have wider application in the higher education sector in the second instance, and to the business, industry, community, and government sectors as well. This wider application is in accord with the notion that separating any of the communities within community is mere illusion, and definitely un-engaging.

Engagement is about the discovery of shared meaning.
This discovery reveals connectivity, builds trust and allows relationships to develop to provide engagers with the opportunity to creatively challenge the status quo.

*My Journal – November 2007*
References


Abbay, R 1997, 'More perspectives on communitarianism', AQ, vol. 69, no. 2, pp. 73-82.


AUCEA 2006, *Global Showcase: From competition to collaboration - Australian universities working together for the common good*, Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, Portland, Oregan, USA, October.


Australian Regional Tourism Research Centre 2008, *Regional benchmarking survey* Southern Cross University, Lismore.


Baverstock, P 2006, Personal conversation at an SCU Graduate Research College planning day to J Strom.


Berg, B 2001, *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*, Fourth edn, Needham Heights, MA, USA.


Beugelsdijk, S & Smulders, S 2003, 'Bridging and bonding social capital: Which type is good for economic growth?', paper presented to 43rd Congress of European Regional Science Association - Peripheries, Centres, and Spatial Development in the New Europe, Jyväskylä, Finland.
Bishop, J 2006, 'Ministerial address: Engagement and higher education', paper presented to Embedding university community engagement: The good, the bad and the ugly, Perth, Western Australia.


Boyce, B 2008, Complexity, chaos, collapse, community, creativity, compassion: Why we need new ways of thinking.

Boyer, EL 1990, Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New Jersey, USA.


Bradley, D 2008a, Bradley review into higher education: Discussion paper, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Canberra, Australia.

---- 2008b, Review of higher education in Australia, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Canberra, Australia.


Cartwright, C 2008, *Seeking a Way to Bridge the Gap: A Scoping Study to Identify the Preferred Aged Care Service Model for Older Aboriginal People in Mid North Coast NSW*, ASLaRC, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour.


Chimhanzi, J 2004, 'The impact of marketing/HR interactions on marketing strategy implication', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 38, no. 1/2, pp. 73-98.


Coghlan, D & Shani, AB 2005, 'Roles, politics, and ethics in action research design', *Systemic practice and action research*, vol. 18, no. 6, pp. 533-46.


Flood, RL 1999, Rethinking the fifth discipline: Learning within the unknowable, Routledge, Florence, KY, USA.


Garlick, S 1998, Creative Associations in special places: Enhancing the partnership role of universities in building competitive regional economies, Southern Cross Regional Research Institute, Southern Cross University.


Garlick, S & Pryor, G 2002, Compendium of Good Practice University-Regional Development Initiatives, Department of Transport and Regional Services., Canberra, Australia.


Gelmon, SB, Seifer, S, Kauper-Brown, J & Mikkelsen, M 2005, Building capacity for community engagement: Institutional self-assessment, Community-


---- 2000, *The response of HEIs to regional needs*, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne.


Healy, K 2007, *Creating better communities: A study of social capital creation in four communities*, University of Sydney, Paddington, NSW, Australia.


Leibowitz, J, Rubenstein-Montano, B, McCaw, D, Buchwalter, J & Browning, C 2000, 'The knowledge audit', *Knowledge and process management*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 3-10.


LGov#1 2008, COoffs Harbour Cultural Trails Project.


Longley, K 2005, 'From regional engagement to marriage: Can the love affair between regions and the University campuses last?', paper presented to Australian Universities Quality Forum, Sydney, Australia, 6-8 July 2005.


Maugh, T 2008, 'Couldn't have picked the weather: so chaos theory was founded', *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 19-20, 2008, p. 20.


Mossfield, J 2008, *Strategic workforce planning guidelines: The right people doing the right job at the right time*, Southern Cross University, Lismore.


Neller, R, Hall, S & Eastall, R 2006, *OECD - Supporting the contribution of higher education institutions to regional development: The Sunshine - Fraser Coast case study report (Australia)*, The OECD Programme in Institutional
Management in Higher Education (IMHE) with the support of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).


Northern Rivers NSW 2005, *Northern Rivers regional industry and economic plan*, Northern Rivers Development Board, Lismore, NSW, <(see Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.)>.


Office of Regional Engagement 2008a, *Internal Reference Group (IRG)*, Southern Cross University, Lismore.


---- 2009a, *Internal reference group (IRG)*, Southern Cross University, Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Tweed Gold Coast.


Powell, J 2008, 'Upbeating university engagement - through virtuous knowledge sharing and systematic academic staff development to a modern renaissance for business and the community', paper presented to
AUCEA 2007, University of Sunshine Coast and Fraser Island, Queensland, Australia.


Selander, S 1996, 'Aspirations under scrutiny - themes in the discussion', in U Dahllof & S Selander (eds), Expanding colleges and new universities: Selected case studies from non-metropolitan areas in Australia, Scotland and Scandinavia., Department of Education, Uppsala University, Sweden.


---- 2007a, A woman’s perspective on growing engagement through "common-unity", USQ Women's Network Inc Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia, 9781921420009

---- 2007b, Regional engagement activity audit report 2006, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour.

---- 2008, University-Community engagement with the business sector, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour.

---- 2009a, Embracing chaordic systems thinking (CST) to enable the emergence of strategic partnerships with business, industry and community, Whyalla, South Australia, July.

---- 2009b, My journal - a compilation of conversations, reflections and night-time thoughts, Coffs Harbour.

---- 2009c, My Reflective Journal, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour.

---- 2009d, Regional engagement activity audit report 2008, Southern Cross University.


Tableman, B 2005, University-community partnerships: Providing useful reports, June 2005, University Outreach & Engagement at Michigan State University, Michigan, USA.


Vanderzwan, R 2009, Discussion about resilience and ambiguity to J Strom, 26 May 2009


Voice Project 2008, Southern Cross University staff survey, Macquarie University, Sydney.


Wessell, A 2008, *Student engagement*, School of Arts and Social Science, Southern Cross University.

---- 2009a, *Community engaged learning*, Lismore, email communication.

---- 2009b, *Teaching and learning seminar* Southern Cross University, Lismore, 15 July 2009, email communication.

Williams, B 2007, *Qualitative data analysis*, http://users.actrix.co.nz/bobwill/.


Appendices

A-1 Ethics Approval

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HREC) NOTIFICATION

To: Dr. M. Wallace / J. Strom
Graduate College of Management
michelle.wallace@scu.edu.au; jan.strom@scu.edu.au

From: Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee
Graduate Research College, R. Block

Date: 26.4.07

Project: Examining engagement practices

Status: Approved subject to the standard conditions of approval.
Approval Number ECN-07-44

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HREC)

The Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee has established, in accordance with
the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (2.27), a procedure for
expedited review by a delegated authority.

This expedited ethics application was considered by the Chair of the HREC and has now been approved
subject to the usual standard conditions of approval.

This expedited approval will be ratified by the full HREC at the May meeting. If the full HREC has any
further queries, the researchers are expected to answer these satisfactorily.

Please note also that the references in the conditions below are based on the old National Statement. The
new National Statement was released by the NHMRC last week. It is available at www.nhmrc.gov.au

Standard Conditions (in accordance with the Guidelines of the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical
Conduct in Research Involving Humans) referred to as The National Statement (NS)

1. Monitoring
NS 2.33
An institution or organisation and its HREC have the responsibility to ensure that the conduct of all
research approved by the HREC is monitored by procedures and/or by utilizing existing
mechanisms within the institution or organisation which will ensure the achievement of the goals
for monitoring as determined by the institution or organisation and the HREC.
Southern Cross
UNIVERSITY
A new way to think

NS 2.36

An HREC may recommend and/or adopt any additional appropriate mechanism for monitoring
including random inspections of research sites, data and signed consent forms, and/or interview,
with their prior consent, of research participants.

The following should be noted:

(a) All ethics approvals are valid for 12 months unless specified otherwise. If research is
continuing after 12 months, then the ethics approval MUST be renewed.

(b) Generally, that the principal investigator/person responsible (usually the Supervisor) and the
researcher/s provide a report every 12 months on the progress to date or outcome in the
cause of completed research specifically including:
- The maintenance and security of the records.
- Compliance with the approved consent protocols and documentation.
- Compliance with any conditions of approval.
- Any changes of protocol to the research.

Note: Compliance to the reporting is mandatory to the approval of this research.

(c) Specifically, that the principal investigator/person responsible and/or associates report
immediately and notify the HREC, in writing, for approval of any change in protocol. (NS
2.37)

(d) That a report is sent to HREC when the project has been completed.

(e) That the principal investigator/person responsible and/or associates report immediately any
circumstance that might affect ethical acceptance of the research protocol. (NS 2.37)

(f) That the principal investigator/person responsible and/or associates report immediately any
serious adverse events/effects on participants. (NS 2.37)

(g) That, if this research is conducted in a country other than Australia, all research protocols for
that country are followed ethically and with appropriate cultural sensitivity.

2. Complaints

NS 2.39

An institution or organisation with an HREC shall establish mechanisms for receiving and
promptly handling complaints or concerns about the conduct of an approved research project.

All Participants MUST be advised in writing that:

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Southern Cross University Human
Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is ECN-07-44. If you have any complaints or
reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the
Committee through the Ethics Complaints Officer:

Ms Sue Kelly

[Contact information]

(512) 6020 3000 / (512) 6020 3700 PO Box 157 Lismore NSW 2480 Australia www.scu.edu.au ABN 41 595 651 524

312
Ethics Complaints Officer and Secretary
HREC
Southern Cross University
PO Box 157
Lismore, NSW, 2480
Telephone (02) 6626-9139 or fax (02) 6626-9145
Email: sue.kelly@scu.edu.au

All complaints, in the first instance, should be in writing to the above address. All complaints are
investigated fully and according to due process under the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in
Research Involving Humans and this University. Any complaint you make will be treated in
c confidence and you will be informed of the outcome.

Sue Kelly
Secretary & Ethics Complaints Officer
HREC
Ph: (02) 6626 9139
sue.kelly@scu.edu.au

Associate Professor Baden Offord
Chair, HREC
Ph: (02) 6620 3642
baden.offord@scu.edu.au
A-2 Participant Related Material

Introduction

Date On SCU Letterhead

Title: ‘Examining engagement practices’

My name is Jan Strom, and I am undertaking research to examine and assess Southern Cross University’s relationships both with the broader community and within the University, for my PhD.

The aim of my research is to discover the experiences and concerns of those who have been, or are currently involved in an engagement activity with Southern Cross University (SCU) through the Office of Regional Engagement (ORE). The study also aims to provide knowledge that can impact on future engagement strategies for SCU in particular, while informing the higher education sector in general. I am particularly interested in your perspective.

The study will use semi-structured reflective interviews, similar to an everyday conversation, which will be conducted at a mutually acceptable time and location. It is envisaged that the one-off interviews will take about one and a half hours and will be recorded on audiotape with your permission. However, you are free to request that interviews not be taped, and if so I will request permission to take notes during the interview. In addition, tapes and transcripts from your interview will be destroyed should you decide to withdraw from the study.

The data gathered will be used in my PhD research and may also be used in journal articles or at conference or seminar presentations. In addition, I may also need to conduct a follow-up interview (most likely by telephone) in order to check on any issues that may arise over the research period.

I will contact you shortly to ascertain your level of interest and availability; and if you consent to participate in the interview we will arrange a mutually convenient time and location. Following the interview you will be provided with two opportunities to review your comments:

1. A ‘Member Check – Summary Document’ will be sent to you to review and provide feedback on. A transcript of the interview will also be made available to you upon request.

2. A copy of the draft Findings Chapter will be sent to you at a later stage for review and verification. No information given in the interviews will be made public in any form that could identify you, and pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity.

A list of available counselling services is provided with this form should you experience emotional upset however this type of risk is not envisaged.
Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and your confidentiality is assured. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw and to discontinue participation at any time. You may also elect not to answer any questions asked.

My research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr Michelle Wallace who is a member of Southern Cross University’s Graduate College of Management. If any issues or questions are raised as a result of your participation in this research please contact Dr Michelle Wallace, on 6620.33623, or email michelle.wallace@scu.edu.au.

Name of Student: Jan Strom, PhD Candidate
Graduate College of Management
Southern Cross University
Telephone: 6659.3900
Email: jan.strom@scu.edu.au

The Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved the ethical aspects of this study. The Approval Number is (Insert when approved)

If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the HREC through the Ethics Complaints Officer, Ms Suze Kelly, Telephone [02] 6626 9139, Fax [02] 6626 9145, Email: skelly1@scu.edu.au.

Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Strom
Interview Guide & Checklist

Interview Guideline:

The following key areas will be covered during the semi-structured reflective interview and will be used as a guide. However, the ‘areas to be explored’ will serve to remind me of areas which need to be discussed in relation to the topic rather than using specific questions in a fixed order. As this is a qualitative and reflective research process there are no fixed set questions and this guide can be adapted as required. However, I will endeavour to ensure that all key areas are covered.

“Touching base’ and Background Information, about:
- the study;
- the ORE projects; as well as some
- general discussion about ‘engagement’.

Areas to explore:

Defining & understanding Engagement
- What do you think ‘engagement’ is?
- Is engagement important? Why/why not?

Your ‘engagement’ experience
- Tell me about your experiences in relation to engagement activities with SCU.
- Tell me about your ‘engagement’ experiences with community (SCU staff)
- Tell me about your ‘engagement’ experiences within (intra) SCU
- How is ‘engagement’ currently being done?
- How could it be done? Better?
- Is it a teaching/learning and research activity? Or a separate activity?
- How could it be measured?

University in the Regional context
- Define region.
- How important is SCU to region?
- How important is ‘engagement’ in this context? Why/why not?

University if the Community context –
- What defines community?
- What are ‘communities of interest’?
- How important is ‘engagement’ in this context? Why/why not?

Desire/want/need/ability to ‘engage’
- University to community;
- Community to University;
- Intra-University

Your perspective...
- Is it easy? Hard? Just another thing to do?
- (External/Internal) Can you influence the University/Community?

Prompts will also be used when needed throughout the interviews to assist the researcher to delve deeper and to clarify aspects of what the participant has said.  EG.
- How important is/was that to you?
- Would you be able to explain that a bit further please?
- Is there anything else you would like to discuss in relation to your ‘engagement’ experiences with SCU?
**Interview Checklist:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Date</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant Number</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement Activity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal/External Participant</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Contextualise research, ORE engagement activity &amp; interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consent</strong></td>
<td>Explain, 2 copies signed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas to be explored</strong></td>
<td>Engagement in general</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your engagement experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A personal perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional feedback</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cessation of Interview</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transcript complete</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Member Check – Summary Document’</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member Check – Summary Document’</strong></td>
<td>Sent to Interview participant for their review and feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Any adjustments made as required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transcript of Interview requested</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transcript of Interview sent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Release Form</strong></td>
<td>Participant to sign 2 copies (Keeping 1) if satisfied with Member Check document.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft Findings</strong></td>
<td>Chapter sent to participants, for their review and feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Feedback received and any adjustments made as required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Chapter</strong></td>
<td>Distributed to participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Project

Title: ‘Examining engagement practices’  On SCU Letterhead

Researcher:  Jan Strom, PhD Candidate  
Graduate College of Management  
Southern Cross University  
Telephone: 6659.3900  
Email: jan.strom@scu.edu.au

† I agree to participate in the above research project and have read and understand the details contained in the Information Sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and I am satisfied with the answers received.

† I agree to my interview being recorded on audiotape.  
OR  
† I do not agree to my interview being audio-taped and prefer the researcher to take hand written notes.

† I understand that I am free to discontinue participation at any time and I have been informed that prior to data analysis, any data that has been gathered before withdrawal of this consent will be destroyed.

† I understand that neither my name nor any identifying information will be disclosed or published.

† I understand that the Southern Cross University’s Ethics Committee has approved this project.

† I am aware that I can contact the researcher at any time after the interview. If I have any further questions about this study I am free to contact Dr Michelle Wallace, on 6620.33623, or email michelle.wallace@scu.edu.au.

The Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved the ethical aspects of this study. The Approval Number is (Insert when approved)

If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the HREC through the Ethics Complaints Officer, Ms Suze Kelly, (telephone [02] 6626 9139, fax [02] 6626 9145, email: sue.kelly1@scu.edu.au

Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence.

† I understand that I will be given a copy of this form to keep.

I have read the information above and agree to participate in this study. I am over the age of 18 years.

Name of Participant: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature of Participant: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Date: …………………………………

I certify that the terms of the Consent Form have been verbally explained to the participant and that the participant appears to understand the terms prior to signing the form. Proper arrangements have been made for an interpreter where English is not the participant’s first language.

Signature of Witness (independent of the research, where possible)

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Date: ………………………………...
Counselling Services

List of Counsellors

The purpose of counselling is to provide debriefing, if required, following interviews that may cause emotional upset. The following is a list of free counselling services:

Free Counselling Services:

Lifeline: 13114 (all areas)

Lifeline Face-to-Face Counselling:
Northern Rivers: (02) 6622 4133 (during office hours)
Mid North Coast: (02) 6651.1919 (during office hours)

Northern Rivers Area Health Service:
Free Counselling Services available at:
Lismore: (02) 6620 2967
Casino: (02) 6662 4444
Ballina/Byron Bay: (02) 6685 6254
Murwillumbah/Tweed Heads: (02) 6672 0277
Coffs Harbour (02) 6656.7000
Participant Release Form

Title: ‘Examining engagement practices’

On SCU Letterhead

Researcher: Jan Strom, PhD Candidate
Graduate College of Management
Southern Cross University
Telephone: 6659.3900
Email: jan.strom@scu.edu.au

I agree that the ‘Member Check - Summary Document’ provided to me by the researcher is a true reflection of my thoughts and comments as stated by me in the course of a semi-structured reflective interview with the researcher.

I agree to the researcher using those opinions, perspectives and reflections in her PhD and in any other journal articles or at conference or seminar presentations, as long as pseudonyms are used and my identity is not revealed.

The Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved the ethical aspects of this study. The Approval Number is (Insert when approved)

If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the HREC through the Ethics Complaints Officer, Ms Suze Kelly, (telephone [02] 6626 9139, fax [02] 6626 9145, email: sue.kelly1@scu.edu.au

Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence.

I understand that I will be given a copy of this form to keep.

I have read the information above and agree to participate in this study. I am over the age of 18 years.

Name of Participant: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Signature of Participant: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Date: ………………………………

I certify that the terms of the Release Form have been verbally explained to the participant and that the participant appears to understand the terms prior to signing the form. Proper arrangements have been made for an interpreter where English is not the participant’s first language.

Signature of Witness (independent of the research, where possible): ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
### Individual Summary Document of Interview Transcript

**Participant:**

**Code Number**

**Date of Interview:** 12 November 2007

**Summary Date:** 20 November 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement – <em>General Definition</em></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement – <em>from a Uni perspective</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should engagement be part of Teaching &amp; Learning and Research activities; or a separate activity of its own?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own engagement experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Jury Process
  *Juror* |  |
| Any additional comments welcome … |  |
## Jury: External Participants

### Emergent Themes – Combination Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Emergent Theme</th>
<th>Lismore X4</th>
<th>Coffs X3</th>
<th>Tweed X2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td>• Connection (2), Interaction, Linkages, Collaboration, <strong>Partnerships</strong>, Grounds in reality • Communication, Consultation • Leadership • Mutual benefit</td>
<td>• Life long learning (2), <strong>relationships/ties</strong> (3), • <strong>Shared</strong> goals/values; informed, consistent, sustainable</td>
<td>• Be part of, <strong>connected</strong>, integrated with; <strong>partnerships</strong> (2) • Enable/contribute to community growth, by <strong>sharing</strong> knowledge &amp; skills development (2) • Provide <strong>leadership</strong> • Contextual; <strong>shared</strong> goals/values;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td>• Funding issues (3) • Accessibility (2), <strong>communication</strong> barriers, • Measurement/incentives • Demand – community</td>
<td>• Multiple demands; internal dynamics; <strong>communication</strong>; • Lack of identity – monolithic; parochialism, self interest; • Getting participation – broader business/community, students, staff</td>
<td>• Build and maintain trust; rapport &amp; confidence; university ‘champions’ (in community) (2) • <strong>Dependence on individuals</strong> – not culture of engagement; (2) • Being able to share knowledge; not <strong>fee-for-service</strong> mentality • Gap academia/business ‘reality’ &amp; <strong>communication</strong>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>• Business links, business/entrepreneurship, partnerships • Leadership (2) • Build <strong>engagement culture</strong>, add value, • Develop solutions, Benefits • <strong>Linkages</strong> (community/regions)</td>
<td>• Add value for students (2); • Build regional relationships (eg reciprocal representation) (2); • Build research connect; life-long learning; increase <strong>linkages</strong> between uni (departments) and community;</td>
<td>• Develop relationships, links – org2org – industry bodies; culture of engagement beyond individuals; • Integrate with others eg health, local government, community; • Build graduate quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part T/L &amp; R</strong></td>
<td>• Agree part of teaching (2), part of research (1) • Obligation, Integration, Intrinsic, service learning, Internship</td>
<td>• Part of and strengthen through panels and advisory committees</td>
<td>• Part of, can use Internships – business &amp; industry (2) – to build relationships, uni profile, community capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>• Communities of interest (2), geographic (2) • Commonality (1), connection (1),</td>
<td>• Communities of interest (3); Wider community;</td>
<td>• General or <strong>Communities of interest</strong> – rural, micro businesses, aged • Can be partisan;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td>• Mega region (1), Larger than community (1), <strong>Geographic</strong> (1), Connections/links</td>
<td>• Organisational/admin function, geographic</td>
<td>• More geographic, legislated; • Incorporates sub-regions and communities (of interest)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Williams Data Analysis Matrix

**Internal 15 from 3 campuses: 7 Lismore, 5 Coffs & 3 Tweed.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generalisations &amp; Exceptions (usually …but…)</th>
<th>Generalisations</th>
<th>Exceptions</th>
<th>Generalisation</th>
<th>Exceptions</th>
<th>Insight</th>
<th>So What? Significance of implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership 11</td>
<td>Instigate/lead 1</td>
<td>Common good</td>
<td>Trust 1</td>
<td>Focus on leadership for the 'common or greater’ good and the adding of value – beyond individuals and organisations</td>
<td>Greater focus on the social and/or community outcomes, the whole more important than the individuals or organisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Add value 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnering 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal &amp; external 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual benefit 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contradiction (on one hand … on the other …)</strong></td>
<td><strong>On one hand</strong></td>
<td><strong>On the other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary finds high focus on connection, interaction, partnerships and mutual benefit</td>
<td>People are more motivated to engage if there is a personal/professional or organisational benefit</td>
<td>A benefit for the ‘common or greater’ good is a secondary side benefit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d expected to see idea of ‘connectivity’ through the development of partnerships, interaction and the like, but was surprised to see some people identify ‘leadership’ (by the University) as an issue.</td>
<td>People inside the University tend to focus more within than without, therefore the idea of providing leadership (in the community or region) is a demonstration of an outward focus that does not generally ‘connect’.</td>
<td>May need to explore the notion of ‘leadership’ (by the University &amp; within the –geographic – region, the community &amp; the communities of interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing (I'd expected… but… OR Surprise (I didn't expect … but</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Puzzle</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Is the inward focus representative of a strong ‘collegial/discipline’ focus by academic staff and an operational focus, by non-academic staff? Or that engagement is not has not been part of workload models/expectations? | Historically culture of academia has focused strongly on collegial community, teaching/learning and research have been rewarded, but engagement has not been recognised (thus not included) in workload models etc. | Educating and demonstrating how ‘engagement’ (particularly with an external focus) can add value personally, professionally (recognition for promotion, study leave etc) and organisationally.